

Brilliant Light.... A MegaTraveller Adventure By Mark Bridgeman.

Referee's Overview (Story Arc).

[NB: A short adventure set in district 268 in the spinward marches sector and written using the Epic Adventure format, can be used in conjunction with T20 and MegaTraveller, though easily adaptable to Classic Traveller.

This Adventure pits player characters against a ruthless agent of the Outworld Coalition and a team of hijackers whose deadly intentions threaten the stability of the Border Worlds region and the delicate peace maintained between the Sword Worlds and the mighty Third Imperium.]

*The characters will be approached by a well groomed, wealthy looking old man (**NPC Arthon Earles/Aran Hrep**) at the Starport on Falldor (SM 1131) he will ask for passage to Walston (SM 1232), and is prepared to pay the group all of his life savings Cr200, 000 to take him there as part of their normal trade/explorations through the subsector. He will explain to the PC's that his daughter disappeared from his home a few years ago without any warning. A lengthy police investigation ensued and they determined that she had gone 'off world' with a group of people. They were unable to help him further as their jurisdiction ended at the Starport and the young lady seemed to have gone willingly, there being no evidence of a kidnap etc. Being unsatisfied with this Arthon hired independent agents to track her down. The process was long and laborious but ultimately paid off. They traced her to a religious commune on the frontier world of Walston. In short the old man simply wants passage to the world, so that he can meet his daughter (NPC Simla Davi) and plead with her to come home. If questioned he will tell the group that he is a wealthy retired entrepreneur and hence willing to pay over the odds for passage in the hope of reclaiming his daughter.*

Unknown to the pc's Arthon Earles is a fugitive from the Imperium, a notorious con artist and a former agent of the Outworld Coalition, who left their services many years ago when his plans became a bit extreme. He is clever, cunning and ruthless he was discovered on Walston by Imperial agents some thirty years ago but managed to evade capture and flee off world, escaping during a raid. At the time Arthon had assumed a senior position in the Brilliant Light Cult and used his position to embezzle funds, and build up a secret weapons cache containing explosives and ship sized nuclear warheads that he planned to move to several imperial capitol cities and detonate as part of a plan to destabilize the border and cause unrest.

Even thirty years ago, this plan was unacceptable to the Sword Worlds government, who despite all of their bad press do not approve of killing civilians, and so the plan was unsanctioned by them. But now though Arthon feels that things would be different if he used these tactics to help liberate the former Sword Worlds territories now called the Border Worlds. Imperial public opinion varies considerably from approving the occupation of the border worlds to being dead against it. Arthon feels that more dissatisfaction can be engineered by causing unrest and criticism of the Imperial authorities that would seemingly be shown to have no control over the occupied territories and ultimately cause the imperials a loss of public goodwill and hence be forced to withdraw from the region, the resulting power vacuum would be an inviting opportunity for the Sword Worlds to reclaim their lost territories.

All that he needs to complete this plan is a ship and access to his weapons cache that he is convinced has not yet been discovered. In the rush to leave the Brilliant Light cult, Arthon left behind his access codes and materials required to open the container' as they had been cleverly hidden throughout parts of the cult headquarters in secret panels etc, unknown to the rest of the cult members who are legitimate faith seekers and thus were perfect cover for his plans.

*Arthon is a meticulous planner and in addition to employing agents and having them in place along the way, waiting for a go signal, he has sent one such employee to the cult itself, (**NPC Simla Davi**) giving details of where the access codes and required materials are hidden*

throughout the cult headquarters. He recently received a message from her saying that she had recovered everything he needed. His other agents are in place along route ready to be taken on as passenger aboard the PC's ship (Henrich Goodman & Villgri Mallikik). Now he can begin his campaign.

Act One: The Old Man At The Starport.

Scene 1: Passengers

The PC's will be approached by an elderly though wealthy looking man, who introduces himself as Aran Hrep (NPC Arthon Earles), he will explain to the group that he is a retired business man who has been searching for his daughter for the last three years, employing agents to track her down after her sudden and unexplained disappearance. His investigators have traced her to a planet in District 268 called Walston; apparently she is now a member of a repressive cult and has little contact with the universe beyond the cult enclosure. Aran wishes to travel to Walston and is willing to pay handsomely to take the PC's of the main trade routes to a world that is little visited. He will explain that Aran will seem genuine enough and offer to pay the PC's Cr200, 000 for passage to Walston, and a return trip out with his daughter. In the mean time the PC's will be allowed to take on any additional cargo and freight and passengers as required as long as they get him to Walston and keep an additional stateroom free for his daughter on the trip out, assuming that Aran is successful in his quest.

Aran will also explain that he has worked in starports when he was younger, and whilst he has no shipboard expertise he will use his former business contacts to try and drum up some extra trade or passengers for the crew along the way as a little thank you for their willingness to help.

Scene 2: Along The Way.

Along the way Aran will become a very chatty and friendly sort of passenger eager to help out in any way and a congenial travelling companion who mixes and mingles with other passengers as would be expected of a number of people confined aboard a small ship for a week. Needless to say at every stop along the way he will get out and stretch his legs when the ship has landed, enjoying a wander about the port facilities and using his contacts to generate some high passengers for the next destination.

Referees

Trade should proceed normally along the way, and the referee should run encounters as appropriate and spread a few rumours etc, and gossip from other ship's crews in the area, and roll for passengers as normal, along the way Aran will disappear into the port and bring back some trade he has managed to drum up. At two of the stops his accomplices will board again paying high passage rates, (**Henrich Goodman & Villgri Mallikik**). Henrich will ask the crew to ensure that his jewels are locked in the ship's locker for security reasons and the trip will proceed normally. The best way to do this is to randomly generate a number of realistic NPC passengers, giving them all names and personalities, slipping in Henrich and Villgri along the way. If questioned Henrich and Villgri will both claim to be devotees of the Brilliant Light Cult and true faith seekers, and profess that the cult is a benefit to sophonts and a generally positive religion. If pushed they will both say that there should be no difficulty gaining access to the cult headquarters as they accept all pilgrims and hold no one against their will. In addition to mixing with all passengers Villgri will also spend considerable amounts of time in his cabin remotely accessing the ship computer with his 'specialist tools' being an expert hacker, he covers his tracks well, making any enquiries look routine such as accessing details on imperial facts & trivia, watching entertainments etc, and investigating local history, all of which is available from the library program and quite normal for passengers to do. In fact by the end of the voyage Villgri should not only have all of the ship's access codes but will have set up a program to change them in the event of an emergency.

Act Two: Planet-fall at Walston.

Scene 1: Good Bye.

When the PC's make planet-fall at Walston, docking within the domed confines of the local starport and Imperial Scout Base, passengers will disembark normally and Aran will tearfully thank the crew for brining him this far, saying that he would now hire a crawler and set off to the cult headquarters, some 300 km planetary east and demand to meet his daughter. He should easily be back within 2 days.

Scene 2: Hijack.

Sympathetic PC's may even suggest accompanying him to the cult head quarters just in case, if this is the case, Aran and his accomplices will enact plan B, if Aran leaves on his own, enact plan A.

Referees.

Plan A

The other passengers will disembark normally, crucially though Henrich will not ask for his jewels back, and will leave with Villgri and being 'pilgrims all' will board a crawler with Aran and head off towards the Brilliant Light Cult Head Quarters.

The exact details of the assault are left up to the referee but something like this works...

A day or so later, Aran will return on his own in a dishevelled and poor looking state, (obviously the victim of an assault) the crawler will drive erratically on to the ship's landing pad and the door will fling open, Aran will stagger out and wave half-heartedly up at either the ship's bridge view ports (if visible) or at the ship's large passive sensors, mounted on the hull whilst being held up by a young woman. Concerned crew members will most probably go and assist as he collapses onto the plastocrete of the landing pad, probably leaving one or two crew members aboard (assuming that some have not gone into the port previously on the hunt for cargoes and freight etc).

Unknown to the players, NPC's Henrich and Villgri are laying in wait at the rear of their ship, out of sight and undetectable to passive sensors (which are typically mounted forward and lateral of the ship as those big o'l)

The young woman will tearfully explain to any PC's present that 'it is all her fault, and that she should never have left home,' explaining that the cult leadership wouldn't let Aran see her, and had some devotees beat her elderly father, but she found out that her father was there and rushed to meet him, realising that he had been assaulted by her fellow devotees she suddenly realised that she had devoted the last few years to a corrupt organisation, and so helped her father into a crawler and drove him back here, to the port, following his directions.

Whilst this is going on Henrich will detonate the explosive jewels starting a small fire within the ship's locker (possibly destroying some of the player's equipment) In response to the fire, the ship's emergency assistance program will then activate and lock down all non essential areas, in order to starve the fire of oxygen, so passenger quarters, crew quarters, engineering and the bridge etc will be isolated from each other and hatches and iris valves etc will not open, trapping players, of course this won't be a problem for the crew who have all of the correct access codes... Unknown to the PCs thanks to Villgri's hacking, their access codes are no longer valid so each pc will be trapped within the various parts of the ship and unable to communicate with each other unless they have comms independent of the ship's. At this point Villgri will then uses his hacked access codes to override the anti-hijack program and gain entry through the air lock allowing Henrich to also enter and work his way through the ship sections (requesting unlocking over the comms link with Villgri who will then use his

hacked access codes to change crew status and access to essential systems before emplacing his fail-safes into the computer core. He will then radio Aran to say that the plan has worked and he can have his ship. A fit and healthy Aran will then board the PC's ship (the assault clearly a ruse – makeup etc) with any remaining PC's in tow (who would be unaware of the events aboard)

Plan B

Aran will hire a fusion crawler (the best transport available on this low tech cold world) and will enthusiastically set off with any PCs to the Brilliant Light headquarters, at which point his daughter (NPC Simla Davi) will meet him, claim that she's got everything she needs and after a tearful reunion with her 'father' get in the crawler and make her way back to the pc's ship in the meantime as in plan A Henrich and Villgri will get access to the PC's ship and either find it empty and hence simple to hi-jack or quickly overpower any remaining crew members tying them up and throwing them into either an empty stateroom which can be locked or the ship's hold.

Act Three: Brilliant Light.

With the ship under his control, Aran will speak to the PC's one by one and try to convince them that support for the Imperium is misguided at best and that their occupation of the Border Worlds is evil and morally wrong. If there's any non Imperial PC's present he may even try to enlist them in his crusade. He will try hard to make the PC's understand that he has no personal malice towards them, finding them to be good people, before offering them a choice, either work for him, for the duration of his mission at which point they will get their ship back and one million credits or he will leave without them, hiring a crew from the local mission hall and abandon them on this cold hard rock forever. He will then explain that he considered killing them, but has come to like them through their recent shared companionship and feels that he owes them at least a fighting chance of life. He will further stipulate that all access codes will be restored to them when his mission is complete and full as opposed to limited control of the ship they may have should they join him.

Depending on how the PC's react, one of two outcomes is possible.

Option 1 - Acceptance.

Arthon will indeed remain true to his word and give them limited control of the ship, enough to fly it to his next destination (as per scene 1) and then jump out, system bound towards the Imperial Border and the rich targets he has in mind. Players will more than likely use this as a ruse to concoct a scheme to retake the ship, in which case allow them to come up with and act upon any plan they might have.

Remember though that Arthon is a meticulous planner and all of his team will be linked by personal (wrist) comms, and apart from checking in regularly with each other also have a panic button sounding an alarm on the rest of the hijackers' wrist comms

Option 2 - Telling them to go to hell.

If players are not compliant with Arthon's plans he will remain true to his word and give them a fighting chance at life, not much of a chance but a chance anyway. In which case he will have all of the crew members marched into the cargo hold, and explain that he needs, someone who can navigate, fly the ship and look after the drives, one or more of the party would be preferable. He will give the group ten minutes to decide before having the least essential member of the crew killed (i.e. the one with the least ship handling skills, like a purser/doctor etc) and will continue to have the next most non essential crewmember killed

every ten minutes until either all of the crew are dead or someone has volunteered. If someone volunteers, to save the crewmember or the rest of the group he will smile, and thank them for 'seeing sense' before taking away the least essential and either locking them in a stateroom or forcing them to become a low passenger if low berths are present as it will make it easier for him to have the character killed later on if the pc's cause any trouble, and reduce the requirements needed to adequately guard them.

Scene 1: Weapon's Cache.

With the ship firmly under his control Arthon will make preparations and insist the ship is ready for immediate lift out, in which case he will instruct the Navigator to plot a course to some co-ordinates he has got in mind. He will order the pilot to inform the port authority that they are heading to jump point with final destination being the being the Squalia System (SM 1133). Needless to say he has no intention of going to Squalia but will instruct the navigator to travel to jump point and execute a system jump to a predesignated set of co-ordinates.

One week later the craft will emerge from jump still in the Walston system but some 1.5 AU out from Gisela a large gas-giant with a complex moon system and well within its sensor shadow as seen from the Walston. He will order the ship to head for Tatiana an airless and rocky moon, with the ultimate aim of flying deep within a long and snaking crevasse (difficult pilot rolls needed), whilst scanning with active sensors (Routine - Sensor Ops). Ultimately the sensors will detect a small metallic object at the bottom of the crevasse. Once discovered, Arthon will become quite agitated and demand that the pc's land alongside it (Routine piloting, frontier landing).

Further investigation will reveal it to be an 8 displacement ton sealed cargo container.

Scene 2: Delivery.

Needless to say, someone is going to have to suit up, and get across to it. Arthon will insist that the crew are either locked up in a stateroom (perhaps) or are forced to get out there and open the crate, using the access codes that Arthon will supply. (As in previous scenes this may be an opportunity for the players to attempt a retake of the ship in which case, allow players to come up with and try to enact any plans they might have. Arthon and his people should be a surprisingly tough fight though, coupled with the advance planning of Arthon to make matters difficult (don't forget the limited access each character has to essential ship systems and restrictive access codes). It may seem likely that unless they can kill Arthon's henchmen and overpower him, they might never recover the access codes they need to regain complete control of their ship. Though there are other solutions (see appendix 1).

Once the container is open the Player's should find a number of tech 10-11 equipment pieces (all of which tend to be expensive) and of course the 8 nuclear warheads, stored in locked and sealed heavy-duty containers to minimise radiation effects and the risk of accidental damage. Opening such a case and inspecting the items will reveal that each warhead has been retrofitted with an electronic timer that once activated will count down from any set amount of time. In addition to this there will also be present a remote detonator that has a 5 km short range though can be linked to longer range comms such as the ship's.

Details of other items can be found in Appendix 2.

Act Four: Resolution.

With the items moved into the hold, Arthon will desire a test be conducted of one such nuclear warhead, and insist that one is detonated on Walston possibly at the Brilliant Light Headquarters, though more likely at the Scout base/Starport as that is an Imperial Installation and hence a worthy and justifiable target.

Shocked PC's may be privy to his plans and he will justify them with the following rationales.

Firstly space detonations are different and much less limited in scale than Atmospheric ones, and the atmospheric blast would provide him with the necessary sensor information and telemetry that he needs in order to use the warheads to maximum effect on their target worlds.

Unless the PC's can overthrow him at this stage he will enact a plan to destroy the starport, as follows:

Arthon's plans will involve returning to the port, setting down as an emergency landing, claiming that a miss-jump has brought the ship back to this system. When down, he will hire a fusion crawler and use it to bring supplies to the ship, in addition to purchasing fuel, finally informing the port authority of his intention to lift out as repairs are now complete (after a few days), leaving behind the crawler, (still on hire to him) with a warhead in its cargo compartment, primed and armed, and counting down, timed to detonate after about an hour. Arthon will hope to flee and lay low on Giddakar (X220000-0 - orbit 1) whilst monitoring any remaining comm traffic in the system and sensor telemetry, pretending to gain the information he needs, though in truth, Arthon just wants the satisfaction of striking against an imperial installation. When the coast is clear he will order the ship to lift out and jump, forcing the PC navigator to plot a course towards the Border Worlds, where he will try to enact the same plan over and over again striking against various imperial installations or capitol cities, until his stock of warheads runs out or he is caught or overthrown.

Smart PC's need to act quickly, and overthrow Arthon, either killing him or capturing him and his accomplices and turning them over to the nearest Imperial Authority, the referee should allow the PC's to enact any worthwhile scheme that they come up with, even crippling their own ship if they can, or triggering the comm. subsystem into broadcasting a Signal GK or SOS either clandestinely or openly in an attempt to draw attention to themselves.

The other alternative for pc's that fail to retake their ship at any point and overthrow him, would be that Arthon will make his way to the Imperial fringe, and once in a populous system will attempt to kill them, and hire a new crew, passing the ship of as his own.

Players should know that whilst there may be many opportunities throughout the entire adventure to overthrow the hijackers, Arthon will allow them one attempt, before dealing harshly with the PC's, if in a populous system where another crew can be hired Arthon will have no hesitation in killing them all, throwing them out into vacuum. If he still has need of the crew then as detailed earlier he will have the least useful crewmember executed as a warning to the others.

Smart players may find out that Arthon has no intention to pay any of his accomplices and will most likely kill them when he no longer has need of them, there may be an opportunity here for players to turn his crew against him, Best candidates for this would be the NPC's **Simla Davi & Henrich Goodman** both very mercenary in outlook and only loyal by virtue of the vast amount of money promised to them. In which case a failed attempt at retaking the ship involving these NPC's as allies would mean that Arthon would most likely execute both Simla and Henrich in lieu of the PC's who are still useful to him, though doing so would compromise his ability to control the PC's.

Other opportunities for PC's would be to profess loyalty to Arthon and claim to despise the Imperium and hence be willing accomplices in the plan in the hope of gaining Arthon's trust or if PC's are so inclined to actually strike against the Imperium. Arthon will promise them a significant amount of money when the task is complete though it should become apparent though through good role-playing that Arthon will abandon them to any pursuing authority at the first instance and claim innocence, or alternatively kill them when they are no longer useful to him. For the sake of the player's dignity though all roads should ultimately lead to Arthon and his henchmen being captured or killed before being turned over to Imperial

Authorities (dead or alive) with proof (Arthon's hand computer) of his misdeeds and evil intentions.

Rewards and Advancement

If the characters successfully capture Arthon Earles alive and his henchmen turning them over to the correct Imperial Authorities, they will be paid a small bounty of Cr 250,000 and receive a commendation of thanks as Arthon is a wanted fugitive. If they are unsuccessful in foiling his plot and the Walston Scout Base or other imperial cities/facilities are destroyed before they manage to turn him over (alive or dead) they will be debriefed by Imperial Naval Intelligence and quietly allowed to go their own way after a number of weeks confinement in a naval facility (they will be treated well) whilst their testimony is corroborated by an examination of flight logs and any internal recordings (security sensors etc) and any log entries the Player Characters managed to make. If the latter is true, no reward will be given and of course the Players will still have to make their mortgage payment to make (if applicable). If however they capture Arthon and prevent a nuclear detonation at the scout base then after a debriefing period (similar to the above) they will be given their reward of Cr 250,000 and also a special pass (along the lines of an Imperial Warrant) allowing their player's vessel free fuel and maintenance (including annual maintenance and inspection) at all scout or Naval bases throughout the domain (one or the other, not both). Naturally enough in return for this the scout service/Navy may request their assistance at other times in the future and will reward the Player's as appropriate for these other missions. If characters are detached scouts and already have access to free fuel and maintenance then double the cash reward, no further benefits will be offered.

For character's who routinely operate beyond what is legal (criminal or pirate types) and if this is discovered had better negotiate their own solution with the Imperial Authorities or choose not to go to go them, e.g. they might Kill Arthon, steal his weapons cache, keep any equipment they fancy and fence the rest on the black market. Though this might alert Imperial Naval Intelligence, who might come looking for them... Additionally they could dump his weapons cache, keeping any goodies and after a brutal interrogation of Arthon discover that he has a secret bank account and raid that for the additional Cr 500,000. In short, just tailor any rewards to the group as appropriate, though I recommend being stingy....

Data Points.

World Data: Walston (SM 1232) C544338-8 S Lo Ni 302 Cs M5V.

Starport C:	Wal'sport Down, + Orbital Beacon
Size 5:	8480 km Diameter, core (solid molten) surface gravity 0.62, base surface temperature -15 C.
Atmos: 4	Thin 0.51 At
Hydro: 4	(42%) frozen liquid oceans, remaining land being rocky though cold deserts
Pop: 3000,	Imperial Scout personnel, starport workers, Brilliant Light cult members and an imperial archaeological team (fossil hunters).
Gov: 3	Self-perpetuating minority (Brilliant Light Leadership)
Law: 8	High Law, blade weapons controlled, no open display
Tech: 8	Pre-stellar
Data:	

Walston is a cold and isolated world deep within the gravity well of its M5V primary, a dull red though medium sized star called, 'Faberge', the reason behind the name is unknown, and the world itself is of little interest except to the Imperial Scouts who find it be to a convenient staging post, maintenance and re-supply point for ships heading to Five Sisters subsector and the space beyond.

The starport is run and maintained by the Imperial Interstellar Scout service, and is a domed affair due to the extreme cold of Walston's climate that's surrounded by a scattering of landing pads, a few of which are open to the public (hence the class c rating). Ships approaching the port normally home in on and receive telemetry from the orbital relay/beacon before landing on the planets surface. The port has no perimeter fence, after all there is no where else to go, and the hard plastocrete landing pads are thermally heated via hot water feeds from the port's fusion reactor so that maintenance and re-supply of ships can be conducted in relatively warm, though steamy conditions, caused by snowfall meeting the heat of the pads, which can occasionally be slippery during or after heavy showers. All landing pads have ramps so that fusion crawlers (the best and most versatile transports on this world) can drive up and load/unload freight, supplies and, of course any cargo that needs to be exchanged here.

A small brokerage and exchange is present along with a 'mission hall' provided by the Brilliant Light cult as temporary housing for out of work spacers. The cult leadership is the effective and independent government of Walston and considered to be an Imperial Client state after the notorious 'Walston incident' that occurred some thirty years ago, the cult is benevolent, recognises the value of an Imperial credit, hence all revenues/profits raised by the meagre starport, brokerage and mission hall go directly to the cult headquarters, and pay for the maintenance of their life support machinery and needed supplies. In addition to any profits made by the sale of pricey art objects and religious symbols etc made by the cult membership and sold to faith seekers on nearby worlds.

The system is protected by a small flotilla of Imperial Naval patrol cruisers/ escorts that scour the system, refuel at the scout base, and jump out to a new system after a new patrol has jumped in.

Other effects of weather include light winds and spectacular sunsets and sunrises, the light of Faberge, (being so close and deep red), fills the sky for most of the day, and combined with high levels of dust in the upper atmosphere serves to make the world at once savage and beautiful, though clearly dead...

A civilian research mission, sponsored by the Flammarion Institute is currently on location on Walston, cutting through the frozen ice oceans in search of evidence that this planet may once have had complex and developed life, as there is a strong scientific possibility of this. Fossil remains of simple bacteria and single celled life have been found, and are under scrutiny to determine whether they are native to Walston or imported from other nearby worlds, the ramifications to this question is scientifically very important as the said remains range from being millions of years old to a minimum of 500,000 years old (the most prolific), though larger remains have yet to be discovered there is strong evidence of mass extinctions occurring at regular intervals in the Walston Geological Timeline.

This planet was also once the site of an Octagon society shelter for distressed star-farers though the shelter is rumoured to have only been a weather shelter and may not have survived to the present day, as it has not been found.

Apart from the IISS and scientific personnel the only other permanent residents are the members of the Brilliant Light cult itself, who live in a small settlement some 300 km planetary east of the starport. The settlement is a former luxury hotel built by 'Maelstrom Tours' in IY 1021, Maelstrom did well marketing elitist tours to the wealthy and aristocratic types of many high tech decadent worlds and expanded their range of possible vacation spots by building hotels and other complexes on frontier type planets with scientific or other notable curiosities, unfortunately their luxury complex built on Walston didn't bring in the expected revenue and so was sold at auction to a former vargr corsair captain who had converted to an obscure and

little known cult. The captain was of course the famous (in vargr circles) 'Grzzerveg Rhonkar' who now regretted the violence and destruction he caused in his prior years and became firstly and adherent and then a priest of the 'Vilarigeta' religion, (a faith that seeks to unify any and all beliefs so that the path towards the brilliant light of truth, abundance and harmony becomes apparent by separating out all of the common elements of all available religions into a new form. Hence the cult dogma is always changing (ideal for vargr) though its overall aim does not (also ideal for vargr). Upon viewing the empty hotel complex Grzzerveg found it to be ideal for his needs and after seeing the many tall and glittering windows of the complex reflecting and refracting the evening light of Faberge (which seems redder to Vargr eyes) he christened the complex the 'Home of Brilliant Light'. Prior to this the cult had never had a permanent home and so he lived in the complex and welcomed faith seekers from all over the marches to his doors, (it has capacity for some 2000 sophonts) who desired to work and live in a commune. Naturally enough humans and other species some came to join this growing cult and bring yet more diversity to it, so that it now its membership boasts a mixed Vargr and human populace with odd examples of a few other species also living within the Home of Brilliant Light.

It is said that in a moment of epiphany that Grand Priest Grzzerveg understood that in time the cults aim would naturally change, and so in order to protect it, set up a ruling council of 11 senior members of the cult (councillors) to ensure that the cult always meets its aims deeming 11 to be a sufficiently odd number that when councillors voted there would always be a majority of one type or another, so that the council would not be locked in power plays and deadlock as a result of a hung vote. Grzzerveg also stipulated that when the council has deliberated they then must ask the membership to ratify their decisions by voting for or against their decisions, again a majority decides the outcome. The council once selected serves for life, and members are only replaced if one of them dies or leaves the cult forever, new members are selected by recommendation and a majority vote cast by the remaining council members.

It is rumoured that then Grzzerveg went away taking with him the most trusted of his devotees leaving the cult behind to sleep beneath the ice ready to awaken should the day come that the cult needs his help or loses direction.

The council of the eleven are the technical rulers of Walston, and considered to be a client government of the Imperium, formally independent until the year 1081 (30 years ago) the date of the Walston incident. In which a flotilla of Imperial patrol ships seized control of the system and effectively blockaded it from all outside contact whilst on the trail of a clandestine mission sponsored by the Sword Worlds.

It soon became apparent to the Naval Task Force Commander (Commodore Derek Hitsburg) that the cult headquarters was instrumental in assisting the sword-worlders though the majority of the cult membership was innocent in this. After interrogating the cult's leadership and questioning the rank and file members he became convinced that the cult's involvement in the incident was at best minimal and that most cult members were genuine faith seekers and not to be blamed. The search team he had dispatched in pursuit of Arthon drew a spectacular blank; the suspected ringleader and coordinator had simply vanished.

Holding a meeting with all remaining members of the cult he offered them a choice of a new life behind the Imperial frontier, whilst some members welcomed this the majority didn't and asked to remain at Walston. In response to this Commodore Hitsburg dispatched a cruiser to the nearest Imperial Naval Base, giving it orders to return with a flotilla of Subsidized Merchants, capable of lifting out and transporting those who wished to leave. Together with the cult's council of eleven he successfully negotiated a client status agreement between them, (the technical rulers of Walston) and the Imperium. In return for the protection of the Imperial Navy they would agree to the placement of an Imperial Interstellar Scout Service facility along side the designated Starport area. The system having little strategic value didn't justify the placement of even a small naval base though it would be beneficial to the scout service that could use this world as a stepping-stone between the Imperial Border and the Five Sisters Subsector to rimward/spinward in order to maintain lines of communication. Over time, both groups agreed that the Imperium would invest heavily in the starport and conduct

numerous geological surveys in order to locate resources that could be mined or exploited by Imperial corporations or concerns that would provide a steady stream of income from taxation or trade licences to the newly formed planetary government. This development of trade would eventually lead to a gradual change from client status to Walston becoming a fully-fledged member of the Imperium, the pace of which would be determined by the Walston government.

System Overview:

<u>Orbit</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>UWP</u>	<u>B Trade</u>	<u>Alg</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Faberge M5V					
Orbit 0	Walston	C544338-8	S Lo Ni	Cs	
Orbit 1	Giddakar	X220000-0		---	
Orbit 2	Palatial	X531000-0		---	
Orbit 3	Melynda	SGG size 55		---	5 moons
Orbit 4	Whenvoe	X802000-0		---	2 moons
Orbit 5	Gisela	LGG size 92		---	11 moons (inc Tatiana)

The Walston Solo System seems to be the site of a monstrous tragedy that has forever changed the nature of this star system. There is some evidence to suggest that the planets as found in their present orbits have all suffered trauma caused by heat, and immense gravitational stresses, as orbits are extremely eccentric, the orbit of Palatial a (a strange world) actually intersects with the orbit of Whenvoe. Theories abound the most popular being that a small black hole passed through the system roughly 500,000 to 1,000,000 years ago with dramatic consequences (although there is no proof of this) or that the primary star Faberge suddenly swelled up in size, vaporising the inner system planets before its resulting collapse drew in the outer system planets into tighter though more eccentric orbits (most serious scientists dismiss the latter theory completely and consider it unlikely at best and at worst, the misguided notions of fantasists. As Faberge would have to have been far hotter and brighter before the event to support the primitive life as evidenced in the Fossil record of Walston if the planet orbited at a further distance.)

Trade classifications are not provided for any other bodies in the Walston system, as they are uninhabited.

Rumours.

Research Team rumours & gossip.

"There was life here man, any fool with a passive ems and a little working knowledge of biology will tell you that. We have oxygen, carbon dioxide and methane all present in significant quantities in the atmosphere, strong indicators of developed life."

"The oxygen content of the atmosphere is actually decreasing! Its true they reckon another million years or so and there wont be any O2 left, you see free oxygen tends to combine with other chemicals and unless replaced, gradually disappears from the atmosphere, this tells you that there's no more metabolic processes still working on this rock. It's a dead world, and those fools from the research team will never find any developed life."

"Judging by the current atmospheric density and projected levels of oxygen decline, something terrible must have happened sometime around half a million years ago."

"The bacteria they found, is deadly stuff and not native to this world, apparently they found a live example that multiplied and infected the first research team, killing them all, that's why they all wear those quarantine suits..."

"We plan to start drilling in the ice in the hope of finding some undisturbed air pockets, from the time the ice was first laid down, should be interesting to compare the atmosphere then to how it is now"

Faith Seekers rumour and gossip.

"During the Walston incident, it was the actions of our beloved founder, 'Grzzerveg Rhonkar', that saved us from a mad and evil man. Knowing that our faith had been corrupted he awoke from his slumber and took steps to put us on the right track and alerted the Imperials."

"They say that 'Grzzerveg Rhonkar's' old ship is out there somewhere, hidden deep in this system just in case he ever needed it again... Many searchers have entered the ort cloud on the system's edge never to be seen again."

"Five Sister's Pharmaceuticals (FSP) Lic, are secretly mining a deep crevasse on the other side of Walston, they think that we're so insignificant that they don't need our permission, Imperial Laws don't apply out here, and they've got mercs guarding them. There must be some pretty special bacteria out there, something they can turn into drugs...."

"It's often said amongst some of the older faith seekers that there's a secret vault deep beneath the cult building, containing all of 'Grzzerveg Rhonkar's' stolen gold."

Imperial Scout Base rumour and gossip

"It's all confidential you understand, but recently an archaeological team arrived from Five Sisters subsector, apparently they were called in when FSP discovered evidence of an ancient civilisation here on Walston, both deep within the ice and in the stony desert."

"During a routine scan of Whenvoe, one of our ships was fired upon, a missile came snaking up from the surface, incredibly fast, the scout pilot managed to out manoeuvre it, before his turret managed to destroy it on auto-fire. This is all top secret though, so don't tell anyone, but the missile was an unknown design, scans seem to suggest it was ancient.... "

"Recently a pirate flotilla came out of jump space and refuelled at Melynda, we picked them up on long range scans, and watched as they jumped out, one of our nav's managed to extrapolate a destination from their hull grid patterns, it seems they were going to the Bowman Belt.... Typical, just when there was no navy ships in system either..."

"One of our people thinks he found a large metallic object out there in the stony desert, hidden under an outcrop of rock, he checked his sensor readings, and reported it back, so we sent a g-carrier to investigate, only to find nothing..."

"Octagon Society Shelter, never been found, though there was a scandal with them, that their top bosses embezzled money by claiming it was being spent on shelters that didn't exist, so it doesn't surprise me its listed in the logs though not present. It was things like that, made the charity shut down."

"The Octagon Society Shelter's were made to be found, and regardless of the world in question you could always find them at the same planetary co-ordinates, even if floating on the ocean and tethered to the sea bed. The society always referenced local north against the equator, at 45 degrees so that the shelters would always be in a temperate zone, you know, not too hot, not too cold, except on this world that area's covered in ice, so its either under new ice, or the ice has moved, because last time I checked there was nothing there."

Non Player Characters....

Arthon Earles/Aran Hrep

T20 Stats:

Str: 5(-3), Dex: 7(-2), Con: 7(-2), Int: 12(+1), Wis: 13(+1), Edu: 12(+1), Chr: 14(+2), Soc: 14
(Human Male Age 66, Rogue-7/Professional-5)

Xp: 67,000

STA/Lb= 48/7

BAB+5 FORT+2 RFX+5 WILL+2

Home-world - Tirem (Spinward Marches/Glisten (2233) C7B5975-B Hi FI 621 Im K5V)

Feats:

**Armour Proficiency (light/Medium), Weapon Proficiency (swordsman/marksman)
Carousing, smuggling, Spot Trouble, Connections (underworld), Professional
Speciality (Knowledge Related), Vessel (ground/tracked & grav/grav)**

Skills:

**Forgery -10, Gather Information -10, Bluff -10, Appraise -8, P/Admin -8, Driving -8,
k/Interstellar Law-8, Bribery -10, leader -5, Sense Motive -5, pilot -5, Survival -5,
Recruiting -4, T/Computer -1, K/Chemistry-2, K/homeworld-0**

Ac=8 no armour, Ac= 14 (AR=6) cloth body suit.

MegaTraveller Stats:

344889 (Human Male - Rogue, Age 66)

Lif: H/V 2/2

**Skills: Forgery -3, Leader -2, Carousing -2, Streetwise- 2, Tactics -2, Small blade -1,
Handgun -1, Tracked Vehicle -1, J.O.T.-1, Grav Vehicle -0, Computer-0, Survival-0**

Cr 200,000 (in person), another Cr 500,000 in a hidden bank account.

**Possessions: 1 x Auto Snub Pistol (10mm) 5 x HE magazines, 5 x HEAP magazines, 1 x
Tranq, 1 x dagger, 1 x model 1 hand computer, well made clothes, 1 x set cold weather
clothing, Ballistic cloth body suit (AV=5) 1 x writs comm. (3km short range)**

Background.

A former imperial citizen of Tirem (SM-2233 C7B5975-B) a balkanised world with an exotic and corrosive atmosphere; the many governments of which were embroiled in a deep and long lasting war contested over land and mineral rights. Being from a wealthy family made him exempt from military service, and being at a loose end, young and wishing to prove himself as an adult in his own right, he fell in with a criminal cartel linked to weapons smuggling (a rife and lucrative trade thanks to the war). Becoming more actively involved with this invariably led to travel throughout the different nations of his home-world, forcing him to experience first hand the devastation and misery brought about by war and hostility. In a moment of epiphany he suddenly understood that the cause of the war laid with the Imperium itself and not the people of Tirem who relentlessly killed each other on a daily basis, and were allowed to do so whilst calling themselves imperial citizens all... He felt strongly that the Imperium should intervene and stop the bloodshed, the simple fact that they hadn't led him to believe that the Imperium didn't care about people, planets or blood, and was a corrupt and mercenary government, concerned primarily with credits. At this point he renounced his imperial citizenship, and using what remained of his funds, left Tirem and headed for the Imperial Border, for a new home and a better government.

A few years of wandering close to the fringe, whilst loudly complaining and criticising imperial interests everywhere, led him to be recruited as an intelligence operative for the Sword Worlds governments a post he adopted with relish, before earning enough money to set up a string of successful (though small) businesses in and around the imperial frontier regions, giving him the needed rational/cover to travel repeatedly across the border and back, chartering vessels to do so, and employing subordinate agents to watch ship movements and keep him apprised of any developments. This network also was instrumental in shipping known imperial fugitives across the border to the Sword Worlds or Federation of Arden.

Unfortunately Imperial Naval Intelligence traced him to an office on Tenalphi (SM 1826) A774102-E, where thanks to a few of his loyal supporters, he was forewarned of the net closing on him and fled the system, travelling throughout the region and utilising his contacts everywhere to get him some false documents and a number of alternative identities, using his skills (he can be extremely charming and charismatic) to swindle a number of people along the way, enough to pay for his next ticket (he was flat broke due to his bank accounts and assets being frozen by Naval Intelligence).

Needing somewhere to lay low, he hooked up with some faith seekers on their way to Walston and joined the Brilliant Light Cult, finding it to be the perfect place in which to remain hidden whilst he spent time rebuilding his intelligence network and his bank balance. Over the next few years he participated in the cult activities fully and became a valued member and was regularly allowed to take a tracked ATV (fusion crawler) into the wilderness to aid in his meditation, on one such trip he accidentally discovered the remains of an old Octagon Society Shelter though now derelict and covered with ice and snow. Arthon decided that it would become his own private retreat, a place to go to when the cult became too much for him to handle (as he wasn't really a believer), a place where he could relax and be himself. On his next trip out he brought some cutting equipment and some other bits and pieces and chipped his way into the shelter, knocking away centuries of ice build up and finally uncovering the door to the shelter. Thankfully there wasn't a problem, designed to seal though without any locks (as after-all it was for distressed space farers who wouldn't necessarily have keys or access codes). It opened readily and easily. Inside there was basic survival equipment, boxes of untouched and out of date survival rations, beds, showers and a small living space, an ancient and clunky computer and fusion reactor, that was shut down though still had fuel, in addition to a radio beacon and some emergency low berths, all of which were unoccupied.

The fusion reactor was designed to be used by ordinary people with a minimum of technical skills only had an activation switch and emergency shutdown lever. Though centuries of neglect and maintenance made Arthon cautious enough not to activate it, no matter how tempted he felt.

He returned 'home' to the commune in triumphal spirit, telling all that his meditation had been a success and that briefly he had indeed been dazzled by the light of understanding and truth.

His mind made up Arthon decided that at earliest opportunity he would return and disconnect the radio beacon, learn how to power up the reactor and stack the place full of edible and up to date supplies stolen from the commune.

He continued to work hard and diligently for the cult and eventually became a councillor after the unfortunate and untimely death of one of the council members...

His high office gave him the authority to make recommendations and changes in the cults financial operations, allowing him to secretly stash away some of the cult's income and disguise it as payments for consumables etc. Arthon used this time to once again establish a network of underground contacts and build up a rich trade in offering sanctuary to known criminals and fugitives, before giving them the means to escape the Imperium forever, obviously this didn't come cheap, but criminal bosses and wealthy killers could all afford the service he provided and were grateful for the false identity and new start given beyond the Imperial fringe. Over time he became very, very wealthy.

This 'wealth' allowed him to charter a courier ship to carry a message to the Sword Worlds confirming that he was still alive and active, and from his new position could once again collect, analyse and pass on intelligence reports to their Armed forces. This dedication and commitment to the cause and Arthon's inventiveness now served to make him a valued agent and in recognition of this he was gifted with a field promotion to the rank of Colonel.

This promotion emboldened him, so Arthon propositioned the high command with a radical plan to detonate nuclear devices in the capitol cities of important imperial worlds, this plan was not sanctioned by high command who disapproved of it due to the projected number of civilian casualties it would involve so Arthon being slightly offended decided that he had to act alone.

Amongst his network of contacts was an arm's dealer named Siril Danna who was known to purchase captured imperial naval specification weapons and equipment from corsair/raider captains who couldn't use it. Weaponry such as this was rare, heavily guarded and difficult to move and manipulate, so understandably it was going to be difficult but Danna was aware that there were several arms manufacturers and dealers that made this stuff and legitimately sold it to private individuals on the distant world of Garoo (SM-0130 A2008C8-A). Together they hatched the plan to hire or coerce a civilian ship into visiting Garoo, purchasing the weaponry and returning it safely to them on Walston.

The best way to do this they decided was to organise a pilgrimage for faith seekers to Garoo and return with holy objects, along the way the faith seekers would discover and assimilate more knowledge of the various religions existent in this area of space and gain new understandings of the path towards the 'brilliant light'. Needless to say the civilian ship crew and the 'lucky' seekers would have no idea of the missions true purpose.

The organisation and chartering of a suitable vessel (a type Y Yacht, called the Lone Explorer) plus the embedding and integration of one or two loyal and trusted agents into the faith seeker group took a little over six months to achieve. The voyage to Garoo and its return to the commune on Walston took 56 weeks at jump 1 and was considered a tremendous success by all parties, (faith seekers included) and did genuinely do much to bolster the morale and enthusiasm of the commune at large, and provide a renewed sense of purpose and vigour to the cultists. Arthon was never more popular (though he did not participate in the journey itself). The 8-ton weapons cache was amongst other cargo containers, delivered directly to the cult HQ at Walston, the ship landing on the roof pads of the complex where it was unloaded as if it were normal freight and supplies for the religious commune.

At this point Arthon proposed to the council that more seekers could visit the colony if they could provide a shuttle service to orbit (as at the time Walston had no port or any other imperial presence, a true frontier world) so that fuel could be sold to un-streamlined ships that occasionally visited the system and hence revenue generated for the commune. Riding on the coat tails of his success the plan was approved and a shuttle duly leased from Ling Standard Products, and delivered some seven months later. Some of the cult members had the skills necessary to maintain and operate it, though the offer of a certified training course and a cheap maintenance contract with LSP was readily accepted, with his key people in position Walston's starport rating was increased from X to E....

The shuttle service was a success and once again became a legitimate source of revenue for the commune that by now was prosperous and rich, it was child's play to have his loyal henchmen move and hide the cargo out system, deep in a crevasse and safe from prying eyes on Tatiana (a moon of Gisela, orbit 5 LGG). All that remained now was for Arthon to plan a way of getting the armament to its targets and detonate them. Whilst contemplating this, a general escalation in hostilities occurred that became known as the 4th frontier war, (IY-1082-1084)

Early on in the conflict, a sword worlds clandestine strike team passed through the system posing as the crew of a merchant ship, with a message for him from 'High Command' that he was to use his network of contacts and information to assist them in their mission to infiltrate an imperial research facility hidden in the Glisten belt (SM-2036 A000986-F) a few months

later they returned again (minus a few crew) but in possession of a deadly cargo of Biochemical warheads stolen from the facility that were being developed for use against Sword-Worlds or so they alleged... as it is well known that the Imperium does not support this type of military action.

Unfortunately hot on their tail was Imperial Naval Intelligence, discreetly following them, investigating and compiling reports with the result being that as soon as the sword-worlders had left system an Imperial Patrol Cruiser descended from the sky, and it's g-carrier containing a squad of marines landed on the roof of the cult's building.

Arthon panicked fearing that his plan was uncovered and fled the complex and in doing so was forced to leave behind the co-ordinates and the access codes needed to activate his weapons cache (he had hidden them in two secret locations within the complex). The navy's investigation was thorough and it soon became evident that a high profile member of the cult was a criminal who had been on the run and hiding for a number of years.

Arthon, escaped in a fusion crawler and made his way to the old octagon society shelter, and holed up there for a number of months waiting for the furore to die down, when it did he used his own network to travel off world and disappear,

Referee:

Arthon's long and diverse career has seen him become a highly skilled and dangerous individual, fit for his age, but ageing nevertheless, Arthon is aware of his physical limitations and understands that his body can't take the punishment it used to, though his mind is ever sharp. Hence he will avoid physical combat, leaving that to his henchmen, but will always be scheming and plotting his next move.

Simla Davi:

Str: 11 (+/-), Dex: 14 (+2) Con: 13 (+2), Int: 13 (+1), Wis: 10(+/-), Chr: 16 (+3), Edu: 11(+/-), Soc: 13

Human Female Age, 26 (Rogue - 5th level) Cr 102,500

Homeworld - Berengaria (2105) (Trojan Reaches/Pax Rulin B566644-7 A Ag Ni Ri 304 Im)

STA/LB = 34/13

AC: 12 (no armour) 18 (ballistic cloth body suit AR=6)

XP 12,000

BAB+3 FORT+1 RFX+4 WILL+ 1

Feats

Armour Proficiency (Light/Medium), Weapon Proficiency (Swordsman/Marksman), Stealthy Vehicle (Ground/Vehicle)

Skills:

Gather information -8, Driving -5, move silently -5, Sense motive -5, T/Communications - 5, T/Mechanical -5, Liaison -3, Hide -3, Ride -1, K/Homeworld-0

Mega Traveller Stats

778978

LIF: 22
H/V = 3/5

Skills:

Streetwise -3, Wheeled Vehicle-2, Commo-2, Mechanical-2, carousing -0, Liaison -0,

Background.

From a wealthy family on the agricultural garden world of Berengaria, Simla had the best of everything as a child including a decent education, though her parents wisely insisted that she get involved with the physical work involved with running the farm. She found this to be dirty, degrading and generally disgusting and inwardly wasn't suited to farm life, loving comforts instead. During her young life, she quickly determined that money bought comfort and freedom from 'honest work' that normally involved standing behind a plough face to face with the south end of the 'Glikur' that pulled it or spending all day in the cab of a weed harvester mindlessly driving it around the fields as it collected up the harvest, neither of which was intellectually stimulating to the young Simla.

As soon as she was able, she left the farm for a more civilised life in 'Payton' a local spaceport and produce export/transport point, originally named 'Pay Town' by the farmers would get paid for their produce there but shortened over time to 'Payton' as per the local dialect and accent. Just being a simple farm girl, she didn't really have much to offer this small town and quickly fell in with the local unsavoury types and became a professional criminal moving from place to place, ruthlessly conning people out of any money or valuable possessions you might have, and spending the gains on the high life. As soon as she was able to she bought a mid passage aboard a tramp freighter and left behind Berengaria forever, seeking her fortune in the worlds beyond, becoming the type of woman who would do anything for money, as long as it was quick and involved little or no work and it was a lot of money to justify her time and loyalty.

In short then Simla loves money and loves the pleasures it can buy, and has no moral conscience whatsoever hence when approached by Arthon Earles to infiltrate the Brilliant Light cult headquarters and retrieve some items for him, she boldly declared that she needed six months of her time to do so would cost him a cool one million credits. Arthon agreed, giving her Cr 50,000 upfront in which to buy high passage to Walston and demanded certain assurances that she would not simply disappear with the money, i.e. that she would be hunted down and assassinated if she didn't hold up her end of the bargain and report in regularly.

Simla at once thought that she might be in a little too deep, before her mercenary nature overwhelmed her; her plan is to retrieve the items that Arthon wants before upping the price, as after all Arthon must be very, very desperate for them.

Referee:

Simla is incredibly mercenary, good looking, charming and despite her savvy nature, somewhat naïve, she believes passionately that Arthon will pay her the money, and hence her loyalty has been bought, this would soon change if convinced otherwise.

Possessions:

1 x blade, 2 x dagger, 1 x Auto pistol, 10 x magazines, (several sets of very fine, good quality clothes), 1 x cloth armour, 1 x ornate wrist comm. (very expensive) 3km short range.

Henrich Goodman:

**Str: 12 (+1) Dex: 12 (+1) Con: 15 (+2) Int: 13 (+1) Edu: 9 (-1) Wis: 13 (+1) Chr: 11 (+/-)
Soc: 12**

Human Male Age, 38 (Mercenary - 8th level) Cr 27,000

Homeworld - Singer (0940-Spinward Marches/Five Sisters) D553774-6 Po 901 Na M2V M2D

STA/LB = 96/15

AC: 11 (no armour) 17 (ballistic cloth body suit AR=6)

XP 28,000

BAB+8/+3 FORT+6 RFX+2 WILL+ 4

Feats:

Armour Proficiency (Light/Medium/Vacc Suit), Weapon Proficiency (Marksman/Combat Rifleman), Vehicle (Ground/Vehicle) Alertness, Evasion, Toughness, Quick Draw

Skills:

Leader -5, T/Communications - 5, T/Sensors -4, Survival -4, Bluff -4, T/medical -4, T/Computer -2, Driving-1

MegaTraveller Stats

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LIF: 26

H/V = 4/5

Skills:

Handgun -4, Combat Rifleman -4, Leader -2, Commo 2, Sensors 1, Survival 1, Medical 1, Wheeled Vehicle -1, Vacc suit 1

Background.

A thickly set, muscular man who looks the image of peak fitness, who if asked often claims to be an athlete on his way to various competing venues or sometimes truthfully explains himself as a soldier for hire, or 'businessman'; Henrich is a native of Singer, a poor (independent world) of some ninety million sophonts on the edge of Imperial territory in Five Sisters Subsector. A ruthless killer of no conscience, who in his career as a mercenary has killed more sophonts than he can possibly count or remember, so that now he is simply a casual killer moving from place to place as an independent security specialist, bodyguard or contract killer. Hijacking is just one more job for him. He is financially motivated and like Simla Davi has also been promised Cr 1, 000,000 for completion of the job. Coming from a poor non-aligned world he has no allegiance to the Imperium or any government or leader. He just simply goes where the money is and has no real roots.

When a young man, he quickly realised that life on Singer offered few rewards or possibilities amongst the various competing nations of singer, some of which were involved in long-term warfare and had conflicting ideologies, whilst others co-existed as neutrals or even allies. In short it was a mixed up world, low tech and dangerous to live in. The merc unit he joined at age 18, lacked the discipline of professional soldiers, and encouraged brutality and violence amongst its ranks, Henrich excelled at this, learning how to become an expert killer, desensitised to the violence or life taking and gained promotion all the way to the top (for an enlisted man) becoming a Sergeant Major. At age 34 he tired of life in a mercenary company and left to find his own way amongst the stars.

Possessions.

1 x Auto-rifle, 10 x Magazines (20 rounds each), 1 x Auto-pistol, 10 x magazines (15 round each), 1 x dagger, 1 x blade, 1 x box of explosive jewels. Normal quality clothing, 1 x Ballistic cloth coverall (AR=6) 1 x wrist comm. 1 x hand computer (model 1), 1 x inertial locator (tl-9), 1 x map box, 7 x dehydrated rations, 2 x cold light lanterns.

Appendix 1 Other possibilities

Villgri Mallikik

**Str: 13 (+1) Dex: 10 (+/-) Con: 13 (+1) Int: 14 (+2) Edu: 13 (+1) Wis: 9 (-1) Chr: 10 (+/-)
Soc: 13**

Human Male Age, 42 (Professional L-8) Cr 47,500

Home world: Ffuden-Spinward Marches/(2334) A41489D-C Ic 904 Im F3V

STA/LB = 36/13

AC: 10 (no armour) 16 (ballistic cloth body suit AR=6)

XP 35,000

BAB+2 FORT+2 RFX+2 WILL+ 6

Feats:

Armour Proficiency (Light), Professional Specialities (T/Computers & T/Electronics), Hacker, Research, Interrogation, Connections (underworld)

Skills:

T/Computers -11, T/Electronics -11, Appraise -8, Broker -8, K/interstellar Law -6, Bluff -6, Bribery -6, Gather Information -6, Survival -5, Trader -4, Liaison -4

MegaTraveller Stats

778988

LIF: 22

H/V = 3/5

Skills:

Computer -4, Electronics-4, Bribery -2, Trader -1, Broker -2, legal -2, Survival-2, Interrogation -0, Intrusion -0, Grav Vehicle -0, Streetwise -0

Background.

A tall, thin wiry looking man, with blond hair showing signs of male pattern baldness, and also a native of Ffuden. Villgri soon left that world behind at the age of 18, finding it to be a hateful place and determined never to return there again as Ffuden is a world that requires its entire population of some nine hundred million sophonts to live in cramped cities/habitats, built either on or tunnelled deep within its extensive ice fields, having few gravitic settlements. The partial vacuum outside means that all habitats have to be sealed, and the laws required to control such a large population as this in close proximity are extreme to say the least.

His childhood in such a bureaucratic and impersonal state, coupled with its relatively high tech level and use of law served to make Villgri a logical thinker who over time developed

deep empathy with computers and electronic equipment, hence a professional career as a bureaucrat/Administrator seemed the natural choice. Whilst fairly intelligent and obviously proficient Villgri has always suffered from a wild imagination and astounding arrogance and confidence in his abilities, and as a release from his mundane duties had an extensive fantasy life in which he saw himself as a master criminal using his skills for his personal gain. When he finally set up his own company some 12 years ago, he crossed the line between fantasy and reality and began embezzling money, hacking computer systems, just for fun, and dealing with unsavoury types on a case by case basis in addition to his legitimate concerns. He soon gained a reputation amongst the underworld as a greedy man, to be humoured, though readily accessible, for a price. Eventually his fantasies grew even stronger and more perverse and began to involve physical violence, leading to him becoming bored of his clandestine way of life, he wanted to be more than just the 'data head' behind the scenes and in order to facilitate this has recently begun studying combat manuals, and martial arts holovids in order to improve his knife fighting skills and learn how to brawl... Recently he assaulted a former customer who raised the alarm (a minor offence) in reaction to which Villgri has 'escaped' off world, leaving his home and business behind, using his criminal connections to travel covertly whilst allowing his contacts to think that he's on the run from a murder investigation or embezzlement of an Imperial bank Vault, before ultimately falling into the lap of Arthon Earles, who for the time being finds his skills useful.

In acting out his fantasies Villgri will be cruel and seek to humiliate his victims at all costs, actually believing himself to be a 'hard case' and a big player in the criminal underworld, and as such is a legend in his own mind.... In truth though can be summed up accurately as a minor criminal, with delusions and mental instability.

Possessions.

2 x dagger, 1 x blade, Normal quality clothing, 1 x Ballistic cloth coverall (AR=6) 1 x wrist comm. 2 x hand computer (model 1), 1 x 7mm Auto pistol, 5 x Ammo clips.

2 x High Passage, 1 x Gold Chronometer/Wrist comm.

Appendix 1 Other Solutions

1. The players could deliberately disable their own ship, shutting down the fusion reactor or the m-drive etc, forcing a crash landing or signal GK broadcast bringing with it the attention of any other ships in system at the time, scout, navy or civilian.
2. The truly heroic could attempt to overpower the hijackers, although a fire fight in close proximity such as on the bridge or engineering can be in retrospect expensive to repair as control panels and other essential equipment get shot.
3. The crew could secretly rig the ships commo systems to continuously broadcast a message to the authorities, again bringing help.
4. The crew could force Arthon and everyone else of the ship by activating one of the nuclear warheads, after the countdown, the flash would alert anyone within a few A.U. all the crew would have to do is await rescue in an obvious location (should they survive).
5. Any gunnery personnel (still allowed to control their turrets) or any computer savvy individuals could remotely rig the turrets to fire at a passing frigate or patrol cruiser, thus drawing its attention.
6. The players could also attempt to re-hack their own computer system and hence gain control of the ship clandestinely; they would still need to deal with the hijackers though.
7. Parts of the weapon's cache could be stolen by the pc's to be used as armament to retake the ship.

Appendix 2 Contents of weapon's cache:

Within the cargo container will be found.

10 x TI-8 Breaching Charges Wt 2 Kg each - Plastic Explosives

5 x TI-10 Radiation Counters (negligible)

2 x Electronic Tool Sets

10 x Electronic Locks (fingerprint readers)

2 x TI-9 Map Box

1 x Inertial Navigator

1 x TI-9 Navigational Satellite

20 x Wall Patches (to repair breaches made)

5 x TI-9 Hostile Environment vacc suits

5 x TI-9 PLSS type B (24 Hour) for use with most vacc suits

5 x TI-6 (7mm) Auto-pistols

5 x TI-6 (7mm) Auto-rifle

5 x TI-5 (9mm) SMG

2 x TI-9 Accelerator rifles

15 x Magazines for each weapon

1 x TI-9 Laser Pistol (including power pack - needs charging)

5 x daggers

5 x blades

5 x Flak Jackets

5 x Reflec Armour

5 x Combat Environment suits (plus 5 soft helmets and supporting gauntlets)

1 x Remote detonator pack

1 x grav cargo floater holds 1 Dt up to 2 meters from the ground/floor etc.

And of course the 8 x tactical nuclear warhead in shielded storage cases with electronic counters.

Appendix 3.

(Arthon being a meticulous planner, has recorded the details of this and future plans are all recorded in his model 1 hand computer, this would make compelling evidence when handed over to the authorities that should clear the PC's of any wrong doing.)

Mainworld	Hex	UPP	Bases	Trade Classification	T	Alg
Asteltine	0931	B7A7402-A		Ni FI		Na
Inchin	0938	D12035C-A		Lo Ni Po De		Na
Singer	0940	D553774-6		Po		Na
567-908	1031	E532000-8		Lo Ba Ni Po		Na
Avastan	1037	C433520-A		Ni Po		Na
Kwai Ching	1040	C503758-A		Na Va Ic		Na
Faldor	1131	E5936A7-2		Ni		Na
Bowman	1132	D000300-9	S	Lo Ni As		Cs
Squallia	1133	C438679-9		Ni		Na
Tarsus	1138	B584620-A		Ag Ni		Cs
Walston	1232	C544338-8	S	Lo Ni		Cs
Flexos	1233	E5A1422-6		Ni FI		Na
Collace	1237	B628943-D	S	Hi In		Cs
Pavabid	1238	C6678D8-6			A	Cs
Datrillion	1331	E227633-8		Ni		Na
Nirton	1332	X600000-0		Lo Ba Ni Va	R	Na
Judice	1337	E9B2000-8		Lo Ba Ni FI RsH		Cs
Trexalon	1339	B361851-C		Ri		Na
Motmos	1340	B68468B-5	N	Ag Ni Ri		Cs
Noctocol	1433	E7A5747-6		FI		Na
Takine	1434	C466662-7	S	Ag Ni Ri	A	Cs
Dallia	1435	B8B5883-9		FI		Cs
Talos	1436	E333532-9		Ni Po		Na
Dawnworld	1531	E885000-0		Lo Ba Ni		Na
Elixabeth	1532	B426467-8	N	Ni		Cs
Forine	1533	D3129B8-A		Hi Na In Ic		Na
Mertactor	1537	B262732-B	S	Cp		Im
Talchek	1631	C7B1462-5		Ni FI	A	Cs
Milagro	1632	E21178A-7		Na Ic		Cs
Pagaton	1634	C769873-4		Ri		Na
Binges	1635	A800231-A		Lo Ni Va		Na
Mille Falcs	1637	B9A2469-B	A	Ni FI		Im

Data Source: MegaTraveller Imperial Encyclopedia

A map of District 268 can be found at www.jtas.net

http://www.jtas.net/travelleratlas/Sectors/Spinward_Marches/District_268.html