

# Belpos-Bh Midline Station

## The System

Sophonts are the same around the universe. Worlds and pocket empires compete for resources, prestige and power within a Confederation that spans the entire M317 globular star cluster. The Belpos system is located in [6,8] Quidsad subsector and is an island of laissez-faire tolerance surrounded by more powerful neighbors with more restrictive laws. The system itself is a distant binary star system with two Type M red dwarfs separated by slightly more than 2.6 billion km. Belpos-A has 5 planets with one habitable moon orbiting Belpos-Ab. The temperature here is near freezing and the atmosphere is tainted by sulfur compounds, but sophonts can live here with care. Belpos-B has 10 planets and 3 habitable bodies around it. Belpos-Bc is a warm, tropical planet with a standard atmosphere. It is favored by reptilians and is easily the most pleasant world in the Belpos system. Belpos-Bd2 is a habitable moon with a cool temperature that orbits a mid-sized gas giant, but it requires a respirator to breathe the very thin atmosphere of the moon. Belpos-Be is a very cold planet with a human habitable zone that tightly hugs the equatorial regions. While the atmosphere is completely breathable, polar regions average around -25 °C as their summertime high. Winter thrill seekers appreciate the planet for its dangerous polar wildlife.

There are 230 million sophonts living in the Belpos system. There are 3 metropolis and 15 large cities scattered among the 4 habitable planets as summarized in the table below.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Notes</u>
New Monaco	25° S, Belpos-Bc	24.3 million	expensive tourist destination, tropical adventures
Xin Macau	33° N Belpos-Bc	16.7 million	less expensive tourist area, more hard core hedonism
Belpos City	68° N Belpos-Bc	12.2 million	system capital, location of Confed. consulate
Orchithan	25° N Belpos-Bd2	9.4 million	class B spaceport, major repairs/overhauls found here
Frost Nest	56° S Belpos-Be	8.5 million	mostly Plivenan, winter adventure town
Freshport	42° S Belpos-Bc	7.7 million	fishing industry, water sports, main cargo downport
Montaigne	39° N Belpos-Be	7.4 million	skiing central for winter holidays and sub-ice mining
Jackson	7° N Belpos-Bc	6.6 million	laid back, forest/agriculture area less touristy
Duzhuville	39° S Belpos-Bc	5.9 million	gambling central, less risque than New Monaco
Greenbelt	8° N Belpos-Be	5.6 million	agricultural region, slow growing delicacies
Old Ilasca	37° S Belpos-Be	4.3 million	cross country, ice life large Plivenan population
Glassdome	5° S Belpos-Bd2	3.8 million	primary agricultural area for port moon
Vulcanio	11° N Belpos-Bc	3.1 million	caters to warmer preferences, hot spas and relaxation
Waveport	3° S Belpos-Be	2.7 million	planetary cargo terminal, ice lobster and minerals
Dunbreck Town	16° S Belpos-Bc	2.4 million	hydrocarbon factory area, manufacturing/industry
Speliensk	14° S Belpos-Ab3	1.9 million	naval port and research center Belpos-Aa atmosphere
Thithilliss	2° S Belpos-Bc	1.6 million	tropical hunting center, mostly stocked preserves
Bantondock	75° S Belpos-Bd2	1.2 million	cargo port with lower prices, fewer services

The largest city, New Monaco, has about 24 million residents on Belpos-Bc and is well known as a tropical vacation hub where lewd behavior and wild parties are acceptable as long as nobody gets hurt. They receive many tourists from the surrounding major systems where laws are more restrictive.

Young adults of various rich aristocrats and high ranking technocrats visit frequently to engage in risque behavior that could imprison them on their home worlds. Illegal drugs are more available here than in most places, which frequently annoys the local Consulate office. The high density of yachts for the young and powerful also attracts attention from pirates looking for easy profits. The planet resides barely within the jump shadow of Belpos-B allowing a quick escape, making kidnappings an all too common crime here.

The primary class B starport for the system is located on the single habitable moon of Belpos-Bd in orbit around the only gas giant in the companion planetary system. This maximizes their nearness to population centers, Jump accessibility, and fuel acquisition. They manufacture 3 types of military craft (Guardian Patrol Cruisers, Fighters, and Scorpions) as well as cutters and ship's boats under contract with Reactor Shipyards. The very thin atmosphere and low gravity simplifies space travel, and inexpensive greenhouse domes and pressurized habitats provide adequate living space for various personnel. Underground cargo facilities provide plenty of warehouse space for in-system traffic as well as exports. A smaller port in the south of Belpos-Bd2 has recently opened and undercut the main class B port with lower fees and fewer services or customs inspections. Latrian Transport funded the development of this terminal and are a significant user, but other organizations use this port as well.

### **Belpos Government**

The government is classified as an impersonal bureaucracy. There is a System Assembly where 249 delegates from the major sections of the bureaucracy meet to set biannual priorities and select the governing council which will oversee the bureaucracy to reach the priorities for the next 2 years. The delegates are chosen by senior members of the bureaucracy and are organized into 2 major groups, the Alliance which currently holds the most influence and the New Order Coalition which supports somewhat stricter laws and regulations. The system works relatively well for the majority of sophonts, and while there are some differences in opinion people are generally satisfied with the way the government handles things.

In general, Belpos is very lightly regulated beyond those required by the Cluster. The government collects Confederation, System, and World tithes, and distributes the money as required under their biannual budget. They have a relatively small but well trained permanent military which tries to keep order within the system. Tourism and berthing fees are the major income, with mining/bleeding licenses substantial but secondary sources. Personal freedoms are abundant, and the resorts around the system have a permissive reputation that brings in many of the bigger spenders from this region of the Cluster and sometimes beyond. Security only steps in when people begin harming others, and private settlement of offenses between affected parties is common.

### **Belpos Sophonts**

Plivenans are a common minor race in this region of the M317 Cluster and originate in a system only 6 parsecs from Belpos. They have a standard humanoid shape with 2 arms, 2 legs, a head, and generally human-like senses and characteristics. Their skin is lavender colored, with silver-gray hair covering their entire body. They are somewhat shorter than humans, averaging 1.35m tall, but are stockier at 75 kg. They are, however, more adapted to cooler worlds than humans or other sophonts in the Belpos system and are immune to all forms of psionics and psionic effects. This makes them very popular with Reptilians as they are seen as natural allies against psionic races while preferring to live in different climates. Unlike many sophonts in the Belpos system, Plivenans tend to avoid advanced cybernetics for 2 reasons: first, if they maintain contact with their homeworld cybernetic enhancement is heavily frowned upon; secondly, Plivenans can produce a bioelectric shock once every 12 hours when angered which short out most cybernetic enhancements. Culturally, they tend to be quite

suspicious of evangelicals of any stripe, and are less religious overall than most sophonts in the system. They are also very observant, gaining a +2 DM on recon checks which make them highly favored as sentries or scouts in Belpos military units. During reproduction, females lay a clutch of 4-6 eggs which must be kept below 10 degrees Celsius for over 8 months if they are to develop properly. Their young are then raised by both parents for 18 years to reach maturity. While there are just over 20 million Plivenans in the Belpos system, there are over 15 billion Plivenans in the Cluster and they outnumber humans in their home subsector. Pliven is an advisory world on the M317 Cluster and as such they have substantial political weight on all nearby worlds.

Reptilians almost exclusively live on Belpos-Bc. The hot tropical jungles suit their physiology, and there are still plenty of wild animals in some of the more remote locations. Hunts take place on stocked game reserves to maintain a consistent environment and prevent overhunting. All of the other planets are rather cold for them.

Humans and uplifted apes live on all of the worlds within the Belpos system. On the colder worlds they congregate near the equator where temperatures are usually just above freezing. There are also several cities in the cooler latitudes of Belpos-Bc.

The Plivenan population tends to prefer living on Belpos-Ab3 and Belpos-Be where the temperatures are more to their liking and the denser atmosphere allow easier breathing without respirators. Even Plivenans, however, take extra precautions during winters at the poles of Belpos-Be where temperatures average -50 °C.

Overall, the system is relatively urbanized with about 120 million of the 230 million sophonts living in the largest cities. Communities tend to be larger on Belpos-Ab3 and Belpos-Bd2 as the atmospheres are less breathable. Belpos-Bc has countless small communities scattered across its surface, while Belpos-Be has more human/ape communities near the equator and fewer settlements approaching the polar regions which are often more populated by Plivenans.

There are a few scatterings of other races that live, work, or visit the Belpos system from various planets of the Cluster, but none of those races amount to even 0.1% of the total population. That allows over 100,000 sophonts, however, which is a significant community. Because Belpos attracts individualists from all over Quidsad subsector and nearby subsectors due to the relatively low law level, at least a dozen different races are regularly seen in the system.

## **Factions**

Humaniti, the humans first (last, and always) group has a distinct presence but weak influence in the Belpos system. Humans make up 75% of the total population and the majority of humans reject the racism preached by Humanity. Bigots exist however, and while they have little effective power they make up for that lack in terms of vehemence and dedication. Humaniti groups operate in small cells and have been known for targeting prominent non-human individuals and businesses. Some cells push for dramatic actions that attract a lot of attention, but it is the quieter cells that work more behind the scenes which are the more insidious danger.

The Industrial Conglomerates wish to increase the amount of manufacturing and resource extraction occurring in the Belpos system. They command a notable amount of support primarily within heavy industries but also on the worlds with fewer tourism options. Aaergan Refining, a significant megacorp with interests in Belpos-Bh as a fluid world, began this group to influence the bureaucracy, but it has since expanded and now includes several megacorps with their own interests and agendas. They are

well funded, and whatever they may lack in terms of grass roots support they make up for in professionalism and organization. Intelligent Systems, Latrian Transport, and Aaergan Refining are the 3 main current sponsors of the Industrialists.

The Belpos System, but particularly Belpos-Bc, depends upon tourism and a reputation for exuberance for a substantial portion of their income. The tourist bureau is almost exclusively represented by the Alliance, a collection of parties which want to maintain the status quo and are currently the largest group in the Assembly. The opposition party in the Assembly are the New Order Coalition, or NOC. The NOC wants to rein in the worst of the hedonistic excesses and establish more limits for individuals and corporations operating in Belpos. The NOC is strongest on the 3 other worlds beyond Belpos-Bc, but even on Belpos-Bc there are significant bureaus which think residents would be better off if tourists were better behaved. They are not a bunch of high law fanatics, but they believe having some more controls and enforcement would be a good thing. The Alliance, on the other hand, is strongest on Belpos-Bc but have their own supporters from smaller bureaus which value the minimal regulations and small government they support. They typically represent businesses which depend upon light regulation or tourist oriented organizations which fear any loss of visitors. This is the largest internal division within the Belpos System, and while arguments can get fairly heated they typically respect the other party's delegates and both groups can work together regularly on projects with broad support.

### The Station Itself

Midline Station is a medium sized space complex in orbit around the large, fluid ocean world of Belpos-Bh. It was built primarily to support bleeding of the fluid world Belpos-Bh, specifically refining the rare exotic hydrocarbons into fractional distillates for pharmaceuticals and other purposes. It provides emergency assistance to asteroid miners and 'bleeders' collecting hydrocarbons as well as providing a base to challenge pirates looking for access to Belpos's inner planets. It serves as a waystation, home, trap, or obstacle for thousands of sophonts who pass through her many airlocks. Midline has something for everyone... and it's rarely boring.

module	maint	support	rooms	life	cargo	fuel	hangar	armory	sickbay	craft	Pods
fuel (x3)	15098	2000	0	1	0	1856	0	0	0	2	5
stateroom(x2)	48046	720000	360	0	17	12	0	0	10	0	397
manufacture(x3)	35994	26000	0	13	260	12	130	0	0	2	149
hangar(x2)	44145	6000	0	3	62	12	1400	0	0	0	0
cargo(x3)	15131	2000	0	1	1813	12	0	0	0	2	7
defense	107450	200000	100	0	98	72	0	10	0	0	45
bazaar	43148	120000	0	60	181	12	0	0	0	0	497
ship's service	49559	200000	100	0	324	162	200	0	0	25	0
general	58523	200000	100	0	125	26	500	3	5	6	121
small craft	55008	4000	0	2	26	0	500	0	0	20	0
Midline Station	47970	80000	40	0	59	40	0	3	8	0	42

Midline Station is composed of a 1600 ton TL11 modified medium base station with 18 2,000 ton modules attached to the various docking clamps of the base. All 18 modules connect directly to a bi-directional circular tube system that uses gravitic sleds to connect each module to the others on the

station. Each module provides for its own power needs using either a solar grid and/or fusion generators with an independent fuel supply. A central hub contains all of the key station systems while the outer ring provides connectivity between the many docked modules. Grav plates are used to supply gravity throughout the station, and the central hub has sufficient maneuvering engines to maintain a stable orbit for the entire station. The 18 modules include military, mercantile, living and service modules that are the lifeblood of the station's activities. The table below summarizes the basic modules of the station. Overall, the station costs roughly 56 MCr annually for life support and routine maintenance. There are staterooms for about 2100 sophonts with additional life support for about 2200 more transients. There is close to 6000 tons of cargo space, over 5000 tons of fuel capacity, and over 4000 tons of hangar space (some restricted for military use). There are many businesses selling products and services, 2 manufacturing modules, 16 armories, 33 sickbays, 65 small craft and about 2000 escape pods, and even a few small research labs operating aboard. It has TL11 interceptors and defenses with the ability to repair up through TL11 craft as a Class C spaceport. The largest hangar can support up to 1400 ton ships, although repair drones and manipulator launches are available for repair jobs outside the hangar confines.

Stations such as Midline are not cheap. Module and base life support costs (not including weapon ammo and some of the many small craft aboard the station) exceed 28 MCr annually. The station and modules itself cost nearly 10,000 MCr, over 0.1% of Belpos's systemwide GDP. Many additional ships with their associated costs are required to keep Midline station operational. Freighters are required to supply food for the station. Tankers and fuel skimmers are needed to refine fuel from the gas giant. Longer range patrol craft are needed to protect asteroid prospectors and hydrocarbon bleeders from pirates and thieves out to steal from the workers toiling on the planet.

Two megacorporations operate separate manufacturing modules aboard Midline, perserving at least a semblance of competition for resources. Aaergian Refining is the longstanding refiner operating on Midline station and was the monopoly provider for several decades. When Belpos forced through changes, Aaergian Refining tried a number of legal (and some semi-legal) tricks to regain their monopoly over refining in the Belpos system. Belpos was able to withstand the pressure from the notoriously greedy company and contracted with Pansophontics to provide a more open market. There are also several smaller companies who purchase unfiltered supercooled liquid and purify it elsewhere, including Belpos-Bc. Bleeders resupply on Belpos station, and some traders use Midline to cut out the middleman instead of purchasing hydrocarbons or refined products on Belpos-Bd2.

## **Midline Fleet**

In space, ships are the only realistic way to go from one place to another. As it orbits an outer fluid world, Midline Station is not close to any other Belpos installation and therefore must be as self sufficient as possible. Since most ships entering the Belpos system do not stop at Midline Station, there needs to be a customs ship or two in the area. Furthermore, if a pirate ship is identified, it would be nice to have a ship with more punch than a fighter typically possesses. Finally, supplying Midline station with fuel, food, and other goods for normal operations and business as well as transiting ships is a significant job.

All of the ships based from Midline Station are organized into a single 'Fleet' which includes both military and civilian-leased craft. It is not a very prestigious command, but it does provide an essential service for one of Belpos's significant export products. While the largest ships positioned on Midline Station are not military quality, both the merchant freighters and fuel harvesters provide essential connections that keep the station functioning.

2x 1000 ton in system TL9 Fuel Harvesters *Humpty* and *Dumpty* (242.6 MCr each)  
 6x CE Merchant Freighters (*Alma-G.*, *Betty Ford*, *Camilla*, *Doris Day*, *Lady Elaine*, *Francesca*) for supply runs to the inner worlds (40.21 MCr each)  
 Coriolis Fleet Corvette *Resolute* for pirate hunting (203.4 MCr)  
 3x Guardian Patrol Frigates *Flytrap*, *Honeypot*, and *Snapdragon* for customs inspections (217.81 MCr each)  
 14th Space Wing composed of 48 fighters (16x 20 ton Scorpion-As, 32x 10 ton Fighter-As) all built at TL 11 specs  
 60+ small craft (various cutters and launches) on Midline station

## Bleeding the Easy Way

Collecting the valuable liquids of frozen hydrocarbons from 'Fluid' worlds is known as bleeding. Several skills play a role in maximizing the yield of rare liquids as opposed to methane or other common hydrocarbon. Each week, a 10 ton mining rig can collect and process 1 unit of liquids from the planet per 8 hour shift. The higher the score, the more valuable the cargo. Each rig requires at least 1 person to run it per shift; a maximum of 3 shifts per week can use the same rig. To determine success, 4 rolls are required: 1 pilot roll (depends upon the type of vessel), 1 physical sciences and 1 sensors roll followed by 1 Bleeding roll in a task chain. Ships with the best sensors tend to find the best quality elixirs. Depending upon the gravity of the fluid world, anyone not adapted to the planetary gravity receives a -2 DM to any skill roll involved in bleeding. Any number of people may operate a rig together, but one person may only operate on 1 rig in 1 shift per week. There must also be 1 pilot per shift whose job is to keep the ship stable; their roll applies to all bleeding operations from that ship during that shift. The results of the bleeding roll (as modified by the other rolls) is determined on the table below.

Ships and equipment may operate as long as they have fuel, supplies, and cargo room. Maintenance rolls must be made monthly. Each full month of delayed maintenance gives a -1 DM to the bleeding roll, and mining equipment starts failing after delaying 3 work-months. Thus after 1 month of working 3 shifts per day equipment starts breaking down. Damaged mining equipment may be jury rigged, but each week the temporary repairs may fail. Full repairs will require a Class C starport or better. A mining system that suffers 3 points of damage is destroyed and must be replaced at a Class B or better starport.

mod roll	effect	volume (tons)	Cr/ton
15+	surpassingly pure elixir- the best quality you can find	1d6	5000
13-14	top quality complex hydrocarbons	1d6	3500
11-12	very good material- high purity material needing less purification	1d6	2000
10	better than average- high percentage of the rarer complex molecules	1d6	1500
9	good quality mix of complex hydrocarbons	1d6	1000
8	solid, unremarkable liquids	2d6	500
7	lower grade liquids, but useable amounts of complex hydrocarbons	2d6	250
6	low grade liquids	2d6	100
2-5	no useable material- clogged intakes and needed regular cleaning	0	0
1 or less	1d3 damage to mining equipment; each operator roll 8+ on remote operations or take 3d6 damage from a catastrophic failure	0	0

## Belting the Easy Way

Similar to bleeding, belting is extracting valuable materials from asteroids. The output is different, but the same general approach applies. Each week, a 10 ton mining rig can collect and process 1 unit of

asteroid per 8 hour shift. The higher the score, the more valuable the cargo. Each rig requires 1 person to run it per shift; a maximum of 3 shifts per week can use the same rig. To determine success, 4 rolls are required: 1 pilot roll per shift, 1 physical sciences and 1 sensors roll followed by 1 Belting roll in a task chain. As much of belting takes place in zero-G, belters without any zero-G score have a -3 DM penalty and the (zero-G skill score +1) sets an upper bound for any physical skill roll other than piloting. Any number of people may operate a rig together, but one person may only operate on 1 rig in 1 shift per week. There must also be at least 1 pilot per shift whose job is to keep the ship stable; their roll applies to all belting operations from that ship during that shift. The results of the belting roll (as modified by the other rolls) is determined on the table below.

Ships and equipment may operate as long as they have fuel, supplies, and cargo room. Maintenance rolls must be made monthly. Each full month of delayed maintenance gives a -1 DM to the bleeding roll, and mining equipment starts failing after delaying 3 work-months. Thus after 1 month of working 3 shifts per day equipment starts breaking down. Damaged mining equipment may be jury rigged, but each week the repairs may fail. Full repairs will require a Class C starport or better. A mining system that suffers 3 points of damage is destroyed and must be replaced at a Class B or better starport.

<u>mod roll</u>	<u>effect</u>	<u>volume (tons)</u>	<u>Cr/ton</u>
15+	high quality radioactive ore- the best stuff you can find	1d6	5000
13-14	rare metal ores- very valuable and hard to find	1d6	3500
11-12	very good metal ore- high percentage of desirable metals	1d6	2000
10	high quality metal ore	1d6	1500
9	minerals with reasonable metal content	1d6	1000
8	decent quality minerals but low metal content	2d6	500
7	half ice, but useable amounts minerals	2d6	250
6	dense ice useable as unrefined fuel	2d6	100
2-5	no useable material- clogged intakes and needed regular cleaning	0	0
1 or less	1d3 damage to mining equipment; each operator roll 8+ on remote operations or take 3d6 damage from a catastrophic failure	0	0

## **Hazards of Mineral Extraction**

Bleeding and belting involve a lot of time being cut off from support and away from immediate help. Bleeding is more physically hazardous as many vessels cannot handle the fluid ocean environment very well, and Belpos' exotic atmosphere does not help matters. Storms are a common issue, and hydrocarbon typhoons are beautiful to see and deadly to encounter. Gasses can accidentally be released into the ship, and having a medic on board is an expensive luxury for small scale operations. Fortunately bleeding activities are confined to a single planet which may be patrolled more easily than an entire belt. Perhaps the most dangerous time is the trip from the planet to an orbital station rendezvous with a mothership or station. Pirates can lie in wait to either steal the entire ship if it is a small craft or pump out the cargo before help can arrive. Bleeders, particularly small scale independents, live life on the edge.

Belters have their own issues to deal with. Not only do they have the standard dangers of space, but because asteroids are very spread out it is almost impossible to patrol a belt closely. If they run into a pirate, there is usually nobody nearby who can get to them in time. Even when a ship does respond, pirate vessels don't have to travel far before they can jump out of the system so there is very little time to actually catch the thieves. Zero-G operations are always challenging, and accidents are all too common. Mechanical problems or collision with even a modest size rock can be lethal and a ship

mining ore doesn't dodge well. As belters often have to travel fairly long distances for resupply, they often push the limit of their fuel and supplies to spend as much time as possible actually in the belt.

## **Midline Station Businesses**

### **Resource Extraction Office (REO)**

The Belpos system has few rules, but the Confederation demands its tithe and somebody has to pay for station operations. The REO regulations work to protect the system from bleeders breaking the rules and to force megacorps to follow their own rules regarding hydrocarbon purification and shipping. The bureaucracy requires a single Admin roll to obtain a permit and new Admin rolls (plus verified tithe payments) for renewals every year. Belpos citizens receive a +1 DM on all Admin rolls, thus favoring local prospectors as opposed to recent immigrants.

The current head of the REO office on Midline Station is Tobias Barnstock, a fussy older gentleman who is meticulous, precise, and painfully honest. He runs an extremely tight ship and makes absolutely sure all regulations are followed to the letter. He reports directly to General Allen once a week, and has nearly full autonomy in making sure the rules are followed. He lives on the station with his wife of 40 years and has 2 children who live on Belpos-Bc but visit Midline occasionally. The dozen or so clerks and inspectors who report to Barnstock find him humorless and inflexible, but he is at least fair and consistent. Most of the workers who interact with the bleeders are more friendly and often helpful, but when they want to give someone a hard time they refer the matter to Mr. Barnstock. Successful bleeders and belters keep the clerks happy; they too are happier in the long run.

*Aral Bienna is a young clerk working in the REO office and appears to be just like any other clerk. She is the one person in the office, however, who can be bribed to falsify bleeding paperwork (she has never worked in the belting segment). Few people know this and she is very careful in those she assists. She is expensive, but not even Barnstock has found anything out of the ordinary in her applications.*

### **MIB**

M317 Interstellar Bank (MIB) is known across the cluster for their banking services. They can take deposits of moderate numbers of notes (up to 250,000 Cr) and arrange for a credit check for 25 Cr per parsec distant. Time will vary based on distance. They have complete banking records from across Quidsad subsector and records from the 3 closest subsectors are mostly up to date (within Jump limits).

### **Aaergian Refining**

Aaergian Refining is a very aggressive mineral oriented megacorp and as such, it pushes very hard to dominate extraction operations wherever possible. For over 4 decades, Aaergian had a monopoly on extractions in Belpos. Bleeders, hardy souls who took dangerously out of date vessels into the high gravity and exotic atmosphere of Belpos-Bh were paid far under the galactic averages. Belpos eventually became frustrated with the situation and encouraged Pansophontics to set up a competing operation. Aaergian liked their monopoly, though, and they are suspected (although not actually shown) to have been arranging various accidents for Pansophontic and Independent bleeders for a number of years now. They have more than doubled what they pay to bleeders, however, and so at least some good has come of this (from Belpos's point of view). Many old-timers, however, refuse to work for Aaergian and there is still considerable animosity towards the company.

The local Director of Operations for Aaergian Refining is Sir Diariah Invalie, 56, a reptilian bureaucrat from Briquitcho who arrived 3 years ago. In public, Sir Diariah is an affable lizard, very conscious of



his status and appearance while trying to portray his company in a positive light. He is working against a very negative perception, however, and is regularly heckled during public appearances. In private, however, he is clearly a tough negotiator; prices paid to bleeders for their cargos have gone up less than 3 percent since his arrival. He reports back to his superiors twice a year in Briquitcho, and visits Belpos-Bc usually once a month or so where he owns a private hunting lodge. He attends various functions and meets with different technocrats (particularly regarding bleeders), but is known as an avid hunter and is quite skilled; several reliable witnesses independently related his ability to kill a Jaguin once (a deadly predator found in the tropics of Belpos-Bc) using a monoblade, although he almost lost his arm doing so. He laughs about that part- he says it wasn't really as bad as it seemed, although the scars are still visible when he wears short sleeves. The pelt of the Jaguin hangs proudly in his office and he will occasionally favor sophonts with a visit to his hunting lodge.

Several hundred Aaergian workers live aboard Midline station, mostly humans but with a few reptilians, apes, Plivenans and other races from nearby systems. There are still occasional dust-ups between them and independent bleeders, but station marines only become involved when someone gets seriously hurt.

### **Pansophontics**

Pansophontics are a megacorp primarily focused on pharmaceuticals, but several of Belpos's complex hydrocarbons are used for making drugs and so they like having a guaranteed supply of raw materials. They use about 1/2 of the second manufacturing module for their operations and have a reputation for treating bleeders reasonably. They tend to use more independent bleeders than Aaergian does, probably because older bleeders deal with them exclusively.

Jeanette Vanyar, a pretty 32 year old woman, is the regional director for Pansophontics and is much quieter and less showy than Sir Diariah. She spends much of her time working to expand legal drug shipments to Belpos and beyond; clearly she is only so interested in bleeders. She takes a keen interest in anyone targeting Pansophontics or her people, though, and is always looking for information that might be used to her advantage. She hates the illegal drug trade (as a threat to honest pharmaceuticals) and knows Midline is a major transshipment base but does not know who might be involved. She is ambitious and hard working, having taken a lower profile Pansophontics job in order to move up the career ladder. Making a splash in a small pond will allow her to move on to bigger and better things.

### **House of Dhuzu**

The largest gambling megacorp in the Cluster has casinos on every habitable planet in the Belpos system, and even Midline Station has a sizeable gambling community. Whether a lucky elixir strike or a lucky straight playing cards, small fortunes can be won or lost as easily gambling as bleeding (but without the high gravity and deadly accidents). While not as uninhibited as their casinos on Belpos-Bc, the local operations provide a fun release for all comers. Tourists, bleeders, and traders all frequent the House of Dhuzu, and the House wins.

### **Midline Econoclub**

The local Econoclub franchise, this mid-price hotel is the regular choice for middle class transients. Its rooms are clean, the management honest, and the franchise lives up to the interstellar reputation of Econoclub as a reliable safe place to stay.

### **Steven's Hostel**

The least expensive residences on Midline Station, Steven's serves the least desirable elements which visit the station. Payment is required up front, and the facilities work (mostly). While not the cleanest

or the best accommodations, they provide a minimum of privacy and a temporary base of operations for periods of time on station.

*Steven Ornay knows his hostel is used by less than savory characters and many illegal transactions are planned or take place within the hostel. He takes a hear-no-evil, see-no-evil approach to running his business, but does know a lot of rumors and will pass them on for his own reasons. He keeps a very low profile and does not rat on any of his guests. He is a key informant for Cargrat and collects a regular 'honorarium' for his knowledge.*

## **Islay Resort**

The nicest rooms available for rent on station, Islay Resort has everything necessary for the discerning traveller. Ingela Tuill is the uplifted ape concierge for Islay Resort and second only to Cargrat for his ability to obtain information and items aboard Midline Station. He also functions as an experienced security agent and can call on Pulsar security teams for immediate assistance. Ingela keeps a very low profile and works only for trusted guests.

## **Encounters**

Encounters is the least desired and one of the most frequented establishments on Midline Station. The proprietor, Jihlofah Erastid, is an overdressed merchant who meticulously skirts the line between legal and illegal behavior. He certainly does not toe the line regarding taste- he pushed past that bottleneck long ago. His club appeals to a very hedonistic clientele, including bleeders looking for a place to relax as well as young revelers from New Monaco. Encounters can be fairly expensive- bleeders have been known to blow a month's earnings in a single evening at Encounters. Despite the over-the-top attitude, Jihlofah is incredibly careful to follow the laws and regulations of Midline Station. When the Station banned publicly displaying human breasts, he altered the costumes of his servers and cordoned off a series of 'private' viewing rooms. When they banned all nudity, he enlisted sophont rights lawyers who successfully sued on the grounds that it was an infringement of normal social customs for several species. (Jihlofah earned a 5 figure settlement for that fiasco.) Encounters may be a strip bar where good taste and species barriers must be checked at the door, but there is no amount of money that will make Jihlofah break the law in his business. He will (and has) thrown out anyone openly using or selling Jain in his establishment, but he carefully does not inspect the restroom facilities to protect sophont privacy. Encounters is a rather wild and risqué club (especially for Midline Station) that would be more typical of New Monaco, but it fulfills a need for successful bleeders to blow off some steam and relax.

## **Raven's**

This is the most popular restaurant on Midline Station. They are a moderately priced, decent place where people can go and have a good time without pressure. Raven is a 32 year old avian from Doevit with a brood of 3 youngsters (Jayelle 15, Heran 17, and Sparrow 21) she's raising alone after her husband was lost in space. Raven and her 'flock' of helpers (about 1/2 avian), are pretty good at keeping people happy without them getting rowdy or out of hand. 'Ace', an uplifted ape, works as her bouncer and even Pulsars don't want to mess with him after he beat down 3 of their own. (The mercenaries claim to have been drunk at the time, but they have never gone back to Raven's.) Raven usually works behind the bar and talks to almost everyone. If you are looking for station gossip, Raven's the bird. She's strictly above board, however, and is not a good source for rumors of illegal activity. If you want to hear about how Tina Feleena slapped Major Ackbar, though...

## **Aquatica**

Aquatica is essentially a large pool/cafe/social area for all sophonts, although merfolk definitely prefer it to most of the other social venues. While there are submerged areas solely for aquatic species, the majority of space is devoted to separate chambers where both air and water adapted species can interact on a more even basis. The proprietor is Triel Poseidon, a merman born on Astelrye-ABb. He and his family prefer the relaxed laws of Belpos compared to any of the nearby major worlds. Triel has many contacts from nearby systems and his establishment is the best known aquatic hangout in the Belpos system.

*Triel's youngest son, Melan Poseidon, has an inferiority complex as he is mostly overlooked by his parents. Unlike his brother and syster, Melan is not interested in keeping the family connections happy. He focuses on his own contacts on Belpos-Bc, but his are of the less legal kind. He is rebellious, and is looking for the 'big score' which will let him live in style away from his family.*

## **Arctic Chill**

This restaurant is staffed exclusively by Plivenans and is kept decidedly cooler than the rest of the station. Most other races here require warm clothing just to be comfortable. Other than the temperature, the restaurant is excellent and serves outworld delicacies not available elsewhere on station. It is a favorite meeting place for semi-respectable traders carrying out mostly legal activities, and the heavier coats common here can conceal many different small items. Vianci, the owner and primary cook, takes a see-no-evil approach to his clientele, and as long as nothing disturbing happens in the restaurant he is willing to sell good food to anyone.

## **Bleeders and Belters**

This is the place to get equipment for bleeding and belting, whether a crew or a ship or anything related to these professions. They provide basic services, provisions, new tech upgrades, suit repairs, or anything else independent workers might need. They know rumors of major strikes (most of them are just that, but sometimes they are accurate) and they help to organize independent ships to keep them from getting too abused. 64 year old Jonah Black (human) was a bleeder for many years before he lost a leg. He then went to law school and was instrumental in breaking Aaergian Refining's monopoly on bleeding in Belpos. Any bleeder or belter that needs help, Jonah works with them, and oldtimers swear by him. A couple of goons beat up Jonah once; they were found dismembered on their ship with a crude sign 'Never Again.' He's never been bothered again.

## **6th World Universal Trading**

This establishment is moderately sized and is part of the Universal Purchases megacorp. It has several well known traders who buy and sell cargo for retail sale as well as selling other cargos onward. The lead proprietor is Garrence Nickelsby, a retired lieutenant who maintains good relations with the Belpos military. They have a spotty selection of regular goods and access to 'good deals' for different items at various times that are brought in from nearby systems. They often sell used parts to Ulithia and are one of her main suppliers. For discounts on common merchandise, 6th World Trading is a good choice when they have the desired item in stock.

*Nickelsby is able to provide such good deals because it accepts stolen goods from other systems. He is also a significant source of information to pirates in the system regarding ship departures, military movements, and a place to purchase fenced goods. Nickelsby has a couple of NCOs who forward him information regarding patrol movements of the 14th Space Wing and other ships. 6th World Trading is part of a network that moves stolen goods between systems before selling them. While they do not know the other proprietors on other worlds, they do know 5 freighter captains who provide them the*

*goods for special prices. Generally they keep a very low profile, but will call in help from out-system to fight their battles directly if things look too hot.*

### **Ethanolics**

Ethanolics is the best bar on station, by far, for exotic drinks. Many of the drinks they serve contain alcohol, but they are not specific. They have distilled spirits, wines, beers, sodas, fruit juices, fermented fungi drinks, anything that people have heard about or would like to consume is considered at Ethanolics. They may not have everything in stock as some things are hard to obtain and other things are only available for a few months before they go bad, but if it can be drunk and can be found, you can find it here. The shop is run by 3 reptilian brothers, Slanth, Sylvester, and Earl, originally from Matcedple but all of whom travel extensively. They also run 5 other establishments on Belpos-Bc and Belpos-Be. There is often 1 brother present but not always, and rarely are all 3 brothers on station at the same time. They have separate areas for bleeders and tourists, and try to provide everyone their fill. Sometimes they go a bit too far, however, as one 'tasting' they sponsored nearly overwhelmed Midline's sickbays.

### **Midline Swingers**

Swingers is a chain of dance clubs with branches in all major settlements in Belpos, including Midline Station. They are owned and operated from Belpos-Be, with the franchise holder on Midline being Tina Feleena. A fiery redhead, Tina is a good looking 38 year old human who is well known in social circles around Midline. She is playful, sexually adventurous and fun loving, a particularly good dancer, and fiercely protective of her business and employees. She slapped Major Ackbar one night when he came into the club demanding all military personnel vacate the premises immediately. Ackbar has pushed for her expulsion for a couple of months now, but the club is well known and reasonably clean so there really isn't a good reason for getting rid of it. There is some low level drug dealing going on, but mostly just to individuals out looking for fun. Jain is less popular (it's more prevalent at Encounters), although certainly available if you ask the right person (not Tina- she wants a clean dance club). Swingers is a place to blow off steam in a non-violent fashion; it is low pressure and very active, but the music is loud enough to make it hard to have a regular conversation. It is far less risqué and less expensive than Encounters, and at least on Midline Station it doesn't attract the hard core hedonists.

### **Warnay Logistics**

Warnay Logistics is a smallish interstellar logistics chain that organizes shipping and storage for a fee. They do business across Quidsad and local subsectors. They handle Pansophontics refined fluids shipments, and they hope to expand their contacts with the megacorp to become a bigger player on the Cluster scene. The local Factor is Brioran Gazith, 42, who spends much of his social time getting close to Jeanette Vanyar of Pansophontics. She tolerates him and will use his desires to collect favors, but is not particularly attracted to him.

*Gazith is emphatically not selling information about ship routes or cargos, but he did fire one of his employees, Sheri Princess, when he caught her storing cargo manifests she shouldn't have been examining. He knows she left the station on a ship bound for Doevit, but hasn't heard from her since and he IS looking. He hushed up her activities, and Brioran will do whatever he must to keep Warnay Logistics far away from allegations of piracy and collusion with pirates.*

### **Treach Custom Tailoring**

Treach is an artist who uses clothes and sophonts as his media. He is a 32 years old gay man, and everyone who cares about their appearance or function gets their clothes from Treach. Not only do the

clothes look stylish, but he understands that clothes have function as well as appearance. He has built custom vacc suits for bleeders that can survive conditions on Belpos-Bh and be stylish at Encounters. He also made Sir Diariah Invalie a custom armored suit which saved him from a neurotoxin attack. He received the Genius Award from the Belpos School of Fine Arts when only 24 years old, and he has only gotten more popular and more skilled. His items cost 50% more than others, but they are absolutely top quality and if it can be done with normal materials, Treach can do it. He outfits tourists from New Monaco frequently and has shows on Belpos-Bc at least twice a year but can't work in 'that hormonal madhouse' in-system. Decoutage keeps trying to hire Treach away, but he doesn't need their support to be a top notch designer.

### **Cargrat**

Cargrat is a 35 year old Plievan who always wears a fitted cold suit (designed by Treach) to stay comfortable. He hangs out with the less presentable of the workers; sophonts down on their luck, desperate, or willing to break the law for the right price. Cargrat doesn't work with people he doesn't know; he'll look into your history and make sure he knows who he's dealing with. In his own way, he's actually honest- he sells what information he can, but if he's paid to keep quiet he can do that too. He doesn't break the law himself, but for a finder's fee he can arrange for you to talk to someone who can do your job, no questions asked. He's always armed and he always has friends around, so double crossing him is not usually very healthy. He will follow his code, and if you have the deal with him first, you're safe. If someone else makes an arrangement to find you first, well that's OK with him too. He avoids Bucaneer Bar, saying that he has a history there, but will meet people at Leverem's or (preferably) Arctic Chill.

### **Wilson D'Alvarez**

Wilson is a very difficult person to meet in person. He is a 23 year old male computer nerd, and is rather paranoid about computer security and security in general. It will take several notes back and forth before he will meet with a new person and will only meet anyone at Leverem's. Trying to follow him is difficult, and if he notices he will do anything in his power to have you arrested which includes planting incriminating files, arranging false paperwork, or planting stories about how you screwed over some bleeders. He is mostly honest with his clients, but he hates the Doevit and Astelrye bureaucracies with a passion. His specialty is computer hacking, and for a price he can get into pretty much any system on the station including the military ones. He refuses to travel out-system to the highly regulated worlds nearby (this clearly disturbs him), but might be willing to go elsewhere in the Belpos system for the right price and right job. Cargrat recommends him regularly, and if he is treated fairly he returns the favor. He is physically a coward, but those who threaten him are relentlessly hounded electronically until they leave Midline Station.

### **Hartly and Aiena, Facilitators of Law**

The human/merwoman couple of Bruce Hartly and Aiena are experts at navigating the administrivia of Belpos's major nearby trading partners. They have 3 clerks who assist them, and based on their skill, education, and intelligence they will add +2 DM to Admin rolls related to neighboring bureaucracies. They are well known on the station and charge 200 Cr/ hr for their services. They are honest and will have nothing to do with illegal activities, but they are much easier to deal with than Barnstock or any military officer. They are well versed in bleeding and trade rules, but can find out other regulations at need. They have a good working relationship with all station bureaucrats and have numerous contacts on the habitable worlds of Belpos for a price. They will also purchase services from individuals (particularly those recommended by Helen Terria) for legal activities that fall outside of their administrative purview. They are good people to know for finding the right people to solve legal

problems. Wealthy tourists visiting Belpos often take advantage of their services while hiding out in Belpos while their homeworld issues are fixed.

### **Leverem's Dining**

Leverem's is a relatively fancy restaurant that specializes in quiet, unobtrusive booths for people combining meals with negotiations. The place has several anti-listening devices scattered around, and they absolutely ban all types of recording equipment from their establishment. The food is OK but the security is excellent, and if you are looking for a quiet place to do business, Leverem's is the spot. Note that Leverem's doesn't distinguish between legal and illegal deals- several smugglers have been arrested immediately after leaving Leverem's from a sting operation. At least one got off because there was no recording of the incriminating conversation- the anti-listening devices wrecked the case. The restaurant is accepted, however, given the number of legitimate deals that also take place in their quiet booths.

### **Bucaneer Bar**

This is the bar where the free traders, independent prospectors, and people looking for those folks go. It is regularly violent with at least one fight a night, and law enforcement only enters in in squads, usually after calling for backup. Heckling the authorities is common here and baiting enforcers of any sort is typical behavior. To find the best quasi-legal ships and crews, however, Bucaneer Bar is the place to go. Some are braggarts (well, most of them actually), but these are independent folk and want nothing to do with anyone associated with the authorities. There are people here who will take pretty much any contract; the question is only whether they will honor the contract or take the money and doublecross their employer. Even going into Bucaneer Bar will make anyone in power suspicious of the character's motives. General Allen would like nothing more than to shut this bar down permanently, but so far has only managed to suspend their license for a few days at a time.

### **Enjoymania**

The local franchise of the entertainment megacorp, they provide a variety of releases for bleeders while they are on station. Their common fare is big budget blockbusters, and they often hype their new releases. It is a convenient place to relax and secretly meet someone in a non-threatening environment where conversation is not expected. Entertainments are reasonably priced and include holograms, films, live shows, etc.

### **Spacemart**

Spacemart is a giant megacorp known across the cluster for its general merchandise. They are fully above board, and no 'special' merchandise is ever available from them. They offer standard prices on all goods appropriate to the tech level and will pretty much have them in stock. They do not traffic in weapons, armor, ships, or drugs at all; they specialize in moderately priced goods that sell to a broad market.

### **Troubadour's**

Music lovers visiting Midline Station invariably come here. Focusing on live music and generic food, they have various regular local groups that appeal to most tastes. Some bleeders even schedule their returns to try and make particular events. Although it can get rather loud, Troubadour's is generally more focused on the music than anything else.

### **Wesson and Smith**

A local market for weapons, they have some of the tightest security on station and have received permission to proactively use deadly force against any suspected thief. They announce this proudly and prominently, but nobody has put this claim to the test recently. Laser rifle emplacements are clearly

visible covering the shop area; the more dangerous defenses are believed to be less obvious. They carry all manner of weapons and armor up to 1 tech level above Midline (ie. TL12) and charge 2x standard for the higher tech equipment. They sell anything below military grade equipment, so no combat armor or plasma rifles. Pretty much any other personal weaponry is available for sale or trade with an appropriate background check. The background check for TL 10 equipment or above is conducted by the Belpos military, takes 2 weeks and costs 200 Cr. Lower tech weapons are available immediately. Most bleeders and beltlers carry weapons aboard their ships if not always on their person. They work in the lonely cold of space, and even the military knows they can't adequately police the whole system.

## **Chromium**

This is the place to go for upgrades and repairs to any cybernetic body parts. A reptilian couple, Sasa and Eslansh run the business and they are reasonably skilled at fixing body enhancements without having to order new equipment. Both have substantial modifications, although Eslansh is more willing to show his off. They import cybernetic parts from either in system or Astelrye and can obtain anything up to TL-14 from Astelrye (for a 50% markup if it isn't available in Belpos). It takes 10 days to obtain cybernetic replacements from within the Belpos system and a month to get them from Astelrye. *Sasa doesn't talk about it, but she worked for Belpos intelligence before settling down with Eslansh. She went on several undercover missions, and is known by General Allen and Captain Terria. Eslansh knows she worked in intelligence, but never talks about it and explains she worked in a government bureaucracy office before they moved on station. Sasa has several high end mods including an improved datajack and a vibroknife implant with the skill to use it.*

## **Ulithia Parts and Salvage**

Bleeders down on their luck still need to fix their ships and drones. The shop is kept quite chilly, and bumping into one of the many shelves of used equipment seems likely to bring the entire pile crashing down. Ulithia is a female Plivenan merchant (47) who is a wizard at fixing non-working equipment using spare or used parts (Mechanic-3, + 1 Int). She knows her equipment and is very difficult to sucker; once you screw her over, you'd better be leaving because she holds a grudge. She despises Cargrat, for example, from a bad deal 10 years ago and won't do work for any of his regular associates. She hates thieves and has 'accidentally' killed one shoplifter by shocking him to death. She can usually obtain obscure parts (no questions asked) or will order new parts if people pay up front. Her used parts are full quality and cost 75% of normal; her worn parts are 1/3 of normal but have a +1 DM for failure. She has a good reputation with oldtimers and is honest about the quality of the parts- 'it's your ship' is her motto. She buys good quality used parts at 1/3 value; the worn stuff she only purchases as part of a collection. For cheap repairs, this is the place to go but you get what you pay for.

## **Pulsars**

The Pulsars are a cluster-wide mercenary service with a reputation for integrity and grit. The military doesn't like them, but the Belpos government has no rules against hiring mercenaries as long as they are appropriately regulated and bonded. There are two brigades of Pulsars in the Belpos system, but only 2 platoons are available on Midline Station. At least 1 platoon is generally out on contract at any given time. For larger contracts, they have access to smaller military grade ships and a few thousand troops. Given time and a hefty bank account, the Pulsars can assemble a very tough, well trained unit for almost anything. They are often used for escort services for anyone worried about kidnapping or pirates. They have contacts with all of the major local systems and they have a reputation for fighting back rather than caving in when threatened. Mercenaries are not hired by people afraid of violence. They have a working relationship with General Allen, and they respect Major Ackbar and think he was given a raw deal. Ackbar won't officially notice their support, but he doesn't oppose them, either.

## **Belpos Military**

Commander Garoni is the Plivenan officer in charge of the fighter wing stationed at Midline Station. A fighter pilot himself, he personally disabled 3 different pirate corsairs over his career, losing his left leg during the last of those battles. His prosthetic is very good and he still flies when he can, but he is mostly a bureaucrat now. He is conscientious and very concerned about the number of bleeders being robbed before they can make it to Midline station. The nearest settled planet is almost a day away even at thrust-6, let alone the slow speeds freighters routinely use. Freighter escort is Commander Garoni's favorite form of punishment (he hates having to protect 'the whales' as he calls them). Garoni is pushing for additional fighters so that he can expand patrols both around Belpos-Bh and increase pirate hunting in the Belpos asteroid belt Belpos-Bf. With only 48 fighters under his command, the pilots and ships are being stretched pretty thin with long patrols and freighter escort as it is. His insistence somewhat annoys General Allen, but nobody doubts Garoni's integrity and competence. His pilots resent his heavy duty schedule, however. They will say as much after drinking a bit too heavily, but despite being overworked even they feel Garoni is a fair commander. He is famous around the station for always wearing short sleeves, saying the station is far too warm for comfort.

Major Ackbar, however, is a different story. Formerly the commander of an elite strike brigade, Ackbar attacked a Corsair who was in the process of raiding an incoming freighter. Unfortunately the Plivenan Ambassador's daughter was on that ship and was killed by the pirates who then managed to escape. While it is believed the daughter was the target of the raid all along, Ackbar was reassigned to Midline station and resents it. He drills his troops extensively, and while they are not bad marines they are also not elite and he rarely has anything good to say about them (or any part of the station, actually). He is rigid about following the rules, and if he feels somebody disrespects him he is happy to use his powers to punish them if possible. His men don't like him and his lower officers are stuck trying to defend him although it is clearly getting harder to do. He is scheduled to retire in 18 months, and most people will be glad to see the last of him. He is respected by the Pulsars as a brigade commander.

*Leutenant Jason Bavori has a drug problem. He facilitates shipments of ecstasy, meth, and jain throughout the Belpos system and beyond. He uses the anti-Ackbar sentiment to control who inspects what incoming ships. He has a sizeable nest egg secured in MIB for the future, and will do whatever is necessary to protect his operation. A dozen men under his command are in on the smuggling, and they routinely 'inspect' particular craft carelessly or discover 'contraband' evidence against someone they target. Several people investigating illegal drug trade through Midline Station have died under questionable circumstances, but nobody has identified the people responsible.*

Brigadier General Joel Allen is in charge of station weapons and is technically the commander of Midline Fleet which patrols the outer planets. He has served throughout the system, and is an efficient if unimaginative officer who can't quite cope with Ackbar's attitudes. He is most experienced with heavy weapons, but gives his executive officer, Captain Helen Terria, a broad role in defining naval policies of the Midline Fleet. Allen is mostly a troubleshooter and spends much of his time defusing issues before they become real problems. While keeping people happy is not really his thing, he is conscientious, trustworthy, and good-hearted enough that he is respected by all.

Captain Helen Terria is a 62 year old woman and former captain of the *Veteran*, a Cluster Scout Service destroyer that calls on Midline Station at least once a year. She captained the *Veteran* for 10 years, and even after 2 years away she keeps in close contact with them and always has a special party when they come to port. Her old crew are fiercely loyal, and station personnel also like her quite a bit. She works well with Commanders Garoni and Allen, and she even manages to blunt Ackbar's poisoning when



present. She is knowledgeable and skilled, but still like to go out aboard the corvette *Resolute* as often as she can. She knows her career is winding down, but is content that she has served honorably and is determined to live the only life she's ever wanted. She has a soft spot for any former CSS people and has excellent contacts with the CSS. She regularly passes information to the scouts (with General Allen's knowledge and approval) and can provide CSS jobs for people she considers reliable (whether or not a background check would approve them). Even though CSS does not have a base here, there are always jobs for responsible, discreet crews. She is a good person to know and keep happy.

## **Subsector Politics**

### **Belpos**

Low-law trading world surrounded by several more populous, higher law worlds. They are a good intermediate port for nearby worlds to trade without the friction caused by direct contact between often opposed governments. Their low law level brings in a fair number of rich tourists who want to relax away from the tight rules which bind them elsewhere. Thieves and pirates work to take their share of tourist money for themselves. Their dominant partner is Astelrye, but Briquitcho is nearly as important to them overall. Tourism is one of their main industries, but it is also one of the few fluid ocean worlds nearby which can effectively produce hydrocarbon elixirs.

### **Astelrye**

Dominant trading partner of Belpos. Higher tech and population, high law feudal technocracy. Belpos is part of their pocket empire, which in turn is part of Briquitcho's pocket empire. They are a rich, high tech world which has many products Belpos does not produce.

### **Briquitcho**

Dominates Astelrye. Advisory world, ultra-high tech. High law feudal technocracy. They share a lot in common with Astelrye but are further away from Belpos so visit less frequently with slightly lower trade volumes.

### **Matcedple**

Matcedple is ruled by a captive government with an installed oligarchy controlled by the Confederation. Matcedple had been an oligarchy with very close ties to Altrav Pharmaceuticals, a megacorp known for producing addictive drugs to quell restive populations. Altrav openly defied the Confederation and vowed to continue their business practices despite Advisory Council opposition, and a 5 year war finally defeated the megacorp and forced the survivors into hiding. The Matcedple branch of Altrav was defeated in 623 CE standard, and the Confederation took over governance of the system. Altrav's ties to the Oligarchy were deep, and many oligarchs disowned Altrav publicly while sheltering their leaders. Sixty-seven years later, the Oligarchy has been cleared of all (known) Altrav influence, but the drug trade here is still abundant and is believed to indirectly supply many systems in the vicinity, including Belpos.

### **Banzen**

Distant advisory world, still very influential. very high population, very rich, highest tech in the neighborhood. Although rather far away, they have more direct influence than Briquitcho. They are not particularly trusted, however, and are known for various schemes which try to increase their influence and the Hindu faith in Belpos.

## **Doevit**

Midling-high law, charismatic leader, high-ish tech. Doesn't like cybernetic enhancements which can cause a lot of friction between openly modded people of Belpos/Astelrye and Doevans. While not generally violent, the openly modded definitely face discrimination. Fanatic anti-psionics, they exile any psionics discovered on their world to Papsap. Anyone using psionics on Doevit is fined, imprisoned and/or banned from returning.

## **Papsap**

Insular, small, pro-psionic world. Little interest in outside conflicts. Takes Doevit psionics and helps them to develop. Low-mid technology which allows people to live reasonably well. The charismatic oligarchy is chosen psionically, where the most talented psions do what is best for most people. While they do not like getting involved with their neighbors, they are curious about psionics and psionic potential. They distrust cyberware and absolute despise robots. While they may be enthusiastic about anything psionic, they will often have their own agenda in any dealings. The scout base on Papsap keeps mostly to itself, although there is a certain amount of trade for food and local goods. Cordial, but distant, sums up the Scout Base interactions with the Papsap natives.

## **Fenvid**

Uninhabited binary star system claimed by Belpos. The one habitable moon (Fenvid-ABb1) orbits around an inner gas giant. Occasionally explored by Belpos as a possible colony site, the moon is cold and filled with biotic and natural hazards. Both the moon and the system have a reputation for being unsafe as pirates will sometimes hide here and refuel from the several gas giants. It is mostly patrolled by Confederation Naval Forces from Matcedple and occasionally scout ships from Papsap.

## **Roytilfra**

Poor, low-tech, high population civil service bureaucracy somewhat isolationist. It cannot openly work with outsiders, but humans without cybermods can get good value here for low tech goods.

## **Ribdoelav**

This is a nearby, small, mid-tech charismatic oligarchy. Part of Doevit's pocket empire, they can be traded with reasonably well by Belpos as long as the individuals involved do not piss off the oligarchy. The oligarchs are king, and even most commoners like having them around. Having good relations with one or more of the gentry, particularly the High Gentry families, opens many doors here.

## **Pliven**

Pliven is an advisory world of the M317 Confederation. The alien Plivenans common on Belpos- like the cold. The homeworld is highly opposed to cybernetics and prefer using robots for many purposes, putting the local population somewhat at odds with the Cluster mainstream. Pliven and Banzen do not get along well regarding the aggressive Hindu promoting faith and fear most of their actions are a front for ulterior motives. Something for nothing, particularly when enthusiastically presented, puts them on the defensive.

## **Sidzinwal**

Higher tech, lower population competitor of Belpos with 3(!) fluid ocean worlds in-system and are part of Briquitcho's pocket empire. Aaergian Refining is the major producer in this system and they would like to regain their local monopoly on bleeding hydrocarbons. Briquitcho and Astelrye are major customers, and having uncontrolled bleeders in the same pocket empire cuts down on their profits. Aaergian Refining has very close ties to the civil service bureaucracy running Sidzinwal, and they make sure the laws there stay favorable to them.

## **Clan Talon**

While not a system of its own, they are the largest group of organized pirates in the local area. They have somewhere between 40-60 ships, mostly smaller converted freighters but a few are salvaged warships. The number varies as ships are caught, but many of them are more opportunists than full-time pirates and have good cover occupations and sometimes even solid reputations. They are not a monopoly nor do they try to enforce a specific territory, but if there is a big illegal operation going down they are probably involved and at least collecting a bribe to allow ships passage unmolested. They actually like having independent pirates around because they can always be framed for any events that attract too much attention.

Two things distinguish Clan Talon from other pirates. First, they have 2 repair ships that always travel with 2 tankers for supplies. They do not do anything illegal, and ALWAYS have up-to-date papers and a reason for being in system whenever they make a civilized port. They also maintain the vessels involved in the actual pirating. The ships and tankers are generally kept ready to leave a system on short notice and often hide in the empty void or rarely visited systems. They have been approached by the CNS several times, but never close enough to actually be caught.

Secondly, Clan Talon salvaged a derelict 2000 ton cruiser and refit the ship as an enforcer vessel, the *Brigantine*. By herself, she can take out small naval task forces and because of the repair vessels she is very hard (so far impossible) to keep track of. While small scale pirates operating in the area are tolerated, other clans know better than to move in for fear of the *Brigantine*. It is far safer to buy protection than take onn Clan Talon in a fight.

# Adventure Plots

## The Nicked Necklace

**required:** streetwise, carouse, admin, comms

**reward:** 5,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Melissa Candlemar, daughter of the Spacemart subsector coordinator, was making a social call at Spacemart on Midline Station when her necklace was stolen from her docked yacht while she was at Encounters. The gold chain is nothing special, but the pendant has 4 Quidsad emeralds which glow a pale blue under UV light. It is a family heirloom and Melissa is desperate to get it back. She is due to meet her cousins at the Miramar Resort in New Monaco in 5 days and doesn't want them to find out about the problem as she is known as a ditz and doesn't want that opinion confirmed.

**Referee's Information:** Melissa doesn't know anyone on Midline Station and she is pretty easy to take advantage of. Her pilot is Aspasa, a reptilian former Navy frigate pilot, and her partner from the Navy, Javy Trebrener, an older retired human engineer. Aspasa was hurt and unconscious aboard Melissa's yacht *Getaway* and didn't see anything useful while Trebrener was meeting with some CNF colleagues at Troubadour's.

1. A couple of known thieves are caught on video camera leaving the docking bay in the right time frame. They hang out at Buckaneer Bar and are trying to pawn the necklace.
2. Javy Trebrener is tired of his life aboard the *Getaway* and Aspasa in particular. He doesn't like Melissa (thinks she's arrogant and a ditz), and stole the necklace himself, hiding it in the jump control board down in engineering after arranging for Aspasa to get beaten up. He is trying to find a buyer through Cargrat.
3. same as 2, but Javy and Aspasa are in it together. Her injury is staged and the necklace is hidden in Aspasa's quarters.
4. An assistant manager at Spacemart, Kara Lukely, told a couple of her less than savory friends about the necklace after Melissa was showing it off at the office. Now she is worried that her friends stole the necklace and doesn't know what to do about it. They are trying to sell it through Cargrat to a semi-legit Doevan freighter captain at Leverem's who is due to leave in 2 days.
5. A Spacemart stockboy wants to impress his 'girlfriend' who is a dancer at Encounters. He saw the necklace at the office party and snuck into the yacht hangar through ventilation ducts. He plans on asking the dancer at Encounters to run away with him after selling the necklace.
6. 2 dockworkers saw Melissa with the necklace and stole it after they saw her leave. They have already shipped it secretly yesterday to New Monaco aboard the freighter *Lady Elaine* to be sold there. Their buddy is (innocently) carrying the package to a dockworker's uncle.

## **An Affair to Remember**

**required:** carouse, liason, fighting

**reward:** 2,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Oscar Fairchild is a reasonably successful young belter who was involved in a big hydrocarbon find. He went to Midline Swingers and met this really amazing girl, but he was so drunk he doesn't know who it was. He really, really wants to find her again.

**Referee's Information:** The girl is Sandy Hunsacker, a thin-boned pretty 19-year old from Glasdome on Belpos-Bd2. She has worked at Swingers for the last 8 months and really wants to make enough money not to have to go home to Glasdome. Tina Fellina is protective of her (and all of her employees) and doesn't generally approve of employees fraternizing with customers.

1. Sandy remembers Oscar a bit, but blows off his infatuation as a 'you're a nice guy, but...' Oscar can't take no for an answer and starts stalking her. Tina demands the players fix the situation.
2. Sandy meets Oscar and looks scared when he confesses his love for her. Sandy is involved with a bullying security guard at Leverem's (BillyJoe) who will beat Oscar up when he's off duty for messing with his girl. Sandy is afraid of BillyJoe and what he will do to Oscar whom she actually likes.
3. Sandy doesn't recognize Oscar at first, but eventually realizes who he is. She takes him for several thousand credits before dumping him and moving to New Monaco where the real money is.
4. Sandy doesn't recognize Oscar at first, but only realizes who he is after Vanessa Ortith, an occasional worker at Encounters, pretends she was the girl of Oscar's dreams so she can bilk him of lots of money. Sandy tries to protect Oscar from Vanessa and wants to let Oscar down easy because she's actually a kind girl.
5. Sandy is a contact for smugglers between Midline Station and the port on Belpos-Bd2. She pretends not to recognize him and arranges for some thugs to dissuade Oscar and his friends.
6. Oscar isn't actually a Belter, and no new big finds have come through on Belpos-Bh. Oscar is actually a pirate kidnapper looking to identify Sandy from a tatoo on her shoulder. Sandy unknowingly attracted the attention of Arden Blythe, a pirate XO who plans to take Sandy away on the corsair *Toucan's Touch*. Sandy can't remember Oscar (or Arden Blythe) at all.

## ***Ghost of a Chance***

**required:** electronics, sensors, piloting, engineer, mechanic

**reward:** 4,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** "Mayday! Mayday! This is the mining vessel *Ghost of a Chance*. Our maneuvering drive is failing and we can't fix it before it goes! Any ship, ANY ship, please respond." Your vessel is the only ship near enough to respond, and Midline Station requests you to render any and all possible assistance.

**Referee's Information:** The *Ghost of a Chance* is a 200 ton mining vessel that has been in the Belpos system for about 3 months. After a rough start they had finally found a good pool to bleed from and have a nearly full hold. A storm was developing, however, and they pushed their departure window too closely. The ship was damaged while taking off and their maneuver drive can only produce 1g of thrust.

1. Everything is as it appears. If they can get their maneuver drive repaired quickly and make orbit, things will be good and the *Ghost* will not only pay up but invite their rescuers out to Midline Swingers for a treat.

2. The engines are damaged, but the engineer is not happy and is very suspicious of their rescuers. There is a substantial amount of Ecstasy hidden in Engineering and the engineer doesn't want to be discovered or to share his hoard. He is a local distributor for the Altrav and doesn't want to get caught.

3. Even after repairs the engines can't lift the full cargo into orbit. The *Ghost* wants to transfer fluids to the player ship so they can all escape with the goods. If successful they will pay and invite everyone out to Midline Swingers for a treat.

4. It's a trap. The *Ghost* is actually half empty of cargo, but plans to jump out of the system after stripping the rescuing ship.

5. As #1, but the pilot, Meredith Goval, has a history with one of the people on the rescuing ship. She used to deal drugs for the Altrav when younger and disappeared over a year ago. She is clean now, but doesn't want her past to catch up with her, either the authorities or the Altrav who think she's dead.

6. Not only are the engines failing, the cargo hold is leaking fluid as well. Saving the ship at the expense of the cargo will ruin the bleeders who then can't pay to repair the ship (or the rescuers). Fixing only the cargo hold will lose the ship.

## **Cutting the Cord** Refinery Sabbotage

**required:** fighting, interrogate, carrouse

**reward:** 7,500 Cr

**Player's Information:** Jeanette Vanyar, director of the Pansophontics refinery aboard Midline Station, has requested a meeting with you for lunch at Leverem's. She has received several warnings via email regarding Pansophontic's refinery module here on station and while her security chief Atlaquita does not believe there is a real threat, Director Vanyar would like you to look into the matter.

**Referee's Information:** Jeanette Vanyar has received 3 emails that all contain vague threats to Pansophontics refinery business. The emails were sent from varied addresses aboard station, and arrived between 5-7pm at night. A good computer person such as Wilson D'Alvarez can trace the servers and find that the computers were all located within 1 segment of their refinery which includes the refining manufacturing module and 5 additional modules: a hangar bay, the bazaar, a stateroom module, fuel module, and cargo module.

1. The sender is Jayelle, one of Raven's flock of teen avians who's bored and looking for excitement. She was trying to get the attention of a tech who eats at Raven's restaurant often. Raven is mortified, angry, and ready to pull her wings off. She apologizes to Director Vanyar and offers her (and you) a good meal.
2. The sender is Hoss Velder, a sometime bleeder, sometime guard, and all-time loser. He was desperate for money to pay off the House of Dhuzu and was paid 250 Cr by an Aaergan Refining assistant shift manager (recently transferred out and 'unavailable') to cause Pansophontics trouble.
3. The messages came from Atlaquita's computer account, but she is shocked, angry, and denies everything. Her new boyfriend Mako whom she met at Aquatica 'borrowed' her account and is a plant from Aaergan Refining. He was paid 1,000 credits by the recently transferred shift manager above to cause internal trouble.
4. The sender is Robin Helmuth, a technician at the refinery. Her performance evaluations have been going downhill for the last 18 months and her job is on the line. She has become addicted to Meth and is getting more and more frantic. She has programmed the machinery to mix 2 inappropriate chemicals that will destroy the main distiller if she isn't stopped.
5. The sender is Jethro Andry, the XO on the freighter *Anyone's Guess*. He's sending the warnings because his ship carried 3 saboteurs (paid through untraceable notes at the House of Dhuzu for disabling the refinery module). He overheard them plotting, but is afraid of them as they're killers. They have 30K worth of credits waiting for them if the refinery is knocked out for at least 3 weeks. They are all experienced with explosives and one has just recently gotten a job offer from Pansophontics.
6. The sender is Liam Offrosen, the wealthy great-great-great grandson of a recently deceased 247 year old tycoon Hiram Offrosen of Briquitcho. Liam blames Pansophontics for his progenitor's death because their anagathics failed him. He's rather deranged, and plans to crash his racing yacht into the refinery module.

## **Saving Yacht *Foolish Dream***

**required:** recon, engineering, piloting, vacc suit, a spacecraft

**reward:** 10,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** You have been asked to investigate a Mayday from the 200-ton Adventure Yacht *Foolish Dream*. The mayday was cut off after only 30 seconds, and no further radio contracts have been made although the ship continues to accelerate. Your ship is in a good position to intercept the yacht.

**Referee's Information:** The yacht *Foolish Dream* is a Astelryan 200-ton Adventure Yacht owned by the avian Willis Stork the 3rd that left Midline Station for routine maintenance on Belpos-Bd2. Three hours after departure they issued a Mayday for 30 seconds before their transmissions ceased. You are close enough to investigate the situation.

1. The party started immediately after the ship left for Belpos-Bd2. They have a young avian named Kalisha Feathers who was out of work and took them up on an offer of transport in-system. When they expected her to partake in their enjoyments, she refused and became scared when they insisted. She sent the distress call, but is being hidden by the rich kids in one of their quarters, bound and gagged. The crew denies any knowledge of a distress call.
2. As above, but there are 2 young bleeders who were brought aboard unwillingly after a late night at Encounters.
3. Some wanna-be pirates snuck aboard the *Foolish Dream*, but the crew got off the distress call and locked the controls before being subdued. Crew and guests are being held in 2 staterooms while the pirates look for valuables and fail to unlock the controls.
4. The ship has not been well maintained and is in poor condition inside. The pilot sent the mayday because their thruster control has failed, but he was overruled by Willis Stork. By the time the players arrive the controls are somewhat disassembled but no solution is at hand.
5. Willis Stork sent the distress call, but has lost control of the vessel to several of his 'friends' who are transporting 2 kg of Jain which he didn't know about and doesn't approve of doing.
6. Willis and friends are high, and managed to break the computer by trying to get it drunk. When the pilot sent the distress call, they then tried to silence it and succeeded, but broke the radio as well. The parties are still well and truly wasted by the time the players arrive.



## **You Can't Be Too Careful**

**required:** admin, advocate, Liason

**reward:** 8,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** The factor of Warnay Logistics, Brioran Gazith, has invited you to Leverem's for dinner. He has a job for you. He has received 12 tons of cybernetic parts intended for transshipment to Doevit, but the paperwork is actually for industrial machinery. While Belpos doesn't care, the government of Doevit is not a fan of cybernetics and have very stiff regulations and fines for those smuggling such technology. He doesn't want to get in trouble on Doevit where he does significant business, but this is his first contract with Ultronic Machines and he doesn't want to piss them off either. Brioran wants you to find out what's going on so he can do what's in his best long term interest.

**Referee's Information:** Warnay Logistics is an honest shipper and they make a decent living by doing a decent job and following the rules. That's easy in Belpos, but less easy in most of the surrounding systems which have generally higher law levels. Brioran knows that something has happened, but he has no idea what or who is involved.

1. Ultronic Machines knows nothing about any industrial machinery or robotics parts. The robotics parts are actually stolen from a warehouse in Matcedple by Vigo Morattenan and intended for an accomplice in Doevit.
2. As #1, but Vigo hears about the investigation and wants his cargo back so he tries to steal it and put it aboard the freighter *Interchange*.
3. As #1, but Vigo tries to bribe the players and Brioran to send the shipment onwards or at the very least return his cargo. If the players refuse to pass on the offer (or the referee decides Brioran refuses) Vigo will try to eliminate those who know about his smuggling.
4. It is an honest mistake in the cargo bays. A careless handler mislabeled the shipments and confused the lots going to Astelrye with ones going to Doevit. Both shippers are happy the error was discovered before being sent onwards.
5. Ultronic Machines was testing Warnay Logistics for efficiency and thoroughness. They are looking for a regular transport company that can be trusted to follow the local regulations and are honest. Ultronic Machines is pleased, and wants to arrange a long term deal.
6. Vigo Morattenan is a supervisor working for Ultronic Machines who is smuggling the robotic parts without Ultronic Machine's knowledge. They are upset and angry at their own issue and send replacement parts ASAP, complementing Warnay Logistics on their thoroughness. Vigo wants revenge on the people who got him fired.

## ***Francesca's Flight***

**required:** demolitions, computers, sensors, recon

**reward:** 4,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** You are traveling inbound to Belpos-Bc aboard the freighter *Francesca* on a regularly scheduled trip. The ship left Midline Station an hour ago, and you are settling into the tedium of budget interplanetary travel. Suddenly the emergency alert sounds and the captain of the *Francesca* calls you to the bridge in a huff. "You're supposed to be troubleshooters, right? Well, we have trouble. General Allen just radioed and said that they have received a threat to the *Francesca*. The Guardian Patrol Frigate *Flytrap* is approaching a suspected pirate vessel which has waylaid a yacht. The pirates say that unless they are permitted to leave the system the *Francesca* will be blown up. Given the actual pirate activity, the threat is considered real. Captain Garoni is leading a flight of 4 fighters and a cutter out to us, but it will take them time to get here. We have to find and dismantle a maybe bomb somewhere on this 1,000 ton freighter before the corsair can jump out-system. Even if they leave, we had better find the bomb anyway."

### **Referee's Information:**

1. There is a bulge on the outside of the *Francesca's* maneuvering drive which shouldn't be there. It is attached by magnetic grapples and has a blinking red light on it. Inside there is a meson detonator attached to what looks to be about 10 kilos of Compound H. Shutting down the Maneuver drive will prevent a catastrophic explosion if the bomb goes off, otherwise the ship will be shattered.
2. The plot is a hoax. The corsairs were just trying to scare General Allen into letting them get away.
3. As #2, but two cargo handlers start freaking out when the search team approaches one section of the bay. They start shooting ACR rifles at the party. They have 40 kilos of methamphetamine hidden inside 4 sacks of coffee, but no bomb.
4. Computer diagnostics reveal a discrepancy in the navigation program which would cause the maneuver drive to overload on an external signal. Sloosia is a reptilian tech who works in a hangar where the *Francesca* was last serviced as well as where the attacked yacht was berthed.
5. An incendiary bomb is wired to an Aaergan Refining storage drum. It is attached to a radio trigger tied into the *Francesca's* communication array. If the storage drum is ignited it will explode and cause a serious explosive decompression of the *Francesca's* cargo bay.
6. One of the other passengers is an associate of the pirates. He brought 2 bombs; a small one (200g Compound H) to prove that they have the capability to attack and a larger one (3 kg Compound H) in case the corsair is attacked anyway. Both are on radio triggers, and the passenger (Justin Thigwell) has a powerful radio receiver/transmitter in his quarters. The small bomb is hidden next to one of the fuel scoops, and the larger one in a conduit near the fuel tanks and the outer hull.

## **Smuggler's Row**

**required:** computers, carouse, liason

**reward:** 4,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** You have been requested to investigate a smuggling operation onto Midline Station. The *Honeypot*, a Guardian Patrol Frigate based at the station, has secured a 500 ton trader, the *Tinker's Damn*, after a routine customs stop. They have found 30 tons of Extended Trends clothing that are counterfits. They know it is destined for the station, but the inspectors want to know who the contraband was intended for. They are bringing the ship into a parking orbit near the station.

**Referee's Information:**

1. The clothes were intended for 6th World Trading who denies any knowledge and have no computer records for such a transaction. The players can find some burned signage for a 'sale' that doesn't seem to be happening, though.
2. The clothes were intended for Treach who is working as a middleman for a mid-high end chain on Belpos-Bc. He is furious about being cheated and wants to find out who cost him (it was the freighter captain).
3. The clothes are part of a regular shipment for SpaceMart, but the clothes should have been genuine and SpaceMart is not pleased. The freighter captain exchanged them.
4. As #3, but the con was handled by Mica Salmon, a new merfolk assistant manager of SpaceMart on Midline Station.
5. Cargrat arranges a meet with someone (brought in from off station) at Buckaneer's Bar who tries to bribe the players not to investigate the case too carefully. If bribery fails, an assault follows. The clothes were intended for 6th World Trading.
6. The clothes were intended for Alice Troyaven, a transient smuggler who was to take the clothing to Briquitcho. She and a crew (after escaping from the players?) steal a fueling cutter and try to steal the *Tinker's Damn* which they already know the access codes for.

## **Stolen Identity**

**required:** computers, admin, advocate, combat skills,

**reward:** 2,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Theresa Hornblower, a casual engineer you know slightly on Midline Station, grabs you and pulls you aside. "You help people, right?" She looks around nervously. "Well I need some help. Somebody's out to get me. My credit stick is locked, my ID got fried, my stateroom door won't open, and even my ship quals are locked. Then these 2 guys started following me. I can't get off station without an ID. You gotta help me."

### **Referee's Information:**

1. Theresa's information was locked by mistake by Helen Terria. She meant to lock a suspected terrorist's quals but had somewhat inaccurate information. One of the guys 'following' her is a bleeder looking for a date.
2. The 'person' you're helping isn't actually Theresa Hornblower but a high end humanoid robot that looks a lot like her. It doesn't do a perfect simulation, but the party doesn't know her well. She is a plant who, with the party's help 'recovering' her identity, will sign aboard a largish Aaergian Refining freighter and work with some pirates to try and seize the ship.
3. Some pirates have seized Theresa's identity and have a person who's been surgically altered to look like her whom they want to put on a Aaergian Refining freighter. They want to tie up loose ends and eliminate the real person.
4. An old boyfriend wants to make Theresa come back to him by causing the problems and then 'fixing' things after he sees the error of her ways. The party starts having computer issues of their own when they start helping her.
5. Theresa has inherited a 5-figure sum from an uncle in Astelrye. Some local con men are working with El Chisme to steal her identity and collect the inheritance.
6. The extremely attractive Theresa has attracted the attention of Simon Tharigar, a rather rich but arrogant and domineering young man she met at Swingers and really didn't like. He wants to kidnap her and take her away aboard his yacht the *Queen Anne*. Nobody will look for someone who doesn't exist.

## **A Taxing Visit**

**required:** recon, admin, demolitions, liason, engineering

**reward:** 12,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Jeanette Vanyar, director of Pansophontics on Midline Station, has invited you to Leverem's to discuss an assignment. Ylan Osprey, the subsector director of Pansophontics based in Quidsad, is coming for a visit to the station. Vanyar is anxious to make a good impression and is worried that Aaergian Refining will try to create problems during his visit. She would like you to make sure that things don't go wrong. Obviously this is a significant amount of work before and during his visit, and is willing to provide you company assistance to fix everything.

**Referee's Information:** Lots of things theoretically can go wrong for an assignment like this. Not everything will happen, but a selection of events to challenge the players is suggested. Slian Yllandran, the recently assigned assistant director of Pansophontics on Midline Station, is after Vanyar's job. He thinks he is far smarter than he is, and while he tries to hide his tracks it should be clear that there is an insider sabotaging things.

1. Vanyar's notes on production quotas and profitability have been altered so that they do not match what the section chiefs have.
2. While Osprey is visiting, a technician is bribed to damage a valve leading to a high pressure fluidics leak.
3. While Osprey is visiting Aaergian Refining arranges for some bleeders to waylay Vanyar and Osprey regarding some disputed (fake) payments.
4. An assassin has been hired to kill Osprey when leaving a meeting with freelance bleeders led by Jonah Black from Bleeders and Belters. They could have been hired by Clan Talon, Aaergian Refining (through many cutouts), an anti-psionic organization regarding Pansophontic psi drugs, or an outraged customer who feels wronged by the company.
5. False rumors of #4 are directed towards the players.
6. A deposit of 10,000 Cr is made into Vanyar's account from the House of Dhuzu. She knows nothing about it and isn't a gambler. Osprey receives an anonymous note about the deposit.
7. A false rumor about Vanyar's sexual exploits at Encounters is spread by an operative of El Chisme.
8. An accounting error is created to make it seem money is being paid to nonexistent freelance bleeders. The error is very recent and no money has actually gone out.
9. An engineer in fluidics handling has been paid 2500 Cr to noisily quit Pansophontics and badmouth Vanyar in front of Osprey. He is being hired by Aaergian Refining.
10. Classified shipping information is left where Osprey can find it and blame Vanyar for poor security.
11. A bomb is planted near the main fluidics transfer dock on Pansophontics refining module.
12. A batch of Pansophontics drugs are contaminated with a hallucinogen and released aboard station.

## **Salvaging Her Reputation**

**required:** liason, interrogate, admin, computers

**reward:** 5,000 Cr + the best mechanic on station as a contact

**Player's Information:** Ulithia, owner and operator of Ulithia's Parts and Salvage, arranges to meet the party at Arctic Chill. She is a well respected mechanic and proprietor aboard station, and she has recently purchased 5 tons of parts from Rick Wolder, XO of the freighter *Garrius Dash* that have turned out to be stolen. Major Ackbar doesn't believe her and wants to seize her shop for selling stolen goods; Ulithia wants the real criminals caught to clear her name and get Ackbar off her back.

### **Referee's Information:**

1. Wolder and the *Garrius* are being refit on Belpos-Bd2 at Orchithan station. They found the parts anchored in the asteroid field. While the players are nearby, some thugs come by to get their parts back and try to beat up Wolder and the party.
2. As #1, but Wolder works for the pirates Clan Talon. The thugs try to silence the party.
3. Wolder is a fake ID created by Wilson D'Alvarez; the *Garrius Dash* is real, but the XO never heard of Wolder. The person is a casual spacer named Hector Lastnam who was paid 500 Cr to impersonate Wolder for some guys he can't identify.
4. As #3, but the guys work for the well known pirates Clan Talon. They want to cut off the investigation of Lastnam first by bribery, then by murder.
5. Wolder is a rather poor fake ID created for a down on his luck belter named Thor Vesnan. The parts were stolen by him and his girlfriend who works on the hangar deck.
6. Wolder is real, but is actually a drug addicted former XO of the *Garrius Dash*. The *Garrius* is being refit on Belpos-Bd2 but the captain and current XO are there and tell the players about Wolder. He is trying to make one quick score and then buy passage to Doevit with the stolen money.

## **Cargrat's Revenge**

**required:** recon, interrogate, streetwise

**reward:** 20,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** A squad of station marines has found you and would like you to come in for questioning. Major Ackbar is rather upset. "Let me cut to the chase. Where's Cargrat? You know exactly who I mean, and don't give me any of your lip. I want him before this day is out, and if I find out you've been hiding him I promise to hunt you down anywhere in this damned Cluster!" While Cargrat may not be your favorite person, he's an established information broker aboard station but certainly not a typical target for a manhunt like this. Eventually Ackbar lets you go, but as you leave you notice several other of Cargrat's associates in line for or being questioned. They seem rather serious about finding him.

Two days later, they are still looking for him without success and a company of soldiers from Belpos-Bc has arrived as reinforcements. Strangely there are several rumors why Ackbar is looking for him but they are not the same story. But you have just received a message from Cargrat through an anonymous email. He wants to meet aboard a 50 ton cutter in one of the hangar bays. This is very unlike Cargrat whose preference for Arctic Chill or Leverem's is widely known. Then again, Ackbar's never turned the station upside down for him before.

**Referee's Information:** Cargrat is in a somewhat desperate situation. He wants to 1) clear his name; and 2) punish those framing him. He currently trusts the 2 men guarding the hangar and the party. While the players may not be his closest friends, they have worked for people in the past and not betrayed them. As many of the people Cargrat associates with would be willing to sell him out, this is a high recommendation. He's also willing to pay 10,000 Cr to clear him and an additional 10,000 Cr if the players can identify who's out to get him.

1. Cargrat is accused of helping to smuggle a nuke aboard station. No nuke has been found, but the authorities are not convinced the rumor is false. The Altrav have planted the rumor to draw attention from a 100 ton drug shipment going to Belpos-Bc.
2. Cargrat is accused of arranging a sale of nuclear missiles to Clan Talon. The Altrav as in #1 are responsible.
3. Cargrat is accused of having helped smuggle a bio-engineered virus onto the station for shipment to Briquitcho. Humaniti activists created the rumor.
4. The marines intercepted the bioengineered virus on the station on its way to Doevit and Banzen subsector. Captain Dimetri Ilgyarich of the freighter *Torraiden* smuggled the virus aboard and planted evidence making it appear Cargrat's responsible. Cargrat knows he works for Clan Talon. The buyer is the Sokoto Caliphate who wished to release it on the naval base in Briquitcho.
5. Plivenans on Belpos-Be have been found addicted to Ayorna and planted evidence suggests it was Cargrat organizing the shipping. It was really (Altrav or Clan Talon).
6. As #5, but Cargrat knows (Altrav or Clan Talon) was selling the Ayorna and he knows a major shipment to Belpos-Bd2 is likely to arrive aboard the freighter *Torraiden*.

## **Bleeding Edge**

**required:** admin, combat, computers

**reward:** 3000 credits

**Player's Information:** The adventurers are being sent to hangar C12 to investigate an anomaly with a bleeder cutter supposedly owned by one Vizen Thoriot. After several days of inactivity and their docking permit expiring, hangar personnel opened the hatches to find Thoriot dead from multiple stab wounds. Helen Teria was supposed to meet with him yesterday morning and wants to know why he's dead.

**Referee's Information:** Thoriot's real name is Boris Andressen, a former Humaniti operative wanted for several bombings of Plivenan hunting lodges on Belpos-Be from about 10 years ago. He's been on station for about 2.5 years and been earning a meager living as a bleeder selling to whomever was buying. He's always been a loner, usually pretty sullen, and has been having a string of underperformance for several months which he always blames on others.

1. Thoriot was recognized by Usep, a Plivenan supercargo who lost his parents in one of the bombings and decided to take his revenge personally.
2. Thoriot's logs show more hydrocarbon than he's been offloading on the station for the last 4 months. He was discovered by Clan Talon and has been paying them 25% of his cargo as blackmail for keeping quiet about his past. He was about to make a deal to turn himself in.
3. Thoriot was part of a scheme with 2 other bleeders and a Pansophontics cargomaster to report lower quality hydrocarbons and take a tax-free kickback. His partners killed him when he wanted out.
4. Thoriot planted a device on the outside of the station at Arctic Chill designed to release toxic hydrocarbons into the restaurant which he planted with the cutter. Several containers and prototypes are aboard his vessel in a locked stateroom along with a racist manifesto. He planned to deliver a manifesto denouncing Plivenans and other nonhumans after the bomb went off. He was killed by Vance Forzan, a new bridge traffic control officer after fighting over being stiffed 500 Cr for not reporting the odd cutter behavior.
5. Thoriot has recently been blackmailed by Clan Talon into smuggling Dyno aboard station based on his history which he was trying to escape. He was killed because he was going to out the blackmailers. The killers are still aboard to bring in a shipment of Dyno and find a replacement local agent.
6. Thoriot had gone clean and abandoned Humaniti extremists years ago, but was recently approached by some terrorists who want to poison Arctic Chill with hydrocarbons. He refused and was killed to keep him quiet and the terrorists are still out there.



## **Lost on Fenvid**

**required:** a starship, survival, recon, sensors

**reward:** 60,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Hartly, one of the lawyers from Hartly and Aiena, has invited you to Leverem's to discuss a mission for you. The megacorp Cosmic Defense Systems was testing a new sensor jamming technology on Fenvid-c1 when their science vessel was surprised by several unknown ships jumping into the system. They bugged out, but left a team on the planetary surface that was using their new jammer are stranded and out of contact. As they hadn't actually asked permission to do the testing, Belpos might have issues helping them. They would like you to quietly go to Fenvid and retrieve their technology and research team. By the time you can get there it will be 3 weeks after the science vessel left.

**Referee's Information:** There are 4 CDS employees on Fenvid: senior scientist Taylor Green, technician Samantha Black, avian pilot Heath Swiftwing, and naturalist/guard Edna Green (wife of Taylor Green). They were left with a slow modular cutter with a base module that had supplies for at least 6 weeks.

1. There are no other ships there, the cutter is safe and broadcasting, but 2 of the employees are separated from the ship due to creatures on Fenvid.
2. There are no other ships there, but the cutter is not visible on sensors and not answering hails. The original landing site is disturbed but the cutter is not there. They moved to a more secluded location when the science vessel left.
3. There are no other ships there. The cutter is there, but it has been trashed and the employees and jammer are missing. Evidence suggests Clan Talon took them to Matcedple.
4. There are no other ships there, and the cutter has been trashed. The employees and the scanner are hiding in caves on Fenvid with minimal supplies.
5. There is a CSS scout, the *Q'teth*, doing a routine search. They are not aware of any CDS cutter or pirate activity in the system. The cutter is trashed, and the crew are hiding in caves with minimal supplies.
6. An unknown freighter is in orbit around Fenvid-c (they are merely gathering fuel for a jump to Metcedple and are not looking for trouble. The cutter is not at the landing site and not answering hails. The original landing site is disturbed, and the crew moved to a safer location but the cutter engines are damaged and they are being pressed by creatures on Fenvid.

**In a Mood** (Psionic Device amplifying emotions randomly)

**required:** a starship, broker, liason

**reward:** 5,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** As you are walking down a corridor just outside of Enjoyamania, you suddenly notice that a reptilian you've never seen before is about to attack you. They angrily deny it, and shove you away. To the left, you see someone drawing a knife on you. This is getting ugly.

**Referee's Information:** They players are at the center of a riot, and numerous people are hurt with several near fatalities. While the players are recovering from their brawl, they hear about a night at Encounters turning into a night of... square dancing? General Allen meets with the players the next day in his office where he tells them that this is the 3rd instance of wildly inappropriate behavior on the station in the last week. A Hozinlid psion who was passing through reported a 'psionic disturbance' just as the square dancing event began. Midline Station doesn't have anyone competent in psionic matters. Allen wants you to go and fetch help from Papsap, a nearby system badly tainted (his words) by psionics. After negotiating payment (see below) they send William and Donna Farber back with you to work on the problem.

Payment demands (1d6)

1. 50 kCr plus turning any psionic individuals or equipment over to them.
2. 200 tons of unrefined hydrocarbons for a reduced price.
3. release of 3 psionics arrested on Belpos-Bd2 on faked charges.
4. acceptance of a dozen Papsian teens for university technical training on Belpos-Bc.
5. psionic enhancement drugs from Pansophontics.
6. permission to finally buy a TL11 defense module that has been bureaucratically stuck for over a year.

Situation

1. A docked freighter has imprisoned a Rutloid psionicist and driven them insane. She is broadcasting her emotions every time she regains consciousness.
2. An alien artifact is randomly broadcasting feelings every few days. A far trader captain doesn't realize what he has in his hold.
3. A private scientist is illegally demonstrating a vomeronasal hormone which amplifies a base emotion and wants to sell it to Pansophontics. A psionic was caught in the effect at Encounters and cannot escape his mind.
4. An unconscious bleeder stuck in a coma in a medbay is broadcasting psionically but cannot control it or move.
5. A teenage telepath is broadcasting uncontrollably and has been taught to hate psionics by her mother (because her father was a secret psionic).
6. A psionic Altrav agent is testing some airborne derivatives of Jain, looking for drugs which can induce particular emotions on a consistent basis. He monitors the effect psionically.

**Business Attire** (find Treach's fabric shipment)

**required:** combat, recon, admin

**reward:** custom equipment from Treach

**Player's Information:** As you are walking through the bazaar, Treach comes up to you and is looking rather haggard. He would like to buy you lunch at Leverem's to discuss a business proposition. Treach was paid a commission to design and make a set of custom wet suits for Oceanhome Industries merfolk executives on Astelrye. This is a high profile deal with a huge megacorp, and would provide excellent exposure for Treach in a large market. For the commission, Oceanhome sent 2 tons of waterproof nanofabric for holding the water in. The delivery was made 2 days ago, and when Treach went to collect some of the material to start work it was gone. The material is rather exotic and there is no way to obtain more of the material in time to finish the commission. Can the players find it for him?

**Referee's Information:**

1. The material was stolen by Clan Talon and is aboard the *Pegasus*, a 200 ton far trader heading for Matcedple.
2. The material was stolen by local criminals who have stashed it in a cargo bay on station. They are willing to sell it back, but the cost will strip Treach of the direct profits from the order.
3. The material was delivered, then stolen back by Captain Druvien of the heavy freighter *Osiris*. He wants to embarrass Oceanhome Industries for screwing him over on a major contract several years ago.
4. As #3, but Captain Druvien stole it back because it was fake material. His supercargo had replaced the real material with fake back on Astelrye and Druvien didn't want to admit to the foul-up aboard his ship.
5. The material was stolen by a rogue agent for Elitronics, a luxury goods megacorp. He is trying to make a name for himself but can't afford buying the real material. He has scheduled the stolen goods as cargo heading for Doevit in 3 days.
6. The material was stolen by thugs working for Asakagi, a Plivenan designer working in Old Ilasca on Belpos-Be. He is a rival of Treach, and they are well known enemies. The material left aboard the *Doris Day* for Belpos-Be and the ship was scheduled to land 2 hours ago.

**Bleeding Tourists** (inexperienced bleeders get into trouble)

**required:** a ship capable of entering Belpos-Bh atmosphere, engineering, mechanics

**reward:** 6,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** As you are approaching Midline Station from the far side of Belpos-Bh, you get a high priority call from Midline Traffic Control. A bleeding cutter registered to one Myokus R. Berryman, esq. has issued a mayday for anyone in the vicinity stating they have mechanical troubles. You are in a position to potentially help and are legally obligated to provide aid if possible without risking your own ship. Given the location of the ship, there may be some risk and while many would look upon you unfavorably as cowards there is little to no risk of prosecution for ignoring a distress call.

**Referee's Information:** Myokus is a dilettante who is more at home in the playboy social circuit than in the hardscrabble life of the bleeder. With each new passion, though, he throws himself into the activity with often reckless abandon. Such is the case with this mission to make a MCr find on Belpos-Bh. He has 2 crew, a very pretty and reasonably competent pilot Sandra Derruga originally from Belpos-Bc, and her friend Grovenor, an uplifted ape engineer who is only basically familiar with bleeding equipment but is a drinking companion of Myokus.

1. The situation is basically as presented. Mechanical and weather problems are the only issues.
2. The problems are real, but Sandra is really working for some kidnappers who want to ransom the boys back to their families. A second ship is responding to take them away.
3. As #1, but the ability of the players to carry out an efficient rescue has inspired Myokus to become one of them. He's an enthusiastic puppy-dog to the characters for about a month, interfering in any upcoming adventures, until a new passion takes him away.
4. Sandy and Grovenor are working together and have faked the trouble from the clueless Myokus. Their goal is to steal the rescuing ship and leave the Belpos system where they are wanted for a variety of cons and small-time crimes on Belpos-Bc.
5. By sheer dumb luck, they actually have a really good cargo of hydrocarbons. Their inexperience and poor abilities have made the weight of the cargo part of the problem and they don't want to lose their profits.
6. As #1, but Grovenor was badly injured in an accident aboard the cutter. Grovenor's family of Belpos-Bc is quite well known and are very grateful to the players. They are very put out with Myokus when they come to the Station after hearing about the trouble. Add a contact and potential future patron.

Note: if the players decide not to rescue the cutter, Grovenor will be badly injured and nearly die. His family makes trouble for the characters and they gain a rival.

**Snipe Hunt** (Sir Diariah Invalie's inexperienced nephew needs a babysitter)

**required:** survival, recon, combat, navigation

**reward:** 1500 Cr + expenses each plus a 'vacation'

**Player's Information:** You have been invited to meet with Sir Diariah Invalie at his Aergian Refining office. He has a proposition for you. His nephew Garvenus Invalie is visiting from Briquitcho next week and is interested in seeing the system. He's relatively young, and Sir Diariah is too busy to be with him the whole time. Would the players be interested in guarding/ accompanying him for 1 week on station and a week at his hunting lodge on Belpos-Bc? Sir Diariah will come and join him there 2 weeks after he arrives, and will pay for your return to the station.

**Referee's Information:** Garvenus is basically a walking trouble magnet, and he counts on money and position to get him out of jams on a regular basis. Various events can occur on station or planet at the referee's discretion and are not generally mutually exclusive. Additional events caused by Garvenus or the players are also possible.

#### On Station

1. Ninkyro Dantai has sent agents to collect back payments of 25,000 Cr from Garvenus for secrecy about an incident with a reptilian girl back on Briquitcho.
2. Garvenus likes spending time and quite a bit of money at the House of Dhuzu.
3. As #2, but he also likes to cheat. Too bad he's not good at cheating (or gambling).
4. Garvenus likes going to Encounters. He's popular there among the girls as well as the guys looking for an easy target to rob afterwards.
5. As #4, but Garvenus gets excited over Shaaltha, a reptilian girl working there who's not interested in him. He tries to get overly physical with her.
6. Kidnappers from Clan Talon try to take Garvenus to ransom him back to his father.

#### On Planet

1. Garvenus goes drinking and insults an uplifted mongoose. A bar fight ensues.
2. Garvenus wants to go out hunting in the jungle for a Jaguin to match the one on his uncle's wall. Too bad he has only minimal weapons and no survival training.
3. Garvenus wants to go on a 3 day camping trip in the jungles.
4. Garvenus gives Aalisha Ingeth (the slightly underage daughter of Aergian Refining's diplomatic liason Asiantha Ingeth) Jain at a party.
5. Garvenus tries to buy Jain from someone at a party. The police find out either because the dealer was an informant or he tries to give it to an undercover officer.
6. Fredrich Vinland, a rich, arrogant uplifted ape dilettante tries to give Garvenus dyno at a party as a joke. Garvenus doesn't see the humor in that, as dyno was engineered to be very addictive to reptilians and very painful to clear from their system.

## **Flight of the Raven** (Raven's eldest daughter goes missing)

**required:** recon, carouse, liason

**reward:** 500 Cr

**Player's Information:** Raven, the proprietor of Raven's restaurant, catches you for a quick request. Her daughter, Heran, 17, is missing since last night when she went out on a date with Egaret, a 23 year old avian occasional worker originally from Doevit. Raven doesn't really approve of Egaret (mostly because she thinks he's too old for her daughter), but also doesn't want to be too restrictive. Heran is the most rebellious of her daughters and has gotten into minor troubles aboard station (graffiti-level, nothing serious). Ace, the uplifted ape bouncer/utilityman in Raven's, doesn't like Egaret either (he hangs around other former Doevans, some of whom are getting deeper into petty crimes).

### **Referee's Information:**

1. Heran and Egaret are at an all-weekend party in one of the cheaper accommodations with the former Doevans. Heran claims to have left a note (which is news to the players). Jayelle (who really really doesn't like Egaret) took the note.
2. Heran and Egaret are scheduled to run off to Bantondock on Belpos-Bd2 aboard the *Camilla*. He's got a regular but minor job at the spaceport and is sure he can get Heran a job there too. Heran doesn't want her mom controlling her life anymore.
3. Egaret is found asleep outside of Encounters (not all that unusual) without ID or money. He was drugged. Heran was kidnapped by a couple of the Doevan punks who want money to get back home.
4. As #3, except Heran was kidnapped by some Humaniti terrorists who want to make a public example of what happens to aliens who don't belong in Belpos.
5. Jayelle tells the players that she saw Egaret kissing this other girl (she doesn't know who) a couple days ago. Egaret is at home after bringing Heran back home last night and seems very upset Heran's missing. The girl is an old flame of Egaret's who wants him back and has (along with a few friends) beaten Heran up. Heran doesn't know who attacked her and can be found in one of the far medbays unconscious.
6. Jayelle tells the players that she saw Egaret kissing this other girl (she doesn't know who) a couple days ago. Egaret is at home after bringing Heran back home last night and seems very upset Heran's missing. Egaret and his new girl have kidnapped Heran and want to get money to go back home to Doevit.

## **The Goodnight Kiss** (people being knocked out and robbed at Encounters)

**required:** recon, combat, medicine,

**reward:**

**Player's Information:** Tina Felena and Jihlofah Erastid have invited your group to discuss a matter of some urgency. This is odd already, as these two are the proprietors of competing dance clubs and are well known to prefer avoiding each other's company. If those two are working together it must be something important. Over dinner at Leverem's they tell you about half a dozen robberies of patrons of their clubs. They all have the same M.O.- the each of the 6 men wake up alone in an out of the way corridor with no valuables and no memory of the previous night. One had their bleeder ship ransacked, and one their hotel room. About 1/2 of the victims were out with friends and they report the guys had met a girl, but the girls varied in appearance and even species. The base officials aren't willing to do enough, so Tina and Jihlofah have decided to pool their resources and hire you to find the people responsible and either bring them in yourselves or get security to arrest them. Just so long as the attacks stop- it's starting to affect business and keep people away from the clubs.

**Referee's Information:** The women are using a skin-permeable version of rohypnol which knocks the person out and leaves them with fragmented memories. It is relatively slow acting, and is can be neutralized by an inhibitory antibody if taken within 15 minutes. It works on humans, avians, and felines, but not other species. Security has video footage of 2 women going into the bleeder vessel *Positive Thoughts* as well as the hotel room. 3 women (one tallish brunette, one short avian, and one medium height blonde who was in both videos) were recorded, but no physical evidence was found.

1. These 3 women are down on their luck and have been abused by more than one man. They've decided to take their own revenge and don't really care if they get caught or not. They don't have much to lose. They are planning on leaving for Belpos-Bc in less than 2 weeks to restart operations there and have already purchased tickets aboard the *Doris Day*.
2. There are actually 5 women aboard the Far Trader *Ladies Night*, an all female crew who heard about the scam on Matcedple and figured it would work even better in Belpos. They bought the drug and antidote there, and have collected a fair bit of loot aboard their freighter. They are prepared to leave if they fear capture, and plan to pick up again on Doevit or elsewhere coreward when they have to leave.
3. This is a new approach being tested by Clan Talon where the 3 women are working with 2 guys (the leader is the blonde woman). They have a bleeding cutter that has never been down to the planet but is filled with loot that will be taken to Belpos- Bd2 soon.
4. As 3, but there are 5 guys in charge who have beaten/cowed the women into finding marks. Avian in the video is in charge and cross dresses as a disguise. They have a Far Trader *Westwind* loaded with hydrocarbons and are ready to make their escape with their loot as a bonus.
5. As #4, but the party gets word one of the women wants to turn herself in. The blonde woman turns up dead near where she was supposed to meet them.
6. The brunette woman in the video is in charge and is a member of Ninkyro Dantai originally from Briquitcho. Women are coming from Belpos-Bc and being used for 2-3 jobs before they earn their ticket home so the new bait is unfamiliar in appearance. She is staying in a moderately nice residential area with her husband. They hire out local muscle as needed, and have been converting the loot into credits at the House of Dhuzu. They will flee after one attempt using muscle to stop the investigations.

## **Ayorna**

**required:** ship, combat skills, interrogate, streetwise

**reward:** 15,000 Cr (+ possibly contacts)

**Player's Information:** Vianci, the Plivenan owner of Arctic Chill, has invited you in for a free meal to discuss a job for him. There is a drug called Ayorna that was originally found on Pliven-Ad in the companion system to the Plivenan homeworld (Pliven-Bg). It causes an intense euphoria followed by a strong anger/depression when Plivenans are coming down off the drug that can lead to violent outbursts. It only affects races that like the cold due to a biological quirk found in several races, and so the majority of the Cluster doesn't care about Ayorna. Several Plivenans on station have found the very addictive drug, and even Captain Garoni, the Plivenan officer in charge of the fighter wing on Midline Station, can't commit enough forces (although he is likely to help with information or once enough evidence is found).

### **Referee's Information:**

1) The Ayorna is being provided by Clan Talon directly from Pliven to some miscreants on Midline Station. It is carried by whomever Clan Talon pays or blackmails.

2) The Ayorna is being brought in by operatives for Altrav, the largest drug smuggling organization in the Cluster. The source is a reptilian marine corporal who distributes the drug on station after receiving it from whomever the Altrav sends.

3) The Ayorna is being produced by the Altrav, but it is being produced on Belpos-Ab3 for distribution in the Pliven subsector. They have a fairly substantial operation, and the Marine corporal source on Midline wasn't supposed to be selling it. He will be killed when the investigation gets close to him.

4) A human engineer on the Pansophontics heavy transport *Foravera* is bringing it on station every ~6 weeks from Pliven through Trepy/Ribdoelav jumps. It is being distributed on Midline Station by common thugs.

5) It is being grown/distributed from Doevit-Af and being transported wherever Plivenans live. It is coming in through the Altrav to a marine corporal and they have a substantial installation producing it there. Doevit doesn't really care about Ayorna as they have no Plivenans. The CSS and CNF will help though.

6) The Ayorna is being produced by a small group of independents on Belpos-Ab3 who have started shipping it in the local area around the Cluster. The Altrav have become interested as well and want to take it over (preferably) or eliminate it. They pay much better than Viandi.



**Sophie's Choice** (runaway rich girl wants help erasing her tracks)

**required:** admin, advocate, computers,

**reward:** 5,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Jason Twyllick, owner of the Far Trader *Argo's Treasure*, has a proposition for you. He is in love with Sophie Bollenth, a debutante daughter of Carl and Helen Bollenth, who came to Belpos-Bc with 3 friends. Jason and Sophie got involved with one another at Encounters-Duzhuville and want to elope together. Unfortunately Sophie's parents are determined to prevent her from 'making a terrible mistake'. They have gotten the *Argo's Treasure* banned from Belpos-Bc, but Jason and Sophie haven't given up and have been sneaking messages to one another through mutual friends. Jason wants you to retrieve Sophie and bring her to Midline Station so they can leave together.

**Referee's Information:**

1. Sophie and Jason really are in love. Helen Bollenth is a senior executive for Ogrenth Industries and wants her daughter to marry someone suitable. She will bug Sophie to keep track of her and hire a squad of Pulsar mercenaries to bring her back.
2. As above, but Helen Bollenth is a minor executive for Ogrenth Industries and a senior operative of El Chisme. She will work to discredit any who try to hide Sophie and will seek to destroy Jason and his ship.
3. Sophie loves Jason but is actually a fraudster who is trying to escape gambling debts. Thugs will do their best to make her, Jason, or anyone who helps them pay up.
4. One of Sophie's friends is actually in lust with Jason. She is the one who notified Sophie's parents about Jason and keep her parents informed regarding current plans and they seem to know what is happening well before it happens. The players are always one step behind until Sophie's friends are cut out of the loop.
5. Sophie and Jason are in love, but her parents know that Doyle Chathar, Sophie's recently dumped fiancée, is psychotic and has vowed to get Sophie back. He has lots of money, and will pay Pulsar mercenaries or bounty hunters good money to bring her back to him.
6. Sophie is a plant for Clan Talon. They want to hijack the *Argo's Treasure* by getting early notice of their itinerary. Helen and Carl Bollenth are not really related to her and are also Clan Talon operatives.

## **Kirsten's Kidnap**

**required:** carouse, streetwise, combat

**reward:** 10,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Joel Atkinson, a youngish passenger aboard the luxury yacht *Gotzmine*, wants to meet you at Leverem's for a job. Joel's friend, Kirsten Olanski, didn't come back to the ship last night after a gambling outing at House of Duzhu on station. Normally this isn't a big deal as the 4 friends from Astelrye often come back to the ship late or with a friend or 2, but this time Joel got an anonymous letter handed to him by a kid. The note says Kirsten has been kidnapped and they need to pay 100,000 Cr to the House of Duzhu or they'd send Kirsten back piece by piece. They gave a class ring from Briquitcho University as proof they have him, a ring Kirsten always wore. Joel wants you to find him.

**Referee's Information:** The 4 friends are Joel, Kirsten, Duke Valias, and Hioshi Yakijima and have known each other since grade school. They have traveled frequently together during school breaks, and this is a graduation trip together to one of their favorite destinations. There are 2 station girls aboard *Gotzmine* (party types typically found at Encounters) along with an older Captain and a longtime steward for Joel. They needed to stop at Midline Station as they need to hire an engineer as the last one quit after Hioshi grabbed her rear one too many times (they tease him about this a lot).

1. Kirsten was kidnapped by a local group of poor men Kirsten's age, one of whom is a dealer at House of Duzhu. They have low end weapons, but don't really have the stomach for killing. He is being held in one of the gang's quarters on station.
2. Kirsten arranged his own kidnapping after his family lost a lot of money and he blew the rest gambling last night. He doesn't want to admit he's out of money and want his friends to bail him out. He's hiding in Steven's Hostel.
3. Kirsten was kidnapped by Astal Ruthi, a Belpos citizen and a Plivenan, who smuggled him aboard the *Camilla* and took him to Belpos-Bd2. The local contact is a Ssetha Fasar, a reptilian waitress at House of Duzhu who passes information to Astal on Belpos-Bd2. Kirsten is being held in a remote area of Bantondock by Astal and some friends.
4. As #1, but Clan Talon has heard about the kidnapping and want to find Kirsten too. Unlike the local gang, they are better armed and perfectly willing to kill for the ransom.
5. Kirsten was kidnapped by Daphne Galar, a very cute but down on her luck engineer who owes money to House of Dhuzu. She and her crewmates aboard the free trader *Juan's Burro* drugged Kirsten and have him aboard ship while they are looking for cargo. They plan to pay off their Duzhu debts and take the money out on Ribdoelav before going far away.
6. Kirsten won 100,000 credits at House of Duzhu and left with 2 party girls to go to Midline Swingers. He is tied up at Midline Econoclub and is missing his ring and 20,000 Cr. He is found after 3 days, is very cranky about the girls and losing the credits. The party girls skipped station to Belpos-Bc aboard the *Alma-G*, but Kirsten would rather forget the whole thing and just leave as soon as they can hire a new engineer.

**Fencing Lesson** sell a (likely) stolen sword

**required:** broker, streetwise, advocate

**reward:** 15% of the sale price

**Player's Information:** You are approached by an old acquaintance who knows you are established on station. They haven't been around lately, and they have acquired an unusually shaped rare sword that's nearly 10 centuries old and designed to be wielded 1 or 2 handed. The sword is a Febwopbian Canthar, a culturally historical weapon from the center of the Cluster in 6,5-Rostit. They figure Belpos is a system where a rich buyer can be found discreetly and want your help and protection while making the sale.

**Referee's Information:**

1. The sword was a gift to a human royal line and was lost in space. It's worth 30,000 Cr and several people want it.
2. As #1, but the sword wasn't lost- it was stolen from a museum. The legality of the weapon is called into question after the sale and your friend (and you) are being called in to make good.
3. As #1, but the sword is a fake, and your friend didn't know. He's out quite a bit of money on the fiasco.
4. As #1, but the sword is a fake, and your friend built it up. The forgery is discovered after the sale and he (and you) are being hounded to recoup the money.
5. As #1, but the sword wasn't given to the royal line, it was stolen. A Febwopbian historicist wants the weapon returned to his possession for return to Febwopbun and is using legal representation to get it.
6. As #5, but the agent is acting outside the law. It wants the weapon for itself as the high point of it's personal weapon collection. Operatives from Jorgasian Auctions are also interested in acquiring the sword and will buy it if they can't obtain it otherwise.

## **The Time and Place**

**required:** recon, streetwise, carouse, combat

**reward:** 6,000 Cr

**Player's Information:** Helen Terria has arranged a meet for you at Aquatica with Captain Victoria Oceanus, commander of the CNS destroyer *Invictus*. The CNS suspects that a visiting trader, Gordon Halmedy, is actually arranging a rendezvous between a pirate frigate and a freighter, but they don't know where or when or who the contact(s) are. Halmedy is staying in Midline Econoclub and is ticketed to leave for Astelrye in 4 days. They would like you to obtain that information so the CNS can join the party.

### **Referee's Information:**

1. The meeting will take place in orbit around Belpos-Ad, an ice giant in the sparsely populated companion system. The *Invictus* is slightly damaged but is victorious.
2. As #1, but the pirate vessels are also joined by the notorious pirate Cruiser *Brigantine*, flagship of Clan Talon. The *Invictus* is heavily damaged but manages to escape in system with serious loss of face. Captain Oceanus is killed, but the Navy wonders if the players betrayed them.
3. Halmedy is actually a plant working for the CSS. The two agencies are chasing their own tail.
4. The meeting will supposedly take place near an asteroid in Belpos-Bf. Hamedy planted this information, though, and nobody shows up. Some thugs attempt to maim/kill the players, though, unless they were VERY careful not to be noticed.
5. Hamedy arranges a meeting as #1 above, but the 2 ships are actually simply legal traders avoiding docking fees (which is perfectly legal in Belpos). The players get reputation points for finding the information; Oceanus is disappointed she didn't get to fight pirates.
6. Hamedy is a pirate facilitator, but the goal is to assassinate Oceanus who is too aggressive for pirate comfort. Once the players obtain the information in #1, Oceanus is targetted for assassination on station (along with the players) and Halmedy tries to disappear. No pirates appear at the rendezvous.

## Scout's Honor

**required:** carouse, liason, fighting

**reward:** future considerations

**Player's Information:** Helen Terria is concerned. The 100 ton scoutship *CSS Hailey's Comet* has 'misplaced' their commander, Scout Theresa Galleon. The engineer, avian Keltia Lightwing, hasn't heard from her for 48 hours. Helen would like you to look into the situation, and is willing to provide you assistance in the future should you need it.

**Referee's Information:** Keltia's last contact with Theresa was a simple voice call, where she said she was going to 6th World Trading to pick up some paints (painting landscapes is a hobby of hers- Keltia can show some of them and she's fairly good). They were scheduled to jump for Roytilfra this morning, but Theresa never showed. Theresa often goes to Encounters for her last night in port and Keltia thought she must have found someone interesting and would be back soon. She's not always good about coming back to the ship every night, but she had never missed a departure before and she always calls in. They have been jumping around the 4 corners area where Briquitcho, Banzen and Pilven's spheres of influence overlap looking for potential smuggling operations.

1. Theresa did go to Encounters, where she left rather early with Palver Byarski, captain of the free trader *FarAway* and has a questionable reputation. (a bouncer at Encounters thought it odd for a Scout to leave with him). Theresa overheard Byarski making arrangements to sell Jain to someone in the club but got caught overhearing by one of the *FarAway* crew. Byarski took her away at gunpoint back to the ship for interrogation to find out what she knows. She has been roughed up but is otherwise still captive there while the crew looks for some truthtell serum before disposing of her.
2. At 6th World Traders Theresa stumbled upon some unusual dyes that she recognized as stolen merchandise from Doevit. When she tried to get out, some thugs grabbed her and took her to a less frequented hangar to find out if she's told anyone. They have truthtell coming from Belpos-Bc that should come in a day or 2.
3. As #2, but she put a note in her comm unit (which she hid in 6th World Traders and can be pinged for location) about what she found. Her dead body (without id or comm unit) is found in a hangar during the investigation.
4. As #2, but she is being interrogated to find out if she knows about Byarski and the freighter *FarAway* which is expected to deliver another selection of stolen merchandise from Doevit in 2 days.
5. Theresa went off with Vance Ravishing, a pilot attached to the *Flytrap* which is currently at Midline Station. Ravishing took her off-station against regs in a boarding shuttle where they could be alone for a while. They developed engine trouble and didn't want to get Ravishing in trouble so didn't report their situation.
6. Theresa's comm unit is found at Encounter's women's room with a picture of someone who turns out to be Byarski, the captain of the *FarAway* from #1, and a single whispered word- Jain. Theresa's body is found not far from Encounters and Byarski is trying to get away on the *FarAway*.

## Ice Age

**required:** a ship, survival, combat, cold weather gear, medicine, admin

**reward:** 500 Cr per rescued tourist, 10,000 Cr reward for identifying the cause of the crash

**Player's Information:** During an otherwise routine visit to Belpos-Bd2, the government issues an emergency announcement. A Poliva cruise liner, the *Winter Star*, has crash landed in a nature preserve near the south pole of Belpos-Bd2 less than 3 hours after taking off from Bantondock, coordinates attached. Ships are being organized from around the moon, but the freezing temperatures and lack of breathable atmosphere make immediate rescue imperative. All ships in the area are requested to provide immediate aid and will be compensated appropriately.

**Referee's Information:** The *Winter Star* was carrying a total of 60 tourists. There is no response to radio hails, and radar flight control noticed a trajectory change 7 minutes before the ship went down. Emergency beacon is activated, and comes from the supplied coordinates. 4d6 tourists are dead, another 6d6 injured. Some breather units and vacuum suits were damaged, and others inaccessible after the crash. The ship itself is hazardous, with damaged electrical equipment, sparking wires, etc.

1. The *Winter Star* was attacked by pirates aboard the vessel who accidentally damaged the bridge. They will be desperate to leave before the authorities show up and will try to commandeer the rescue vessel.
2. Shoddy maintenance and poor records at the budget port led to the *Winter Star's* crash. The owners of the liner were responsible. Medical and survival gear is past date.
3. Contaminated fuel from the budget Bantondock port caused the fusion reactor to malfunction. The *Winter Star's* engineer noticed a power problem and the Captain tried to land, but the fusion reactor spiked and fried the computer and controls. Emergency supplies are distributed, but many areas are cut off from easy access. 25,000 tons of hydrogen at Bantondock need repurified because 2 drunk (former) technicians didn't do their jobs.
4. Same as 3, but radiation alarms are going off aboard ship, and half of the injured/un-injured survivors have abandoned the wreck site to escape the radiation. Unshielded individuals are receiving 3d6 rads per hour within 100m of the crash site. Belpos will supply anti-rad drugs for survivors and rescuers alike.
5. Terrorists set of a bomb aboard the *Winter Star* and were caught in the blast themselves. When rescued (half remaining terrorists are injured), they attempt to sneak into engineering to plant a relatively small bomb in the M-Drive. They threaten to blow up the rescue vessel unless they are transported out-system (if jump equipped) or to a waiting freighter (if not).
6. Same as 2, plus small predators are hunting the survivors and rescuers alike. A few rifles are available to the refugees, but most are unarmed. The predators are attracted to warmth and movement.

## **Firewater**

**required:** admin, carouse, recon, combat

**reward:** 2,500 Cr

**Player's Information:** One of the 3 reptilian owners of Ethanolics (Slanth, Sylvester, and Earl) approaches the players with a proposition. A recent inventory has revealed a moderate, but widespread shortage of booze compared to what should be there. He wants you to find the culprit and bring him/her/it back to them to recover as much booze/money as possible and put a stop to the losses. He's more interested in being repaid than having the thief punished.

### **Referee's Information:**

1. A Plivenan manager (Oythink Crysst) has been paying off gambling debts to the House of Dhuzu. He's been supplying booze to Fanik Theeonen, a manager at Buckaneer Bar, but he can't seem to pay off his full debt. The most recent batch of liquor (ie. the missing bottles) is in Cargo bay B13. Several thugs are there unloading it when the players go to recover the bottles and a fight ensues.
2. Ethanolics is being consistently shorted by the quartermaster Jack Inthabox aboard the freighter *Betty Ford*. Cargrat knows he is selling to Fanik Theeonen, and is accumulating the profits in a MIB account.
3. Ethanolics accountant Yander Finch has been cooking the books, saying he's buying more than he actually is. Yander hires several Pulsar mercs to help him escape when he realizes his scheme has been discovered. Yander himself is a coward.
4. Dockworkers have been marking Ethanolics shipments for several months and appropriating boxes of booze for their pleasure. They are not happy at being discovered and want to take it out on the players physically. Ethanolics wants to be repaid by someone.
5. Earl's girlfriend, Essther, copied the key to the storeroom and has been stealing cases from the store for a few months with some thug helpers. She will be trying to get off-station before getting caught.
6. A human manager at Ethanolics (Sasha vanWarner) has been redirecting cases of booze to her brother's bar in Xin Macau on Belpos-Bc. Her boyfriend (Gordon Ulander) is an engineer aboard the freighter *Camilla* and takes the cases off station but doesn't know they are stolen. He thinks Sasha is buying the booze legally and trying to sneak it back to Belpos-Bc.