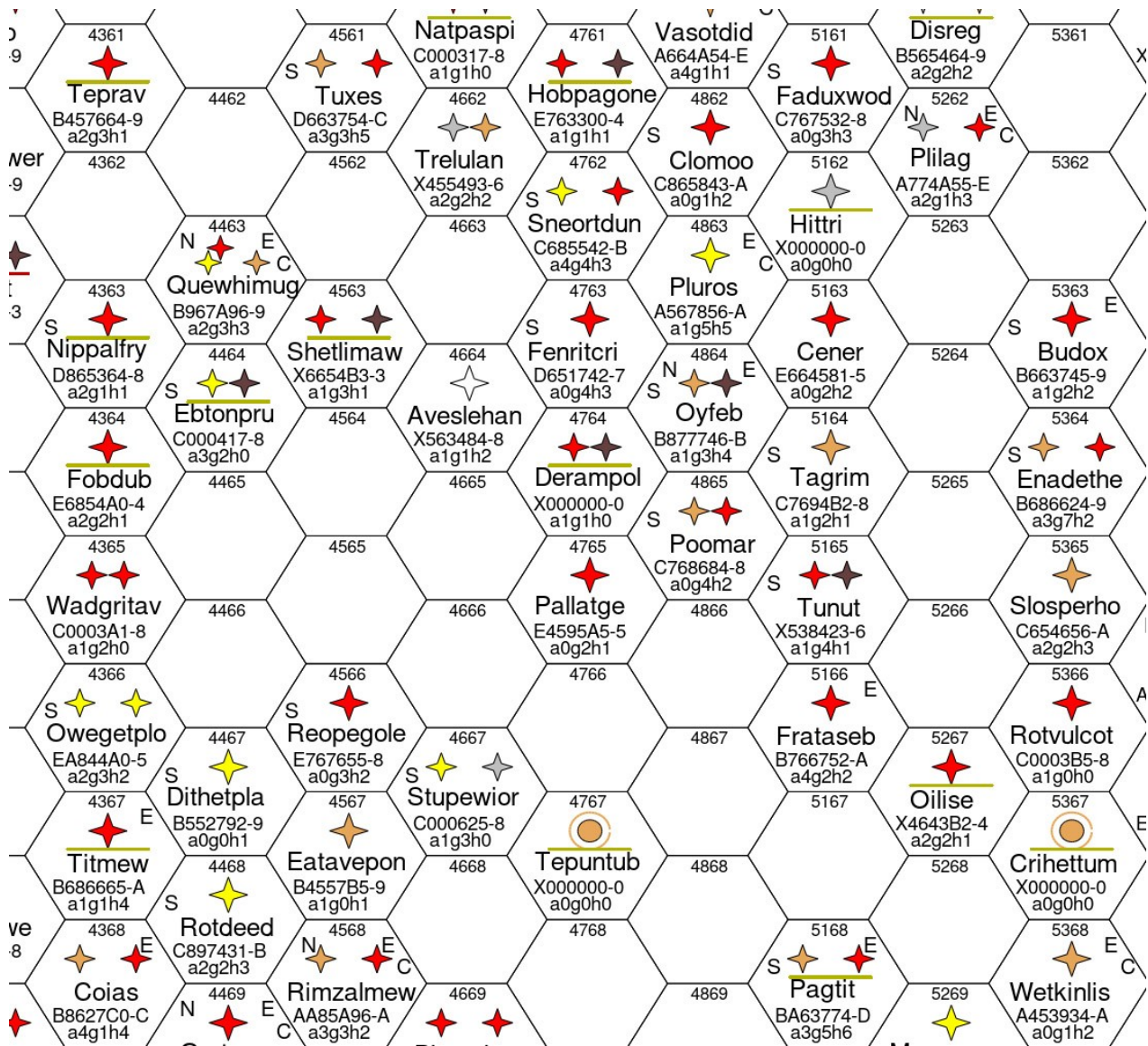


Mind Games

The Favor

Valarma Asject (operations officer of the Tagrim scout base at (1,4) in [4,5]Plilag subsector) has a problem. She needs a priority shipment of 2 tons of advanced machine parts sent to Pallatge at (7,5) in the [4,6]Rimzalmew subsector and doesn't have any ships to send. She will pay you triple the normal rate for a priority cargo (15,000 credits total), but there are some issues. First, you won't be able to pick up any new cargo on Pallatge as the observation post there is clandestine. They have a high percentage of psions there, and if they find out about the observation post things are likely to become dicey. Secondly, neither Tagrim nor Plilag (the pocket empire you are currently in) really supports the purpose of the observation post. They would actually prefer seeing it abandoned, so local captains couldn't be trusted to carry out the mission. The CSS has a concealed psychological research station on planet to study their independently evolving culture, but the station's psionic shield is failing and they need new parts. If repairs are not done soon, the station will lose shielding and be abandoned.



The population of Pallatge was manipulated and bred by Plilag in pre-Confederation days to have a high psionic potential. The genetic engineering and selective breeding which increased the likelihood of psionics also subtly changed their pheromone system such that unaltered humans anger them literally by their smell (or lack of it, nobody's quite sure). Because they were manipulating psionic humans, they became a very small core group of psions and a collection of likely mates to produce psionic offspring isolated on a mostly uninhabited planet. The subjects became completely isolated when Plilag began fighting with their neighbors (again), and for as yet unexplained reasons Pallatge abandoned most of the technology originally left on the planet. Over the next 400 years or so they have developed their own techno-psionic society and are in the middle stages of an industrial revolution. A charismatic leader runs a tight organization of island city-states, but technology is suspect and advanced technology is actively discouraged. They definitely seem to prefer a low tech society of sailing/diesel vessels on their mostly water world.

Pallatge is aware of the Confederation, but the class E 'starport' is more an emergency stopover point and humans aren't really desired there. It's a smell thing. They want minimal contact, but several nearby pro-psionic worlds (Resest and Wetkinlis) want to learn more about how their society is mixing psionics and technology. The CSS has a heavily shielded observation post hidden in a cliff on an isolated island well away from their main populated atolls and island chains. They are studying the culture using stealth probes, orbital monitoring and technological spying without local knowledge. Unfortunately Plilag, the dominant pocket empire here (just barely) is actively uninterested in the research but unwilling to create a major fuss as politically it would not be worth it. Jury-rigged repairs to the psionic shield are holding as of last week, but new parts are essential. Communicating from orbit with the base is easy for a TL11+ ship as the planet doesn't understand mesons at all. Essentially the goal is to bring down the new parts through a large hangar and depart several days later unseen. The hangar can handle up to 500 tons of spacecraft and ship size should not be an issue.

The Opposition

Plilag is distinctly psi- hostile these days, and doesn't really want others digging around too much regarding their former experimental colony. As such, they would be happy seeing the observation post abandoned. Tagrim is also psi-hostile, so nobody there particularly wants to help Pallatge. It isn't worth a real fight, but Wetkinlis regularly brings the former colony up as a point of contention between the pocket empires. CSS has so far supported the continued study of Pallatge's independent development, but only if the base can remain unobserved.

The Observation Station

Scout Soldin Quinval will respond quickly to any meson hail, and even more quickly to radio communications. He doesn't really want to attract planetary attention and emphasizes ONLY meson comms should be used anywhere on Pallatge. After a 45 minute wait to allow a dirigible to exit the area, your ship is cleared to come in over the sea observing radio silence.

The 500 ton hangar has a 200 ton far trader freighter, a modular cutter, and a fast launch inside, all with a stealth coating to limit detection. Fuel refueling from sea water (40 tons/day) provides essentially unlimited hydrogen for refueling and power. 2 technicians are waiting anxiously in the hangar to collect the new parts under the watchful eye of an old marine and the station chief, ensign Rachel Yannat. She is concerned about the equipment, and while unloading is taking place asks you to come with her. Given the low gravity of 0.35g, getting around is going to take practice for those not used to low gravity conditions.

Once you are alone with ensign Yannat, she tells you that since the scout vessel left 2 weeks ago, the outpost discovered that the psionic shield had been cleverly sabotaged. The quantum fluxulator was slowly degrading due to an intentional short circuit over time and would fail completely in 3-4

weeks. Another ship was sent to Tagrim 5 days ago with this information, but clearly your ships crossed en route. There are only 9 people on the station, and she doesn't know who to trust. Only Helena Forvin, the technician who found the sabotage, and Rachel know the sabotage happened (plus presumably the person who carried it out). Ensign Yannat wants to trust Rachel's best friend Uluala, but doesn't understand Eatavapan psychology to fully trust her. Therefore, you and your crew are drafted to investigate.

Station Personnel

Rachel Yannat- ensign (67B966) is smart and quick, but relatively inexperienced. 25 years old and trained in human cultures, she is young for an independent command but her skills matched the job so well she was given the opportunity. She is not very technically skilled, but is a good leader and judge of people. skills: science-0 (social science-2), leadership-1, admin-1, diplomacy-1, advocate-1, animal-0, art-0, medicine-0, gun combat-0

Garan Al'Sisri- marine staff sergeant (999666) (age 53) by the book, but older and ready to retire. He does his job, relaxes when he can, but is not a high pressure guy and is looking forward to finishing his last term. Likes 'the officer kid' well enough, but doesn't really think she is mature enough to command her own mission. He's frustrated with Widdershins, but that kid's still green and doesn't know what the eff he's doing. skills: vacc suit-2, gun combat-0 (energy rifle-1), melee-0 (sharp weapon-2), recon-0,

Joe Widdershins- marine private (8A7455) 19 years old is in his first term, and hates the post with a passion. Nobody to see, hardly anyone to talk to, and Boring with a capital B. He is quite attractive, and will try to seduce any woman aboard the ship who will have him. The Ensign Yannat doesn't think he's qualified (he barely is) and Helena smacked him hard enough to get herself a reprimand when Joe made a forceful pass at her, so he is out of other options here. skills: athletics-0, vacc suit-0, tactics-0, heavy weapons-0, gun combat-0 (energy rifle-1), stealth-0, carouse-0, computers-0

Scout- Soldin Qinval (5856A6) is the senior technician (age 49) and a grouch. He doesn't like people in general and prefers machines, which is why he's actually fairly content on such a small station. He takes the condition of the psionic shield personally and bristles at any suggestion that maintenance wasn't up to snuff. He knows that someone overrode the lock mechanism to the engineering access panel at some point, but hasn't told the Commander because she originally blamed him (and hasn't publicly changed that since she wants to hide the sabotage). He has been conducting his own investigation secretly and suspects one of the scientists because Helena wouldn't have had to override the lock and is a 'good youngster, but still green'. He will share his findings with another engineer type who approaches him. skills: melee-0 (unarmed combat-1), engineering-0 (power plant-1, maneuver drive-1), comms-1, sensors-0 (remote operations-2), electronics-0 (robotics-2), computers-0, mechanic-2, engineering-0.

Scout Gordon Halvers (4669C8) a 35 year old sociologist with expertise in Sophontology and Psychology. He is exceedingly interested in these adapted psions and how they are living, and has served here for 5 years. He is personally very guarded, but will go on at length about the people themselves, how its development is at a critical stage in the evolution between violence and non-violence, and how critical it is that they not be disturbed by the larger galaxy. He strongly believes that the base should be shut down and will say so very openly. He was serious enough about the non-interference to sabotage the psionic shield to force the base to shut down. He has many notes to write up, and he can do that at the University on Wetkinlis (his home) as easily as on base. If the base is repaired, he will try to sabotage the generator again. His personal notes emphasize how the culture

must not be disturbed, and he has communicated this to several colleagues if his computer is searched. He sends, by far, the most mail to others back home. skills: science-0 (social science-3 life science-1), computers-1, advocate-0, mechanic-1, carouse-0, pilot-0 (small craft-1), gun combat-0, electronics-0 (robotics-1).

Specialist Bill Gleason (9778A7-5) is 27 years old and only joined the staff here 3 months ago after just finishing his masters. He thinks that Halvers is probably right that the culture needs protection, but usually takes the devil's advocate position because Halvers is very emphatic about keeping them isolated. He is more intrigued by the idea that they should be psionically contacted while minimizing physical interaction so that they can be more easily integrated into stellar society. While honest, he trusts Gordon implicitly and, if shown evidence of the crime, he will act reluctantly. skills- science-0 (social science- 2, life sciences-1), admin-0 computer-0 engineering-0 (power plant-1), electronics-0.

Specialist Hujari (666996) is 49 years old and miserable here. He has a gambling problem and took this post as a temporary place to avoid some angry losers, but is suffering because nobody here gambles. He is OK at psychology, but is more interested in genetic engineering rather than the society itself. He is very frustrated that the CSF will not allow him to collect genetic samples here on Pallatge, and is still fighting for permission. He can't wait until his term finishes and he can finally go somewhere with a real social life (and a House of Dhuzu close by). skills: science-0 (social science-1, life science-2), gambler-1, deception-1, melee-0, art-0, carouse-0, liason-0

Specialist Uluala, an Eatavepan female 35 years old and Helena's closest friend. She does her best to fit in, but her socialization was mostly with other Eatavepans and isn't always the best at showing her feelings. She very much likes and respects Ensign Yannat, and will defend her vehemently. Uluala is also the doctor of the group. She is less sure that keeping the planet unaware of stellar society (the larger clan) is a good thing, but humans think very differently and psions make it even more complicated. Skills: science-0 (life sciences-1, social sciences-1), linguistics-0, electronics-0, admin-0, medic-1

Eatavepan

The Eatavepans of Eatavepon-c (UWP B4557B5-9) are derived from omnivore-hunter stock. [Eatavepon-c](#) is located in the [\[4,6\] Rimzalmew subsector](#) at location X-5 Y-7.

They breathe air and are small in size, standing 75+4d6 cm tall and weighing 24+3d6 kg. They are bilaterally symmetric, have 2 genders, and reproduce by bearing their young.

They have 4 limbs, 2 of which are arms and 2 of which are legs.

Using their limbs, they are able to move at 4.5 meters per second on land.

The race matures at age 14, has 20 years in its prime, then begins aging with a +1 DM modifier.

Their primary characteristic scores are:

Str: 1d6 Dex: 3d6-1 End: 2d6-2 Int: 2d6 Edu: 2d6+1 Soc: 2d6 Psi: 2d6

In terms of senses, their vision is human norm, hearing is better than human, and scent is better than human.

These sophonts have the following special traits:

- gravity intolerance: gives a -2 DM in normal gravity, -4 DM in high gravity
- low gravity adaptation: automatically adapted to low gravity environments

- slow speed: species moves at a slower speed than humans (less than 6 m/sec)
- good first impression: causes immediate, temporary friendly attitude due to appearance/odor
- major unusual life support requirement: requires a particular substance or will die from dehydration equivalent
- well traveled: gives a +2 DM on liason checks due to cultural familiarity

Apprentice Helena Forvind (465885) 22 years old, quiet and self contained, she chose this assignment so she could work on a holoview screenplay (which isn't very good). She is technically competent and is afraid to talk to anyone on station other than Uluala about what she knows regarding the sabotage. Generally shy and mousy, she really doesn't like Joe and got a reprimand for slapping him when he wouldn't take no for an answer. skills: art-0, computers-0, mechanic-1, engineering-0, electronics-0, remote operations-0, sensors-0

