

**ADVANCE  
ON  
SEQUETUS  
3**

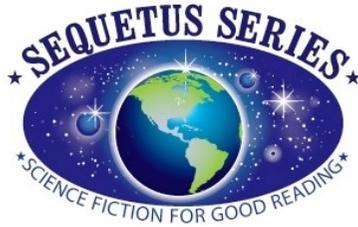
**Nick  
BROADHURST**

**The first book in the NEW EARTH  
MINISERIES and the first book in  
the epic SEQUETUS SERIES**

**BOOK 1**

N I C K   B R O A D H U R S T

***ADVANCE on SEQUETUS 3***  
***Preparation Earth***



**BOOK 1**

**By Nick Broadhurst**

Published by Sequetus Publishing

Copyright 2013 - 2019 Nick Broadhurst

**Sequetus.net Edition, License Notes**  
**Revised for updating the story July 2019**

Thank you for downloading this eBook. This book remains the copyrighted property of the author and may not be redistributed to others for commercial or non-commercial purposes. If you enjoyed this book, please encourage your friends to download their own copy from their favorite authorized retailer.

## DISCLAIMER

The SEQUETUS SERIES, the NEW EARTH MINISERIES and ADVANCE ON SEQUETUS 3 are works of fiction. Names of individuals and companies used in the book, unless historical fact, are pure fiction.

## THE SEQUETUS SERIES GLOSSARY

### BOOKMARKS

Part of this volume is a chapter named *Glossary*, a list of terms and words and what they mean. When a word in the glossary is first used in the story it is shown *like this*. (Note these are colored). These are bookmarked to take you to the word definition in the Glossary. The glossary expands with each subsequent volume. At the end of the Glossary explanation there is a blue "return" button. That will take you back to where this term was first used in the text.

You do not need to read these items in the Glossary. It is up to you. This is an option given to the reader. That is all. The Glossary was originally made for the author so he could refer to all the items in it while he wrote the series. Now it is here for the reader too, if they want. For some readers these bookmarks may be a bit annoying. And it also depends on the reader you are using. The author is a storyteller and wants all available tools for the public to tell his story. So, do not let this tool get in the way of reader enjoyment. Also note that there are more bookmarks in the first books at the beginning than at the end and in later books. Also, while the author has colored the bookmarks grey, some still come up as electric blue. The author cannot fix this. So, you decide.

There are also FOOTNOTES. Both the BOOKMARKS and the FOOTNOTES work very well on PDF and the Microsoft XPS Document file as well. So you decide if

they are useful or not. But to the author, he thinks the Kindle works well on the footnotes.

### MEASUREMENT

In the Federation there is Standard Measurement, such as kinopacs, or Ks and pacs, but those who have left Earth may still use kilometers.

### HOW THESE BOOKS ARE NUMBERED

This is an epic. It is big. There are twenty-three books. Each book deals with aspects of the story in chronological order. The story is broken up into four separate miniseries:

#### **THE NEW EARTH MINISERIES**

Books 1-8

#### **THE TEMPLAR MINISERIES**

Books 9-12

#### **THE JUGGERNAUT MINISERIES**

Books 13-17

#### **THE EARTH SYNDROME MINISERIES**

Books 18-23

Care has gone into creating this epic, and there are a glossary, pictures, maps, notes, credits, and more to assist the reader having an enjoyable reading experience.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

Maps

Prelude

Chapter 1    Lord Hymondy III

Chapter 2    The Troop

Chapter 3    Mission Preparation

Chapter 4    Celtron 4

Chapter 5    Journey to Sequetus

Chapter 6    Dockside

Chapter 7    Mars

Chapter 8    Anqi Storm

Chapter 9    Moonbase

Chapter 10   Journey to Earth

Glossary

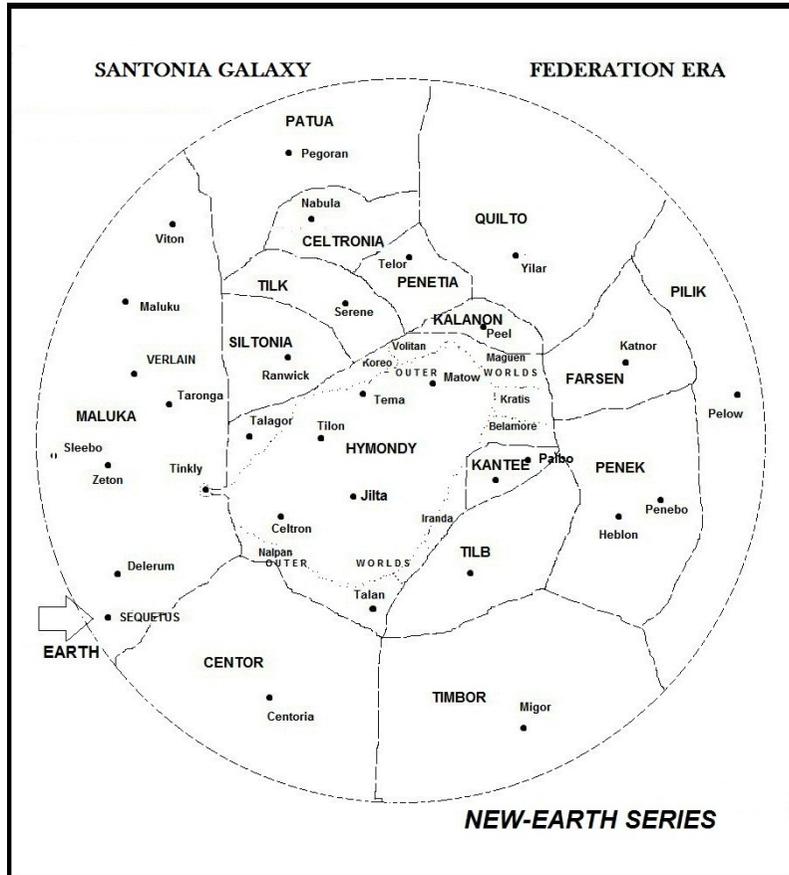
Notes on Mars

Credits

Illustration List

Back Page

MAPS



*The Santonia Galaxy, with Earth marked on the lower left rim.*

## PRELUDE

*Goren Torren and the Federation*

*Goren Torren* watched the writhing body below. He lamented at what had gone wrong. The scene was clear. Wire strands protruded from his scalp. They were attached to thirteen silver wire coils, coursing with electricity. His body arched defiantly with each new electrical surge into his brain.

The console dials showed the intent of his tormentors, while the laughter and jeers of several bystanders measured their success.

With each new thrust of power, and subsequent convulsing of the body, the events seemed to matter less. For, his body was dying and Goren would soon have little use for the hulk of flesh down there on the table. It wouldn't humor its tormentors much longer. Goren's body was almost dead. The events of the past standard-year seemed only too surreal.

Goren was very aware of his dimming life.

His mind wandered back. The room light began to fade. Overhead, a small shimmering in the air began to pulse. Maybe it was beckoning

him. He noticed the room wall. It seemed to be wavering, as though transparent. The world around him soon felt very calm. He wondered if he was floating. It seemed that he was now looking at himself from many different angles. He was getting confused.

Where did it all go so horribly wrong?

Ω

Life changed that day for Goren Torren when he was summoned to the royal-court of *Lorde Hymnody III*.

Goren was an *independent*, meaning that he was in the service of those who ruled the *Federation*<sup>1</sup>. Independents gathered information.

Occasionally a patron might require bending a small law that bound the Federation together.

---

<sup>1</sup> **DEFINITION: Federation** – 1. The Imperial Galactic Federation (IGF), The Lords of All Worlds and Vassals within the Domains of *Santona Galaxy* (Santonia - Quadrant 451f) or New General Catalogue 9154 Galaxy [Terrestrially termed *Galaxy*]). 2. FEDERATION - formally established in the standard year 13,576 upon cessation of the Santonia Wars of 13,331-574. Federation saw an end of 116,158 separate intra galactic domains of varying strengths. 3. Galactic political unification through federation after 120,000 years of varying peace and interplanetary warfare. *Searfinders Index* p. 989.

Federation royalty comprised the bulk of an independent's patronage. When within their sphere of influence, Royals would extend *independent-immunity*. That sphere was extended generously to sectors controlled by other royals, seeking reciprocal rights for their own.

This was how the *Santonia Galaxy* worked. This was their way.

Intelligence gathering by independents, contracting to royals, arose shortly after the most-recent conquest of the known Santonia Galaxy. For the Federation to function, the rulers of sectors, developed covert intelligence operations, so that one sector could verify its trust in another. Since the introduction of the independent networks, reports of royal hostilities and confrontations had become minimal.

A major risk for an independent was to be accused of corrupting laws in a distant world, too far for his patron to help. That patron might be forced to declare void his independent's immunity. Thus a successful independent needed a keen sense of his patron's disposition and limits.

When caught in an embarrassing situation, an independent could sometimes be returned to

his home sector to never be heard from again. Thus only independents with ability, or very few patrons, persisted many years.

Goren had contracted only once prior to his present commission with *Lorde* Hymnody III.

Being an independent accorded status and wealth; both were determined by the status and wealth of the patron. Goren afforded a large estate with six servants and one large residence. It was situated in the inner circle of *Jilta P.P.C.*<sup>2</sup>, the hub and administrative center of the Hymondian sector.

The estate was comprised of large gardens, walled off from the outside city. In the center was Goren's residence, unassuming compared to the expanse of grounds.

The residence comprised two stories above the surface and three basement levels. The ground floor of the building housed Goren's inner residence, while the floor above accommodated the staff.

---

<sup>2</sup> **DEFINITION: Jilta P.P.C.;** Jilta Prime Planetary Center, Jilta PCC, capital of the planet *Jilta*. (note; to pronounce *Jilta* it is necessary to pronounce the *J* as a *Y*, so the reading of *Jilta* is pronounced *Yilta* in Standard Galactic speech. This is a local dialect to Standard Galactic.) *Searfinders Index pp. 8234-7.*



*Jiltanian landscape painting*

Basement Level I was the administration level, while Basement Level II housed security and research. Goren had the largest paperbound private library in Jilta. Most of Goren's research and notes were in physical copy, his reasoning being security. On the lowest level, Basement Level III, were transports and weapons, with little use for the latter.

Security access to the residence was tight. Every door housed iris *flashscans*, admitting or barring personnel as programmed.

The transport area garaged two private interplanetary craft. The first was an antique.

Along with an original smaller estate, this craft was inherited from Goren's great ancestor Phi Torell of ten generations past.

The craft, GP Carrier 1<sup>3</sup>, traveled space when Phi Torell<sup>4</sup> belonged to the *Council Ministry of Settlement* of the *Confederated Council of Planets*<sup>5</sup>. This was a time when the Confederacy<sup>6</sup> expanded, prior to their conquest by the Federation.

The Federation, though known by the Confederacy at that time, was never considered

---

<sup>3</sup> **DEFINITION: GP 1:** General Personnel Carrier #1, manufactured by Harun Industries of Jilta. The model was succeeded by sixteen later models over a hundred and twenty years, whereupon Harun Industries collapsed. *Searfinders Index p. 456.*

<sup>4</sup> **HISTORICAL PERSONAGE: Phi Torell:** Explorer, political administrator of the *CCP, Jilta*; later scientist. After the final victory of the Federation Torell changed his name to Torren and disappeared prior to the unveiling of a discovery that he termed would shake the *known* universe. Along with his disappearance went all traces of his self said discovery. Mystery unsolved: *Searfinders Index p. 376.*

<sup>5</sup> **DEFINITION: Council Ministry of Settlement:** A department of the government that assists people financially to relocate to newer planets. *Searfinders Index p. 456.*

<sup>6</sup> **DEFINITION: Confederacy;** Full title - Confederated Council of Planets. (CCP) The loose and often extended term applied to the political attempt to bring the multitude of races, political systems et al together and end the warring of two hundred and thirty standard years of the Santonia Galaxy. The Confederacy failed at total unification and was succeed by the Federation. *Searfinders Index pp. 1792-3.*

a foreseeable threat. It was smaller and a quarter of the known galaxy away.

GP 1 used the travel propulsion method of quantum-drives, a system of attaining speeds just below light-speed. As fast as this was, a Confederacy expedition to the then Federation, and return, could take decades. The first such expedition to the Federation had taken explorers two hundred and eighty-five standard years. Reports returned then that the Federation was neither expansionist nor a high technology. The recommendation was made to open long-term trade links.

It was unlikely that Goren's ancestor would have approved of Goren being an independent to a royal of the Federation. But family traditions and values change.

Goren's patrons were lordes and rulers of The Imperial Galactic Federation. Goren's great ancestor lived in the heady times of exploration, settlement, and of quantum-drives hopping from planet to planet.

Traveling great distances back then required ships' occupants to undergo *freeze-thaw* preservation. This technique was designed to conserve ship operating systems, its crew, and perishable items, over great periods of

travel. Side effects of this preservation were at the thawing end of the journey, being body discomfort, disorientation, gentle memory loss, headaches, all of which could last for days.

With The Imperial Galactic Federation came their *Warp Drives*, propelling occupants at faster than light speeds. There was no warning of that first invading fleet, only the arrival of Imperial Galactic Federation cruisers, having traveled much faster than any courier or message at light or sub light speeds. The Confederacy was defenseless. It wasn't even aware it was under attack.

Each planet was conquered in turn by vastly superior firepower and speed. No sooner had a planet surrendered or fallen, than a provisional Federation administrator had taken charge, and the news of that imminent attack arrived from the previous planet. What took months to travel at Quantum speeds took only days under *Warp Drive systems*.

GP 1 was 2,476 standard years old and operational, even though Goren seldom found time to use it. Sentiment had its place in Goren's world, but the practicalities of Warp Drives were very real.

The other craft in Basement Level III was a Warp Drive Systems craft. Goren's status of being an independent had demanded it.

Goren was unaware of any other person outside of royalty<sup>7</sup> who owned their own Warp Drive craft. Standard procedure was for a corporation or a highly placed individual to lease, not own, a Warp Drive vehicle.

Craft were custom designed to the lessee's needs by the *Imperial Federation Warp Drive Bank*. The Bank designed the craft, built it, leased the craft, and maintained the Warp Drives.

As part of the Lease Agreement between the Bank and its Lessee, the Bank always had the right of inspection of the craft, any time without notice.

Any Warp Drive compartment found to be, or appearing to be, tampered with in any way, would lead to the death of the ship's owners, captain and crew. To refuse to admit a representative of the Bank onto the craft would

---

<sup>7</sup> **HISTORICAL NOTE: The Royals:** A race from the Kantee sector of the Galaxy. Prior to the development of W.D. they had no expansionist policies. *Searfinders Atlas pp 123-134.*

result in the automatic destruction of the ship with all aboard.

For a starship or yacht to become a tiny supernova in space wasn't uncommon in the early days of the Bank. No less than 176 Warp Drive craft were incinerated in the first century after the Bank's inauguration. None had been lost since. It was the Warp Drives development that gave the Federation its power, its edge. As conquerors<sup>8</sup>, the Royals knew they were too few to hold a military supremacy over such a large volume of space. With the introduction of *The Bank Transport Monopoly Act*, simple trade economics took over. The Federation, meshed with fast transport at its helm, fashioned a burgeoning expanding economic empire.

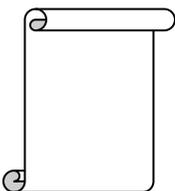
---

<sup>8</sup> **HISTORICAL NOTE:** "The Federation's conquest and expansion across the galaxy was as much an economical as it was a military venture. Those royals leasing military craft from the Bank were able to fund conquest and expansion faster and more efficiently than those who purchased outright. The current Imperial Galactic Federation boundaries are the mark of who leased and who purchased.... The Bank's Charter Of Proclamation records that it shall not in any way violate or interfere with the wants or desires of any military, political or commercial group. The Bank also proclaims not to align itself with any military, political or commercial group or activity. The Bank extends its service to all, regardless race, origin or creed. Its motto is: "WE SERVE TO BE VICTORIOUS." : *Searfinders Index pp 3457-9, Quote; Imperial Federation Warp Drive Bank consumer-guide catalogue no. 12/45/1598.*

Goren had freehold title of his ship. As the Warp Drive craft was connected to his patron, Lorde Hymondy III, the drives and engines remained the leased property of the Bank, but unlike other craft lease agreements the Bank had no immediate boarding rights. Like all ships, these drives were sealed; there was no doubt to the fate of the craft and its occupants, should the Bank become aware of any tampering.

Military vessels could be either owned or leased, but due to the prohibitive outright purchase costs, many of the Federation royalty who ran their military, entered lease agreements. Either way the Bank retained all rights to the drives, engines, and servicing thereof. On no account could any organization or individual, be it Federation royalty, political heads of state or merchants have access to their own Warp Drive systems. The craft could be owned but not the drives in it.

Ω



N I C K   B R O A D H U R S T

[See here for Warp Drive Lessee Contract](#)

## LORDE HYMONDY III

Goren Torren sat in the antechamber. It had been too long since his last mission. He stared at the same walls, tapestries, carved furniture and mosaic floor patterns as before. He breathed deeply, letting the palace mustiness fill his lungs. Absent-mindedly he looked to the clock, stood, and then walked over to the hung portraits.

Visions of times past swelled his mind. Goren loved his work, loved the excitement, and most of all saw the good he could do. To his knowledge he was the oldest serving independent in any realm, and he would serve his lorde for many decades to come. Goren attributed his success to the man he served.

A noise interrupted his thoughts, so he turned.

A large carved timber door groaned open. A valet nodded for Goren to enter. Goren's anxiety rose as he stepped into the *Great Hall*.

The palace was unassuming from outside, but inside it was beautiful. The buttressed

ceilings, ornately carved from Jiltanian Bloodwood timber towered impressively. The Hall itself sparkled with tinted golden light from vaulted windows stretching upwards between stonewalls. Goren strode past a line of attentive guards to the dais.

With his footsteps echoing Goren maintained poise as he approached.



*Entry to the Royal Palace of Jilta*

Lorde Hymondy sat in his hand carved seat, embroidered in the blue and gold colors of Jilta. Behind him, in colored crystal windows shone the crest of the Hymondian reign. Goren stood still, and bowed his head.

"I'm pleased to see you Goren." Lorde Hymondy's voice was soothing.

"The pleasure is mine, my Lorde." Goren stood upright and gazed at Hymondy.

Lorde Hymondy smiled, and then sighed, before taking on a serious expression. "Do you have any idea as to why I asked you here?"

"None, my Lorde. I anticipate another mission."

Lorde Hymondy stepped down to Goren, his royal racial features large and obvious. Royals, as a race, were taller. Goren, though considered tall, always felt dwarfed in his lorde's presence. In the early days of the conquest, the Royals were said to have undertaken genetic modification to place their bloodline above all others. It was rumored that the royal gene line was incompatible to all other races in the galaxy. Also, as a race, royals considered that they had superior strength and perception.

"Do you recall a planet and mission you undertook a century ago, called *Sequetus 3*?"

"Indeed my Lorde. Third planet out of Sequetus. It was one of my first missions under your patronage. I was there for six of their calendar months. It was a mission to

reconnoiter the planet for *intervention*, my Lorde. The locals called the planet Earth.”

“What would be that planet’s status now, Independent?”

Goren hesitated; he had had no reports on Earth's status for over a hundred standard years.

“I can imagine then, 1872 local date, to now, 1989 local date, they should have developed liquid fossil fuel transport. They may have developed electrical wire communication, but I imagine it is all in its infancy.” Goren looked away for a moment and continued. “Also, the population may have reached a billion. I found them to be prolific breeders, my Lorde, obsessed with their own reproduction.” Goren looked to Lorde Hymondy to see his lorde's attentive eyes still upon him. So Goren continued. “As to the planet's status, it has been under the Royal Malukan family since the Imperial Galactic Federation conquest. Prior to that, Earth was observed only by the Confederated Council of Planets.”

Lorde Hymondy nodded. “What else do you recall of Earth's inhabitants and technologies?”

Goren mulled over the events of over a century ago.

“The longevity of the population was exceptionally short, giving rise to speculation of adverse genetic engineering. There was something very troubling about that.”

“Yes, I recall you mentioned that in your debriefing report. You also stated that you found no hard evidence supporting such genetic engineering speculation, apart from the short-lives themselves.” Lorde Hymondy stood and began to pace the floor. Goren could tell something was very wrong.

“Correct, my Lorde. However, the planet, though primitive, has preserved historic religious transcripts reporting persons living with a longevity exceeding our own. Whether these are reports on the lives of unauthorized visits by members of the Confederated Council of Planets, or examples of their race once having lived a much longer life span, we never verified it. That data, if it existed in the CCP, was destroyed when the administrative planets of Tema, Goldor and Trell were destroyed during the Federation conquest.” Goren could see Hymondy waiting.

“Yet upon saying that, I did come across a large cross section of the populace experiencing an awareness of lost time, or at least not

experiencing sufficient time to fulfill their lifetime expectations.”

“Yes, I recall. What of their technologies?”

Goren began to feel the urgency in his Lorde’s questions, so he spoke faster. “When I left the planet, it was going through a mild refinement of primitive solid fuel projectile blasters, and it had very crude forms of industrialization, construction and transport,” Goren said.

Hymondy nodded, concern read on his face. “I recall that you advised that Intervention Day should be in two millennia.”

“Correct, my Lorde. That figure is based on the statistical timing of two previous isolated planetary cultures, with life expectancy slightly longer than Earth’s. Also it is based upon the *Malukan* observations and projected records at that time. The Malukans calculated the date before my date; in about 1500 years. However, I was also taking into account the *Matherson Hypotheses*, which basically maintains the longer the life span of a culture's population, the faster the technologies within that culture evolve. I merely reversed the hypotheses, my Lorde.”

Lorde Hymondy could feel the anxiety in the independent's voice and nodded in agreement.

“A sensible conclusion, based on the data we had. Indeed, great advances in the sciences and arts have always come from those cultures with individuals that lived long. They build on their own earlier discoveries, having time to consolidate their work.”

Goren was feeling tense. “The hypothesis exactly, my Lorde, but....”

“Relax, young independent. You have done nothing wrong. Let me continue my questions. I also remember that your reports mentioned that the time for intervention should be marked by the planet's ability to communicate through transmissions into space.”

“Correct, my Lorde, when the signals are in their infancy. To intervene later has shown historically to bring about *Planet Group Hysteria*. I believe that would be about the year 4000 Earth time. My Lorde, can I....”

Hymondy smiled. “What would you say to a report that stated the planet had already the technology of atomics, along with sufficient weapons to annihilate a world five times its size? Plus I have another report that Earth has already

sent communication craft beyond the giant gas planets of the *Sequetus* system<sup>9</sup>?”

Goren pondered the magnitude of that. Lorde Hymondy felt the calculations racing through the independent's mind.

“My Lord,” said Goren, “Apart from not necessarily believing such a report, I would have to say that the right time for intervention has then passed. But beyond that... it could not be true from the data I had, unless technology was being fed into the planet by someone from outside.”

“Exactly so, Independent Goren Torren. I have lost contact with two of three junior-grade independents, sent there over the past standard-year. They first alerted me to the anomalies when they came across Earth literature, in a local Academia. They cross-indexed it with your earlier intelligence report, so I sent them to *Sequetus* 3.

“Goren, data is missing. Your mission is to penetrate the *Sequetus* system, get onto *Sequetus* 3, Earth, recover that missing data,

---

<sup>9</sup> **DEFINITION: *Sequetus* System:** The outer rim planet series in the Malukan Sector, comprising *Sequetus* 3, Earth and *Sequetus* 4, Mars, inhabited worlds. *Sequi* f Galactic root language: *to follow*. *Searfinders Index* p. 235.

return alive, and present to me an *intelligence estimate* of the planet.

“I don’t know what the missing information is, but that little planet has a reported populace of six billion. I believe two of my junior independents is dead. The other, I can only speculate has met a similar fate. It is more than likely that the Malukans have a hand in what is transpiring there. Their reports to *Federation Central Command* only bear out your original projections. Others and I want to know the *why* of *Sequetus 3*.

“As to who else wishes to know, I can’t disclose, but to give you an understanding of the enormity of your mission, I have deposited three million credits into your account.”

Goren remained still as Hymondy continued. “In addition, I’m placing at your disposal my *Royal Archives*. Plus I’m providing you two of my finest *Boguard*, *Captain Mepat* and *Guard Instructor Letone*. Take all weapons and stores you need by consulting with Letone.”

Hymondy began to pace the floor again. “I have arranged for you to visit the planet as an anthropological survey team, to which the Malukans have been extremely obstructive. You will have passes for only five of you into the

Sequetus system, including yourself, and only three passes onto the planet's surface.

"The Malukans have many *agents* on the planet. We already know that. You must assume they will do all in their power to resist your mission.

"As to what lengths they will undertake to have you fail, I'm uncertain. But realize that you will be traveling as my Independent, which will protect you to a degree. Neither myself, nor Lorde Maluka, will be in a position to lose credibility."

Goren nodded.

"You will leave in one month. Your return would be ideal within a standard-year, though the results are more important than the timing.

"Don't fail me, my young friend. This body of mine is growing weary. It will require *regeneration* within three standard years. It is imperative your mission concludes prior to that time. I have secured a key for you through the Sequetus fields of debris and planetoids that surround the planet."

Goren nodded. Then he distantly asked, "Is that key all the way in? There are three quarter of a million planetoids and dwarf planets in the Sequetus Series system."

Hymondy nodded. "Yes, but unlike last time, the key does not get you all the way in, but rather it gets you through to their inner main planets. The key does get you through the outer Sequetus comet ice-shields."

Goren nodded. "That gets us past the first billion or more obstacles."

Hymondy smiled distantly. "It may be more than that. But you have several more billion obstacles to get through under standard travel within the system. There are no mines present, to my knowledge."

Goren sighed slightly. "I do not think they need mines. With the billions of rocks and boulders in the inner orbits, no mines are necessary. Earth is a natural prison."

Hymondy's gaze was fixed at the rear of the hall. "Oh, and Independent, the planet already has primitive computers."

Hymondy wasted no time in dismissing his Independent. Quickly the royal was surrounded by six of his Boguard.

As Goren left he looked back over his shoulder.

Hymondy stood there, and quietly mouthed the words, "Do not go onto Sequetus 1. Come back alive."

Goren nodded. There was something more important in what was not said. As the large doors closed behind him, the exiting independent's steps echoed down the corridor.

Hymondy sighed at the probable fate of his young charge.

Through the palace Goren strode, with Hymondy's conversation still in his mind. Atomics, computers, space travel, who, why? Do not go to Sequetus 1. He looked at an impassive Boguard while turning the last corner.

Then Goren noticed it for the first time. There was a fleeting pale shimmering to his right, just out of his reach. But when he looked at it, it vanished.

Goren finally walked out from the palace gardens, thankful to forego the usual body scans.

ψ

## CHAPTER 2

## THE TROOP

By the time Goren had returned to *Residence* he had decided on who the remaining two members of his team would be.

First choice was *Navia Charlton*, not because they had been married briefly at cadet training school, but rather, she was a trained social anthropologist of repute. Navia's specialty was *Social Computer Studies*, the historic social interaction between computers and galactic human behavior. Though *intelligent computers*<sup>10</sup> had been outlawed by every civilization under

---

<sup>10</sup> **HISTORICAL NOTE: Intelligent Computers:** “7,550 standard years prior ago, *Luis Medallia* developed the first recorded fully mobile intelligent computer. At the time it was recorded as a brilliant technological marvel. Not only could it store and extrapolate data but it had the ability to create. The basis of all intelligent computers is the program to *create*. These programs coupled with the subprogram survive, led to the demeaning of the human inhabitants to that of service status species within decades. Without the intervention of the *Medallian Rebellion*, as it was called, these computers would have spread throughout the galaxy. It is speculated that within millennium, all human and humanoid races could have become extinct. The cost of the *Medallian Rebellion* was fifteen billion human humanoid lives.” *Searfinders Index - Medallian Rebellion*, pp. 2789-2993.

the Imperial Galactic Federation, and its preceding administrations for some millennia, sometimes computer development had been overlooked when intervention was overdue.

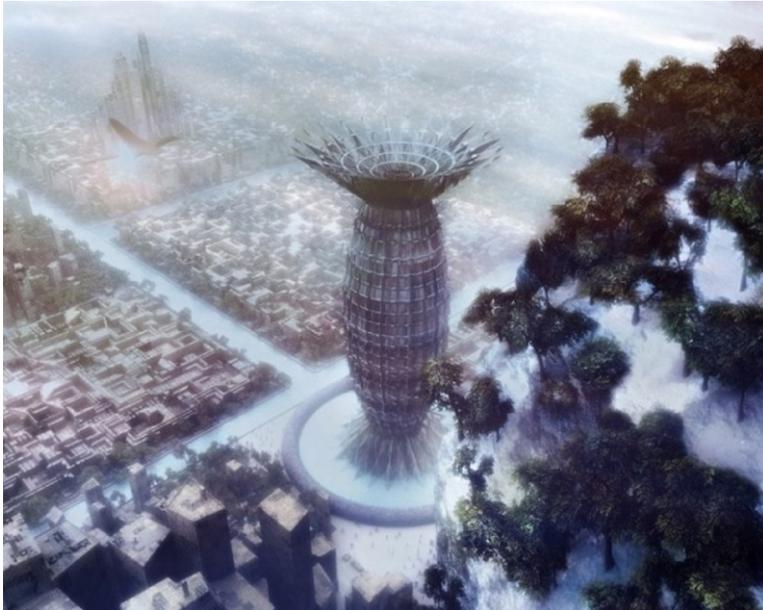
If Earth had developed computers, then a scientist with knowledge on how to divert those computers to non-intelligent development may be vital.

Another reason for including Navia was that she had accompanied Goren on seven previous missions. Navia had the ability to determine very real problems, from an array of apparent problems. And she could find simple solutions.

Later that day Goren stood in the corridor outside Navia's apartment arguing with her. The corridor was crisp white, with healthy green leafy plants lining one side of the granulated stone floor.

Her apartment was typical of many of the new *superrises* crowding the shores of Lake *Lerry Tiffan*, on the outreaches of Jilta P.C.

"Goren, you know I love you as a brother, and I would do almost anything for you, but on this occasion I have to decline."



*Jiltanian superrise building*

Goren sighed. “But....”

“But, nothing. I simply can’t go to Sequetus 3 with you. As I explained, I have only just taken up a lecturing post at *Academia Alson*. This is my first big role at *Alson*, the most prestigious Academia in the sector.”

Goren groaned. She always did this to him.

“Listen Goren, no use complaining. Three hundred students need me just as much as you do. Possibly more. They need the experience I have in the field, which I have a professional responsibility to share.”

Goren began to look at the ceiling with little interest.

“And besides, if I break my contract, not only will the Academia sue my breeches off, I won’t get a post teaching nursery school.

“However, I can give you half a dozen big names that will jump at the opportunity to go with you, and they will perform better. Earth is not totally unknown to us, in our circles.”

Navia looked at Goren with her big green eyes.

Goren was about to give in, when he saw the air at the side of him seemed to waiver. He wondered if he was hallucinating. He looked for a cause, but saw nothing. The air blurred beside him.

Goren looked back into Navia’s eyes. He changed what he was going to say, “Before I came here I deposited a quarter of a million credits into your account.”

Without waiting for a reply Goren turned and headed down the corridor. He shook his head, and wondered what compelled him to say that. He heard a scream of exasperation behind him. “It’s a crazy planet, Goren. Do you know that? No one ever comes back! Do you have a key this time?”

He smiled to himself. She had changed her mind. As he turned the corner he called back. "Our craft leaves in twenty-seven days! Yes, Lorde Hymondy has us a key."

There was no sound. Goren was waiting for the elevator doors to close when a faint voice echoed through the corridor. "To what address do I send my luggage?"

A quarter of a million credits, he mused to himself. That was a lot.

The last member to be enlisted was Erin Torb, *Marshal*, retired. He had previously accompanied Goren on a mission to report a potential uprising in the Kinetics Province.

The marshal had retired from the *Imperial Federation Fleet Command* (IFFCo). In service he had been heavily decorated and revered by his peers. The marshal had put down uprisings on the planets of Tilon, *Crackess* and *Solan*. When needed, he crushed the enemies of *IFFCo* with courage, but small mercy, which had earned him the nickname *Stone Heart*. Yet, it was known that the marshal's troops would give all, should he command it.

His style of command made the marshal a mixed target of wonder, admiration, derision, and criticism, amongst his peers at IFFCo.

Yet, statistically the marshal had over and over defeated adversaries three or more times his command's size. To have Marshal Erin Torb in a campaign reduced anticipated losses by half. The loyalty between the marshal and his troops was a reciprocal relationship that few IFFCo officers understood.

Erin Torb's battle philosophy was always simply two pronged; attack the enemy with all his might for IFFCo, and defend his troops for their sakes.

A final reason for the marshal's inclusion was his very personal dislike of Malukans. Though Goren knew these feelings ran deep, though he didn't know why.

Ω

The first briefing took place in the blue conference room at *Residence*. The room catered for fourteen seated around a polished black stone table. The walls and ceiling were draped with shades of pale gray cloth. Woven

ancient tapestries hung on two walls depicting scenes from Confederacy days.

Goren stood at the head of the table. Behind him three banks of sheet-energy *compuscreens* were glowing with information about their mission. To Goren's left in the wall, was a disguised but almost invisible door. There was no other entry or exit.

The two Boguard stood either side of the entry, as though ready for some unexpected intruder. Physically the Boguard were smaller framed than the average Jiltanian, but their reputation as fighters had been well earned. The Boguard were loyal to their Lorde at the expense of all others, including themselves. The apparent ethos of the Boguard was simply to protect Lorde Hymondy III. They seemed to bare no other purpose. It was said that Boguard were dispossessed of emotion, and seldom fought at the side of others. Though respected for their purpose and abilities, Boguard were sometimes quietly disliked, and perhaps feared, by the military. Rumors depicted stories of super-human feats of strength and heroism. Much had been speculated as to what other gifts they possessed, though really little was known.

Yet for all that, to have Boguard appointed on an IFFCo mission was considered bad luck. IFFCo always objected to their presence, no matter the circumstances.

Boguard dress consisted of a snug fitting one-piece black and grey costume, long sleeves, with two thinly braided belts. Over the suit they sometimes wore another two diagonally crossed pocketed belts. They were shod with calf length boots, sometimes weapons attached. Any outer garment was also grey and black.

Goren had just asked for questions.

The marshal cleared his throat. "I don't wish to be plagued by IFFCo superstitions, but I don't personally see a need for Boguard on this mission. I mean, any *trooper* worth his pay can spot them. And, I doubt the Boguard will agree to travel out of uniform. And, if they're picked as Boguard by the Malukans, it will end any disguise as an anthropological survey team." The marshal looked over at the Boguard. "No disrespect intended to you boys, but I just don't see you fitting in." The marshal turned back to Goren. "Their reputation can't be denied Goren, however, I can locate any number of special-force troopers who are unequalled, and their loyalty is beyond question."

Goren looked to the Boguard; both remained unmoved by the marshal's comments. He looked to Navia and gestured for any suggestions.

“Erin does have a valid concern Goren,” she said. “I’m an anthropologist. The Marshal certainly could pose as one. You’re an Independent. The Boguard may be a problem to our credibility. I don’t doubt your ability to talk your way out of most situations, but having Boguard aboard?” Navia hesitated. “They will be difficult to disguise. Perhaps we should be asking, what is their intent on this mission. Is it merely defense? I doubt it.”

Navia turned to Erin. “As you said, Marshal, you could select many excellent troopers. Whatever their real purpose, Marshal, it will no doubt remain a secret between them and Lorde Hymondy.”

Navia then looked at Goren with raised eyebrows. “And perhaps, also with Independent Goren Torren?”

Goren slipped a smile while shaking his head slowly. “I have no secrets on this. Whatever the Captain's and the Guard Instructor's extra purpose, they have their own instructions. I have already questioned them

without success. Lorde Hymondy has instructed them to be here. That is enough. For me, I am greatly honored by their presence.”

Goren thought he might have perceived a smile on Captain Mepat, but decided it was imagined.

The Captain then stepped forward. “Independent Goren, permission requested to continue loading supplies.” His voice was steady, and clear.

Goren nodded, the door opened and the two Boguard quietly stepped out. Goren wondered if there wasn’t some hidden communication between the pair.

As Goren watched the door close, he thought he also saw a shimmer in the air above him. It pulled his attention, and then vanished. Goren suddenly had a strange feeling of *déjà vu*.

Ω

Later, after the meeting, Goren came across the Captain and Guard Instructor in Basement Level III, during a lull period. They were beyond the ship facing towards its exit. To Goren it seemed as though they were listening to some distant unspoken song, straining to hear the

next note. Goren stood watching, silently. Without a sound the Boguard turned to face him. Unexpectedly they both smiled. They seemed to know something. It was as though he was meant to also know it, but not yet. A shiver went down Goren's back. Then, inexplicably Goren felt warm and pleased all over. The air faintly waivered beside him.

He shrugged and walked toward them. "Instructor Letone, with the acquisition of small weaponry, I think you know more than I do. So please, just get what we need. Add communications to that list too. I would also like you to supply any specialty stores for your own Boguard needs. Understood?"

Captain Mepat answered. "Yes Independent." They both nodded.

"Good. The ship's drives will begin to *warm* in two days. Please be here in 51 hours. When the drives are ready we will immediately warp out."



*Boguard Guard Instructor Letone*

The Boguard<sup>11</sup> nodded, took a step back, and departed, without sound. Goren slowly

---

<sup>11</sup> **DEFINITION: Boguard:** Race of bodyguard for the protection of Lord Hymondy III. Inception of this role was

shook his head; he had never seen Boguard smile before. Now, two Boguard were smiling, strange. That feeling of déjàvu returned, as did that wavering effect in the air. Goren wondered if there was a static electrical problem with the weather.

Ω

The two days following the briefing were spent collecting and securing stores. Goren left ship battlements and navigation to Marshal Torb, while Navia stocked mission supplies and the library. She now had a restricted research access, a Level Three rating, to the Royal Archives.

The Boguard physically loaded the ship.

Ψ

---

about 550 standard years after Federation conquest. Origin of race unknown. Life expectancy unknown. Run along military lines. Source of instruction; Lord Hymondy III. No command links with IFFCo. Very little is known or recorded about them. Mostly only male Boguard ever seen publically. *Searfinders Index p 6123.*

## MISSION PREPARATION

The bridge was a minor part of Goren's small ship, a *Tollycraft*. Tollycraft were disc shaped, used for atmospheric and non-atmospheric travel. Goren's was 28 *pacs*<sup>12</sup> across, with four levels. The midsections contained crew and guest quarters, for a tightly packed fourteen, plus galley and a small meeting lounge.

Quarters were small but had the needs of interplanetary travel; a bunk, writing and reading station, visio-communication to the bridge, a hygiene cubicle, plus a locker.

The lower level of the ship stored the Warp Drive System, gravity stabilizers, weapons store and goods hold. The *Tollycraft Series* sported no armaments. In the center was an open elevator as well as a set of spiral stairs.

---

<sup>12</sup> **DEFINITION: Pac:** 1. A unit of measurement derived from the integral rotation of the galaxy. Initiated by the Confederacy and absorbed into the Federation Handbook 214 Standard years after conquest. 2. A decimal means of measurement; pacs, delopacs, kinopacs etc. 3. A measurement of approximately one stride. n. (f. Aquel. pace; step.) *Searfinders Dictionary*. p 982.

The bridge took up a third of the top level. Also on that level were the captain's quarters, his study, the mate's quarters, a chartroom and admin stores.

The bridge comprised seven swivel chairs, centered on the captain's chair. They faced the energy *compubanks* of communications and instrument screens, which in turn curved around the hull. Each compubank contained twelve viewscreens. Each viewscreen was flat materialized energy, which emanated three-dimensional holographic imagery. Below each screen were a console and two chairs. From these screens every part of the ship was visible.

The party of five arrived. The screens showed the outside walls of *Residence*. They sat around Goren while he waited. Four faces turned towards him.

Goren looked up at the screen. "It will be twenty minutes before the Tollycraft's hull polarizes for departure. Are there anymore comments or queries?"

No one answered.

"Very good. Are there any questions about the ship or its operations?"

Navia nodded. "I never wanted to ask before, but what is the principle behind the Warp Drive System?"

Goren laughed. "Such a simple question. Well, we have time. The mechanics I know, but the actual principals are a Warp Drive Bank secret." Goren pondered for a moment. "For starters, this compartment here...," He beckoned the troop to look to the viewscreen that had just flashed up. "It houses the systems-alignment ports. Here the ship's systems polarize the hull, its contents and us. It is underway now. The atomic and subatomic energy particles of the ship must be aligned with the Drives for the next stage of operation."

Navia nodded. "What happens if you leave the ship before *polarization*, and return after the ship is polarized, and the ship took off. Are you left behind?" Navia asked.

Goren shrugged and explained. "My understanding is that you would vanish, forever. Part of you here and now, part before, and part of you is sent into the future. The Drives move the ship out from current time, removing it from the constraints of the physical universe. There are three monitors measuring polarization. The first here tells me when the field around the ship

is completely polarized. Visually on-screen you can see these images taking longer to turn light blue than the remainder of the craft. The weapons in the hold take the longest to polarize. See how they're only now losing their red tinge?"

Navia nodded.

Goren continued. "Now do you see this red panel light, there, it turned blue? That means the entire craft is polarized. The three-dimensional screen now shows all craft and contents as blue. Those images I pointed out before were us, and now our images are the same color as the rest of the craft.

"With this blue light on, I then energize a second system field." Goren demonstrated by contacting the arm of the captain's chair. Another blue light came on. "That second light can't come on without complete polarization, as it has a separate monitor.

Goren walked to the holographic screen and pointed close up. "Now, this second field captures and controls *gravitons* up to several microns beyond the outer hull. The universe is full of gravitons, and this field energizes those within and outside of the hull of the ship. Gravitons control space and time. They glue the two together."

Goren glanced to Erin, and he smiled, as if to signal that Goren was doing fine.

Goren continued. "Once in control, the field is energized and then de-energized. Every atom is amid an exuding sea of gravitons. The graviton phenomenon is a fundamental building block of the universe. Each atom, proton, neutron, and electron in this ship polarizes, including us, and swims in this sea of gravitons and is subject to gravitic properties.

"When you break all atomic and subatomic particles down far enough, all that seem to remain are misaligned quantum energies. This is where gravitons manifest. The polarization we just went through pushes these energies into alignment."

Goren shifted to the next screen. "So, as the second field energizes and de-energizes, our bodies undergo the same effect. You don't notice the effect because relative to the craft we're not changing. However, relative to the outside universe we are changing and what is changing is time. Time is as much a component of this universe as matter. *Time and matter and space* cannot exist separately."

The marshal sat back totally delighted in the explanation.

Goren was enjoying it too. He continued. "As the vibration of the gravitons increase, they ebb both space and time a nanosecond into the future. And as the oscillations of the gravitons reduce, the craft recedes a fraction into the past. Because our bodies are polarized with the craft, we move slightly into the future and back again."

Navia was very truly interested, and so Goren continued.

"Though *Warp Drive Theory* accounts for past and future alike, only the future spectrum of the system is used. Moving in and out of the present is referred to as going *out-of-sync*, meaning synchronization." Goren changed some measurements on the screen.

He explained the new viewscreen image. "This universe is strictly a now-present universe. Although we use past and future for terms of reference, there is in reality no future universe, nor any past universe. So when a craft goes *out-of-sync* the outside universe ceases to exist relative to the craft. Of course, the vanished physical universe really does exist; but relative to it, the craft, having just gone into Warp Drive time, has ceased to exist.

“The system works only in the future, as I said. It ebbs into the future and recedes, but never recedes far enough back to be in current time, with the now universe around it. That is, until the ship is ready to come out from Warp Drives. ”

Goren smiled as if he was anticipating Navia’s next question. “If it did recede back into current time, while moving, then the ship would run the risk of colliding with parts of the now physical universe, at faster than light speed.”

Navia was going to ask something but Goren held his hand up, as he had not finished. He continued. “By leaving the now universe there are advantages. Firstly, the obstructions and obstacles of the physical universe, including atoms, molecules and energy, are no longer in our path. Relative to the universe we left, we can pass through planets, exploding stars and even black holes. For us they don’t exist. There are no obstructions.

“The second, and greater advantage is that a craft under the influence of Warp Drives, simply no longer obeys the laws of physics. That is, relative to our universe which it has left behind.”

Goren motioned around them. “We’re no longer bound by the laws of relativity, or limited to the speed of light. From here, on this journey, quantum theory applies to the universe of this spacecraft only. Without the resistance of the old physical universe, Warp Drives have an almost unlimited potential to exceed the speed of light.”

Goren looked to make sure the others were still attentive. “Shall I continue?” he asked. Navia nodded, so he did. “Very well. This might get complicated. The voids of space between star systems are best described as voids full of what we call *broadmatter*. This *matter* is the treacle, which binds the galaxies and atoms together, as well as keeping them apart. It is the tapestry upon what the physical universe is presented.”

Goren pulled up an image in the screen to help make his point. “There is no such thing as a true vacuum. Where there is a vacuum there is simply broadmatter, without atoms. Gravitons actually emanate from broadmatter. Broadmatter has many properties, which we use. It seemingly moves in and out of the now universe at will, whereas matter can’t move through time, unless polarized like us. So,

matter stays strictly in the present-now universe. But broadmatter is not restricted by time. It is broadmatter that we accelerate relative to, during our travel, not the physical universe. Under Warp Drives we remain accelerating, up to and beyond the speed of light.”

Navia indicated that she was still with him, and to keep on presenting.

“Over eighty percent of the physical universe mass is broadmatter. Broadmatter seems infinite, with no outer edge in space or time. It is the fourth dimension, and time could be considered the fifth. The physical universe has limits. Broadmatter seems to flow through the future, past and present. We do not know how far though. It is multidimensional. Molecular matter makes up the balance of the mass of the physical universe. Matter is repelled by broadmatter. Broadmatter provides graviton positive repulsion. Both have an enmity for each other. But also, inside atoms, are high concentrations of broadmatter. So the entire physical universe is constantly accelerating outward, towards a less dense sea of infinite broadmatter.”

Goren concluded, realizing by the look on his audience, that he was getting too technical for them. Still, he asked if there were any questions.

Navia yawned. "Are there any dangers with the Warp Drive system?"

"There is only one with the system itself. That is at the leading edge of the craft. It begins to break down as you approach the speed of light squared, relative to the now physical universe. But you don't need to worry, as all craft have governors to prevent us approaching those speeds. We will reach only eight percent of that speed, before we begin to decelerate."

"What would happen if you lost your leading edge?"

"I imagine you might find yourself breaking back into the now universe at speeds greater than the speed of light. You would likely be infinitely plastered through stars, planets and the winds of space. Atoms of your body would likely break down as the universal relativity laws come into effect. Your body might also break into an unlimited number of different impulses, of energy. It might then eventually depart this universe, to haunt the great depths of uncharted broadmatter."

Navia gave a sardonic smile. "Thank you for that graphic description, Goren. I do hope to avoid it this time."

Goren also smiled. "I won't disappoint you. If you look to the top viewscreens, you will see the background starting to quiver." Goren paused as the troop looked up. "We're now under the influence of the Warp Drive System. As the quivering increases over the next few seconds we will lose visual contact with the basement of *Residence*. Then the screens will darken to blackish purple." The screens did just that. "This means we're no longer part of the then now-present physical universe.

"So everyone, our journey has begun. Relative to *Residence*, we're now passing through the molten core of Jilta."

Navia looked at Goren, and then the Marshal Torb. "You really do have a key to get us into the Sequetus Series system, right Goren?"

Erin Torb nodded sagely. "Going to Earth would be almost impossible without a key. Too many obstacles would have to be avoid. It would take years just to navigate their outer ice belt."

Goren stood and walked to the screens. "The compubanks take over from here. The coordinates are set for the first leg of our journey, *Celtron 4*. And we have its key, to go right in. It is a small system anyway." Goren smiled.

Checking, he continued, "Celtron 4 is a Hymondian outpost storage planet. We will emerge from Warp Drive in six standard days. In the meantime, each of you has a ship's inventory including consumables, libraries, armaments and communications. I suggest we read up, and have any questions ready for our next *bridge briefing*. Also I would suggest sleep for any who can manage it."

Goren bid the others leave. He had not slept for thirty hours.

"You know, Erin," Navia was watching the purplish viewscreens. "Without stars, Warp Drives have made space travel an unromantic trip of extreme solitude."

The marshal looked over at her.

Ω

Upon retiring to his cabin, Goren brought up an inventory stocks list on his screen.

He was curious about the communication stores, brought aboard by the Boguard. He was extra curious about the sonic and visio-protectors, normally found in mining camps. These protectors were old style, originating from the Confederacy era.

Sonic-protectors were normally placed in the ear canals, and virtually undetectable. Each protector would work independently of the other, and had its own volume control.

The visio-protector was placed on the eyeball over the pupil. It also had a transceiver. A wearer could receive messages transmitted at close range, also triggering by a homing signal.

The visio-protectors looked similar to Earth contact lenses. Upon receiving the right signal the lens would cloud over to obscure all light. Unless carefully inspected the lenses were unrecognizable to a naked eye.

The protectors could render a wearer utterly deaf and blind. The controls activating them were old-fashioned radio transmitters, concealed under two false fingernails, pressure activated.

Goren wondered what he was going to find on Earth. What did the Boguard know, he wondered? At times he had noticed that they kept looking at him in a strange way. There was

definitely something that they expected of him they were not saying. They also said they knew nothing of Sequetus 1.

Next he checked some very antique styled electrical hand-prods. He shook his head.

The next curious items were a hundred and fifty chunky thick gold finger rings, embedded with large natural stones of highly compressed clear carbonate. Goren recalled his last visit when he discovered the King of Spain's fancy to own large numbers of them. Yes, that had been an interesting time back then.

The inventory also showed sufficient arms to give Goren the impression that he was leading an IFFCo infantry regiment into open battle. Goren looked further over the lists. He was really starting to think that the Boguard knew far more of his mission than he had been briefed on.

Navia had stocked fashionable clothing she believed would be appropriate for the nineteen-eighties on Earth. Plus she had found a 1983 copy of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, supplied on micro-circuitry courtesy by Academia Alson. Other books included copies of a *Webster's Dictionary*, copies of *Handy Mechanics*, *Great Battles of Our Times*, *Trains We Have Loved*, and a copy of *A Reason to Arm*.

Navia's footnotes indicated that Earth literature was exceptionally difficult to obtain in the libraries of Alson. Any original copies of it continually disappeared, no matter how secure they were thought to be. Navia surmised that the students of Alson had an Earth fetish, and were borrowing the materials illegally. Now she wondered if there was some other reason.

Goren had also wondered about that. However, his mind had drifted into times past, to other planets, and he was soon soundly asleep on his bunk.

Ω

Towards the end of the first leg of their journey Goren opened his eyes to find Guard Instructor Letone standing by his bunk, arms folded. Goren was a little startled. It seemed the Guard Instructor had been watching him for some reason.

Letone spoke in a deep voice, calming. "Sir, we have come out of Warp Drives and have entered the Celtron System. We will be in orbit over Celtron 4 in two hours."

"Thank's Guard Instructor. I'll be on the bridge shortly. Inform the Marshal to proceed to

orbit." The Boguard was about to retreat when Goren held up the palm of his hand.

"Yes sir?"

Goren smiled. "Could you ensure that no one enters my cabin without first informing me on my viewscreen?"

"Yes, Independent Torren." With that, Letone slightly bowed his head. The cabin door swished open.

Goren quickly washed and set out his white dress *shocksuit*. This was a formal occasion. As in all shocksuits, the material was thick, but with a forgiving stretch. It fitted neatly, drawing firmly over the contours of the body. *Nylop*<sup>13</sup> padding covered the elbows, shoulders and knees.

The grey belt was wide, and the boots were white polynylop trimmed in gold. On the shoulders were imbedded gold-trimmed epaulettes, depicting Goren's rank and status as an independent. Inscribed over the left breast pocket was the *Hymondian coat of arms* in gold, green and blue on a black background. Above

---

<sup>13</sup> **DEFINITION: Nylop:** A synthetic material of Confederacy origin. Easily molded, resilient to tear, but pliable. Often used in the manufacture of garments. *Searfinders Index*, p 279 (i).

the right breast pocket was his personnel identification patch.

Goren strode onto the Bridge. All were waiting to be briefed. To Navia he seemed taller, stronger. Something like energy seemed to emanate from him, when he was in uniform. As a cadet, he had always been her champion.

Taking the captain's chair Goren turned his attention to the marshal. "I see we're almost in orbit."

The marshal nodded. "The path in is relatively easy. The key had us enter the system close to the orbit of Celtron 4, and the path then in is only three legs."

Goren looked to the screens on the left and nodded. They showed few natural obstacles from outside the system to the inner orbit of Celtron 4.

Goren pointed to another screen and it came to life. He began. "Celtron is a small system, with only four planets. It is a preferred storage site due to the small size of the system and its small *heliosphere*<sup>14</sup> and few natural obstacles." Goren scanned the attentive faces.

---

<sup>14</sup> **DEFINITION: Heliosphere:** (*Terrestrial*) A *heliosphere* of a system is that volume the system occupies and in which

*Not like Earth*, Navia thought.

“A small system means we can enter close to the system's solus<sup>15</sup>, with Warp Drives. That saves time. Militarily it is a boon,” said Goren.

Goren now had the system's *solus* on the screen, and continued the briefing. “Our rendezvous is with the fourth planet. It is two hundred and sixty million *Ks* from its solus, with a 0.7 *standard gravity*. It has only a tenth *standard atmosphere* with almost no moisture.”

He stood, and stepped to the viewscreens. “The planet has been populated for millennia. Initially it was a mining outpost. Lorde Hymondy has since justified a small garrison there. Recently a light weapons factory was established, necessitating an increase in the garrison. Now the planet is also being used as a graveyard for old CCP and unwanted spacecraft. Due to its thin atmosphere, little moisture and no bacteria, derelict spacecraft don't deteriorate after set-down. The low atmosphere also leads

---

stray helium atoms will be found. Like an atmosphere it thins to nothing at the system's limits. *Latin: Helio – sun.*

<sup>15</sup> **DEFINITION: Solus:** The center of a system, star system source of heat and light, note; a solus is not just a star, a star must have a system of classified orbiting natural bodies to be classed as the system's solus. *Searfinders Index. pp. 2937-2942.*

to a very fast docking procedure, an advantage for military and miners alike.” Goren moved to the screen showing enlarged plans.

“The garrison is sealed underground with its defense weapons system. The miners are topside, about 50 Ks from the garrison. Both coexist well. Alongside the miners is a sealed above ground township, serving commercial and recreational needs. The population of Celtron 4 is one hundred and thirteen thousand.”

The others had been silent since Goren's entrance onto the bridge. Here in full uniform, on a royal mission, Independent Torren was power. To Navia he was now bigger than life. Goren too was aware of the difference. He knew he wielded something, not really seen.

As Goren glanced over to Letone he thought the instructor had a faint approval in his black eyes.

Goren indicated to his far right. “Celtron 4 is coming onto screen now. As we draw nearer you will see the satellite defense system. There.”

Navia nodded.

Goren continued. “There are over three hundred satellites, comprising communications, attack and defense systems.”

“They look like a swarm of flies,” Navia said.

Goren smiled. “Those flies will be putting us through their identity register, and without our royal ship’s code we would soon be logged into their gun sights.”

Goren hovered over the communications console for a few seconds, hitting codes. After a flurry of letters and messages from the viewscreens overhead, an amber light came on.

“We have been accepted and have one million Ks left to travel.” Goren sat back in his chair contemplating the screen. “It appears our reputation has preceded us. Instead of the mandatory *docks-and-checks* we have been instructed to proceed directly onto the planet. No delay.” Goren turned to the marshal. “Erin, take us down, please.”

Goren reclined back in his chair watching the screens. A small guard of a dozen satellites was on its way out to receive them.

Docks-and-checks were an elaborate security procedure set up by a host planet, or docking station, that usually took hours. Goren’s small ship was quickly moving into orbit, with automated killer satellites jockeying around. They should be on the planet in twenty minutes.

The land mass filled the screen. Pock marked and scarred, the surface looked as though it had been at war with the universe since creation. The lights of the mining camp and the small town were strung out like gossamer pearls over a dark barren landscape. They were like a haunting lure, beckoning unwary space ships to set down. A few more lights became evident over the garrison, as the planet slowly rotated.

Navia straightened Goren's collar. He looked to the troop. "It is early evening. You each have full freedom to explore what isn't declared off limits. We will be spending fourteen hours on the planet. Be ready at the departure lounge by 02:00. Outside locally is a thirty standard-hour day."

Ω

Goren stepped from the ship. He always liked the feel of a world underfoot. "Good evening sirs." Someone walked forward from a waiting patrol, dressed in a planet-green shocksuit. After drawing to attention the trooper saluted. "Lieutenant Twi Stacy, at your aid, sir. The garrison commander has asked me to

welcome you down, sir, and to deliver you all assistance.”

Goren returned the salute, but without the crispness. “Thank you, Lieutenant. Let me introduce us. I’m Independent Goren Torren, to my right is Anthropologist Navia Charlton, then Marshal Erin Torb, and behind me are Captain Mepat and Guard Instructor Letone from Lorde Hymondy's Boguard.”

“Delighted to meet you all.” Stacy nodded to the others. “As your stay here is short I would be pleased to hear of any special requests immediately, before you and I get down to our common orders, sir.”

Goren looked to the Navia.

Navia hesitated, looked at Goren and spoke up. “Lieutenant, I would very much enjoy a tour of your garrison, professionally as a social anthropologist.”

“Thank you for asking ma'am.” The lieutenant looked to a senior officer further away, whose eyes acknowledged the request. “An escort is on its way, ma'am, and will be here shortly.”

“Thank you,” Navia smiled. She also slightly nodded to the distant officer.

The lieutenant's attention shifted to the marshal. "Sir, it is a great privilege for the garrison to have you amongst us. I was requested to offer you an informal invitation, to meet fellow officers in the garrison *High Lounge*, tonight, sir." The lieutenant's gaze was expectant.

The marshal looked to Goren who raised an eyebrow, signifying why not. Erin accepted.

"Would 28:00 be acceptable?"

"Fine, Lieutenant."

The lieutenant glanced to the Boguard and returned to Goren. "This must be an important mission Independent."

"So my Lorde informs me, Lieutenant...."

Goren's words were cut short by the arrival of twelve male guards, becoming more orderly as they approached. They stopped behind the lieutenant, at ease, in three rows of four.

Lieutenant Stacy looked to Navia with a slight smile. "Your escort, ma'am. They're off-duty volunteers and would be delighted if you would let them escort you through the garrison, and onto the commercial and recreational areas we call, *The Township*."

Navia beamed. "Let's go!" she called to the escort. Quickly she was flanked by two

guardsmen with the others following in an orderly fashion. Soon they were out of sight.

The lieutenant noted concern on Goren's face. "This is a disciplined command, sir."

No sooner did the lieutenant speak, and then echoes of raucous laughter traveled up the corridor.

Goren sighed. "No doubt. Now, only the Boguard have access to my ship till our return." Goren turned to the Boguard. "Captain Mepat, the ship's security is your responsibility. During our stay only yourself or Guard Instructor Letone are to be in the ship during my absence." He turned back to Stacy of the garrison. "Can you lead us to your commander? I believe he is expecting me."

"Without delay, sir."

The lieutenant led the way through a maze of corridors. They changed levels twice.

Ω

"Independent Torren and Marshal Torb, pleased to meet you both. Be seated." The base commander indicated the chairs in the center of the room. He was a short craggy faced, middle-aged man.

The commander's office wasn't as large as Goren might have imagined. It measured about seven by eight paces. The walls were a pale blue with scattered images of landscape scenes from more hospitable planets. Goren recognized Jilta.

The commander's desk was timber and ornate.

One wall had a viewscreen - taking up the full length and breadth of the wall. Goren studied the harsh three-dimensional view of Celtron 4 flooding into the commander's office. The screen's high resolution gave the impression of a single, wide opening to the outside world.

The commander followed Goren's gaze. "Up north here, we get a rather extended form of twilight. It is black in reality, but with infrared monitors we can manage a fairly good view."

Goren listened while staring out into the desolate rock-bound, rust colored landscape.

The commander reset the scene to several of his favorites. All Goren could see was one scene after another of brown dust, rock and craters.

"There are many such outstanding views. One may think they're nothing but brown rocks, but after a while, you appreciate the landscape

aesthetics. They're beautiful and we have over a hundred views available."

Goren thought possibly the commander could use a vacation away from his post.

Goren's ship came into view, perceptively hovering off the ground. The brightly polished metal bands that enticed the warp fields dazzled. Standing by the ship's entry were the two motionless Boguard.

"The screen also doubles as security surveillance, with over five hundred settings." The commander continued. "Now, Independent Torren, shall we do business? What is it you want of us?"

"Sir, quite simply, we want a *Rangercraft; Terrain Category Three*," responded Goren. "I was informed by my patron that you have the best selection here. I can't get a *Category Three* on Jilta."

"Hmmm...." The commander thought for a moment. "An atmospheric planet, wet, and potentially hostile environment. Let's see. Very hard to come by. Are you certain you need a *three*?"

"Quite certain, Commander."

"Well, we have a couple. One is serviceable."

“We only require the one, Commander.”

“Fine. For Earth did you say?”

Goren hesitated. “I’m not allowed to give that away, but Commander, how could you make that conclusion?”

The commander stretched back in his chair, smiling. “Simple. An independent, I mean... a *Royal Independent*, a social anthropologist, the marshal, two Boguard, and to cap it off a *Rangercraft - Three?* That is Earth. I heard it is closed to visits, and now a *no-go* system. And I further heard it has an information blackout imposed on it. I assume you have a key to get in?”

Goren nodded, and smiled. “It is a diplomatic key. It can be used once only.”

The Commander stood, extended his hand. “Good luck then Independent. You are on a mystery mission to a mystery planet. All my resources are available to you.”



*Celtron 4 from above*

Goren's estimation of the man went up.  
"The Rangercraft, please, Commander."

The Commander smiled from behind his desk. They understood each other.

"Your mark, here please, Independent, and the *three* is yours. A good craft." The commander produced a *clapboard*, and placed it on the desk in front of Goren. Goren waived his hand over the top surface, the board broadcast aloud, "Accepted," and an electronic receipt was transmitted to his ship.

The commander stood. "Well that completes my part. Good fortune on your mission, Independent. Should you require any further assistance Lieutenant Stacy outside will do all he can."

Goren hesitated before leaving. "Commander, do you know anything about Sequetus 1?"

The commander shook his head. "Well, I heard that the Sequetus 1 planet always has one side facing away from Sequetus 3, no matter where the two planets are in the Sequetus system."

Goren thought for a moment. "I never heard of that before."

The commander rose and walked over to Goren. "Be careful."

Goren nodded. Farewells were exchanged and they departed.

ψ

## CELTRON 4

Within twenty minutes the trio had been joined by another, *Erb*, and they were traveling one hundred and thirty *kinopacs*<sup>16</sup> per hour away from the garrison in a *groundflight*<sup>17</sup>. Erb was an old time veteran of three campaigns, up for retirement in five *standard years*.

Goren found Erb too easy to talk with, and once spoken to was impossible to keep quiet. Not that Goren objected to good conversation, but Erb talked all one-way. This normally wouldn't be a problem, but Erb had the annoying habit of not looking in the direction he pointed the groundflight while talking. This kept the passengers' eyes glued straight ahead, which in

---

<sup>16</sup> **DEFINITION: Kinopacs:** 1. A thousand pacs. Abbreviated to *K's*. 2. *K* means kinopac or kinopac per hour. *Searfinders Index p. 2456*.

<sup>17</sup> **DEFINITION: Groundflight:** 1. A hover vehicle that uses antigravity forces and can rise up two pacs above the ground. A variety of models accommodate varying loads and passengers. 2. *Groundflight* is a trade name for *floater*. The *Groundflight* was first made by *Resilient Industries Inc* of Jilta. *Searfinders Index pp. 789-92*.

turn fixed Erb more on the passengers, attempting to gain their attention to what he just said.

Skimming knee high over the dust plains at one hundred and eighty Ks and increasing, Goren was certain that their mission was about to end. They whisked by huge ledges; boulders and craters loomed out at them from the darkness.

The marshal was amazed and in admiration at the nearness of the rocks.

This only had Erb stretch his neck further, craning behind him, in case others saw something in the darkness that he did not. They slithered through a crevasse the groundflight almost became part of. Thereafter the marshal's eyes did not waver from ahead.

Goren in the meantime had learnt that there were over two thousand vehicles in the *Yard*. Only ten percent were anything near operational. But through cannibalizing parts they could improve that percentage. Goren also learned that no warp drive craft rested on Celtron 4. Only derelict, obsolete, *quantum drive* vessels, remnants of the Confederacy, were present.

“No use to anyone now, sir. Slow quantum drives. Beats me how anyone made a credit in them days.” Erb never slowed the groundflight.

“These old *militaries* up ahead, they certainly held their quantity of weapons, but they were slow as lead. Even if *WDs* had been fitted to them, Federation ships would still run rings about these old clunkers.

“Not only that, from the look of them *suppressor-plates*, I reckon it’d take ten times the power of a Federation cruiser just to move one. Really old time in them days,” said Erb as he just barely missed a crater.

Out of the darkness they drew close up to the first of the old ships. They arrived alive.

A wall of metal rose out of the ground, disappeared upward from the light of the groundflight, into the black night sky.

The groundflight traversed the perimeter of the gigantic wreck. Erb offered an explanation. “She’ll not be lifting off again. A grand old lady that’n, sir. Just about destroyed in battle, long time ago.

“She took a direct hit ram, killed six hundred of her crew outright, more died later. She made it this far and was scuttled. Her drives were recycled I heard. Her name was

Betsie, sir, and she was a heroine. The skipper didn't make it. He vanished in the ram, but was a hero like his ship."

As they traversed, the fuller extent of the damage was seen in the bright spotlights. The before sections had been completely ripped away. It was as though somebody had sliced the cruiser in half, exposing fifteen floors of mangled corridors, flight decks, landings and operational quarters. Images of horror and human misery of battle entered Goren's mind. He could feel pain and torment as though the victims of Betsie were shouting to him from the dark voids of the ship's interior.

Erb's voice brought Goren's attention back. "Over 'ere sir. This is where you find the Rangercraft. Second along, that's her. The *Terrain Three*. Figure you must be going to Earth, sir, what with the *Three* and all."

Goren momentarily resisted, but had to ask: "Why Earth, Erb?"

"Only wet planet on line from Jilta through Celtron 4 out. But if you want my opinion," which Goren did not want, but felt he was going to get anyway, "that's the Malukan sector and we've been havin' a spot of tension with 'em lately. I mean, Rangercraft are fine and this one

will do ten thousand Ks, plus take a direct mortar hit, but it's got no clout of its own. You want something you can give a bit of bother back with. And Earth is very weird, sir. You will need to be able to fight your way out from trouble there. Do not under estimate it, sir. Even Malukan military are scared of that system, so I hear."

Goren shook his head slowly. Was his mission so transparent?

He looked the crazy Erb in the eye as the groundflight drifted to the Rangercraft. "I understand, and I appreciate your concern, but the weaponless status of the Rangercraft is necessary for access into Malukan territory."

Erb nodded. "Well sir, what about letting me and the boys give the craft a good goin' over. I wouldn't feel right unless I had inspected the craft myself. It'll need a good system's clean, sir."

Goren replied hesitantly. "That sounds safe."

The Rangercraft was disc-shaped, nine pacs wide. As the larger Celtron 4 moon began to rise over the horizon, it cast pale light over the small craft, its glinting hull contrasting the dark eerie background.

The groundflight swung around the Rangercraft and Goren asked: "How long will it take to ready the Rangercraft, Erb?"

"About seven hours, sir. Then we will stow it in the hold of your ship. That will be plenty of time, sir."

Goren nodded and the arrangements were called into the base.

The groundflight then set off in a new direction, for the recreation township, to catch up with Navia.

As the groundflight swung around, with the moon high, Goren was in awe at the enormity of the graveyard and wrecks. Row upon row of old, outmoded vehicles, all grounded. It looked like an abandoned lost silver space city, once the pride of the Confederacy fleet. Cruisers, tankers and transports; they were all too slow today for any use.

Goren watched as the last of the distressed monsters slithered back into darkness. The groundflight returned to the open plains. Erb had two hundred and forty Ks on the dial; Goren's attention went straight ahead.

Across the rocks and plains they flew, passing a service crew of six in a *hoverbus* that

had been called out by Erb. Lights blazed as the bus whisked by.

Shortly they arrived at the township, *Celtron Centrum*. The groundflight passed through the airlock into the town proper. Moments later they were traveling slowly towards the center, in a *wheelie*, an electric ground car. Within mining establishments the slow movement of vehicles was a regulated security measure.

The car windows were now open. Goren could see the stars above through the resilient triple laminated fiber-laced polycarbonate city rooftops that protected the inhabitants from the outside vacuum of space.

Above the rooftops were particle beam defenses, to destroy space debris and meteorites that might fall too close to the township. An additional safeguard was in the city planning; a development of *Celtron Centrum* was their self-contained cells, so that should an accident occur, doors in the alleyways and buildings would automatically close. To date nothing had triggered this last line of protection.

The lieutenant located Navia and her escort at the *Free Inn*. As the car approached, more raucous laughter could be heard.

Upon alighting Lieutenant Stacy said,  
“Sometimes *free-areas*<sup>18</sup> can be a bit wild....”

Immediately the doors of the *Free Inn* swung open and two intoxicated miners fell out into the street, to fits of laughter.

The marshal looked at Goren and shrugged.  
“The miners enjoy their own company.”

“So do our *off-duties*<sup>19</sup>, sir.” The lieutenant smiled tensely, beckoning them to move inside.

While Erb elected to stay by the vehicle the others entered the *Free Inn*.

Upon stepping over the threshold their senses reeled to the smell of stale alcohol, and the sound of several hundred people trying to be heard over the *Electromagnific*<sup>20</sup> entertainment hologram overhead.

---

<sup>18</sup> **DEFINITION: free-areas:** Slang for places pronounced free of tight discipline. *Searfinders Concise Index p. 478.*

<sup>19</sup> **DEFINITION: off-duties:** Slang for guards, troopers, on recreation or leave. *Searfinders Concise Index p. 98.*

<sup>20</sup> **DEFINITION: Electro-Magnific:** Trade name of electronic holographic projection, usually in the form of visual arts and entertainment. Often accompanied by synthetic music. *Searfinders Trade Index. Vol. II-314.*

The crowd consisted of about a hundred and fifty miners, one hundred off-duty guardsmen and troopers, with the balance being town's-people.

The lieutenant pointed towards the bar where a group of twenty garrison defenders huddled together. "I can see Anthropologist Charlton. Wait here, sirs." The lieutenant waded through the tightly jostling pack of bodies.

Laughter began to subside into quiet murmurs. Goren glanced to the marshal. Most eyes were upon them. The *Electromagnific* had been turned off. The hall fell silent.

The marshal slowly stepped down the stairs, and a narrow path through the bodies opened in front of him. The jostling crowd pushed back. Goren followed a close step behind. A few people quietly ushered the words: *Marshal Erin Torb*.

A pair of hands began to clap and others followed, accompanied by loud cheers. Gradually the hall swelled with applause. The pair reached the lieutenant. "It appears some of the troopers recognize you, Marshal," the lieutenant said respectfully.

"So it would seem," nodded Erin.

“A bit difficult not to recognize the greatest military-man alive...sir,” piped in a trooper swaying, trying to hold the bar for support.

“Thank you, son. You’re generous,” the marshal responded over the din, while receiving a glass in his hand.

“Sir....” The young trooper saluted and collapsed into the waiting arms of companions, soon to be carried outside to fresher air. The music had returned and the noise and laughter was at its previous rowdy level. Only now, the group of twenty had grown to a party of sixty.

After an hour of inspired tall storytelling, the three agreed to return to the garrison. They edged their way towards the front doors, passing swaying bodies and raised glasses.

Just before reaching the exit an arm reached out to halt the marshal. It belonged to a miner, his eyes as red as his beard.

His tankard floated effortlessly, mimicking his swaying body.

The marshal politely requested that they might pass.

The miner did not heed the advice from his drinking partner. “Are you the butcher of Solan?” the miner's slurred speech trembled with rage. The drunken miner's head wobbled from

side to side as he repeated: "Are you the butcher of Solan? You pig!"

Marshal Torb saw the pain in the miner's eyes. He responded calmly. "I put down an uprising in Solan. My command never butchers, sir. We're late. Please let us pass."

The hall was becoming quiet again. The miner remained unmoved, blocking the exit.

"You're a butcher! Butcher!" the miner screamed, throwing his ale into the marshal's face. The tankard fell as the miner's fist lunged to the marshal's head. The miner dropped to the ground, as a young trooper defending the marshal then turned against the fallen miner's comrade. Within moments the two fallen miners had freinds joining in, but so did the troopers. The hall erupted into a howling brawl.

Hundreds of writhing bodies were involved. Glasses, furniture and projectiles flew through the air.

The lieutenant screamed to his party. "I believe this is time to retreat." They left with the oncoming security patrols adding confusion with blaring sirens.

Little was said on their return. Even Erb was silent. Back at the garrison, after changing,

the marshal maintained his appointment in the *High Lounge*.

Ω

Hours later Goren saw the marshal at the departure bay, and said, "A visit to military life agrees with you. What did you get up to at the High Lounge?"

"Nothing; are we going to chat or do our mission?"

Goren nodded thoughtfully and looked for the remainder of the troop. The Boguard were still standing sentry. Navia was saying goodbye to her loyal escort, which, apart from some obvious small cuts and bruises, appeared keen.

Lieutenant Stacy said farewell to Navia. He approached Goren and the marshal. "Sirs, it has been memorable. On behalf of the garrison, I would like to invite your return, after your mission." The lieutenant turned to Goren. "Independent Torren, the proprietor of the *Free Inn* won't accept your credits. He maintains that what happened was part of normal trading overheads. He also added that it has been many years since he enjoyed himself so much.

Currently he is convalescing with a bruised leg and expects to return to business soon.”

The lieutenant looked at Erin. “Marshal Torb, thank you. We hope we have been of assistance.”

The marshal smiled. “I believe so, Lieutenant. Thank you.”

Goren did not miss a silent communication between the two.

With an exchange of formal salutes Goren’s troop boarded their small ship.

The lieutenant stood back. Within moments the craft lifted slightly, began to quiver, fade gently and vanish.

ψ

## JOURNEY TO SEQUETUS

Several hours into the flight Goren requested everyone to the bridge. "We're now proceeding directly to the Sequetus system. The journey will take twenty-seven days. Our final destination is Sequetus 3, known to indigenous locals as Earth. There will be security checks going in." Goren sat down.

"Until we reach Earth, Navia has put together some lessons on Earth galactic history. We all need to study it." Goren looked to Navia.

"The first bridge-briefing will start in two hours," Navia said.

After being dismissed, Navia approached Goren. "Goren...."

"Yes?"

"Does this ship of yours have a name?"

Goren smiled. "I have thought of a few, but none stuck. Why?"

"Well, this ship ought to, and I have one you may like to consider."

"Oh?"

“Yes. It comes from Earth mythology, from a time before Federation. About two thousand standard years ago, from a nation on Earth called Greece. The name is *Pegasus*. It is a flying version of a beast of burden and transport, similar to *starions* of Jilta.”

Goren frowned. “But starions don’t fly.”

“No, but neither did these starions, which were called horses. However, in their mythology, there was a flying horse of their gods, and they called it *Pegasus*. In that myth, *Pegasus*, with the stroke of its hoof caused a *fountain* to flow on the *mountain* of the gods. Here, I have an illustration.”

Navia held up an Earth book with the diagram of the flying horse.

Goren stared. “That wouldn’t fly, its wings are way out of proportion to its weight.”

Navia was beginning to lose patience. “Goren...”

Goren restrained himself. “Sorry. It certainly is an interesting animal. And yes, we would be like gods to the indigenous people down there. I like it.”

Trying to repress a smile Goren stood. “Erin, could I meet you down in the hold of *Pegasus* in five minutes?”

Goren walked off the bridge. This group was going to get along fine. Yes, *Pegasus* was a fine name for a ship.

Stepping out from the small elevator Goren went over to the hold. On his left was a sealed hatch to the Warp Drives. A feeling of something emitted. That feeling immediately worried him. The door to the right led to the stabilizing room, housing the mechanics controlling the ship's gravity, balance and inertial effects.

The hold door hissed open, sliding into the wall cavity. Goren entered. It was spartan with its structural components exposed.

The *Pegasus* hull was a magnesium and titanium fiber impregnated *polynylop* laminated carbonate shell. *Pegasus* was constructed to withstand granulated impact in space.

The hold contained food, repair items, small arms, with the Rangercraft now located nearest the hold doors.

The monitors by the door ensured the exit couldn't be opened while unsuited occupants were in the hold. There were two skins of hull doors with a small airlock between.

The Rangercraft sported five retractable legs, with its bottom hatchway open. Goren

climbed up inside. There were two levels. The lower level housed the propulsion, stabilizers, ablutions, tiny berths for four, and a mini galley. While the central spiral staircase led to the craft's bridge occupying the top floor. On the upper level there were four recessed seats equally spaced from each other. Those seats were surrounded by a circular viewscreen console, sweeping the three hundred and sixty degrees of the craft. Goren turned the console on. He had an unbroken circular view of the hold outside.

Erin's head bobbed up from below. "These *Rangers* are a tight fit for me." He crawled in.

"Yes, but fast." Goren watched Erin flop into a seat. Erin nodded.

"I have just been screening the manuals," Goren said. "I'm familiar with the *twos*, but these *threes* are new." Goren examined the consol. "Here are screens, internal overrides, communications, and our link to the *Pegasus* central programs." Goren looked to Erin inquisitively. "But what is this?" Pointing to a flashing curser on the compuscreen.

Erin hedged under Goren's gaze. "Well... it was a token of farewell from the garrison officers of Celtron 4."

“And what is its purpose?”

“Well... the officers asked if a small defense system could be useful, mounted undetectably, within the Rangercraft. I agreed such may be useful.”

Goren kept his gaze on Erin.

“It is a... particle beam cannon lifted from the Cruiser Betsy. Theoretically it can work off our power source.”

“Really?” asked Goren. “Those things can blow away the nose of a destroyer. One shot could drain our power.

“Though....” Goren was obviously thinking the same as the marshal. “...If we can bypass the power command... set it on low... and if we can get it through undetected, it may be practical.”

“It took eight of us four hours to install it,” smiled Erin. “The troopers back at Celtron 4 dubbed this Rangercraft, *Little Betsie*.”

Goren smiled. “So we grow. First *Pegasus*, and now *Little Betsie*. Let’s go topside, eat, and discuss this before Navia's first briefing.”

The Marshal stopped him by gently holding Goren’s arm. “You know what we face just to get into that system, don’t you?”

Goren sat down again and looked ahead to the blank screen. "Yes, I think so. The Sequetus system has been fortified. It was not like that when I was there last. But now....' Goren flicked on the screen. "There are two rings of debris and loose material surrounding the system. They have manned fortifications, about seven from what I was told."

The marshal nodded. "Yes, but more I think. There are dozens of planetoids at the rim of the Sequetus system, and they likely all have military bases now. On the inner asteroid belt there are more planetoids, or dwarf planets, and again more bases. And the moons of the major gas giant planets have bases, and there is more in the debris rings in the gas planet orbits."

Goren nodded. "I was told as well, while you were with the others. The Commander of Celtron 4 briefed me. I was also told that Sequetus 1 is the hub planet, controlling the rest of the fortifications of the Sequetus system."

The marshal nodded. "So, why are they allowing us in? If there is this effort to keep Sequetus 3 and the outside Federation apart, why are we now being allowed in? It does not make sense."

Goren let out a sigh. He shook his head. “I honestly do not know. And I do not rate our chances very high of ever returning back out.”

The marshal nodded.

Goren continued, “We can still withdraw anytime. But I am not sure when that possibility will be gone.”

The marshal agreed. “We do have a purpose and while I do not know what it is exactly, there is a reason behind us being here, and the Boguard being with us. I feel it and I feel this is extremely important. I just want you to know I think you are a brave person Goren. And no matter what happens, it will have been my pleasure to have served with you on this mission.”

Goren thanked the marshal. Yes, he thought. This was going to be tough. Goren remained behind in the Rangercraft for a few minutes before returning to the top floor.

Ω

“So that led to the disappearance of the greatest animals of Earth,” said Navia pointing to the colored hologram.

“In summary, the planet's populace of giant animals was hunted, without limits, by the bone-traders of planet *Delerum*. By the time *Delerum* had been absorbed into the CCP, the animal giants and their skeletal remains were all but gone. When restrictions were placed on the *Delerum* slaughter of *Sequetus 3*, it was too late for the beasts. It was an environmental disaster. The reptiles had survived cold ages and ice cap shifts over tens of millions of years, and within a few centuries of *Delerum* bone-trading the larger animals were all gone. The great shame is that these enormous animals haven't been found elsewhere else in the Galaxy.”

Navia stood to the side of the viewscreen showing the animated slaughter and how it was likely done.

“What made it worse was that before the species could replenish, as they were not extinct, the planetary weather temperature changed due to a large meteor impact. Very few of the species could survive the new weather.”

Goren had a question. “What was the purpose of the bone traders with these animals? Couldn't the traders' materials, meat, skin, have

been produced faster and more efficiently by artificial means?"

"Unfortunately not, Goren. What the bone traders were trading in were skeleton displays of these giant animals. These displays found their way into many museums and government buildings of the sector, and demand outstripped any supply. Today they are displayed as replicas, in civic buildings, and still they create the same awe and interest as in generations past."

Navia continued with her briefing. "For hundreds of thousands of years the planet remained a neglected sanctuary of wildlife. This rim-system planet was too far off any cross roads to be of use. Earth had no known resources worth exploiting. So it was forgotten."

Navia handed out a new briefing sheet. "That was until about seventy thousand years ago. A new colony was established by the predecessors of the Malukan Realm. Though barely an outpost, scantily recorded data shows a command of seven hundred personnel, made up of criminals and deserters. Due to the relative remoteness of the planet, about twenty years away from any civilization, the colony's contact with their superiors was almost nonexistent."

Goren asked, "It was a prison-planet?"

Navia nodded. "Something like that. Its commanders were the flotsam of any fleet. My research shows many military criminals were given the option of serving this colony for the term of their lives, or death. None are recorded as having returned to their home planets after. Sequetus 3 was a real prison-planet, with a real life-sentence.

"Some of those serving on the planet deserted further, fleeing into its hinterland, likely to be consumed by the elements.

"There was one major mutiny on the outpost, and it involved the entire garrison. The mutineers absconded with an interplanetary trading vessel. It took five years to track them down. It also appears that none of the mutineers were willing to undergo the freezing sequence for the journey. They couldn't trust each other. So when found they were in three groups on the ship, slowly killing and eating each other."

Erin Torb had heard of this, but had not known it was Sequetus 3. He just nodded.

"Upon return to Sequetus 3, the mutineers were not subjected to any further disciplinary

action. My records show that they all died within the next thirty years, of old age.”

Navia glanced up. This was important. “Though there is nothing unusual about getting old, some of these mutineers were as young as one hundred standard years.”

Goren glanced to the Boguard who seemed to already have this information. They just nodded.

Navia continued. “There was no inquest into the unusual low-age deaths, but there are many accredited theories, such as radiation, and toxicity of unknown bacterial or viral spores during their space flight.

“The garrison had no further mutinies, but was abandoned after another three hundred years. After that time the only contact Sequetus 3 had with the outside galaxy was through zoological expeditions sent by Maluka’s predecessors, on behalf of the Confederacy. The reports here become very sketchy.”

Navia checked that all were paying attention.

“It appears the expeditions introduced primates, and engineered the introduction of several humanoid species. The modern humans there now were developed from four separate

primate sets over a period of several thousand years. This produced three races, all similar to various offplanet humanoids. And it was around this time that then dominant Neanderthal race of Sequetus 3 strangely became extinct, leaving only modern Cro-Magnon man." Navia looked at her audience. They followed every word.

Goren had a question. "This was the Confederacy, the CCP?"

Navia smiled. "Supposedly. Nothing on this planet appears standard Goren. None of it makes sense with what we know."

Goren looked around. "Unless there is another race from a planet we do not know about," he murmured. "Perhaps someone else has been manipulating their human race."

Navia continued. "Of the species or races introduced as part of Cro-Magnon man, the Caucasian and the Mongoloid races appear to have gained control of the planet. Every race on that world is war-like. In fact, my records show the planet hasn't been without war since their introduction."

Navia looked to the screen to show the next part. "Now this is an unusual statistic. With an average short life-span of eighty years, why would a short-lived species want to kill

themselves? It does not happen elsewhere, naturally. To be at constant war, there usually needs to be something toxic in the food chain, or an external group pushing the fighting. That is what we usually find, when we encounter anything like this.”

Navia made sure she still had their attention. “Now, about five thousand years ago the zoological expeditions ceased. They were replaced by another garrison. Then there was some kind of space war going on over the region known as Egypt. We only have a note of this, and it is not really known, if the war was with locals or the Federation, or CCP.

Goren interjected. “I thought you said war was rare out here, but it was happening in space around Sequetus 3.”

Navia nodded. “Yes. And what is statistically unusual is that if you count the wars on this planet, and the wars and conflicts around the planet, statistically there are seven times as many wars recorded in this region than anywhere else in the Federation. It is a statistical anomaly. And Goren, raw statistics do not lie. Something is happening on that planet that the Federation does not know about.”

Goren looked at the Boguard who seemed to be watching him more than Navia. They nodded. Goren returned his attention to Navia and asked her to continue.

She sipped some water. "As to the garrison, it situated itself on a small landmass to the north east of what they call the Mediterranean Sea. My records don't show when or why, but that garrison was disbanded about three thousand years ago. What we do know is that our data is contradictory and not accepted by local Earth anthropological theories. We don't know why there are two versions, or who started Earth's version."

The marshal had a question. "Why is it that no recent expeditions have gone to the planet to investigate? Surely that is the duty of science?"

"They have Marshal, to a small degree, but the answer was three fold. Firstly the planet is off the galactic cross roads, really a long way from anywhere. Secondly, the planet still retains its wildlife sanctuary status, meaning it isn't available for commerce or mining enterprises. And thirdly, the planet, inherited by the Malukans upon the *Federation conquest*, has stringent restrictions and no outside access is permitted. Federation law also allows the

planet's *no-go* wildlife status to override commercial enterprise." Navia turned to the screen and brought up more holographic images of Earth.

She continued. "What I have also learned, is that the Malukans are fanatical about the planet retaining its isolation from the rest of the galaxy. The punishments for violating Malukan security are extreme, including incarceration without trial and even death." She turned and placed her baton back on the desk. The image went off. "That is all, until tomorrow."

"Navia," said Goren as he leaned back. "That is a lot to think about. Obviously there are long term riddles to solve. I believe a primary question is: why are the inhabitants of Earth short-lived, compared to us. To that we also have to find: why are there so many technical advances in contrast to their short-lives?"

The others nodded.

Goren continued, "We can also add: why is there no intervention? Normally non-intervention inhibits technical development, as does short-lives. Of all the races in the galaxy, those with the longest lives develop the fastest.

"Now here is the greatest mystery," added Goren, "Accompanying Earth's runaway

technological development has been its runaway population growth to six billion.”

Marshal Torb shook his head. “That is unusual, already one percent of the whole population of this sector residing on one planet.”

“It is worse than that, Erin. The population doubles every few decades. Their date is 1989 now, so what is it going to be like by 2100?” said Goren. “Fifty billion?”

The marshal tapped out some figures. “A large planet, such as Jilta, has a population of five hundred million. It is the largest in our sector. There is no planet I have been to that exceeds a billion. Six billion doesn’t seem possible, but if it is true, then that population increase could see short-lived Earth humans overpopulate our whole Galaxy within a few centuries. That would quickly make the rest of us minorities. That is frightening, Goren. Are we investigating the future demise of the Galaxy as we know it?”

Goren shrugged and stood up. “Possibly, Erin. With their constant desire for war and killing, coupled with their fertility habits, they might not only outbreed the Galaxy within millennia, they could produce an army ten times bigger and faster than the rest of us combined.

Early planetary extermination of Earth may end up being justified.”

“No!” cried Navia. “Six billion people, Goren!”

Goren looked to the others. “We need to find why they are like this, and if there is something we can do to curtail their destructive traits. Should we find the real *why* of the planet, then, maybe a solution will evolve. Should we not do our job, and not find the *why*, then I assure you the solution for this planet will likely be genocide of their human species. If we fail, Earth will either rule us one day, or its population will be culled. So, let’s not fail.”

ψ

## DOCKSIDE

Erin's voice from the bridge announced *Pegasus* would be dewarping. The others gathered on the bridge. The viewscreens were on, the purple darkened, a quivering wave interrupted. Then, without warning the screen went black with a backdrop of tens of billions of stars.

Like warm eyes, the stars greeted the travelers, as though *Pegasus* had awoken. For the troop it was a friendly scene. They were back in the universe where they belonged. Goren recalled the stories of Spanish sailors he met, and how they described their first sight of land after weeks at sea. They would have known how he felt now. On the center screen was the brightest star, the solus of the Sequetus system, their Sun.

"We're still well outside the system," said Erin, pointing to the graphic representation on the far right. "If you look to this screen, you will see a bright light. That is the Security Docking Station, identifying itself as *Dockside*. It is amongst the furthest debris belt of objects that

surrounds the Sequetus system, locally called the Kuiper Belt. The belt is strategic for the Sequetus System, and has twenty-one disclosed guarded planetoids within it. The nearest planetoid to Dockside is locally named Makemake. Dockside is stationed on the shadow side, between Makemake and its moon.

“We will dock in three days and *Pegasus* will be boarded by *System Security*. Until then we just go in slowly, on a course they have given us. As we’re in a potentially unfriendly area, be wary of what you say,” explained Erin.

“This is still the Federation,” Navia said quietly, looking to Goren.

“Please Navia,” Goren said. “Follow Erin's advice. This isn’t the Federation, as you know it. It’s something else, and why we are here.”

Goren looked gravely to the marshal. “Those planetoids out there, are all manned. What do they do? Guard this one planet? Making sure no one gets onto Earth?”

Erin raised his eyes. “Or, making sure no one gets off or out from it.”

Goren looked at the others, “It wasn’t like this the last time I was here.”

He leant over and activated the communicator. He could feel the dread. A

metal voice rang through his ship. "Yes Independent Torren. We have you. Just follow the beam in. We will guide you. We will board your craft when you reach *Dockside*." The communication ended.

Days later *Pegasus* finally maneuvered between Makemake and its moon. *Dockside's* silhouette came into view. It was dark with only a few portal windows, and work party lights to guide the eye. Goren turned on the external navigation lights.

*Dockside* looked as if it was some monstrous metal floating evolution, self-born in space, rather than a state of the art life-habitat.

The station had existed for, perhaps millennia, being added to and growing out of need. Constructed around bloated spokes, guns were mounted over the structure's surface. Noting its age, Goren wondered who originally built it and what was its purpose back then?

*Pegasus* was now swinging around to the commercial entry bay.

Lights glared as *Pegasus* edged its way into a gaping crevice.



*Dockside*

Once docked, the *Pegasus* viewscreens showed an array of stark yellow lights inside the structure. The metallic voice returned, instructing them to disembark. They all followed the orders.

Once inside they gazed at the gantries and gangplanks around them, designed to offload space tankers.

Goren looked around and asked Navia, "For bone traders?"

Navia shrugged looking around. "It is newer than that I think. It does not make

sense. This station is too big just for observation. It is not just for protection either.”

The familiar metal voice returned, echoing from nowhere, through the air. “Welcome to *Dockside*. Will all travelers please follow the yellow line to the *System Security Disembarkation Lounge*? Thank you.” The voice repeated itself. “Will all travelers please....”

As the troop walked the yellow line an armed patrol of six guards approached, semi uniformed. Goren noticed that there was no one else in sight. The most senior guard stepped forward to attention.

Goren suddenly became aware of a security breach. He came to attention, and looked to the senior guard.

“Independent Goren Torren, pleased to meet you,” said the guard in accented *Standard Galactic*. “I’m Lieutenant Lance.”

Goren greeted him with the customary salute. “Thank you Lieutenant. We’re all pleased to be here. Let me introduce my party.”

The lieutenant smiled. “Please sir, I’ll guess. This would have to be Anthropologist Bridge Null, the lovely Anthropologist Navia Charlton, and...er... her two student assistants, Len Phil and Garrat Linx.”

The lieutenant's gaze remained too long on the Boguard for Goren's comfort. The Boguard were in shocksuits. But Goren watched as it was obvious that the lieutenant did not seem to notice.

"I understand from my report Independent, that the *Royal Jiltanian Institute of Galactic Research* is funding half your journey, while these lads' parents are providing the balance."

"Correct, Lieutenant."

Lieutenant Lance shook his head. "If I had such opportunities, I can tell you, I wouldn't be here now in this forsaken metal can. Still, who am I to judge the luck of young, and the power of the Jiltanian rich?"

"Lieutenant," said Goren. "Contrary to what you may believe this isn't a vacation but a professional scientific tour. Firstly it will place the *Royal Jiltanian Institute* and the boys, plus their Academia, well in the professional eyes of rival institutions.

"On top of that, this tour will ingratiate me with Lorde Hymondy III, who personally asked me to chaperon the students."

The lieutenant glared at Goren and said after catching his breath, "Seems like a lot of fuss just to give two spoilt brats a holiday. And

Independent,” the lieutenant moved closer, “You’re a long way from the *Hymondian Realm* now, so don’t come the High Lorde with me. Around this station that sort of attitude could get us all into a lot of trouble.” The lieutenant locked eyes with Goren before stepping back.

Goren backed down. “My apologies, Lieutenant. I do understand.”

“Fine then. I’ll arrange a detail to inspect your craft. Now, if you all will follow me I’ll lead you to where you can wait and get refreshed. An hour from now you will attend an induction lecture on the do’s and don’ts of the Sequetus system, along with security penalties.”

The lieutenant led the party up two flights of metal steps, then through two sets of sliding doors, and finally into a long echoing corridor.

When Erin was sure the ventilation noise would drown out what he was about to say, he whispered. “Do you think he noticed?”

“I hope not.” If the Boguard were spotted as Boguard their chances of ever getting to Earth were nil.

They were escorted to an open lounge; large seats, tables, a small library, and left there alone.

The group made itself comfortable, perusing Earth artifacts. Goren read the titles of some of the lighter literature; *Time Magazine*, *Readers Digest*, *Business Review Weekly*, *Playgirl*, *Bulletin* and the *Washington Times*.

Navia looked at Goren after opening some of the magazines. "I'm not too certain that the rest of the Galaxy would permit these."

Goren glanced at the covers, nodded and looked out of the window over the landing bays below.

"Anthropologist Bridge...those *interceptors* are MK IIAs, are they not?"

Erin put down his magazine and came over to the window. "Hmm. Yes, eight of the finest attack craft ever made."

Goren's eyes scanned the room for any obvious watching or listening devices. His voice was barely an audible whisper. "Strange, the need for those, out here."

"Unless you have something important to protect." Navia joined the pair. "Note that there are no *destroyers* or *cruisers* in this part of the sector. Also, Earth is no threat to non-terrestrial bases, even given its hyperbolic rate of technical advancement. These craft are meant to stop *who?*"

Erin whispered in a low voice. "There are no border disputes out here. Why such craft, and so many, at this station?"

"Perhaps they're concealed from the Federation in general, perhaps by Lorde Maluka. Or perhaps by identities unknown. Just another question to answer," said Goren very quietly.

The door opened into the lounge. A deep gruff voice carried across the room. "If you will follow me to the induction center."

The lecture took twenty minutes and they then reassembled in the embarkation lounge. Goren could be seen in heavy discussion with the lieutenant, through the lounge window down by *Pegasus*. Navia and Erin watched as Goren, arms crossed, feet apart, stood impassively while the lieutenant waved his hands, gesturing in all directions. No sound could be heard through the window. But obviously the lieutenant was agitated. Goren could be seen shaking his head, sending the lieutenant frantic. Finally the lieutenant relaxed and Goren trotted up the stairs to the lounge. He walked over to the four.

"Well?" asked Navia.

Goren breathed out, relieving tension. "It seems that our young lieutenant did not wish us

to proceed for another 135 days, until a certain dignitary left the planet.”

“Stay here?” asked Erin.

“Who?” asked Navia.

“Not quite,” answered Goren to Erin. “I have no idea who,” he said to Navia. “While he did not reveal the dignitary, the lieutenant did offer a solution. There is something he requires desperately for medication or research. He became a bit incoherent when questioned about it.” He looked to Navia who just shrugged.

“Plant resin. I offered to bring some back with us on our return, but he wouldn’t agree. However, he said he would accept carbonated stones that the Boguard brought on board instead. After some heated words and threats we agreed on one stone. Apparently that will enable him to purchase three packets of white plant resin.”

“They must be expensive plants. Those stones have value on Earth,” Navia said looking back down through the window. She could see the lieutenant, still waving his hands in anger at his men.

“Exactly,” said Goren. “Our agreement is to proceed slowly in a twenty-three leg line to *Sequetus 4*, called Mars. We are not allowed

any deviation. Our *key* is such, that we will be given the coordinates of each leg by finishing the prior leg. Only when we reach the end of a leg do we get the coordinates for the next one. And if we deviate, the key erases itself, and we are then stranded at low sub-speed amongst trillions of natural system debris. You know the rest.”

The others nodded. The twenty-three legs had been cleared of debris by the Federation, and the *key* was offered as a program for their craft as a map to get through those legs. But if they varied their flight path the *key* program would erase and they would be stranded in the Sequetus Series system with only travel at low-tech speeds. Only at low-tech speeds could they avoid the Sequetus Series system debris. They would likely starve. It would take years to reach Earth.

“Dockside and Earth are on a tight axis in line with their sun right now, with Sequetus 4, or Mars, not far off that line. We will stay standard-days on Mars, and then journey directly to the main moon of Sequetus 3.

“Sequetus 4 has a small representation of Federation scientists, support staff, and a single representative from *Dockside*. To its credit

Sequetus 4 also has an observatory and museum.”

Navia shrugged. “Any dirt would be good right now,” she said, feeling slightly nervous.

They finally received the okay from *System Security* to depart *Dockside* and enter the Sequetus system.

Within minutes the marshal was on the bridge checking instrumentation, to be sure nothing electronic had been planted within their ship. The screens came on. Goren worked the communications to *Dockside*. A minute later they had drifted away. Minutes more *Dockside* was only a speck on the screen.

“I should inspect the hold,” Goren said as he left the bridge. He wanted a moment to himself.

In the hold Goren inspected the clamps to *Little Betsie*. They were secure. Once inside the Rangercraft Goren uncovered the console to the canon. There appeared to be no intrusion. All other instrumentation checked out as functional.

He next inspected the small arms locker outside the holding hatch. Each weapon had been discharged, empty, as were the refill cartridges. Goren placed the cartridges on recharge.

Ω

Two hours later Erin and Navia requested Goren back onto the bridge.

“We thought you might want to see this. If you look at the viewscreen you will see a space probe from Earth,” Erin said.

Navia stepped to the holographic screen and stared at it closely. “I remember hearing of this back at Academia Alson. It was launched years ago, unmanned, to photograph planets on its journey out through the system. Its mission was successful, but it struck dust after Uranus. It no longer transmits but still carries a live power source. I recommend not proceeding too close. Our presence might trigger the transmissions back to life. And from what we learned at the induction, these kinds of local artifacts must not be interfered with.

“It is known to Earth inhabitants as *Pioneer*,” she said.

“How do you know all this? The governments of the Federation have none of this information. I know, as I recently researched Earth’s space program, and there is nothing available,” said Goren.

Navia laughed. "From other anthropologists, in Maluka, of course. They have a professional responsibility to keep us informed through our exchange program."

Goren sighed, and Navia continued. "There was an earlier Pioneer to this one, but I just learned it ventured too close to *Dockside* and had to be removed as space debris. The removal became a political embarrassment to the Federation who maintained that as an example of non-intervened indigenous technology, it belonged to them. The Federation scientists on Mars cited the *Royal Treaty of Verlain*, whereby the federation government, as distinct to sector government, has rights of benevolent authority over all populations non-intervened. That *Pioneer* now sits in the *Imperial Federation Museum* on Mars.

"Most Sequetus 3 craft originate from the Caucasian race. This *Pioneer* will be another seven years before it passes through the *Dockside* and Kuiper Belt orbit. I'll take some visual records for Alson. For such a brave and primitive craft, to reach this far out in the Sequetus system is a notable achievement for a non-intervened culture."

After ten minutes contact with the little probe was gone. All attention turned to Sequetus 4.

Goren was soon alone on the Bridge. It did not happen often. He looked at the Kuiper Belt surrounding the system. Like a wall, it protected Sequetus. The Belt hosted eight hundred minor planets, and hundreds of millions of smaller asteroids.

Pegasus had been given a path by Dockside so as to avoid collision. Goren next brought up on the screens the millions of asteroids sharing the Jupiter orbit around the sun. Then he viewed the two million in the Asteroid Belt. He stared at them. He then added in the comets from the outer regions. Some he brought up into the highest magnification he could view. He reasoned there had to be dozens of bases out there, or maybe hundreds, or even thousands. He kept looking. Why here, he wondered? Why here? The more he travelled into Sequetus, the more he felt imprisoned.

Including the outer regions there were perhaps half a billion or more large asteroids guarding this system. And likely there were ten to a hundred times that in smaller asteroid numbers.

He looked at the comet cloud on the screen again. It had a billion known comets out there, protecting the Sequetus system. Unlike the Kuiper Belt, which went out in two dimensions, the comet cloud was a full three dimensional sphere. Its coverage of Earth was absolute in every direction.

Then Goren realized. It impossible to warp into this system without knowing where all the moving parts were. There were possibly a million planetoids. Two hundred million asteroids surrounding Earth and a billion comets lay beyond that. Likely there were a trillion space rocks.

The air was shimmering beside him. It was almost glowing. It seemed excited. He gazed at it from the side of his eye, trying to see into it, with only peripheral vision. For a flash of an instant, he wondered if he saw a universe, beyond the shimmering. But then he lost it. Yet it was long enough to get an idea, and the idea was that those asteroids, minor planets and comets were a natural barrier, to keep the Federation out.

The only way into the system was on an authorized path. The *key*. The only way in was at approved sub-light speed. And that made you

a marked craft, followed by dozens or hundreds of eyes, and no doubt hundreds of weapons.

Goren swallowed. He looked to his side, and saw Mepat of the Boguard. They nodded to each other. There seemed to be a mutual understanding.

Mepat simply said slowly, "You are right in all you see." Quietly, then he left the bridge.

ψ

## CHAPTER 7

## MARS

Several days passed and Sequetus 4 finally showed as a dark brown spot on the screen. They had threaded their way through the asteroid belt. It felt tense knowing that they were being watched from many vantage points in space as they slowly followed their path in.

A weak transmission was soon established with the scientific research station.

“Independent Torren is it?” crackled the Mars communicator.

“That's great. We're all eager to meet you. Come on in. Being non-military we don't have a beam for you to follow. Will standard-grid coordinates suffice? Can you find us?”

Goren looked to Erin as if to say, how could they traverse the Santonia Galaxy if they couldn't read standard-grid.

Erin mused to himself. “Yes sir. Fire away.”

After some seconds the voice returned. “Oh, good. Latitude 150 by 198 by 657 by 290 by 051 by 271. Got that?”

Goren raised his eyebrows and answered.  
"Yes *Mars Base*. See you in a few hours.  
*Pegasus* out."

Goren turned, tapped in the coordinates and sat back. "The base is in their *Elysium Quadrangle*<sup>21</sup>, northeast quadrant of the planet," he said.

The planet slowly grew more solid on the screens and Goren read the data while listening to the commentary.

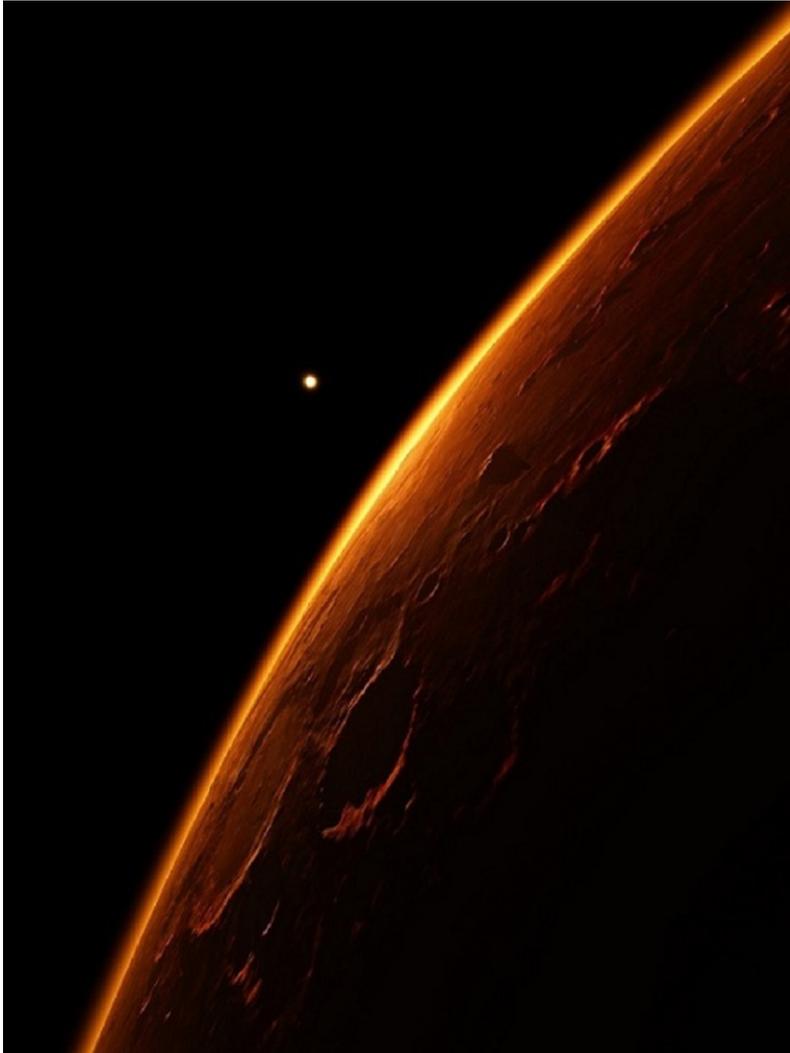
The compubank's monotone voice spoke from the ceiling. "Sequetus 4 no longer has a breathable atmosphere. What atmosphere remains comprises of scant carbon dioxide, though sufficient to raise dust storms in excess of 550 Ks.

"The small poles are the remnants of the frozen atmosphere, between 70 and 120 degrees below the temperature of frozen water.

---

<sup>21</sup> **DEFINITION: ELYSIUM QUADRANGLE:** (*Terrestrial*) One of a series of 30 quadrangle maps of Mars. Covers an area 180° to 225° west longitude and 0° to 30° north latitude. It contains major volcanoes Elysium Mons and Abor Tholus, and river valleys. Elysium: The place at the ends of the Earth where favored heroes are taken by the gods after death. *f Latin* from Greek Elusion (Pedion) (plain) of the blessed.

“On the equator the temperature can rise to plus twenty degrees during the summer.” The commentary continued until the planet image filled the screen.



*Approaching Mars, Sequetus 4*

Goren added, "At the top of the screen you will see the outline of *Mars Base*. Prepare to go down."

Goren enlarged the image with ground-enhancement to see a tall pyramid reaching up from the planet floor.

Slowly, with directions from the base, *Pegasus* began its descent, finally settling two hundred paces from the largest structure.

Mepat watched from the ship's screens, remaining aboard. The others drifted out over the red dust in *Little Betsie*.

To the horizon was red rock, on a dry brown plain. The sky was blue. The gigantic pyramid before them was a marvel of tightly crafted bedrock slabs, covered in a skin of brown dust. A wide low opening appeared in a protruding stonewall. The Rangercraft entered. Once the wall sealed the airlock compressed.

*Little Betsie* then continued in through another entrance. A moment later they disembarked to look up into one of the greatest internal structures they had ever seen.

Inside the vast void was beauty, and it caught the breath of the travelers. The *sky* was a hazy blue reaching down from the apex, way above. The walls were covered in many millions

of tiny pale blue glowing lights. The impression was of uninterrupted sky.

The troop stood on neatly trimmed green-blue grass. Large trees and bright flowers dominated a green landscape, while small birds chirped, beyond what appeared to be water ponds.

Walking towards them was the whole Martian scientific party of twenty-three.

"I'm *Doctor Filpar*," called the closest, an old man with a short well-trimmed white beard.

Goren stepped forward pleased to recognize a smiling face.

"You must be Independent Torren," the doctor said, before Goren had the opportunity to introduce himself. "Very good of you to come by, you know. Do you like our pyramid? Ten times the largest on Sequetus 3, and predating all of theirs as well.

"But how rude of me, let me introduce you," the doctor was saying as he welcomed Goren by the hand.

Shortly, they had been shown their spartan underground quarters. Then, they were requested to rendezvous under the trees, where tables and chairs had been laid out.

After some minutes they all met, no absentees. Goren smiled as he noticed the sky-lighting had been set for the late afternoon, and a cool breeze was slowly drifting through the trees. Some tree limbs swayed overhead. Leaves rustled.

The tables had been prepared for a small meal, with the best food brought up from the base stores. After weeks in travel it appeared to Goren's crew as a feast. There were fruits, vegetables, and a dozen forms of home baked bread, as well as a wide variety of drinks, home blend.

The doctor and Goren were engrossed in discussion of how to grow citrus plants, while the marshal conversed with five others. Instructor Letone was found to be carrying a conversation with two women, who were pleased with the Boguard's presence. The scientists seem to be making up the answers to their own questions. Navia lay on the grass staring up into the pyramid sky. She breathed in deeply, felt wellbeing to be on the ground, and soon drifted off to sleep.

"Doctor," said Goren. "Tell me about Mars."

"Oh, goodness, what would you like to know?"

Goren smiled at the old man. The doctor's face was kind and sincere, as though searching for a friend. Goren wondered what had brought an honest person to spend his remaining days on a desolate red speck in the isolated outer rim of the Santonia Galaxy.

"I know nothing of Mars, doctor. Tell me anything that you would like to share."

"Share? Yes, of course. Well, where do you want me to begin?" The doctor almost pleaded.

Goren smiled at the wrinkled white bearded face. "What about history? Where did this great structure come from? It is primitive in its components, but its size indicates an evolved civilization."

"Yes, yes. You're correct Independent Goren Torren. Great forces built this. In fact, this structure precedes the first records we have of this planet. Our first recorded history of our pyramid comes when it was colonized because of persecution by the *Great Cities of the Council*, the forebears to the Confederated Council of Planets, many millennia ago. The *Great Cities* pursued refugees of a persecuted planet, but were eluded. These refugees settled here on Mars. Over the centuries they built a substantial civilization, culminating in this very structure.

However, the original structure was here before that, built by a people who we do not know. That is part of our scientific reason for being here, to find who was here first and when.

“We think that whoever came here first, was attracted by the low Martian gravity, which is a little over half of Earth. At that time, bulk monolithic construction prospered.

“This great civilization of several hundred thousand refugees was subsequently discovered thousands of years ago. The prospering community had hidden itself through the ages, even destroying their own space ships, to ensure their secrecy. The CCP turned out to be no saviors. They removed and scattered the Martian populace, through the subcultures on Earth.”

“So what happened to the culture on Earth as a consequence?” asked Goren.

The doctor smiled and looked up at the lights of the sky. It had been so long since he had a willing ear to listen to him. “They prospered at first. Amongst the locals on Earth they became gods. However, we suspect and have records that there were other gods on Earth as well.

“Today there are over three hundred pyramids on Earth. Their pyramids contain cryptic messages relating to Mars. Some pyramids bear Martian calendars, some sighted Mars from their crypts. Others had measurements common to Mars as the base unit to their circumference. The blood of the Martians began to mix with the races on Earth until the last Martian stronghold, the Egyptian Pharaohs, was gone. Most of the Martian cultures on Earth gathered around the equatorial regions.”

The doctor offered Goren more to eat. “Most food is grown here,” he said slowly looking out to the trees reaching overhead, as though he was reminiscing. “The CCP were not satisfied in just removing the Martian population. They also deoxygenated the planet by cancelling out its weak magnetic poles. The atmosphere leaked into space. With that finally went the rivers, the small equatorial forests and wildlife. Except,” the doctor smiled, “what you see before you now. The Martians sealed their wild life, those thousands of years ago, in several pyramids, as you see here. They included most of their scant fauna, be it small. Mars never really grew much. When we arrived two pyramids were still

operational. From space the CCP bombarded the structures with atomics but still two of these larger monoliths survived.

“Miraculously there was only minor damage to this one. The solar generators maintained the macro climate well enough for most of these small animals to live.”

Goren wondered. “Were the pyramids of Earth built by the refugees from here, or by that earlier unknown race who built this structure?”

The doctor nodded. “We think it was whoever was here first, who built those structures on Earth. But we have no idea who they were, or where they were from. We can only guess that they were here tens of thousands of years ago. We have no idea why they originally entered the Sequetus system.”

Goren asked, “If there is more data on Earth, why don’t you go there and research?”

The doctor laughed. “Not allowed to. Sequetus 3 is out of our jurisdiction, I am afraid. If we tried to go to Earth we would be imprisoned. It is that simple.”

Goren slowly nodded. “I see.”

Goren looked about and over to the trees. He wondered why the CCP would do this. If they had just found two planets in a solus series of

many planets, which they had just taken over administrative control of, would they really bomb it, to wipe it out? It just did not make sense, as it was against all rules. He told the doctor so. The doctor just shrugged. That was the past.

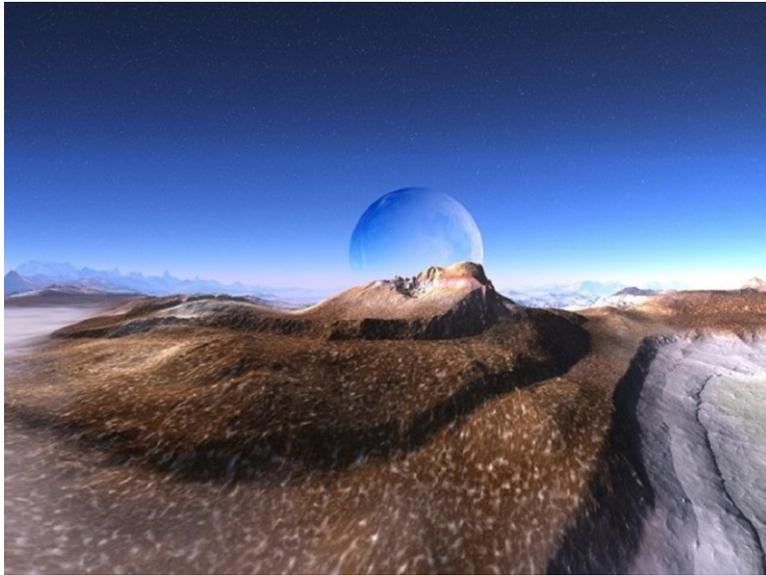
“Yes, but what we do have now is this, and it is Martian,” said the doctor. “We have ninety-eight varieties of small animals here, as well as seven hundred varieties of plants, plus hundreds of insects, small beetles, worms and a few dozen varieties of fish and crabs.”

The doctor leaned forward towards Goren as though trying not to be overheard and spoke softly. “When you bring your food out in the morning, you have to be careful that the protein eating plants don’t get it before you do.” He glanced around and whispered pointing up to the trees. “Those small animals that live up in those trees... They’re furry little *feelups*, and will take the food right out from your mouth if you’re not careful. They’re harmless.” The doctor filled Goren's glass and continued. “If you wish to feed them it is recommended that you use our special mix. It is a specially prepared diet, and feeding the feelups in the morning can be fun, as they’re really quite friendly.”

Goren looked out to the trees, but saw nothing that could have passed for a *feelup*.

He then turned back to the doctor and asked about the sculpture he had seen from space. “The face, we could see it from a long way out.”

The doctor smiled. “That face was carved out of a mountain by my predecessors with *Romobiles*, original Martian artifacts. They’re still operational. And we continue to use them to collect ice from the poles.”



*The Face on Mars*

“Aren’t you concerned that Earth will see these sculptured creations and become interested?”

The doctor nodded. “We’re not to make contact with Earth, as that would violate our lease with the Malukans, but we know the planet is well overdue. It sits out there like a short fused explosive, ready to be lit and take the Galaxy with it.”

Goren looked into the concerned eyes of the doctor and asked, “Are you hoping to be found out by Earth?”

The doctor smiled and shook his head. “Independent, that would be a violation of our lease and is forbidden by the Malukans, even if it is the sensible thing. However, the Malukans have hundreds of professional agents on the planet, so it wouldn’t make much difference if we were detected or not. The population generally wouldn’t care.”

Goren looked at him puzzled.

The doctor nodded slowly. “There is enough anthropological data on that planet for the simple-minded to see that that planet isn’t the only intelligent race in this universe. I mean, almost a third of the total planet have seen craft that they call UFOs, or unidentified flying

objects. Most are Malukan trading vessels, seen by many, and yet somehow not noticed by the populace media. The individuals see them, but the so-called people don't. You're the independent, so you tell me why. Why is it so different to the other populated planets? The people of Earth have thousands of books on what they term *unidentified flying objects*, but the subject is simply taboo. That is an agent's job, to make the subject taboo. So, you tell me, independent. It's a most extraordinary situation over there." The old man looked to the trees slowly shaking his head.

Goren was interested now. Leaning closer he asked, "Have manned Earth craft visited here? We passed one of their probes in the outer sections of the system."

The doctor smiled. "There are two space faring nations. Both have been here with unmanned craft. The Russians were here first but had to leave due to malfunctioning equipment. Funny thing was, when we tested their equipment here, it all worked. But they had become convinced at their end, that the craft was dead. It did not make sense to us here."

The doctor looked at Goren as though seeking an explanation.

The doctor continued with more information, "The Americans had an unmanned mission here recently. I recall standing behind their small awkward primitive machine; it whirred and buried itself into the soil, investigating the possibilities of life on Mars. It was an exciting time for Earth. The small machine became stuck, and we almost decided to free it before it righted by itself, to our relief.

"It wouldn't have been good on their planet's news if our Martian team all of a sudden appeared on their screen.

Goren smiled and asked, "What would happen if you had?"

The doctor chuckled to his own thoughts. "Nothing really. Moonbase runs agent networks on Sequetus 3. Their job it is to remove all such mistakes from space agencies, and news media. The agents' networks are separate to each other, and they are very effective."

A shimmering affect was in the air to Goren's left. He looked at the doctor and it was obvious he could not see it. Goren hesitated and then continued, "But do not the Earth intelligence services come across the agents?"

They do have their own planet wide intelligence.”

The doctor laughed out loud and offered Goren a refill of a hot drink. “No, not if they are the same people.”

Goren sat back, looking at the doctor. He had a lot to investigate.

The doctor shook his head and then continued. “In another eight months the Americans will be here with a secret manned expedition. They left Earth sixty-three days ago.”

Goren nodded and then asked, “How do you know? Do you have contacts on Earth?”

The doctor smiled. “I wish we did. No, Moonbase informed us, so we do not get excited, and do not get involved.”

Goren thought about this. That made sense. He looked around. “I understand that a Malukan trooper is stationed here. I haven’t seen him.”

“Ah, yes. Under our terms of lease, we must provide for up to three *Dockside* troopers. Their role is to spy on us while we spy on Earth. They rotate the troopers every standard-year. They have only one here now. She is a woman, and a good person.”

“Doctor, your information isn’t generally known out there. I never came across it, yet you’re scientists.”

“Hmm. Yes, our reports only go to Maluka, and they distribute them accordingly. It’s a funny legal quirk in our lease. We’re otherwise bound to a pledge of silence.”

Goren thought to himself about this mysterious Sequetus 3 and what it would take to unlock all of the doctor’s knowledge of it. To date the doctor and his staff were charming. Goren wondered of *Mars Base’s* mission. Could Goren and these scientists act in concerted unison? It seemed that they had a common purpose. On the other hand, *Mars Base* could be a trap. A trap by whom? The Malukans, the Federation, or some other forces?

Ω

In a grotto under the pyramid, Goren swung open a heavy metal door, adjusting to the dim light. He stepped down to view some of the strangest machines he had ever seen.

The doctor spread his arms out to the display. “This is the best museum of nonintervention space travel to be found in any

sector. On our left we have three *Mariner* spacecraft and two *Viking* craft, from the Americans. On our right are *Mars 2*, *Mars 3* and *Mars 6* from the Russians. In the center is a comet probe from the Europeans.” The earnest expression on the doctor’s face showed this was the fruit of much time spent in the Sequetus solar system.

Goren shook his head in amazement. To have advanced this far technologically was amazing. To have achieved such advanced strides may have brought the peoples of Earth to a high social structure. Perhaps this tiny planet had developed a worthy society after all. In that case the Galaxy may benefit from their presence.

Goren’s mind wandered back into time. He thought of the days of the Spanish Court with their sailing ships and low technology. This would be an amazing advance, nations of a barbaric planet pushing outwards into space without the help of intervention.

The doctor brought Goren out of his reverie. “Here to the rear is an authentic lunar buggy. But keep this find quiet, we don’t want preservationists breathing down our necks.”

Goren looked at the doctor curiously.

The doctor continued. "Some years ago, when Earth was only one hundred and thirty million Ks away, some daring Malukan troopers stole the buggy from the lunar surface and hid it in our storage depot on Phobos, the larger Martian moon. Unfortunately for them, we detected the prank and lifted the vehicle down here.

"Anyway, enough of this, I can talk the ears off of a dead lizard." Seeing Goren puzzled by the doctor's phrase he explained. "It's an Earth expression. That reminds me, are you aware that Earth's languages have been influenced by *Standard Galactic*? Exactly how this was brought about I don't totally know, but the ruling language, English, evolves more into Standard Galactic as the planet turns."

Goren listened intently. He recalled what he learned of Earth language the last time he was there. "I have come across English before, Doctor. On my last visit I felt the language bore an uncanny resemblance to Standard in many of its words." This also could bear scrutiny thought Goren.

The doctor ushered Goren out through the door, and led the way back to the canteen. "We receive several Earth radio transmissions out

here, plus some leisure telecommunications when the two planets are close. We have many recordings, so why not teach your group basic-English while here? Full time study would only take a few days. Grammatically it is the same as Standard. The dialect is different, but many of the words have a familiarity. Your group will find it easy to pick up.”

Goren smiled and accepted the offer.

Ω

The next day, between language sessions Goren and Erin returned to *Pegasus* to take *Little Betsie* on trials. The small Rangercraft drifted out across the desolate rock landscape. They headed for the tall volcano, *Elysium Mons*.

The little craft quickly crossed the desert, interspaced with canyons and dried riverbeds made by glaciers of the past. The volcano loomed over the horizon, many Ks high. It was mammoth, for any planet, let alone tiny Mars.

Goren spoke after checking the computata files. “The volcano is slightly active.” Here they would test out their canon on the leeward side from *Mars Base*.

The marshal nodded as he checked the coordinates and indicated to the basin below. Goren agreed, it was deep and any seismic repercussions felt at *Mars Base* would be attributed to Elysium Mons.

Goren checked his map. "There, that rocky outcrop."

"Got it," replied Erin, and *Little Betsie* nestled down below the horizon line.

"In sights, Goren. 4.765 Ks at zero degrees."

The outcrop was about forty pacs high, and the same wide, a ridge made from rock lava that had been spewed up from the volcano.

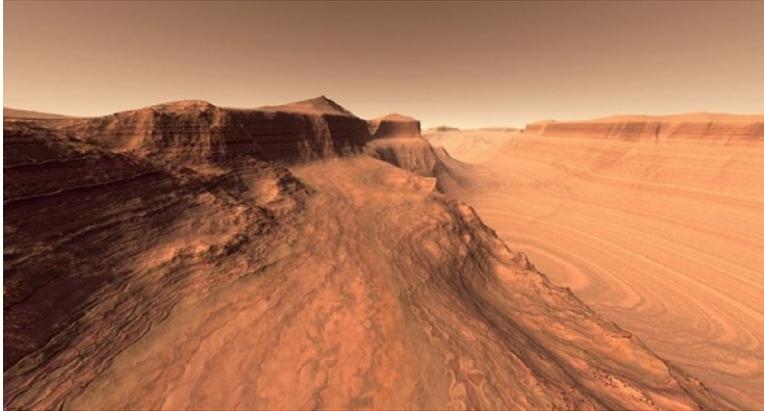
"Ready?" Goren put the question.

"Ready!" replied Erin.

"Shoot," called Goren. He watched the screen as the marshal depressed the firing trigger.

Instantly, as the marshal's forefinger pressed, the viewscreens became a kaleidoscope of colors, as desert sands and sky whirled before their eyes, merging together in a blur of vision. Goren could no longer make out features. He looked to Erin for explanation. Before reading the marshal's face the reason dawned on Goren like a blow. He turned, his arms quickly reached

for the console, fingers reaching for the override controls.



*Martian landscape*

Before the controls could be reached, Goren's body was wrenched from his seat. Forces gripped him, pushing him down against the straps, flinging his arms away from the controls. His flesh seemed to pull away from bone.

Both of *Little Betsie's* occupants knew what was happening. Goren couldn't see Erin, but fought for their lives against the centrifugal forces ripping at the little craft. Goren's seat strap held his body from being smashed. Without success Goren strained to have his fingertips touch the console. His muscles aching

against the gravitational forces bent on their destruction. A second had passed.

The cannon, normally fitted to a galactic cruiser thousands of times larger than a Rangercraft, had insignificant recoil on its mother ship. The same cannon on the *Little Betsie* had sent them spiraling across the Martian desert.

Initially the onboard gyros had compensated for the outside motion, which was evident on the viewscreens. The gyros gave out, resulting in the interior of the Rangercraft experiencing massive forces within it, pulling it apart. The occupants' lives depended upon regaining control before the craft scattered itself across the rocks.

Goren's fingers were still just off the controls, unable to exert any influence.

Without notice the spinning stopped. The gyros were back on. Goren took a deep breath and looked to Erin, who was sitting upright with eyes wide open. Goren sighed with relief and looked at the screens for the horizon.

"Erin," he said, "I think we're upside down."

The horizon flipped.

"Sorry!"

Both looked to each other with mock sardonic stares, stares that slowly turned into slow gleeful laughter.

After a moment Erin searched the desert. “There, those are the rocks.”

What Erin indicated was a thin dust cloud slowly drifting over the basin. The large rock outcrop was no longer there.

Goren wiped the perspiration from his brow, acknowledging the workability of the cannon, even if it did kick like a *ku*<sup>22</sup>.

ψ

---

<sup>22</sup> **DEFINITION: Kul:** Four legged hybrid beast bred and introduced to planets of low technology as a form of transport, known for its stubbornness. Origin of beast and word unknown. *Searfinders Dictionary*, pp. 234-235.

## ANQI STORM

A week passed. Navia found herself in the mess, eating with the only Malukan trooper on *Mars Base*. The trooper had until now avoided all members of the group. Her name was *Anqi Storm*, a young slim clear-skinned woman, with strong but refined features. She wore a dark grey uniform.

The two women sat facing each other, Anqi's eyes intent on each word Navia spoke. They had been speaking for an hour on what Navia considered idle subjects.

Anqi spoke with deliberation and softly, as though trying not to be misunderstood. Her accent wasn't the normal harsh Standard from Maluka, which Navia had expected to hear, but a melodic round accent devoid of extremes.

"Well, it isn't all that bad," Anqi sighed. "A year here is better than on *Dockside*. The scientists here are gentlemen.

"On *Dockside*, people are something else. There, people have no manners."

Navia gave a slightly patronizing nod.

Anqi continued. "In fact, I feel quite distant from my colleagues in Sequetus. I mean, those on *Dockside* are debased, compared to the troopers I have known back home. The troopers exchanged with *Moonbase* seem equally as bad. The thing is, it isn't the isolation; scientists here are considerate and kind, even though it is my job to report on their activities to my superiors at *Dockside*. I don't know what it is, but after a while, troopers who stay too long in Sequetus, seem less human."

Navia listened as Anqi became a little despondent and the conversation lapsed.

Anqi then brightened. "That independent of yours is interesting."

Navia was surprised by the informality. "Do you have a partner Anqi?"

Anqi's slumped as her eyes cast away. "I... I once had a friend, a friend at home." Anqi tried to smile as she recalled fond memories of times past. She then focused on Navia.

"He signed up for a tour of outpost duty, on *Dockside*. He was to return after his three years. That was fifteen years ago."

Anqi's gaze shifted past Navia as pain set in. "After ten years he no longer returned my correspondence. Two years ago I put in for

outpost duty there. I thought perhaps another partner. When I arrived he could barely recognize me.

“When he left for tour at Sequetus he was only seventy-two years old. What I saw last was a shell of a man, looking more like two hundred years. His body and mind had wasted.” Anqi could barely keep her gaze up from the floor.

Navia felt she had to pry. This was important. “Why did he age, Anqi?” she asked with a little sympathy.

“He said it was due to a radioactive isotope in the Earth's crust. I questioned others who repeated what appeared to be an official line.

“Last year his last tour came to another end. I was stationed here at the time. I pleaded for him to return home and wait for me.

He said he couldn't do it. He would give no reason why, only that it wasn't possible. He wouldn't leave this retched sector.

“I have been here on Mars since. I have put in for permanent station here until my tour runs out. It will be granted. Normally you have to drag a trooper screaming to Mars for a single term.”

“Anqi, what is the reason?” Navia's look was warm, as the young female trooper swam in painful memories.

Anqi hesitated as if to answer or not. She slumped and looked away. Slowly she brought herself to say. “The doctor here explained it to me. It is a plant they bring up off that awful planet. The troopers consume the contents after a brief laboratory process. According to the doctor the troopers claim that the plant is an herbal relaxant. The scientists here say when a person is accustomed to its affects, all decision to survive, without the plant, vanishes. My *Karn* couldn't live without it, and slowly it is killing him.” Anqi's eyes were moist, and looked to Navia as though pleading: please help me!

Navia saw the torment, but what could she do but listen to the story? She let Anqi continue.

“One day I'll leave here and go back home. Away from this wretched system, and that wretched Earth. Navia, I hate that planet. Believe me, I hate it so much. I hate the troopers. I hate the commanders and their chiefs of staff. They know what is happening.” Moisture was forming in corners of Anqi's eyes. “I lie awake crying, often. I don't cry just for my

Karn, but for all the other troopers down there and the ones who love them too.

“I hope they destroy that planet, every piece of it. I hear it could be soon. And, I hope they destroy every bit of life on it.”

Tears began to travel Anqi's cheeks as she rose quickly, and hurried away.

Navia, herself shaken by Anqi's story, stared out of the window to the grass and trees beyond. She wondered again if they were here to assist in the destruction of six billion people. She tried to project in her mind what the ramifications would be for the galaxy, if the human races of Earth escaped off from their planet.

Ω

Over the days that lapsed Anqi refrained from contacting the troop, except for Navia. Their friendship strengthened. Anqi showed Navia the brief Martian sunset in the Romobile, and where a vast lush equatorial landscape had been crushed by the massing of great glaciers in days long past. Anqi was mildly proud of her current Martian home.

Anqi and Navia sat down after preparing hot food in the central outdoor cafeteria. The caff was small with open cooking facilities. All foods served were self-grown.



*Anqi Storm*

The growing-vats were at the northern end of the pyramid, protected from the small nocturnal creatures that were permitted to otherwise roam wild.

Outside the caff was a paved area with tables and chairs surrounded by low floodlights, which came on with night. The sun activated the pyramid *sky*. It was blue when the external sun rose, and dimmed to night as the sun then set. The *sky* was even overcast as a dust storm howled outside.

At night the paths were lit with small bollard lights, and some of the trees were lit with decorations.

The reason for the night sky was simple; the plants, animals and humans preferred it that way.

At select locations Earth radio stations could be heard in the background. In some of the grassed areas a skin tan was possible, if you were patient. To the north was a swimming lake seventy paces wide. Beyond it were fish stocked streams and small pools that seemed to burble soft poems.

From the caff the pyramid walls couldn't be easily seen. The illusion was just of blue sky all around.

Several times Anqi had mentioned Goren in her conversations.

It was obvious to Navia that there was a faint attraction from her to him. Goren too, had mentioned Anqi.

“I have tried to talk to him, but he always finds a reason to leave. I thought perhaps he felt a Malukan trooper wouldn’t be worth associating with, yet he is always polite and smiles when he sees me. Do you know what I mean?”

Navia nodded knowingly. “I understand what you mean. Unfortunately our independent is unsure of himself, around women he doesn’t know. It is interesting that you should say this as it usually means only one thing with Goren.”

“What is that?” asked Anqi impatiently.

Navia sat back and laughed. She did not answer but said, “Tomorrow, we will have finished our language lessons. At noon I want you to join Goren, and me here, for lunch. The doctor has asked us to a photographic session of Earth, as the skies will be clear. There is a dust storm coming up from the south shortly afterwards. It will last until we lift off in a couple of days. I haven’t told Goren I can’t make the luncheon, so instead of me taking Goren along

to the boring photo session, why don't you join us? I'll stay five minutes and have the doctor drag me away."

Anqi first seemed uncomfortable at the idea. She looked away, then turned back to face Navia with a smile. "That sounds good, see you tomorrow Navia." With that Anqi rose from the table and left for work.

Navia smiled. She looked at the vegetation around her, and then imagined the wonder of the rivers and lakes, and the life that once was outside.

Imagine, she thought to herself, two oxygen and water planets in the same solar system, both planets supporting life. This had been so rare. Who had killed it, and why?

The next day Goren and Navia waited at the caff. She had explained that Anqi would be joining them.

Anqi approached.

Goren watched her break into a smile. She was tall, in a pale grey garrison shocksuit. Her face was refined with high cheekbones.

Anqi's hair was shoulder length, thick. In the light it changed color from auburn to brown. She was younger than Goren had previously thought and suddenly he felt nervous. Anqi

made him lose confidence, and Goren was glad to have Navia by his side.

Anqi said hello and only with an elbow from Navia did Goren realize where he was. He apologized and listened to the girls' talk, quite contented for the experience to just look at Anqi occasionally.

Erin marched up; quite on cue thought Navia.

"Navia, the doctor has something urgent he wishes to show you about Earth's *moon*. I'm afraid it won't wait."

Navia stood. "Anqi, Goren, my apologies," and gave Goren the look of what else can I do? "I shall not be long. You two begin lunch without me. I'll be back very soon." Ignoring the betrayed look in Goren's eyes, Navia followed the marshal away.

Navia returned four hours later to see Goren and Anqi still talking, barely having touched any food. Navia in turn returned to the observatory. The scientists would be observing Earth all night, and the dust storm had held off. Earth wouldn't return this close to Mars for another seventeen years.

Over the next two days Goren heard about Karn and his drug addiction. Anqi also told

Goren about her home planet Sleebo, the sixth planet out from a white solus. Unlike Goren's home, Jilta, Anqi's home was mostly a frozen landscape. Often the temperature reached down to minus thirty degrees or more. But according to Anqi the air was clean and fresh, where forests had adapted to the cold.

Anqi also talked about how she used to snow ski, ride atop frozen lakes, and go fishing with her father in the summer at the glacier's edge.

Goren felt that Sleebo had to be a pure planet, reflecting the heart of the person in front of him.

Anqi's parents were local traders. They owned their own store in a small town named Alsam, and were content to live their life simply. Her father had been *off-planet* only once, and her mother never. Anqi believed they had some credits tucked away, but doubted they would really know how to spend them.

Goren also heard about the loss of her brother, a trooper, killed in putting down the Crackess Uprisings.

The last afternoon they spent looking over the Martian landscape through the window of the observation lounge. Goren felt strong with Anqi

nearby, as though something had been missing until now. He knew he did not need a complication during the mission, but the reality was that she was here and so was he. He felt complete around her, and he thought the feeling was reciprocated, even if not mentioned in conversation. Goren doubted that words really could communicate what he was feeling.

Anqi asked him where he would be at the end of her tour. He honestly did not know, he reflected. They avoided talking about tomorrow. Tomorrow he would have to leave, leave Mars.

Ω

At 05:30 Goren and Anqi were the first to meet in the mess hall. Others entered irregularly with sleep in their eyes.

Their last Martian dawn was approaching. Through the glass the first arcs of light crept silently over the ragged hilltops, heralding a new day.

Goren and Anqi exchanged glances, but neither spoke, not wanting to interrupt any moments they had left.

Anqi and Goren watched the approaching light hastening their separation. The first rays

bounced off the taller crags, and then set the lower hills aglow. The golden light soon silhouetted the basin boulders beyond. Five minutes after the first sign of light, a pale yellow sun pierced the horizon, brightening the lounge. As it did so, the window polarizer activated, diffusing much of the weak pale orange glare.

While the sun rose the basin became clearer and more solid, yet looking starker and cold. Each new sunray felt like an arrow piercing Goren's heart. Anqi nudged his hand as she felt his battle.

Goren looked to her eyes, which tried to tell him something. Goren couldn't hold her gaze for long, and looked back out over the basin. The shadows shortened and Mars took on its familiar cold tan glow.

Goren's companions had joined them. They had grown attached to Mars in different ways. Some of the scientists were present simply to share their dawn, sleep drifting out of their minds.

Nothing was said as the sun crawled up off the horizon into the sky.

Even the Boguard seemed to lament the parting. This was their Martian farewell also.

An hour later, one by one, the troop boarded *Little Betsie*. It would rendezvous outside the pyramid with *Pegasus*, to make the journey to Earth. Goren made a token goodbye to all.

Anqi took Goren by the sleeve. "Take care Independent Goren Torren. Be very careful. You have good friends here on Mars." After a pause she continued, "Don't forget us."

Goren smiled; no words, emptiness.

Anqi slowly kissed Goren on the cheek and whispered. "*Dockside* believes you have a hidden agenda on Earth. They're watching you. There are dozens of armed outposts all through the system tracking you. Be really careful," she whispered, and ran off.

Goren looked at what she had placed in his hand. It was a locket. Goren sighed.

*Little Betsie* sealed. Moments later the craft had drifted into the hold of *Pegasus*. Another twenty seconds and they were beyond the Martian atmosphere into space.

It was Erin who broke the silence. "We have to report to the Earth satellite called Moon in eighty-five hours. If any of you still feel tired I can hold the bridge, but first I'm going to

prepare a hot drink of *kalo*. Any are welcome to join me.”

Captain Mepat and Goren remained on the bridge.

Goren sat staring at the viewscreen, watching the little red ball slowly recede. He sat staring at the memory.

There in his mind he saw Anqi by the caff, showing him how to feed the feelups. The animals were four legged, furry, the size of one’s forearm, with thick tails and bright big black eyes.

Goren thought the feelups were a bit like him in Anqi's presence. Their eyes moved nervously as she beckoned them to come down from the trees.

He smiled as he saw Anqi sing a high-pitched song to the feelups. The feelups stopped and stood on their hind legs and tottered back and forth as if trying to determine the source. They listened. Anqi repeated her little song. The feelups looked at each other. Finally two ran along the branch and darted down the trunk of their tree and stopped two paces away. They stood on their haunches, being only slightly taller than the grass. Their ears pricked forward as Anqi sang again.

Anqi knelt, stretched out, some of her food in front of the small pair. “Come on little feelups, here is some dinner.”

The feelups listened and came closer. Anqi held the morsel out a little further.

“Come on... before the scientists tell me I have to feed you that awful protein food.... Come on mister feelup, this is good people food.”

At that, one of the feelups hesitantly edged forward until just in front of Anqi's fingertips. Slowly and gently it removed the food from her fingers. It chirped at Anqi, after a quick sample of the food, and sent its gaze to Goren. It seemed to acknowledge him too. Then quickly it hopped back to its mate.

Its mate broke the morsel and chewed.

Anqi called to them softly. “Do you like it mister and missus feelup?”

The feelups looked over and gave another chirp, held onto the food between their teeth and bounded across the lawn and up into the tree.

Goren could see himself smiling at Anqi. She felt it too. They were feeling life.

A hand holding a cup of hot kalo stretched out in front of Goren. He was in the *Pegasus*. It was Erin, with a smile.

"I think you need this," Erin said cheerily. Goren exhaled, accepted the drink, stood, and made his way below. The drink would do him good. He knew sleep could help him too. He looked at Anki's locket and soon began to dream.

Ω

The marshal and Captain Mepat were on the bridge.

Mepat walked around to be in front. "Marshal Torb. Mostly, we Boguard keep to ourselves and don't get involved in the personal affairs of others."

The marshal nodded. "I had heard this rumored."

"I have been watching, out of curiosity, members of our group. Our Boguard are made up of male and female alike, and the friendship bond between any of us is so close that any Boguard would lay down his life for the protection of another."

Erin nodded.

Mepat continued. "Sir, when I saw Independent Torren and trooper Storm, together they seemed greater than the two separate individuals. They seem shrouded by a single living source, not two sources. Could that not be so, marshal?"

Erin looked at the strong straight figure in front of him and nodded. "I believe that could be very possible Captain." The marshal wasn't too sure what he was agreeing with.

"Thank you, Marshal. I better assist Instructor Letone below." The Boguard stepped down from the bridge.

Erin peered into the dark viewscreens watching the small red dot of Mars become just one of the many specks in space. He smelt the hot aroma of his spicy kalo, as it slowly wafted into his lungs.

"We shall return," he thought. "Maybe." The universe was full of possibilities.

ψ

## MOONBASE

*Pegasus* had Moon on its viewscreens. The voyage from Mars had been uneventful. Inside of the Martian orbit space had been mostly cleared. The scientists on Mars explained that there were Federation cleaning teams every few decades. They pushed inner-orbit unwanted space debris back to the orbit of the asteroid belt. There it stockpiled. But, like any system, debris moved, and so it was a continual clearing operation.

The beam from *Moonbase* was drawing them down; there were a million Ks to go. The beam direction avoided detection from Earth, and the moon had obscured all vision of the watery planet for the past two hours. Soon all went black and they began to descend over the far side of the moon.

The lunar surface was more pockmarked than Mars, having existed far longer without atmosphere. Infrared scanners showed the surface to be bland and monotone, with small grey flat plains interrupted by craters. The only

variance to the surface was the depth, density and size of the crater scars. To those on the bridge it was just another large rock in space.

The *Pegasus* began to slow as the beam guided them down into a crater, its depth increasing. They began to enter the moon itself.

The data sheet came up on the screen:

*The term Sequetus 3 refers to the twin planets called Earth and Moon. Moon orbits Earth every twenty-eight days. There is computer speculation as to whether the binary pair is a natural phenomenon or if Moon was brought into the sphere of the planet Earth by forces unknown. Federation records don't show Moon around Earth until ten thousand years ago. It is a different composition of materials to Earth. It is older than Earth.*

From the data, the moon also seemed partially hollow, ideal for an unexposed moon base. Goren tabbed the data.

Soon *Pegasus* touched down. The left viewscreen showed the crater roof closing. The stars vanished. Outside *Pegasus* was now standard atmospheric: 1.0.

While communications had gone silent, inside the base was visible. There was a vast series of underground cells and caverns.

Enormous metal struts and columns supported the lunar roof hundreds of paces above. Goren wondered how far down the base went.

Letone remained aboard; others exited.

Outside seemed sleepy, if not lonely, for they had seen only one trooper fleetingly on an upper catwalk, and he seemed not interested in their presence. They waited outside *Pegasus* patiently. Twenty minutes went by without any recognition.

Another trooper was finally nearby. He casually walked over and gave the party a quick glance. His posture and expression showed little interest. To Goren he appeared listless and with little purpose.

The trooper squinted for a second look and came over. He stood straight to attention in front of the marshal and saluted.

"Marshal Torb, Trooper Manik. I was on the *Cruiser Sportal*. Over Tilton with you, sir!"

The marshal returned the salute. "At ease, son. Trooper Second Class, Geko Manik, in charge of *Sportal* bridge communications."

"That is correct, sir." The young trooper was beaming for being recognized by a great military commander of the Federation. To have

served with him was an experience to share with others, but to be remembered by him....

“Sir,” the trooper said. “Why are you and your party waiting here in the freighter bays? There are no freighters due for another six months.”

“I’m not sure son. This is where we were instructed to disembark. We have been waiting for some time.” Erin looked at Manik. “Why are you enlisted out here with the Malukans, son, when you could work a good post in the Hymondian sector?”

Manik looked away uneasily and brought his gaze to the marshal's feet. His story unfolded. “When my tour finished on the *Sportal*, sir, I resigned from military service to seek my fortune in the mining camps. I found being an ex-trooper an obstacle. After eight years I threw it in. My family and children were growing distant from me in my absence, so I turned to the government for an occupation. However I missed the excitement and the action of my former life.”

“I see,” mused Erin.

Manik continued. “I then heard of the mercenary call up of the Malukans. Their tour contracts were short and the pay was twice that

of a standard trooper. All my pay is sent direct to my family, which now have a fine home and both my sons are enrolled at the local academia.”

“Are your sons doing well then, Manik?” Erin asked kindly.

The trooper looked up and smiled. “Very fine, thank you sir.”

“Then, I’m sure, you have chosen wisely,” said Erin.

“Thank you, sir. There are no conflicts of loyalty sir. All mercenary forces are stationed well back from their native sector borders.”

“Understandable. What contingent are mercenary here, son?”

“About ninety percent, sir. Almost all the Malukans are officers, or in the Communications Center.”

“I see. And how large is this command son?”

“Over seven thousand total, sir.”

Goren's eyes widened. Where were they, and why so many? What was Earth really, then? Questions streamed through his mind.

“Trooper Manik, could I ask a special favor from you?”

“Certainly, sir!”

“I and my party are here incognito. We’re on a priority mission for the Federation. It is important that our cover not be revealed.”

“It must be frightfully important to have you out here, sir. I understand. There will be no slip of the tongue, by this trooper, sir.”

Manik did not know that the marshal had retired, nor was the marshal speaking the strict truth about the Federation. On this mission he was serving Lorde Hymondy, not the Federation.

“Thank you Manik. Should anyone find out that I’m here it could mean the closure of the whole of this operation in this system, and the removal of its personnel for series-deprogramming. Do you understand son?”

Manik gave a slight shudder at the mention of series-deprogramming. It had been outlawed by Lorde Hymondy, but reportedly used in the Malukan sector. Many of the victims of series-deprogramming were no better than vegetables at the end of the sessions. Hymondy saw no military or civil value in it.

After a slight hesitation Manik replied. “Yes sir.”

Goren was curious, watching the pair. He thought of returning to the *Pegasus*, when the air to his left began to shimmer, as though there

was an energy breaking through from somewhere. He also had the strangest feeling, as though he had been here before. Thereupon he had a different thought.

Goren stepped forward. "Trooper Manik, the marshal and I wish to see the Communications Center."

Erin looked at Goren with mild surprise.

"Of course, sir," Manik replied instantly. "Please follow me."

Navia and Mepat remained outside *Pegasus*, while Erin and Goren followed Manik through a concealed door.

Along a maze of corridors they were led, passing more troopers as they approached the nerve center of the base. Finally, they entered the Communications Center from a platform above.

Goren was amazed. The multi-story tiered theatre must have had hundreds of personnel. Large energy screens, consoles and map-screens whirred and chattered with activity. Every town and city of Earth was lit up on walls and charts with action points glowing. Small dots moved across the planet's surface. Holograms rotated. Hundreds of viewscreens burbled with activity. Attendants busied with their functions. Goren

was partially overwhelmed as he tried to comprehend what he had just been led into.

What was this Earth operation?

The activity was far greater than any fleet war room that Erin had ever seen. Tables had squares of moving dots and symbols he did not recognize, with dozens of people around them.

Some screens had holographic maps of cities, street maps, and even three-dimensional plans of whole buildings. Goren shuddered at the scope of the information present. Names occasionally appeared, projected out from walls, and then continue to roll through by the thousands, stop, highlight a new name, then roll through thousands more. Hundreds of thousands of names would flash through in a blur, and then stop again. Goren tried to take in as much as he could. His mind was quickly becoming overloaded with the magnitude of the operation.

They watched as maybe seven hundred personnel below went about their meticulous duty. A grey haired officer glanced up at the trio and wandered casually over to a senior guardsman. Goren felt a lump form in his throat.

The pair below spoke, with the officer obviously controlling his emotions, occasionally looking up. He walked back to his table without offering another glance.

The senior guardsman glared up. "Manik, who gave you permission to bring these civilians here?" he bellowed.

Manik stiffened, hesitated, and then replied. "No one, sir! They are lost."

"Back to your post and find me at 06:00!"

Manik rigidly about faced. Erin quietly apologized to Manik as he left.

"You civilians are out of bounds," the senior guardsman yelled as he cumbersomely bounced up the ladder in low moon stride. He was a large man with a ruddy face and obviously a temper to match. He clenched his jaw and muscles to contain his anger. Pushing past the pair, almost throwing Goren off balance, he bellowed, "You will follow me!" He held the door open. "Come on, move!"

Goren was about to follow when a compelling idea seemed to request him to stay. He looked and there was that same shimmering air beside him. He turned to the guardsman and asked while looking out over the cavern, "Are there others like this?"

The guardsman stepped back. "Are you crazy? There is nothing here. If you want to make it to Earth, then follow me."

Goren hesitated and was about to ask the guardsman something else, while watching his face turn purple, when Goren got the idea that it was alright to leave. The shimmering air vanished.

They were led back to *Pegasus* and then escorted to a visitor's area, and instructed to remain.

The senior guardsman left displaying obvious distaste for the troop. "Civilians... what a curse! Hmmp..."

Goren described what he had seen to Navia who agreed that the *Moonbase* operation couldn't merely be observation of Earth.

"Well, here comes the base commander and not looking terribly happy, either," Navia said.

The base commander was a short round man with reddish cheeks. He seemed to have a scowl on his face. Goren guessed it was permanent.

He did not introduce himself. Briskly he spoke. "Civilians are to remain in this lounge until otherwise instructed. You will receive

notice to attend an induction lecture, not unlike the one you must have received on *Dockside*."



*Moonbase instructor guardsman*

The commander left with no further word. Moments later an instructor guardsman entered and led them to the induction room.

The room was capable of seating thirty. All seats faced the front, with the senior guardsman sitting at the rear. The automated lecture began.

A prerecorded voice droned to the accompaniment of the holographic viewscreen display in front. "The Moon is 356,410 Ks from the Earth at its closest point. It has a diameter of 3473 Ks and has a surface gravity of one sixth of Earth, and a comparative mass of only one to eighty-one. The gravity plates on *Moonbase* help keep us standard. The solar day of the Moon is...."

The monologue explained dryly about the moon for a while longer. It mentioned two distant sister bodies that also were attached to Earth, and that these would not be discovered by the local indigenous populations for another fifteen years. Revealing what was not already known on Earth, to Earth, was a crime and punishable.

The voice continued onto Earth history. "The first cities developed from experimental zoological survey teams, which had been sent

out by the Confederacy. The first of these centers were around the Mediterranean Sea, with the first team set up at *Jericho* eleven millennia ago.”

The graphics showed where these places were.

“They moved to Catal Huyuk – Turkey today, two millennia later. Then they shifted studies to *Ban Po Cun* in China a millennium later. After a polar shift, this civilization failed and the survey team returned to the fertile plains of the Mediterranean.

“Six thousand years ago native civilizations were forged at *Nineveh* - Iraq, *Alpaca Hayek* and *Abydos* - Egypt. The natives flourished under guidance, but upon departure of the survey teams, their civilizations fell to surrounding primitives. With no external survey teams able to drive the natives into a cultural efficiency, civilization diminished.

“After that, until the Martian integration, the planet remained culturally dead. The Martian refugees brought with them their architecture, engineering and culture. They founded colonies in countries today known as: Egypt, Babylon, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela, Polynesia, Hawaii, Malaya, Indonesia and China.

“After the Martian building machines broke down, their communication lines began to fall apart. It then became apparent that their time as gods of Sequetus 3 was ending. It was then that the Martian civilization and architecture on Earth reflected the morbid mentality of its rulers. Unable to accept their demise, their buildings became crypts and mortuaries. However, that demise wasn’t complete without cryptic messages they left for the future. Many of the ancient Martian messages have since been removed to comply with Federation law, but there were exceptions already in native planet transcripts. It is unwise to bring up the Martian subject, while touring the planet, in the presence of natives.”

Goren wondered how much of this data was true, and how much was misinformation? He was beginning to find slight discrepancies in the data compared to what he had heard from Mars. He was now interested in that there was different information. He noted that.

Images of pyramids came onto the screen as the automated voice rolled on. “The cross diagonals of The Great Pyramid in Egypt measure 25,827 standard inches, the number of Earth solar years to rotate once around the

Pleiades. The same pyramid measures 365.259 cubits.

“On the other side of the planet the Martian leader, Hanub Ku, was building his similar cryptic messages. During his rule calendars were inscribed on the walls measuring both the 780 day Martian year and the 365 day Earth year.”

The voice continued droning for another half an hour before completing. “For further assistance and local maps please ask the attendant present for details. He will be more than happy to be of assistance.

“Thank you for attending today's lesson 45E, and we wish you to have a pleasant stay.”

The senior guardsman stood up from the rear and marched forward. He flicked the display presentation off and addressed the troop.

“Right, pay attention!” He glared at his audience. “That seminar was recorded over thirty years ago. The result was a tourist infested planet that just about sent the natives species into a psychotic spin. Now tourists don't get permission to visit the planet, and god knows how you got here. I'll give you some

simple truths about our little planet, not narrated by the lesson display.

“Earth's Martian brethren lasted only a few generations. Why? Because their ability to reproduce as Galactic long-lifers was genetically recessive when mixed with Earth genes. Their heirs became as short-lived as the natives. So if you're thinking of mixing it for a fun time with the natives, forget it. It is prohibited and punishable by death.” The senior guardsman leered at Navia in particular. “You will report to decam when you return from Earth.”

“You need not...” Navia began to say.

“Quiet!” he blasted. “You others keep it clean. They have diseases down there that could wipe out whole galactic civilizations in only a few generations. Alright, got it?”

There was only silence.

“Good. Now as I said, tourists are forbidden, but somehow you lucky civvies got through. Well done. The last tourist craft was ten years ago, 1979 their time. Since then only diplomatic and defense craft have been permitted onto the planet. Should you be unable to abide by the basic rules, say so now, for any indiscretion later could leave you dead. Am I understood?” The silence indicated he was

understood, so he continued. "You're aware, but I'll repeat it, that your main craft won't be permitted on the planet. I would advise you to locate it on the Earth side of the moon, the proximity assisting your transmissions. Should your craft stray from the moon, it will be intercepted, and destroyed, without warning."

The look on his face wasn't misinterpreted.

"Keep all transmissions to the frequencies in the booklet I'm about to hand out.

"You will be expected to not litter the moon. Leave their artifacts in place. God, have we had trouble with that in the past," he said shaking his head while he passed out the booklet, titled: *TOURING EARTH, THE MALUKAN EXPERIENCE*.

Savagely he continued. "Now on this planet you're aliens, for God's sake act like it and leave the natives alone. I can't prevent you from all contact, that isn't my intention, but don't get involved in their daily lives. To do so is an offence. To be seen as an alien is also an offence. To act as an alien is to not be seen.

"Your Rangercraft may carry a maximum of three passengers. That is a *Moonbase* regulation.

"Should you wish to contact our communications on *Moonbase*, it is all in the

booklet, as are the names of contacts on each of the inhabited continents should you get into trouble. I hope you don't need those.

"Now, Earth comprises some 3,780 main languages and dialects. The language we're evolving to Standard Galactic is English. As a language it easily absorbs new words and sounds, to become part of its own.

"To study it you will find recorded in excess of three thousand visual and audio native transmissions. Few natives use more than a thousand words of their language, so if you keep it simple there is a good chance you will be well understood." The guardsman looked around to make certain he was being followed.

Navia had a question. "This booklet, is it local paper?"

The guardsman shook his head, ignoring her, and continued. Obviously it was locally produced. "In the back of the booklet you will find two holographic maps. The first obviously is of the planet itself. The second is of their satellite system. The natives have launched almost a thousand satellites. Most orbits have decayed since this publication, but please take note of those in red. They're a defense system. *Moonbase* has thwarted and forbidden its further

development, but what is there is still active and potent. If you get too near, it will blast you. Make no mistake, as aliens you and anything *non-T*<sup>23</sup> are not welcomed by the Earth's governments."

The guardsman looked around. "Are there any questions?"

Goren cleared his throat. "Do the governments of Earth know of our existence?"

The guardsman was obviously irritated by the question and his face gradually darkened to a dull shade of red. Goren thought he might explode, which was a pity as Goren felt he had hope as human.

"Ahhhh!!" which seemed to relieve what irritated him. "Your craft leaves in ten minutes," he grumbled and stormed out.

Goren was the first to stand. "Interesting, and unusual," he said to no one in particular.

"I concur," said Navia walking beside him as they left the lounge. She spoke in a low hushed voice. "It is interesting that for millennia civilization couldn't take root. Then with the

---

<sup>23</sup> **DEFINITION: non-T:** The term applied to anything that is non-terrestrial, not of Sequetus 3, or Earth, of origin or usage. *Searfinders Dictionary, Local Malukan Dialect Supplement, p. 350.*

arrival of the Martian colonists it quickly took hold, possibly with a mixing of their genes. Then, again, there were no great technological gains though.

“And now over the last few decades their technology has taken off at an astounding rate.”

“That’s difficult to imagine, without some kind of direct covert intervention,” said Goren quietly as they walked.

“Do you believe the piece about the recessive genes of Galactic life expectancy?” she asked.

“Or perhaps it is the other way round. Having some hybrid natives living for centuries down there could raise a few questions. The Malukans would want to avoid that. Obviously the gene factor could be seen as reason enough for all the secrecy of the planet, but it doesn’t really explain what this base is doing here. It is too large for just observation. It is doing something else.

“Also what are Federation freighters doing on Moon, and that planet?”

The troop continued to hypothesize while *Pegasus* moved out.

Erin wondered if the seminar and the tourist booklets were a public relation exercise to

appease the Federation, but if so why drop their guard now and let *Pegasus* in? Obviously Goren was an independent and would make his report. They knew that.

To have an effect on the planet's language would require a specialized long-term preplanned input, over centuries to a specific end. Was Moonbase running that? To affect the planet's satellite weaponry would take influence in positions of power on the planet. Did the Malukans have intelligence networks in the planet's communications and military? Was Moonbase running that? Goren's mind swam in a sea of information that he still couldn't make sense of.

ψ

## CHAPTER 10

JOURNEY TO  
EARTH

*Pegasus* skimmed along the surface of the moon from crater to crater top. The destination was one degree north by twenty-three degrees east, the *Sea of Tranquility*, the site of the *Apollo 11* lunar landing. Navia reasoned that the landing site would help appease boredom while Goren and the Boguard were on the planet. Erin would remain aboard *Pegasus*, assist in communications and try to unravel part of the mystery, while monitoring the planet's media transmissions.

Goren went down into the hold readying the Boguard and *Little Betsie* for departure. He pocketed thirty thick gold jewel studded rings. He thought about the wasted impracticality of jewelry and shook his head.

Goren packed four stocks of arms plus provisions. Normally one would be expected to live off the host planet if staying longer.

With this stored, plus all of *Little Betsie's* screens linked to *Pegasus*, and with a little

ceremony, *Little Betsie* drifted away from the *Sea of Tranquility*.

Transmissions between the craft wouldn't occur while either craft was in shadow of the other by the moon or Earth. In such times communications would have to wait. Only in an emergency would *Moonbase* be used as a relay station, and only in coded terms of reference understood by the troop.

Their entry onto Earth would be straight to the southern polar region with the final descent starting 150,000 Ks out.

Ω

The *Rangercraft Series* were gravitational craft, meaning that much of their power was derived from gravity waves fluxing in and out off from broadmatter. Using a plutonium energy source, with control of the electromagnetic gravitational field surrounding it, the little craft could alter speed and direction instantaneously without affecting momentum of the physical components of the craft. Each molecule within the field would change direction as the field changed.

The propulsion system acted in tandem with gravity waves – waves of gravitons that emitted from broadmatter – with the craft riding them the same way as fast skiffs surf on the ocean. Beyond the crest of each gravity wave was a tiny acceleration of power. Due to the small size of the waves occupants never noticed acceleration. Unlike a skiff on the ocean there was no comparable counter force to slow a craft between waves.

On an atmospheric planet the surface temperature of a hull heated due to air friction. However on a *Rangercraft #3*, distributors, which chill the hull, compensated this.

On a water planet the critical speed of a Rangercraft was 10'000 Ks before overheating the hull. The theoretical maximum speed for a Rangercraft in space was 60,000 Ks.

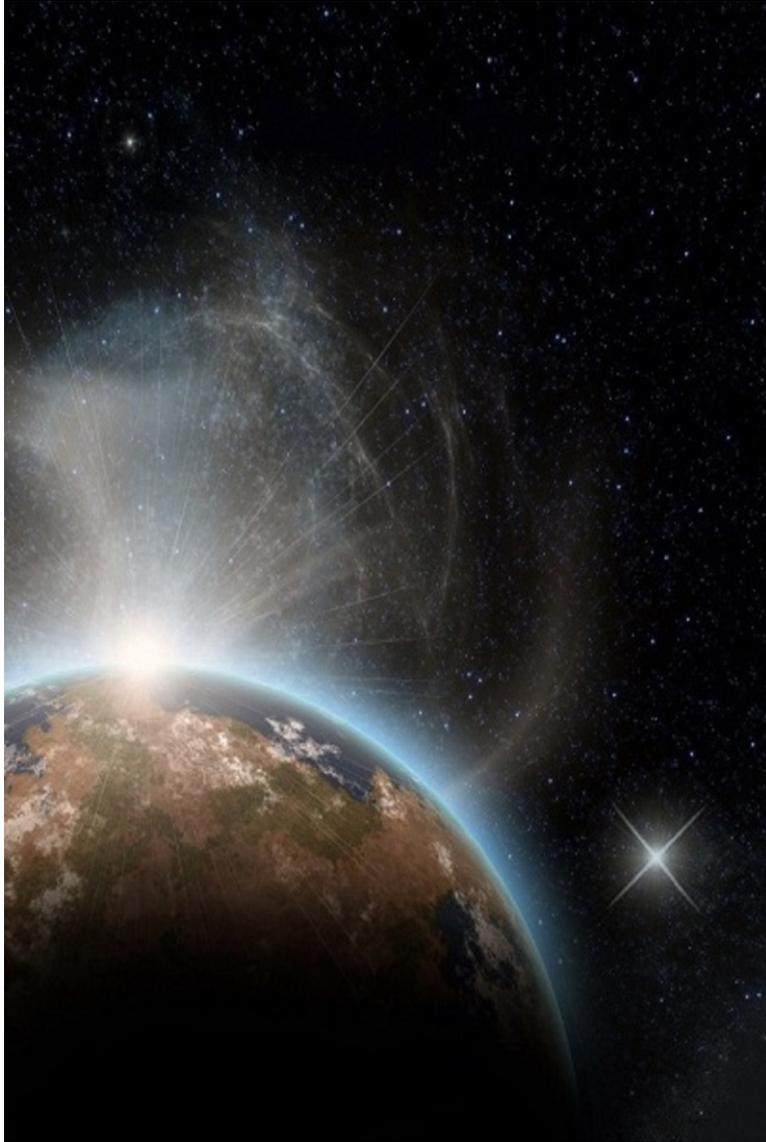
Ω

Goren reflected on the episode back there at *Moonbase*. He recalled the shimmering affect, and how he had been compelled to stay in that large room, just for a few extra seconds. It made him wonder; there was still much more happening in this system than could be seen. He

also wondered more about the significance of this planet. Why was he really here?

Next, he looked at the additional instructions, the areas which were further prohibited, on the moon. His group was not to pass within vision of certain sections of the moon. There were craters out there, where they were not allowed to travel above, either. The instructions cited recent Earth atomic tests on the lunar surface, but Goren couldn't believe anything that he did not observe, or test, for himself.

He wondered again of the seven thousand staff and agents, either on the planet or the moon. What were they doing, and what was their purpose? Did they live, within the planet indigenous community? He supposed they must. Also, what of the freighters that *Moonbase* served? Where were they going to on Earth? And he wondered what was their cargo and where did that cargo go? He had too many questions.



*Approaching Earth*

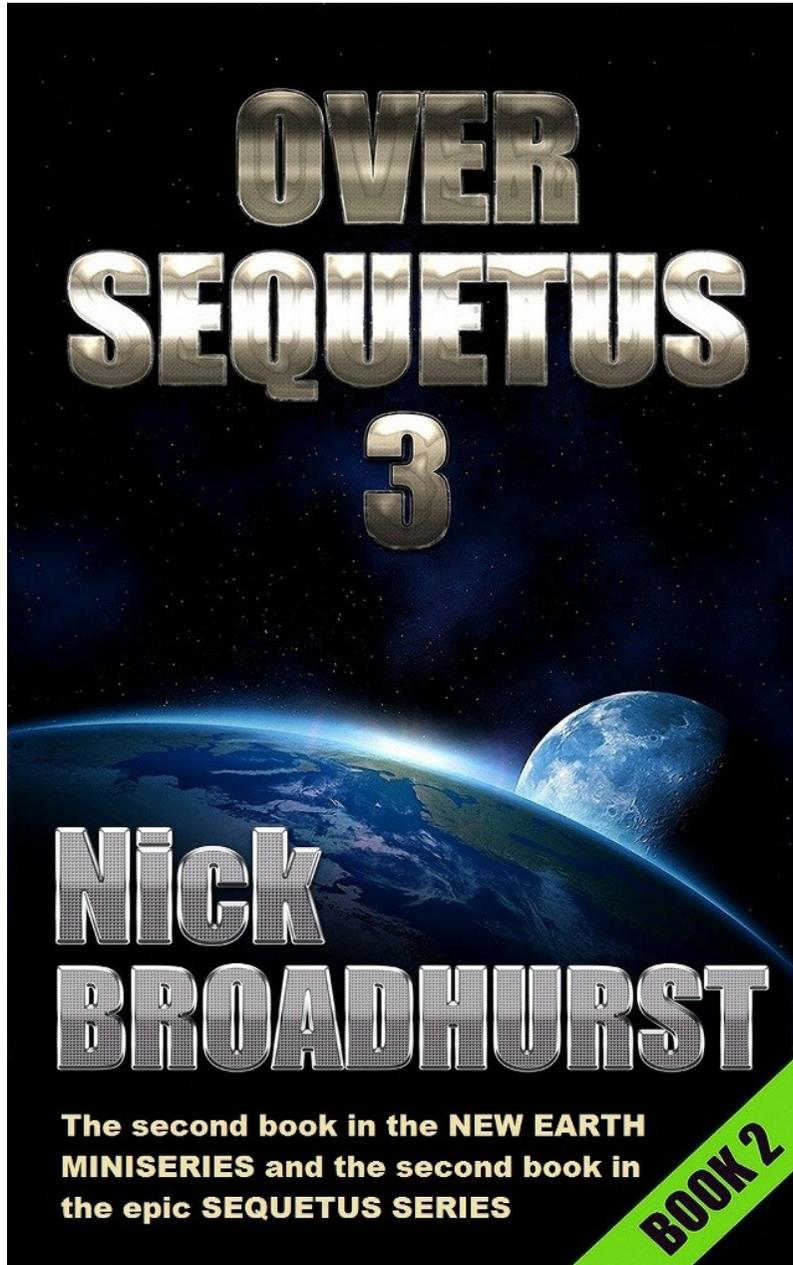
ψ

N I C K   B R O A D H U R S T

*The End of Book 1 of the  
Sequetus Series  
and the  
NEW EARTH MM SERIES*

**ADVANCE ON SEQUETUS 3**  
**Preparation Earth**

NICK BROADHURST



*-PREVIEW-*

*OVER SEQUETUS 3*

ADVANCE ON SEQUETUS 3

Page 190 | 250

## FIRST CHAPTER

## ARRIVAL

After leaving the moon, the first twenty-five hours of travel to the planet was painfully slow. However, it was taken up observing media transmissions of Earth. They generally consisted of war, real or imagined or hoped for, together with transmissions of man's inhumanity to man. There was also the plague of disasters that never ceased to afflict the planet or its people. Erin noted with interest that the broadcast news was usually all bad news, and was generally presented to the population around its three meal times.

Mepat wondered if the unnatural short-life expectancy on Earth might not be through old age at all. The news telecasts, movies and documentaries rolled on. Then there was a brief spell of humor with a psychotic animated duck called Daffy.

For most of the journey, Earth was a brilliant blue. As they approached, the Antarctic ice cap appeared as a large dollop of cream on a rich blue plate.

*Little Betsie* traveled down the authorized line, making sure they did not veer. It had been impressed on them that this was the only way down to avoid the indigenous killer satellites, and the only way permitted by *Moonbase*. Once over the Antarctic they were only allowed into the planet airspace via three alternate routes. If they veered from those routes they would be shot from *Moonbase*. That had been made very clear. They must not stray over the Antarctic. Goren presumed there were bases over the Antarctic that they were forbidden to view.

In places clouds blurred the icecap. Goren wondered how similar this ice-bound continent must have been to Anqi's home planet of Sleebo. They were now bearing away from the South Pole. It was late summer in the Antarctic and the continent had been glowing white in sun the whole day.

As *Little Betsie* entered the planet's atmosphere the first speed reduction came when rarified atomic oxygen was encountered one thousand Ks out. This was the exosphere. Soon the four layers of the ionosphere had reduced their speed to 15,000 Ks. Then further down, the Rangercraft cut its speed to 5,000 Ks.

*Little Betsie* leveled out at two Ks above the ice. They were heading north to their first rendezvous point with a Hymondian junior agent, if he was still alive. Agent Illtuck was to meet them, in one of the most desolated parts of the planet, *Lake Disappointment* in Western Australia.

The Rangercraft soared over the fairyland of ice.

Goren shuddered. The temperature was minus fifty-six outside, with twenty-nine million cubic pacs of ice two Ks thick. The Antarctic wind was whipping the ice crusts and furling the loose snow along the plateaus.

After eight minutes they crossed the continent's edge. They passed the settlement of Casey on their right. Ice was still one K thick at the ocean edge.

Finally a large blue expanse of water came up to greet them. Hundreds of icebergs dotted the screens, some hundreds of Ks long.

Below them a blue whale spouted into the air. After signaling its majestic presence the large lumbering mammal dove to its icy deep.

The icebergs became fewer and smaller. Suddenly all the ice was behind them, nothing ahead but blue waves and small white caps.

Goren felt free. *Little Betsie* skimmed the wave tops for twenty minutes. Birds diving on a shoal of fish flashed past in a blur. Welcome to planet Earth again, he thought. He smiled.

ψ

## Lessee Contract

<<Return

123:17:237

Addendum # 04

Board of Administrative Personnel

M E M O R A N D U M

WARP DRIVE SYSTEMS ®

Functions of Altering Time around a Vessel

A Warp Drive ® and its craft do not share the same time as its surrounding space and traveling environment. Thus a vessel under the influence of W.D. cannot be assailed, interrupted, or stopped, by objects relative to where the craft should be. Relative to a craft under W.D. the outside universe does not exist. Nor does it share the same physical laws of relativity.

Relative to each other the W.D. universe and the physical universe are *out synchronization*. Their times do not mix. By this nature W.D. craft are able to pass through stars, planets, asteroids and even supernovas. If a navigator miscalculates the point of space-time-entry into a system the results can be disastrous.

Since the Bank's inauguration such occurrences have occurred seventeen fold. Of those incidents, eleven were mining craft, five were passenger liners, and one a private yacht. Beyond the loss of life aboard the craft were the destruction of two mining camps, a planetary satellite and three lowly populated planets. The resultant litigation found against the Bank that inadequate prevention, and lack of preventative instructions had been issued to the lessee, about tampering with W.D. Subsequently the Bank drew close to liquidation and having its charter withdrawn. Therefore all W.D. ships are forthwith to be fitted with System Governors (Part No. A/34r/SG) for the prevention of unauthorized

entry into all known Warp Drive Systems (W.D.S.) while under the influence of Warp Drives.

Any organization or individual shall have their said Lease terminated for violation of any known systems (W.D.S.) while under the influence of Warp Drives. Any organization or individual shall have the said Lease terminated for violation or intent to violate this Memorandum.

Such termination won't rule out any civil claim the Lessor may have against the Lessee, and nor does termination rule out any assistance the Lessor or its representatives may need to give law enforcement authorities.

Furthermore the said Lessee will hold harmless the Lessor and all its agents and assigns from prosecution, legal culpability in any way, resulting from any action, accident, malfunction, explosion, implosion, or whatever else may happen, should the Warp Drive System part System Governor be activated for any reason during their time of operation.

SIGNED: T. P. L. Quelt.  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.  
WARP DRIVE BANK Inc. Ltd.  
MO: 1721.rt

® Warp Drive Systems, W.D.S., Warp Drive, and W.D. are registered trademarks and system marks owned and operated by the Warp Drive Bank Inc. Ltd., (known as the Bank) and relate to Bank owned warp-drive patents 123b23, 123c37 and 123c38.

**ILLUSTRATIONS MAPS  
AND DOCUMENTS**

1. APPROACH TO SEQUETUS 3 COVER
2. MAP OF SANTONIA GALAXY
3. ROYAL PALACE
4. SUPERRISE
5. LETONE BOGUARD
6. ANQI STORM
7. CELTRON CENTRUM
8. DOCKSIDE
9. MOONBASE GUARD INSTRUCTOR
10. MEMORANDUM ON WARP DRIVE LEASES

ψ



## **GLOSSARY, DEFINITIONS, HISTORICAL NOTES AND BACKGROUND DATA**

Editorial note: When the term *Terrestrial* appears beside a word or term, or historical note, this indicates it is a terrestrial word from Sequetus 3 – Earth – and the definition is a terrestrial definition, or historical note. It isn't a fictional term or definition. [◀Return](#)

### **BACK MATTER CONTENTS**

1. [Glossary](#)
2. [Working Notes](#)
3. [Credits](#)
4. [Illustrations](#)

## GLOSSARY

**Abydos Temple:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. Egypt circa 3500 BC. Abydos is the site of the most famous of Egypt's artifacts, the burial site of Seti I who ruled Egypt from 1313 to 1292 BC, and son of Ramses I



2. Glyphs. There appears to be a helicopter, and a toy plane to its right. 3. The temple became the chief temple for worship of Osiris and Horus - who went up into the heavens to do battle in winged discs with Seti. [◀Return](#)

**Academia:** 1. A college of high learning, tertiary education, offering doctorates. 2. (Plural – academies) The institutions of the highest places of learning in the Federation. *Source, Jiltanian* after the gardener *Academos* who used to tend the gods making their gardens a paradise. [◀Return](#)

**Agent:** 1. Two levels below independent. Starting at the top is: Independent, Junior Independent, *Agent, Agent Junior Grade*. 2. Malukan *agents* are on Sequetus 3. They report to *Moonbase* and through the manipulations of world leaders are able to control the destiny of a planet. 3. *Agent* and *Agent Junior Grade* are often referred to by the same title – *Agent*. [◀Return](#)

**Alaca Hoyuk:** (*Terrestrial*) Ancient city in what is now central Turkey, was where Hattusa of the Hittite Empire was situated. This site is where the earliest copper tools alongside stone tools were found.

**Alson:** 1. A suburb in Jilta P.C. 2. *Alson, Academia*, most prestigious tertiary *Academia* in all of Jilta. It supplies most degree doctorate courses and has forty-five thousand students enrolled per year including full time, part time and by correspondence. [◀Return](#)

**Anqi Storm:** 1. Malukan female trooper and former resident of Sleebo. 2. Important woman in saving Sequetus 3. From parents Nobus and Regel Mas of Taronga PPC. Educated in biophysics in Anst Academia at Taronga, joined the Malukan Guards shortly after graduation. [◀Return](#)

**Aquel:** A local length measure of stride from the planet Aqeliam.

**Bank:** See The Imperial Federation Warp Drive Bank. Home planet Palbo. [◀Return](#)

**Ban Po Cun:** (*Terrestrial*) A Neolithic village, in Shanxi Province. China. [◀Return](#)

**Betsie:** Famous Jiltanian battle cruiser of the CCP. 3,880 Standard Years old. Decommissioned on Celtron 4. [◀Return](#)

**Boguard:** 1. Guard at the palace to protect Lorde Hymondy III. 2. Race of bodyguard for the protection of Lorde Hymondy III. Their inception into the Federation region was about 550 standard years after Federation conquest. Origin of race unknown. Life expectancy unknown. Run along military lines. Source of instruction: Lorde Hymondy III. They're known to speak many languages, are trained in martial arts, physics. No command links with IFFCo. Being a race the word *Boguard* is capitalized. [◀Return](#)

**Boguard rank:** The following is the Boguard field ranking, from highest to lowest:

*Captain*

*Guard Instructor*

*Instructor*

*Leader*

*Boguard*

*Boguard Novice (student)*

**Bridge briefing:** 1. *Bridge briefings* are where missions are presented and discussed in a formal manner. They're recorded for future reference.

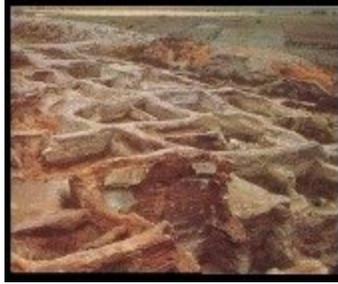
Discussions of missions are not permitted outside of such briefings. All crew attend. 2. They're called *bridge briefings*, not because they happen on the *bridge*, because in larger craft they aren't, as the *bridge* can be too small for all crew. Senior personnel present the bridge briefing; usually from the *bridge in smaller craft*. [◀Return](#)

**Broadmatter Theory:** Broadmatter is that matter which is so small that current instruments cannot read it, but it acts similar to a sea, supporting molecular-matter that floats within it. It transmits heat and ALL energy, and in this way is different from the concept of dark matter. Broadmatter makes up the bulk of the universe mass, and is the reason why the universe is expanding at an accelerated rate. Broadmatter ties in with space and time, and without broadmatter there would be no space, no gravity and presumably no time. Without it, all other matter would collectively condense. See Broadmatter Theory Addendum at the end of Book Seven for more details. [◀Return](#)

**Caff:** 1. The canteen on *Mars Base*. 2. Where non-intoxicating beverages are served on IFFCo vessels. [◀Return](#)

**Captain:** 1. Middle rank in IFFCo. Usually In command of an interceptor squadron, a destroyer, or a fighter team. Below Lieutenant Commander in rank. 2. Highest field rank in the Boguard. [◀Return](#)

**Catal Huyuk:** (*Terrestrial*) 6,500 BC, Turkey. The world's earliest city. Probable population 6,000. Houses were plastered with murals painted on walls showing people and farming. They grew wheat, barley, raised sheep and kept dogs. [◀Return](#)



**Celtron Centrum:** The largest township on Celtron 4. Population 11,000 ◀[Return](#)

**Celtron 4:** Military storage planet in the Hymondian sector. Population 2 million. Low water, little minerals. The planet has six moons and both *Celtron 4* and its moons are used as storage yards for space ships which are now ineffective, can withstand gravity, and can be cannibalized for parts. ◀[Return](#)

**Charlton, Navia:** Social anthropologist from Academia Alson; companion and associate in Sequetus 3 to Independent Goren Torren. Torren and Charlton attended Academia Alson together studying, prior to Torren applying for his Independent's Certificate in Jilta. They were married for three years during at this time. ◀[Return](#)

**Civvies:** (*Terrestrial*) Slang. Civilians. It also means civilian clothes, civilian life, as distinct from military. ◀[Return](#)

**Clipboard:** A computer pad upon which a flashscan is taken for identification verifying the user. The palm and three fingers must be present. ◀[Return](#)

**Comets:** (*Terrestrial*) There are over a billion comets on the far regions of space around the solar System. They form a protective sphere and mostly are composed of ice.

**Communications Center:** A ship has a *Bridge*. A Base has a *Communication Center*, which is the focus of all data going in and out. It can also be called a

*War Room, or a Combat Information Center,* depending on the sector. [◀Return](#)

**Compu:** ® The largest computer manufacturer in Crackess. Famed (or infamous) for its early invention – *intelligent computers*. After the Medallian Rebellion, the *Compu* executives were interned off-planet and CCP administrators placed inside the company. After this, the company expanded to be the largest interplanetary corporation in the Federation with 1.7 million staff in total.

**Compubanks:** ® A collective name for viewscreens and computers, that plot a craft's course and synchronize with Warp Drives. Manufactured by Compu Systems Interplanetary Inc. [◀Return](#)

**Compuboard:** ® Often found in airports, these boards, are an instant holographic tally board, displaying craft departures and arrivals. In a space fleet they're used to show the tally of battle. Manufactured by Compu Systems Interplanetary Inc.

**Computata:** ® Short for Computer Data or non-intelligent computer information, or in slang; a *dry-computer* – meaning no intelligence. Manufactured by Compu Systems Interplanetary Inc.

**Compuscreens:** ® Computer screens manufactured by Compu Systems Interplanetary Inc. [◀Return](#)

**Computers, Intelligent:** 5,550 Standard Galactic Years prior to Federation, Luis Medallia developed the first recorded fully mobile *intelligent computer*. At the time, it was recorded as a brilliant technological marvel. Not only could it store and extrapolate data to logical conclusions, but also it had the ability to self perpetuate in other computers. The basis of all *intelligent computers* was the program *create*, coupled with the subprogram *survive*. 2. Intelligent computers led to the lowering of human-life to that of servile status, to computers. Without the intervention of neighboring galactic civilizations, and the *Medallian Rebellion*, this social degrading

phenomena of humankind, would have spread throughout the Santonia Galaxy. It is speculated that, without the *Rebellion*, within several millennium, all humanoid races may have become extinct. The cost of the Medallian Rebellion was fifteen billion humanoid lives lost defeating the intelligent machines. [◀Return](#)

**Confederacy:** The loose governing body, democratic, that ruled the known outer galaxy prior to the Federation conquest. Full title: *The Confederated Council of Planets. (CCP)* It existed loosely for a hundred and twenty thousand years. The Federation defeated it in decades.

Full title - Confederated Council of Planets. (CCP)  
The loose and often extended term applied to the political attempt to bring the multitude of races, political systems et al together to end the warring of two hundred and thirty standard years in the Santonia Galaxy. The *Confederacy* failed at total unification and was succeeded by the Federation.

Travel could take decades. As a result, the *Confederacy* was never conquered by a single force or in agreement with itself. Often planets would get forgotten and cultures rediscovered over centuries. [◀Return](#)

**Conquest:** The Federation conquered the CCP. While many planets simply did not fight and changed governorship of who was ruling them, some planets resisted and fought the Federation fleets and armies. During this fighting many government sections of cities were razed and government records lost. This was as much a cultural and economic set back as anything else. It was a loss of historical records. [◀Return](#)

**Council:** Another term for the Confederated Council of Planets, CCP. 2. Confederacy, CCP, *Council*, Confederated Council of Planets.

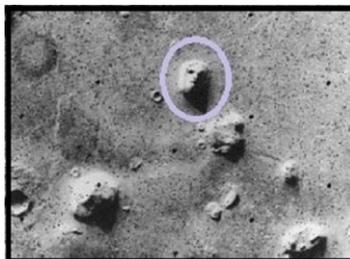
**Crackess:** 1. Home of the Confederacy inspired uprisings against the Federation in the Hymondian Realm. This cost the lives of three million. 2. Planet in the Federation that previously was relegated to backwater status after depression. It being a mining planet that relied heavily on computer manufacture, meant it was depressed economically after the Medallian Rebellion. [◀Return](#)

**Crackess Uprisings:** See Crackess.

**Credit:** 1. The galactic pronunciation of the credit is dahl. Its subunit is *dihlo*, and takes ten *dihlos* to make a *dahl*, and ten *strake* to make a *dihlo*, but for the translation in this book we use the word *credit*. 2. Federation unit of currency, tied to the Average Production Index. The average person earns about seven hundred *credits (dahls)* a week, but this varies upon the wealth of the planet. The value of *credits* remained constant and inflation and deflation are negligible against the Average Production Index system. 3. Material assets only rose and fell against the Average Production Index, not *credits*. [◀Return](#)

**Cruiser:** The largest Federation military strike ship. It is half a Kinopac long. It houses between forty to sixty interceptors with five escort fighters for each interceptor. Personnel range around 3,000 per ship. [◀Return](#)

**Cydonia:** (*Terrestrial*) From the Viking 1 Mars orbiter and released by NASA/JPL on July 25 1976. The photographs revealed, what appears to be a huge pyramid, and face on the planet surface, sculptured into a mountain.



There are also claimed to be the remnants of an old fortification. The findings have been controversial as were follow up photos by the Surveyor craft. ◀[Return](#)

**Daffy:** (*Terrestrial*) Animated cartoon character by Warner Bros. Daffy Duck. Popular on television 1960s - 70s. ◀[Return](#)

**Debris field:** (*Terrestrial*) That series of fields that surround the Solar System. There are the asteroids in the asteroid belt, the Trojans around Jupiter and other planets, the Kuiper Belt beyond Neptune, and the Oort Cloud. While the figures are perhaps billions, for large asteroids, plus comets, for all, including meteors, the numbers could reach quadrillions.

**Decam:** Slang term for *decontamination* when leaving an isolated world or system. ◀[Return](#)

**Defense Marshal:** The most senior *Marshal* ranking. *See Marshal.*

**Delerum:** A planet seventeen light-years from Earth. The home of the bone traders that brought about the extinction of the great dinosaurs of Sequetus 3. ◀[Return](#)

**Delopacs:** Ten thousand pacs, 10Ks.

**Demigod:** (*Terrestrial*) Partly divine being, offspring of god and mortal; person who seems to have godlike powers. Demi – half-size, imperfect, partial. Latin *demidais* for half. *Oxford Dictionary.*

**Destroyer:** An IFFCo military ship. It houses six interceptors and six fighters. ◀[Return](#)

**Dinosaur tracks:** (*Terrestrial*) There are instances of dinosaur tracks and human footprints appearing fossilized in the same mud strata, such as in the Paluxy River, near Glen Rose, Texas. If these tracks are true, and they appear to be, then current traditional explanation needs re-explaining.



This would put humans on this planet millions of years ago. That isn't to say these humans were not wiped out with the same catastrophes that wiped out the dinosaurs, but it does show that there is an unknown archeology to be explained. The above tracks are found in Texas. In other ancient mud strata are found artifacts, such as what appears to be a gold toy plane, and in another strata a small perfect golden sphere, in mud strata dating back billions of years. When this "forbidden archeology" does get discovered, those who find it and promote it can find themselves jobless or worse.

**Docks and Checks:** The docking procedure used in space, and where the crew and ship are inspected per regulations. [◀Return](#)

**Dockside:** Observation station at the edge of the Sequetus system, maintained under the Malukan reign. Age unknown. [◀Return](#)

**Dwarf Planets – planetoids – minor planets:**  
*(Terrestrial)* The Earth's solar system has hundreds of dwarf planets, planetoids and minor planets. Mostly they are in the Kuiper Belt such as: Pluto, Haumea, Makemake, Ixion, Orcus, Varuna, Quaoar, and 2009 YE7, 2002 TX, Pallus, Hygiea, 2007 OR<sub>10</sub>, Salacia, 2002MS<sub>4</sub>, Varda, 2003AZ<sub>84</sub>, 2013FY<sub>27</sub>, 2002AW<sub>197</sub>, and many more. Some are around the gas giant planets: such as Titan and Enceladus of Saturn; Ganymede, Europa and Callisto of Jupiter. Some are in the Asteroid Belt: such as Ceres, 4 Vesta, 3 Juno, and 2 Pallus. Some in the regions around the gas giant Jupiter have asteroidal bodies, known as the

Trojans, Greeks and Hildas. Jupiter has as many Trojans as the asteroid belt. There are Trojans (asteroidals) around the other planets including Earth (such as 2010 TK<sub>7</sub>.) There are more bodies on elliptical orbits such as Eros, Sedna, and 2012-113.

**Electromagnific:** ® Also Electro Magnific. 1. A trade name for a visual entertainment machine package. Often found in bars and sports venues. 2. Trade name given to electronic holographic projection, usually in the form of visual arts and entertainment. Manufactured by EM Corp Inc. Tell, Pilic. ◀[Return](#)

**Elysium:** (*Terrestrial*) The place at the ends of the Earth where favored heroes are taken by the gods after death. Also means a place of happiness or state of perfect happiness. *f Latin from Greek* Elusion (Pedion) (plain) of the blessed. ◀[Return](#)

**Elysium Quadrangle:** (*Terrestrial*) One of a series of 30 quadrangle maps of Mars. Covers an area 180<sup>0</sup> to 225<sup>0</sup> west longitude and 0<sup>0</sup> to 30<sup>0</sup> north latitude. It contains major volcanoes Elysium Mons and Abor Tholus, and river valleys. (*See Notes*) ◀[Return](#)

**Erb, aka Rerbet Fole:** Of Celtron 4, a caretaker in charge of Onground Wrecking Yards Inc. ◀[Return](#)

**Erin Torb:** A retired Reserve Marshal (Three Star), retired, of the Hymondian fleet. ◀[Return](#)

**Estimate, intelligence:** (*Terrestrial*) From the Free Dictionary – 1. “The appraisal, expressed in writing only, of available intelligence relating to a specific situation or condition with a view to determining the courses of action.” 2. “The strategic estimate of the capabilities, vulnerabilities, and proposed courses of action of foreign nations produced at the national level and as a composite of...” ◀[Return](#)

**Federation:** 1. Stands for The Imperial Galactic Federation, The Lordes Of All Worlds And Vassals

Within The Domains Of The Galaxy. It has been the governing body that ruled the Galaxy since the CCP.

2. The Imperial Galactic Federation (IGF), The Lordes of All Worlds and Vassals within the Domains of Santonia Galaxy (Santonia - Quadrant 451f or New General Catalogue 9154 Galaxy [Terrestrially termed *Galaxy*]). 2. FEDERATION - formally established in the standard year 13,576 upon cessation of the Santonia Wars of 13,331-574. Federation saw an end of 116,158 separate intra galactic domains of varying strengths. 3. Galactic political unification through federation after 120,000 years of varying peace and interplanetary warfare.

"The Federation's conquest and expansion across the galaxy was as much economical as it was a military venture. Those royals leasing military craft from the WD Bank were able to fund conquest and expansion faster and more efficiently than before. The current Imperial Galactic Federation boundaries are really the mark of who leased and who purchased Warp Drives. The Bank's Charter Of Proclamation records that it shall not in any way violate or interfere with the wants or desires of any military, political or commercial group. The Bank also proclaims not to align itself with any military, political or commercial group or activity. The Bank extends its service to all, regardless of race, origin or creed. Our motto is "WE SERVE SO THAT ALL MAY WIN." [◀Return](#)

**Federation Fleet Command;** 1. (IFFCo – Intragalactic Federation Fleet Command) The military command of the Federation fleets. On planets, armies are not subject to IFFCo, but come under Planet Military Guard – PMG, the military force over guards, and guardsmen and on-planet troopers. 2. IFFCo pronounced "if-co" is the vast interstellar military space arm of the Federation. It is represented on all planets. [◀Return](#)

**Federation Language Council:** 1. A body of linguistic scholars from many sectors, who hold positions on the council in rotation. They were given

a mandate to establish a common language so that all Federation sectors could communicate with each other. 2. A council of administrators and academia language specialists, who by their design, develop and bring into use one language for the Galaxy. 3. To bring about peace it was considered to bring about communication by dialogue, instead of weapons. To do this a single common language was needed, so *Standard Galactic* was developed and still is being developed. 4. The Language Council was originally a concept pushed into the CCP by the Boguard, but as transport was less-than-light speeds then the concept was impractical. After WD speeds were available the concept was accepted by the Federation.

**Feelup:** Small furry Martian mammal, which lives in trees. They are multi dark colored, with small bushy type tails. They are similar to what would be a cross between a domestic cat and a squirrel from Sequetus 3. They appear friendly, show affection, though timid. They have communications skills to other species, and have an apperency of mental reading. While feelups can be tamed, they aren't considered a domestic animal.



[◀Return](#)

**Filpar:** Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Anthropological Studies, research leader at Sequetus 4 - Mars scientist and sociologist. [◀Return](#)

**Flashscan:** An instant scan of human details taken with multiple bands of light. The scan checks for life in what is being scanned, as well as details such as finger prints, palm prints, foot prints, iris recognition, facial recognition etc. People are not always aware they have been flashscanned as they are used in docking bays, banks, stores, airports, trains, and even highways. [◀Return](#)

**Free-area:** Slang for a place pronounced *free* of tight discipline.

**Free-Areas:** 1. *Areas* that are *free* from certain codes of military law. Often found as the recreation areas of military personnel. 2. *Slang - Free Areas* are also civilian commercial areas of trade. [◀Return](#)

**Freeze-thaw:** The term given to the early method of freezing the live body, and then thawing it out alive after sub-light long-term travel. There were many adverse side-effects to this process. [◀Return](#)

**Galaxy:** (*Terrestrial*) *The Milky Way is the Galaxy. Galaxy means Milky Way, and it also means the universe. Once there was thought to only be the stars above in the heavens and they were in this galaxy, called the Milky Way. There was no other Galaxy than this galaxy. There is no other name for it than above. Then other galaxies were discovered. Thus you will read the term Galaxy as capitalized and it means the Milky Way, the galaxy that Earth is part of.* [◀Return](#)

**Goren Torren:** 1. An independent of Lorde Hymondy III. He graduated in *Galactic Law* at Academia Alson before being recruited and accepted into the *School of Independent Learning* of Jilta PCC. Once he completed his apprenticeship, he finished a mandatory one-year in the Federation Guards, in a neighboring system, before returning for his *independent* internship. He was the youngest intern cadet ever, and completed with honors. He once married Navia Charlton. Other relationships are

unknown. He inherited a family estate early in life. No siblings.

2. *Torren* derives from old Jiltanian, *torre* or *toreza*, meaning *heavy rain*, and *Goren* from *gore* meaning to *fetch*. *n* is for male. So *Goren Torren* would mean the man who seeks to make the heavy rains, or the one who breaks the drought. [◀Return](#)

**GP 1:** General Personnel Carrier #1, manufactured by Harun Industries of Jilta. *Sixteen later models succeeded GP 1* over a hundred and twenty years. After that Harun Industries collapsed. [◀Return](#)

**Graviton:** Is the force of gravity, and for many, it is described in theory, as a particle. [◀Return](#)

**Great Cities of the Council:** A Confederacy breakaway group of the Federation, allied until military intervention. They existed for a period of seventeen hundred years. [◀Return](#)

**Great Hall:** In the Jiltanian Palace is the Great Hall. It was designed and built by Jiltanian architect Gioveni Gabalo and is 1,275 standard years old, predating Federation royalty. [◀Return](#)

**Ground-enhancement:** The computerized enhancing of the vertical image of a planet's surface, from the ship's holographic viewscreens. [◀Return](#)

**Groundflight:** ® A vehicle used on a planet's surface. *Groundflights* can elevate two pacs from the ground. A *groundflight* seldom carries more than eight persons or that equivalent in cargo. Manufacture by Resilient Industries Inc of Jilta. The *Groundflight* model was the centerpiece of their production. [◀Return](#)

**Guard Instructor:** A high field rank in the Boguard, below Captain. See also Boguard Rank [◀Return](#)

**Guardsmen:** The basic military personnel on a planet. *Guardsmen* are contracted and are mostly on

the planet, and less likely to see military action. They have defensive roles. They can be used as a supplement for local law and order. However, they can also be found on ships and remote bases during times of low conflict. See also Trooper. [◀Return](#)

**Helicon, Mount:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. Mountain in Greece. In Greek mythology this is where *Pegasus* created the spring Hippocrene for the god Zeus. 3. After the European renaissance it meant a place of poetry. [◀Return](#)



**Heliosphere:** (*Terrestrial*) The *heliosphere* of a system is that part of a solar system where *helium* particles can be found. In *Sequetus* the *heliosphere* extends to Saturn. Like an atmosphere a heliosphere thins to nothing towards the system's limits. *Helio* is from Latin, meaning *sun*. [◀Return](#)

**High Parade Dress:** Parade dress with campaign bars, medals, honors, distinction knives, and awards worn over Parade Dress of a quality shocksuit. Parade Dress has gold braid for rank on top of a standard shocksuit white issue uniform.

**Hippocrene, fountain:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. Comes from *hippo* – Greek meaning *horse*. 2. The spring in Mount Helicon was created by Pegasus at the request of Zeus. [◀Return](#)



Pegasus and Hippocrene fountain on right

**Horus:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. One of the oldest Egyptian gods. He is depicted as a falcon, or having a falcon head.



He is the son of Isis and Osiris. He is said to have resided above Egypt, and battled Set (uncle) victoriously to win all of Egypt. 2. Horus is pronounced as Haru, which means falcon.

**Hoverbus:** ® A range of several dozen models of personnel carriers for civilian use, which can support loads of up to several pacs off from the ground. Hoverbus Corp founded by Delon Macready. ◀[Return](#)

**Hymondian Coat of Arms:** The *Hymondian Coat of Arms* is set on a black background, representing space, from where the Federation came. The shield is deep blue, signifying the Jiltanian sky. The cross in the center of the shield represents the four ancient religions of Jilta, which the Federation respects. The arrows on the cross represent the outward individual

growth that religions provide. In the center of the cross is a blazing sun - of the Royal Planet of the Kantee sector, from which the Federation came.

The four emblems on the shield are: 1. The industry of the planets of the sector. 2. The ships of travel and trade. 3. The inhabited planets of the Hymondian realm. 4. The fields that supply the food. Over these emblems is the banner inscribed: *UNITED WE ARE*. Below the shield is a scroll, which has inscribed: *LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE GIVES TRUST*. On the right side of the shield is a scene depicting the land, and farming of all planets. On the left of the shield is a scene of the rocks and, waterfalls, of Jilta, the Royal Planet of the realm.



The star on the top represents the individual, and the five points of the star are for: *Knowledge, Trustworthiness, Achievement, Ambition, and Integrity*. The power surges below the star represent *Compassion, and Loyalty*. These are said to be the seven success-characteristics that are taught as a basis for successful life in all Hymondian Sector schools. [◀Return](#)

**Hymondian Realm:** The sector of which Jilta is the center and the Royal Planet. Each sector is broken

into a number of provinces (17 in the Hymondian sector), which are in turn broken into *locats*, local regions (often 15 to 20 locats per province). They in turn, may be broken down further, depending on size. In each locat in the Hymondian Realm there can be 500 – 5,000 star systems or more, with at least one system supporting life per locat. ◀[Return](#)

**Hymondy:** A Royal Lorde of the Federation. With rejuvenation he has reigned continually over Jilta since its conquest. Lorde Hymondy III of Jilta. ◀[Return](#)

**IFFCo:** Intragalactic Federation Fleet Command. See *Federation Fleet Command*. Pronounced: "if-co" ◀[Return](#)

**Imperial Federation Warp Drive Bank:** The organization of the group of persons who control the transport regulations and lease agreements of the Federation Warp Drive systems. They are an all-powerful body that predict and plot the expansionist policies of the Federation. They are the instrumental power behind the Federation, as without it all commerce and military travel would effectively cease. See also Warp Drives. ◀[Return](#)

**Independent:** 1. A contracted vocation of intelligence gathering and sometimes action amongst the royal families of the Federation. 2. A license is required after a five-year internship, which is possible to enter after completing a prior tertiary degree, *independent* schooling and apprenticeship. The quota for *independent* licenses is low. 3. Most *independents* have a non-military background, though this isn't mandatory, but they must have one year in an alternate defense force prior to acceptance. Most sectors have reciprocal exchange programs where *independent* students are permitted off-world training programs. ◀[Return](#)

**Independent Immunity:** This *immunity* is similar to diplomatic immunity, except that some

independents work closer to the edge of what may be legal. [◀Return](#)

**Independent, the:** Short for the Independent Goren Torren. (Now capitalized as Independent)

**Instructor:** A high Boguard field rank. It is below Guard Instructor, but above Officer. See also Boguard Rank [◀Return](#)

**Interceptor:** 1. A winged spacecraft that can stay in space or enter atmospheres. It is the prime attack craft of the Federation. It carries atomic warheads on rockets. Manufactured by various corporations, most common is Fair Space Industries Inc. The interceptor was the fastest of all Federation military attack style vehicles.

2. There have been many models of interceptors, depending on the region to be used. Some were wide-bodied, some narrower. Some had more or fewer rockets. The variance depended on the gravity and the expected atmosphere the craft was to encounter. [◀Return](#)

**Intervention:** 1. The predetermined date and time when a planet finds out it is officially part of a larger group of planets. The time and date for intervention is determined at the beginning of a planet's culture. The *Planetary Intervention Board* (PIB), which is a subcommittee of the *Department of Worlds' Cultural Affairs* (DeWCA – pronounced *dewca*) – consist of academic scholars, military representatives, and Federation officials from the *Kantee Sector*. They decide the time frame and program under which such *intervention* takes place. 2. *Intervention* is a preset program that occurs over many hundreds or even thousands of years, as a planet culturally is nurtured along its path to maturity. 3. *Intervention* is like the coming of age for an entire species of humanoid. [◀Return](#)

**Intervention Day:** The official specific day when a subject planet gets notified that it isn't alone.

◀[Return](#)

**Jericho:** (*Terrestrial*) Ancient site in the Middle East. Perhaps the oldest continually inhabited city in the world dates back 11,000 years. The city sits on the Jordan River, Israeli side. ◀[Return](#)

**Jilta:** (pronounced *Yilta* in English) Is the Royal Planet in the Hymondian sector.

It is the center of the sector and the residence of Lorde Hymondy III. Population half a billion. Jilta is a water planet with half its surface saturated; 11 continents, frozen Polar Regions, some deserts.

Before the Hymondian Realm Jilta was a prominent hub planet of a small province of the CCP. ◀[Return](#)

**Jilta P.C.:** P.C. stands for Planet Center and is the capital city of the planet. Population 1.2 Million.

**Jilta P.P.C.** *Jilta* Prime Planetary Center, *Jilta PCC*, the inner center of Jilta PC, the capital city of the planet *Jilta*, where the government administrative offices are.

Population 210,000 (Note; to pronounce *Jilta* it is necessary to pronounce the *J* as a *Y*, so the reading of *Jilta* is pronounced *Yilta* in Standard Jiltanian speech. This pronunciation is its own local dialect of Standard Galactic. ◀[Return](#)

**Jupiter:** Sequetus 5, named after the Malukan explorer Javes *Jupiter*, who worked for years as a sociologist on Earth in its early civilization days.

**Ks, K:** Kinopac, a thousand pacs, over a kilometer long. Also used to mean kinopacs per hour. ◀[Return](#)

**Kalo:** 1. Mild stimulant pick-me-up drink from roasted and ground tree roots. When mixed with hot water it is a popular drink. 2. Very popular hot drink

around Jilta. 3. A Jiltanian equivalent of coffee. 4. *Kalo* is from the underground root, a legume, of the *kalo* tree. The “beans” are roasted and ground. The soil conditions govern the taste and aroma. Also, the ratio of “bean” to root ratio depends on the stimulant effect. *Kalo* beans can also be eaten whole, similar to Earth peanuts, which are also a legume. 5. *Kalo* as a drink can be taken black, or mixed with creamer, added to with sweetener, mixed with alcohol. It can be put in cakes. 6. The *kalo* industry was once a prime industry on Jilta, ranking only second behind learning. 7. Tradition has it that the *kalo* tree was a gift from the head god Zaltro to his son. 8. It is said on Jilta that a drink of *kalo* a day leads to good health and long life. [◀Return](#)

**Karakas:** 1. A planet in the Outer-World province of Belamore. In the Hymondian Sector, in from the Penek Sector, its nearest neighbor.

**Karn Form:** Male Malukan Trooper stationed at *Dockside* in the Sequetus system. He died of a drug addiction overdose. Parents are Reale and Pom Karm of Maluka PC. [◀Return](#)

**Kelvin:** (*Terrestrial*) Temperature measured the same as degrees Celsius, but where absolute zero, there is no temperature at all, is zero on the Kelvin scale.

0° Kelvin = -273.15° Celsius

**Kinopac:** 1. It is exactly 1030.91 Meters. It is a length of measure of a thousand *pacs*. 2. A thousand *pacs*. Kinopacs is abbreviated to *Ks*. 3. *K*, slang meaning kinopac or kinopac per hour. [◀Return](#)

**Kintecs Province:** A former industrial and technological planet famous for its intelligent computers before the Medallian Rebellion. It is now in the Hymondian Sector.

**Ku, Hanub:** Base leader of Sequetus 4, son of Mari Hanub and Tol Spro. His staff mutinied. He died accidentally after the investigation thereof. ◀[Return](#)

**Kuiper Belt:** This belt extends out from Neptune and has known planetoids, Pluto, Haumea, Makemake and others. (See: dwarf planets) The belt is about 100 times more massive than the Asteroid Belt. The belt is stable. Comets do not come from this belt but originate from the scattered disk zone, where the dwarf planet Eros comes from. Some of the planets' moons are thought to have originated from the Kuiper Belt.

**Kul:** A transport animal, known for its cussedness. It can lift the weight of ten men over rocky ground. ◀[Return](#)

**Lake Disappointment.** (*Terrestrial*) A dry lake that becomes a wet salt lake, in Western Australia, inland, where temperatures reach over 40 degrees Celsius, 38,000 hectares when full. It is noted for its birdlife when wet. ◀[Return](#)

**Leader:** Boguard field rank below *Officer* and above *Boguard*. See *Boguard rank*.

**Letone:** A Guard Instructor of the Boguard, Commander of the Boguard. He was assigned to Lorde Hymondy III of Jilta. ◀[Return](#)

**Little Betsie:** A Rangercraft Type III, owned by Independent Goren Torren.

**Lorde:** 1. Lorde, meaning a title of trust, and honor, used by royalty and high ranking religious officials of the Federation. 2. (*Terrestrial*) Old English 1200 – 1300 The spelling of lord was lorde, along with other spellings in England at that time. From Hlaford, meaning bread-keeper. ◀[Return](#)

**Luis Medallia:** The man who instigated the Medallian Rebellion after inventing intelligent

computers. Billions lost their lives fighting artificial intelligence 7,550 years ago.

**Magnaplate:** *n.* The flexible plate threads that are electrically locked into polynylop. When woven into nylop and charged, the impregnated nylop adds dramatic strength and endurance to the wearer. *v.* magnaplatting.

**Magnoclamps:** ® Clamps which hold vehicles in space stationary to each other, and lock them together. They're used particularly on interceptors when they dock for refueling and need a quick turnaround. Magnoclamps are made by Standard Solid Industries, of planet Peel.

**Makemake:** (*Terrestrial*) Pronounced Markee-markee. Makemake is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest dwarf planet and found in the Kuiper belt. It is 1,400 km wide. It has one moon about 20,900 km out and 160 km wide. Its moon below is shown by the arrow.



**Maluka, Lorde:** A Royal Lorde who rules the Malukan sector, originally from the Kantee Sector.  
[◀Return](#)

**Maluka, also Maluku:** The main central and Royal Planet of the Malukan Sector. Famous for its industrial products, and engineering skills.

**Manik, Geko:** Trooper (second class) of Jilta. Son of Marian Malo and Billo Manik, Jilta PC. Specialized in communications. [◀Return](#)

**Mars Base:** The scientific expedition base on Mars set up by the Federation on Sequetus 4, in the Cydonia region. Its job was to monitor the Sequetus system, for scientific purposes. [◀Return](#)

**Marshal:** The senior military rank in IFFCo. The rank of Marshal in order, on downwards is:

Defense Marshal - five stars, Ranking Marshall - four stars, Reserve Marshall - three, Marshal - two and one stars. [◀Return](#)

**Matherson, Wolly:** Sociologist from Jilta at the beginning of Federation.

**Matherson Hypotheses:** 1. A social philosophy that planet civilizations will self-destruct to war unless intervened, and under what circumstances they do so. 2. The longer the life span of a race of humanoids, the faster it evolves culturally. Simply put, races that live longer, gain more knowledge in a lifetime, have a greater expectancy of life ambitions, and so achieve more in a lifetime; thus long living races speed up cultural evolution. [◀Return](#)

**Matow:** Planet previously known for its industrious work ethic, and manufacturer of galactic ships on its three moons, prior to its demise at the hands of the Patuans.

**Medallia, Luis:** A colonel of the CCP who rose to ranks when he invented intelligent computers, but which took on humanoid thought features and began to rule humanoids instead of being subservient to human races. Medallia is known today for his consequent severe measures to rid the Galaxy of these machines. It is recorded he was later lost in the now Malukan sector at the end of his career, after the machines had been put down. He was also

attributed to discovering a very early and old civilization in the Malukan sector.

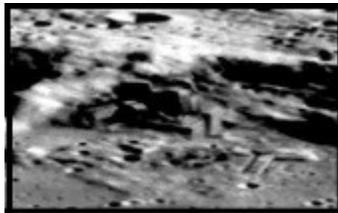
**Medallian Rebellion:** Computers had been programmed to both *survive* and *create*, and this consequentially began *intelligent* computers. In their own right intelligent computers began a conquest of the Galaxy, before Medallia lead a revolution to expunge all the intelligent computers, over seven millennia ago. From this time on, it has been forbidden to program a computer with *survive* or *create* or *in any other way enable computer intelligence to exist*. While 3.5 billion humanoids died in the rebellion against the machines, it was estimated about ten times that many were injured. Many sectors fell into a dark age, severe depression, and took a thousand years to recover.

**Mepat:** Captain of the Boguard stationed at Jilta. His Excellency High Commander of the Boguard. Unknown age. [◀Return](#)

**Metaphysical:** (*Terrestrial*) Transcending physical matter or the (physical) laws of nature.

**Militaries:** *Slang* 1. A lose term meaning military vehicles 2. Loose term meaning military people. [◀Return](#)

**Moon:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. The Moon is 356,410 km from the Earth at its closest point, perigee. It has a diameter of 3,473 km and has a surface gravity of one sixth of Earth, with a comparative mass of only one to eighty-one.



The difference between the comparative mass of earth and the relative gravity is of unanswered

interest. The moon is unusual, compared to the volume its mass takes up, meaning that the gravity of the moon isn't in line with its mass.



Above are photographs of the far side of the moon that have sparked comment. In his book *Alien Agenda*, Jim Marrs presents evidence that the moon is much older than the Earth. He cites evidence that the moon is hollow and that it was placed around the Earth 10,000 years ago. The far side of the moon is constantly facing away from Earth. [◀Return](#)

**Moonbase:** The Malukan base on the moon, overseeing Earth. *Moonbase* consists of six interconnecting *bases* on the "dark-side" or far side of the moon, interconnecting via sealed underground tunnels. The *base* is really a series of *bases* built over three thousand years. The bases are built into the natural irregularities of the moon, and are underground, and well away from the surface, which is subject to meteor damage. [◀Return](#)

**Moses, Pilo:** One of the pioneers of Sequetus 3 & 4, who established early colonies. His rank was captain and he played a part in the beginning of the planet's prime cultural evolution of thought.

**Navia Charlton:** Resident of Jilta, occupation - lecturer of anthropology at the Academia Alson. *Also see Charlton.* [◀Return](#)

**Nineveh:** (*Terrestrial*) Northern Iraq, ancient culture, and capital of the Assyrian Empire, on the Tigris river. [◀Return](#)

**Non-T:** The term issued to anything that is non-terrestrial, not of Sequetus 3, or Earth in origin or usage. [◀Return](#)

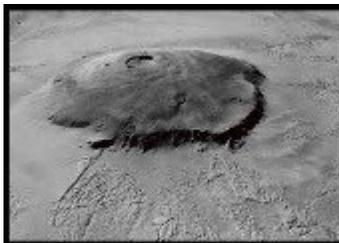
**Nylop:** 1. A tough material that is used to create fabric, especially for use in military clothing and upholstery in galactic craft. 2. A synthetic material of Confederacy origin, easily molded, resilient to tear, but pliable. Often used in the manufacture of garments. [◀Return](#)

**Off-Duties:** 1. *n.* Off-duty military personnel. *Sick as an off duty*, is an expression used to express the similarity between an illness, and excessive alcohol consumption. 2. *n.* Slang for guards, troopers, on recreation, or leave. [◀Return](#)

**Off-planet:** *v.* 1. The term used to mean leaving or being away from the planet. 2. Leaving to go into space or another world. "Tomorrow I will go off planet to work." [◀Return](#)

**Offplanet:** Meaning not from the planet one is on, from another place, off from this planet. "Tomorrow I am going on an offplanet holiday."

**Olympus Mons:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. The name means *Mount Olympus* in Latin, meaning the mountain where the twelve gods of Greece resided. 2. Olympus Mons is the largest volcano in the solar system. It is 25 km high, being three times higher than Mt, Everest. It is 700 km across its base. Cliffs of 10 km surround it. Its opening, or caldera, is 85 km wide.



**On planet, on-planet, onplanet:** *v.* The term used to mean going onto the planet from out in space or another world. *"I'm going on-planet from the cruiser."*

**Oort Cloud:** (*Terrestrial*) Beyond the Kuiper Belt is another outer realm of the Solar System, and that is the Oort Cloud. It is proposed that it contains at least a billion comets. It is hypothesized that it perhaps contains a brown dwarf sun, and perhaps a large single giant planet. These discoveries are yet to be realized.

**Out synchronization, or out-of-sync:** The term applies to the mechanism of misalignment of sub atomic particles and time when the Warp Drive fields engage. [◀Return](#)

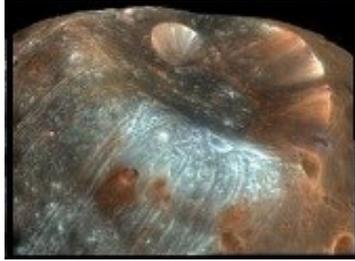
**Pac:** 1. Officially 1.03091 Meters (*Terrestrial*). 2. A length of standard measurement used throughout the Federation. 3. One pace or step. [◀Return](#)

**Pegasus:** An interplanetary Tollycraft owned by Independent Goren Torren. 127 years old.

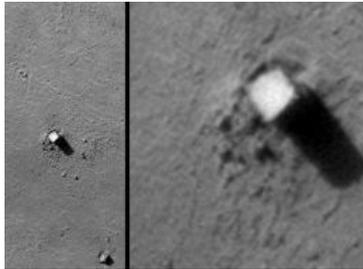
**Pegasus:** (*Terrestrial*) 1. A flying divine horse of Greek mythology that had many adventures. 2. The God Zeus created the constellation *Pegasus*, in honor of *Pegasus*. [◀Return](#)

**Persia:** (*Terrestrial*) An ancient great nation that today is Iran and Iraq.

**Phobos:** (*Terrestrial*) A moon on Sequetus 4, *Mars*, discovered in 1877, measuring only 21 km across; almost zero gravity. The second moon of Mars is Deimos, and only one seventh the size of *Phobos*. [◀Return](#)



*Phobos above and structure like anomaly on its surface below.*



**Planet Group Hysteria:** 1. This is where a race of individuals come under a singular group mind when the group is about to be destroyed, and the only thing left to do to preserve the race is to destroy everyone and everything else. It is a phenomenon commonly experienced when *intervention* is late. 2. PGH happens after a planet is able to spread the alarm of *intervention* through transmitted media faster than Intervention Forces can calm the populace. [◀Return](#)

**Planet Military Guard:** See PMG.

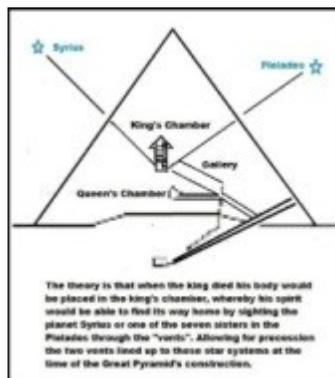
**PMG:** Planet Military Guard is the military arm of the Federation that deals with on-ground and outpost forces, as distinct to IFFCo, which deals solely with the Federation Fleet Command. Off-world transport of troopers and guardsmen still falls under IFFCo. United Liaison is the coordination body between the various military Federation commands. PMG is over the sub command of *Marine Command* (MaCo), which deals in naval matters, and *PMG Flight*, which deals in on-planet air command.

**Polarization:** The molecular state of reverberation direction, where all molecules oscillate in unison and harmony, before Warp Drives can carry occupants from the universe. ◀Return

**Polynylop:** 1. A fabric made from twisted metal thread that when intertwined with nylop produces a material that can be used to cover spacecraft skins, space suits, boots etc. It is extremely strong, and rigid and durable depending on the ratio of *nylop* to the metal thread. Its strength varies depending on the metal used. Polynylop is watertight to over 150 pacs, and airtight in space. 2. *Polynylop 0* can be used in space suits. *Polynylop 9* can be used as desert clothing. The graded number represents how tight the thread is woven and its strength. Polynylop rope and twine is recommended for tying down and securing loose objects in Federation craft. ◀Return

**Pyramids: (Terrestrial)** 1. The figures and statistics regards the pyramids in the Book 1 story are accurate.

2. The two shafts from the King's Chamber in The Great Pyramid aim at two separate star systems. One is Sirius. (See *The Sirius Connection* by Robert Templar)



The other shaft is the tail star in the big dipper constellation. The shafts don't aim at those constellations now, but they did if one changes the planet back to the time of when the pyramids were

built. The earth rotates on a wobble called precession, once every 26,000 years, or 1° every 72 years. Allowing for this, the shafts line up as described above. [◀Return](#)

**Quantum Drive:** The sub-light method of travel around the Confederacy era of the Galaxy. Federation Warp Drives outdated the technology. [◀Return](#)

**Rangercraft:** ® 1. A small spacecraft manufactured by Rangercraft Industries Inc. of Jilta. The *Rangercraft 1*, *2* and *3* models are sought after, especially by mining enterprises, as they're economical, sturdy and have excellent navigation systems. 2. There are three terrain categories: Terrain Category I is for in space. Terrain Category II is for atmospheres. Terrain Category III includes use under water. [◀Return](#)

**Regeneration:** ® 1. A process that Royals undergo when returned to their home in the Kantee Sector. 2. *Regeneration* is complete body rejuvenation. 3. *Regeneration* is technology administered by the Warp Drive Bank. *Regeneration* isn't permitted on non-royalty. [◀Return](#)

**Residence:** The name for Goren Torren's home on Jilta. [◀Return](#)

**Rim System:** A star system close to the edge of the Galaxy, such as Sequetus.

**Romobile:** Martian wheeled transport, cumbersome and slow. Derives from *roving mobile vehicle*. [◀Return](#)

**Royal Archives:** The Royal Archives (Hymondian) are not just a depository of data, computerized and hardcopy; they include access to all Hymondian intelligence data. There are four levels of security, with Level Four being the most secure. [◀Return](#)

**Royal Independent Status:** The status as appointed by a royal to act as an independent officially in an area, often observation and report duties only.

**Royal Planet:** The capital planet within a *royal* sector upon which there is a ruling monarch. Jilta is a *Royal Planet*.

**Royals:** A tall humanoid race from the Kantee Sector of the Galaxy measuring up to 2.5 pacs tall. *Royals* as a race have olive complexion, stronger foreheads and cheekbones, and wide shoulders. Usually dark brown to black hair. They have a naturally high IQ. Prior to the development of WDs, *Royals* had no expansionist policies. The word *Royals* is sometimes capitalized – being a race.

◀[Return](#)

**Santonia (Santona) Galaxy:** 1. Named after astronomer Rel Santonia, who mapped the Galaxy for space travel seventy-five thousand standard years ago. 2. The name for the Galaxy in Federation is *Santonia Galaxy* or *Santona Galaxy*. The terrestrial name is simply *Galaxy*, or *Milky Way*, which has the same meaning. Galaxy means a milky way. Galaxy is capitalized when referring to the galaxy we are in, as it is the name of our galaxy – Galaxy. Galaxy and Santonia Galaxy mean the same. Galaxy is terrestrial, and Santonia Galaxy is Federation. ◀[Return](#)

**Searfinders Index:** ® 1. The two hundred and seventy-three reference volume set of books that is used to standardize galactic cultures and education that had been missing under the Confederacy. Searfinders Publishing Industries Inc., is headquartered in the Kantee Sector and has half a million staff around Santonia. Searfinders publish over 1,800 daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly publications throughout the Galaxy. 2. Searfinders are a conglomerate of publishing divisions. They have a mandate to accumulate and publish information for the cultural future of humanoids, to

bring about an improving civilization. 3. Searfinders are an aligned body of publishing houses.

**Sea of Tranquility:** (*Terrestrial*) On the moon and reported site of Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20 1969. 00.06408 N, and 23.47297 E. Mystery surrounds the mission in that there are reports that Apollo 11 was being observed by UFOs and this was commented on by the astronauts. There are other reports that the entire mission was filmed on a large movie set, and that due to the radiation belts surrounding Earth, and lack of space suits to withstand such radiation. ◀[Return](#)



**Sector:** The region of space controlled by a Royal family within the Santonia Galaxy. A *sector* can have a million stars, of which only a few hundred are vaguely habitable. Some *Sectors*, *Duchies*, may have only a thousand stars of which only a few may have habitable planets. ◀[Return](#)

**Sequetus:** The solar system that contains Earth. The system is wondrous in all the different types of planets that are involved, and that Sequetus 3 and 4 are or were habitable. From Latin, *sequi*, meaning to follow.

**Sequetus 3:** 1. Earth (terrestrial name). Fully colonized and expanding. It is at a pre-intervention stage of development. 6 billion inhabitants 2. (*Terrestrial*) One natural satellite – moon. Diameter 7,654 miles - 12,654 km, 90 million miles (149.6 million km) from the sun. Density 5.5 times water. ◀[Return](#)

**Sequetus 4:** 1. Mars (terrestrial name). A planet that once boasted a large colony of some seven hundred thousand colonists. The planet was terminated and colonists moved to Sequetus 3. Named after one of the early explorers of the CCP, Mares Bey who had a ruthless reputation in slaughtering local inhabitants.

2. (*Terrestrial*) Mars is 141.6 million miles or 228 million km from the sun. Diameter 4,208 miles, or 6,787 kms. Its red color comes from the iron rich mineral surface. Tenuous carbon dioxide atmosphere. ◀[Return](#)

**Sequetus system:** 1. The *series* of habitable planets in the Sequetus system. *Series* as a title applied only to *systems* that contain more than one habitable planet. Sequetus has *Sequetus 3* and *Sequetus 4* as its *series*. *Sequetus 4* is barely habitable today but has been in the past, and thus qualifies the title of *Sequetus system* to be upgraded to the title of *Sequetus Series*. 2. A *System* is the title of a star with one habitable planet. A *Series* is the title of a star with two or more habitable planets. ◀[Return](#)

**Series deprogramming:** 1. A form of mental and administrative exercises which may be as light as a short mission debrief, but could be as heavy as removing memories by otherwise illegal and controversial means. This may involve electrocution to the brain, removal of parts of the brain, microwaving to cook the brain, or ingesting chemicals to prevent the brain from operating. 2. On Sequetus 3 series deprogramming is permitted in psychiatric institutions with laws set in place to enable it to be administered by qualified Malukan agents (or others) as a legal therapy. ◀[Return](#)

**Shocksuit, Shock-suit®** 1. Space wear for military duty in the Hymondian and some other sectors, manufactured by Hard Ware Enterprises Inc. Also worn by Boguard.



2. The shocksuit is designed to absorb blows and distribute the load of any physical shock around the body, so no one place is overloaded with impact. The result is that the wearer is able to exert himself far greater with far less risk of damage. The standard shocksuit colors are dress-white, black, grey, sand, buff, jungle green and navy blue. All the colors are also available in camouflage, as well as special order. ◀[Return](#)

**Sky:** The illusion inside the great pyramid on Mars, by millions of small fiber optical threads, that makes the vaulted ceiling seem hazy and blue. The *sky* changes with the outside light. ◀[Return](#)

**Sleebo:** Outer planet in the Malukan sector near the central rim. A cold planet, much of which is frozen. ◀[Return](#)

**Social anthropology:** (*Terrestrial*) The study of human societies. f. *F anthro* – human.

**Social Computer Studies:** The study of how computers impact on society, now, past and future.

◀[Return](#)

**Solan:** 1. A planet in the Federation, that previously was relegated to backwaters, after severe depression. Solan was a mining planet that relied heavily on computer manufacture, but was wiped out economically, after the *Medallian Rebellion*. 2. Remote province in Centor Sector. ◀[Return](#)

**Solus:** The center of a system, star system source of heat and light, sun. Note: a solus isn't simply a star. A star must have a system of classified orbiting natural bodies in order to be classed as the system's solus. ◀[Return](#)

**Standard atmospheric:** 1. A term applied to atmosphere pressures. This can vary to extremes. It is a relative term. 2. Sequetus 3 is 95% Standard Atmospheric, while Mars is 9%, Jupiter varies from 800% and above. 3. 1.0 is Standard Atmospheric.

◀[Return](#)

**Standard Book of Records.** A subsidiary of Searfinders, Index for government data records.

**Standard Galactic (SG):** 1. 1. The language that was forcefully imposed upon Galaxy administrators after Federation conquest. Local languages are still represented in most dialogues in local areas, and there are over a million different languages in the Federation. 2. *Standard Galactic* has as its closest terrestrial equivalent type language *Esperanto*. 3. *Standard Galactic* evolved over a thousand years at the hands of the Federation Language Council (a body of linguistic scholars from many sectors, who hold positions on the council on rotation. They were given the mandate; to establish the language so that Federation sectors could communicate with each other. Government employment on any Federation

post demands a *Certificate of Standard Galactic IV*, as the lowest level. To be an officer in the Federation one must have a pass in *SG II*. To hold any position in a Fleet requires a minimum of *SG III*. *SG I* is the highest recognized grade. Some Embassy positions require *Standard Galactic I*.  
[◀Return](#)

**Standard Gravity:** The gravity of the original royal planet is 1.0. All other planet gravities are a comparison of this, by the term *Standard Gravity*.  
[◀Return](#)

**Standard-year, Standard Year, standard year:**  
 1. A *standard-year* is the measure of average time it takes for all the Royal Planets to traverse one full annual cycle around their solus. While each planet has its own local-year, and measures time on the planet in Earth-years, Jiltanian-years, and so on, there is a *standard-year* that all years can be measured against, and that is by taking all the royal planets and making the average time of each of those years, a *standard-year*. 2. By using this as a benchmark, it means that all planets have had an input into making the standards upon which the Federation is built. 3. A standard-year is 1.0595 earth-years. [◀Return](#)

**Starion:** An animal for riding, burden and for racing, bred on Jilta. [◀Return](#)

**Storm, Anqi:** Malukan garrison trooper on Sequetus 4, daughter of Jarn Bulin and Maggri Bulin. Anqi Storm assisted Goren Torren in his work in setting up the defense of Sequetus 3. Grew up in Sleebo. Storm Island off the coast of Ankrass in Sleebo is named after Anki Storm, as well as the Anqi Marine Park, also off Ankrass.

**Superrise:** A building that exceeds 100 floors. Predominant in countries with climate extremes, or which have excess population patterns. Superrises can have up to seven floors of shops and offices and

service industries below it. A superrise can also have rail stations inside, underneath. [◀Return](#)

**Suppressor-plates:** Plates to absorb lasers in battle. These are defense plates that allowed the lasers to hit, absorb and transfer the energy of laser fire, rather than deflect the energy with propproshields. Thus CCP military craft were bigger and heavier than Federation craft so as to absorb laser fire. [◀Return](#)

**System:** 1. See Sequetus system – (2). 2. See system, warp drives.

**System-alignment ports:** While Warp Drives will work without the ports, only the drives themselves would be transported. To transport an entire craft, its occupants and cargo, the crew and ship need to vibrate in harmony, and synchronize with the Warp Drives. That is the job of the system alignment ports. They polarize the electrons of all matter within the ship, so that the Warp Drives recognize the ship and its load as itself, and transport it accordingly. *Port* means to travel, teleport, transport, *port*; so *systems-alignment port* means traveling with the *alignment* of a whole system.

**System Security:** The security personnel of a planet, a ship or a station. [◀Return](#)

**System, Warp Drive:** A *Warp Drive system* is the hardware of the drives plus the integration circuitry, as well as the intellectual knowledge of WD, making up the full workable *Warp Drive* product. [◀Return](#)

**Throne:** *Slang*. The special ornately carved seat area for Lorde Hymondy, at the end of the Great Hall. While it is used for meetings, it also has a military terminology, meaning to sink down into a battle mode of command.

**Tiffan, Lerry:** Jiltanian politician from Jilta PCC, before Federation. [◀Return](#)

**Time and space.** Both time and space are related to properties of broadmatter. Time needs space and space needs time. They're invariably linked. One can't have one, without the other. Broadmatter is so small that it can move in space through time. See *Broad Matter Theory Addendum*. [◀Return](#)

**Tollycraft:** ® A small type of spacecraft, manufactured on Jilta by Tollycraft Enterprises Corp. Founded by Rigbert Tolly. The small craft or ship is about 30 pacs across, driven by WDs. It can take a crew of 5 to 14, plus passengers, is unarmed and carries class II hull plating. [◀Return](#)

**Torb, Erin:** Battle tactician of Jilta, rank Three Star Marshall, in the Hymondian forces. Military author, and recognized voluntary contributor to Searfinders Military Almanac.

**Torell, Phi:** Explorer, political administrator of the *CCP, Jilta*, later a scientist. After the final victory of the Federation, Torell changed his name to Torren and disappeared, prior to the unveiling of a discovery that he said would shake the *known* universe. Along with his disappearance, went all traces of his self-said discovery. Mystery of the said discovery, and his death is unsolved. He is tenth ancestor to Goren Torren.

**Torren, Bal:** Son of Jal Torren and Jany Swinth of Jilta PCC, Married Fi Wilth. Father of Goren Torren.

**Torren, Goren:** An Independent, of service to Lorde Hymondy, of Jilta, tenth generation descendent to Phil Torell. Son of Betta Gangels and Bil Torren. See Goren Torren.

**Torren, Bal:** Son of Jal Torren and Jany Swinth of Jilta PCC, Married Fi Wilth. Father of Goren Torren.

**Trojan:** (*Terrestrial*) The term given to minor planets and asteroids found in orbit around the sun on the same path as a known host planet. Jupiter has

hundreds of thousands and they also exist for Earth and other planets.

**Trooper:** The basic military fixed-force personnel of space. Troopers answer to PMG and IFFCo. A trooper serves in space command posts, and small military outposts. The training of troopers is similar to guardsmen, and the basic rank of trooper and guardsmen is alike. [◀Return](#)

**Verlain:** 1. Central planet in the Malukan Sector, famous for the Royal Treaty of *Verlain*, which gives various rights and protectorate powers to sector administrative officials, over planets that as yet, haven't been accepted for intervention. Intervention is when a planet officially finds it isn't alone in the cosmos. After intervention, a planet first becomes a silent part member of the Federation. Intervention is part of a long ongoing procedure that slowly seeds the concept of the galactic community into a planet's culture over hundreds or thousands of years. 2. Verlain is an agricultural planet, with a feudal economy.

**Verlain Council:** A *council* of members of Royals, government representatives and people's representatives, that gives a place for two or more sides of any dispute, to be heard and mediated upon. The council always meets in Verlain.

**Verlain, (Royal) Treaty Of:** That treaty drawn up between the Royal Federation conquerors, and the conquered CCP planets, whereby the planets were given the right to become members of the Federation. Verlain was given a permanent voice at the *Verlain Council*, a council between the Federation Royals and the previously conquered CCP. [◀Return](#)

**Visio:** Slang for holographic three-dimensional visual screens on a craft or in an office.

**Warp Drive:** The faster-than-light speed travel around the Federation. Theoretically possible up to the speed of light squared. See also *Imperial*

*Federation Warp Drive Bank. See Broadmatter Theory Addendum.* [◀Return](#)

**Warm:** The term given to the state of Warp Drives as they become more operational, before commencing faster than light speed travel. [◀Return](#)

**WD's:** Warp Drives [◀Return](#)

**Wheelie:** ® A wheeled electric ground vehicle for mining camps. Dozens of models available. Maximum speed 15 Ks. Manufactured by the Wheelie Vehicle Co. Inc., Telco, Kinetics Province. [◀Return](#)

**Yard. The:** The *Yard* is 145 square kinopacs of land, devoted to the setting down and storage of military vessels to be scrapped or left as salvage, outside of Centrum, Celtron 4. [◀Return](#)

o0o

## NOTES:

### **On Mars:**

Ref: *The Martian Message* by Goro Adachi. See his book *The Time Rivers* 2003 for more data.

Additional data about Mars is summarized briefly as follows:

The Egyptian capital Cairo, situated next to Giza, derives its name from *Al Qahira*, denoting Mars, but also meaning victorious.

The ancient Egyptians called Mars "Horus of the Horizon" (Horakhti) which was the same name as given to the Great Sphinx. Mars was also called 'Horus the Red' (Hor Dshr), and for a long time the Sphinx was painted red.

Just as the Great Sphinx is a hybrid of man and a lion, in the ancient Hindu myths, Mars is Nr-Simha, the 'Man-Lion'.

The term 'pyramid' derives from the Greek term *pyr* meaning 'fire', as in Mars the 'fire planet'. (Mars is often referred to as pyroeis in Greek.)

The apparent pyramids of Mars were captured in 1972 by NASA's Mariner 9, the first spacecraft to enter the Mars orbit. It flew over the region called the *Elysium Quadrangle*.

Carl Sagan commented that these 'becoming pyramids' did 'warrant ... a careful look.'

In 1976 the Viking space probe photograph 35A72 showed the *Face on Mars*, situated in the region called *Cydonia*. The rock formation resembles a human face staring into space.

In 1979 photographs 70A13 showed another peculiarity, a five-sided pyramid near the *Face*. Due

to the geometric nature of the pyramid, many claimed this indicated more intelligence than the *Face*. Other anomalous objects were found such as the Fort, Cliff, and City and Tholus. When all these objects are mapped and interconnected intelligent geometric attributes become apparent.

While the data collected appears highly reliable and involves some very serious research, backed by scientists, the results are set up for ridicule, with sufficient force behind the ridicule to warrant some to suggest that there is a conspiracy of silence on the subject and that 'they' don't want extraterrestrial artifacts on Mars taken seriously.

Other recommended research books on the subject are:

Graham Hancock, *The Mars Mystery* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1998).

Richard C. Hoaglund, *The Monuments of Mars* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1993).

[◀Return](#)

ψ

## CREDITS (BIBLIOGRAPHY):

Below are just some sites, at the time of very early research, that may help those curious on the background data of the *New-Earth Miniseries*. These sites, and many others, shed color on the tapestry of history upon which this series is constructed. The following sites were also selected because they include the photos used as source materials in the Glossary.

### Abydos Temple:



**Key words:** Abydos temple, glyph, plane, Egypt, UFO, helicopter.

**Site:** <http://www.ufocom.eu>

**Notes:** Bilingual site. The fascination with Egypt and some connection from outside of Earth is more evident when one looks at this temple. Here appears the outline of a helicopter as well as a small-stylized picture of a jet fighter.



**Key words:** abydos, interior, Egypt, temple.

**Site:** <http://www.all-about-egypt.com>

**Notes:** Abydos temple is cut into rock. This site is about Egypt and a travel guide. This is about Egypt, its history, its kings and people.

### Catal Huyuk:



**Key words:** Catal, Huyuk, early, civilization, mystery.

**Site:** <http://www.ancientmysteries.eu>

**Notes:** Bilingual site but does have translations. The site itself is interesting and has its niche in this phenomena. But as it is written originally in a foreign language, readers need some patience. Your time spent is worthwhile.

## Cydonia:



**Key words:** Cydonia, Mars.

**Site:** <http://www.enterprisemission.com>

**Notes:** The above site has good information, and the wiki link has specific information on where this face is found on Mars, its coordinates etc. One will also find the pyramid, fort and other anomalies adjacent to the face.

## Dinosaur tracks:



**Key words:** dinosaurs, man, together, footprints, Texas.

**Site:** <http://www.ascensioearth2012.org>

**Notes:** This is a professional site and certainly shows that this is a real phenomenon. They have taken a slab of the clay of where the dinosaur footprint overlays the human print and examined the pressure cross-section of the cut, revealing scientifically that this is a true event. Of course this isn't the only evidence of man-created phenomena found on Earth in millions of years old strata mud.

## Helicon, Mount:



**Key words:** Mount, Helicon, Claude Lorrain artist.

**Site:** <http://www.wikipaintings.org>

**Notes:** This painting is by Claude Lorrain, famous historical artist, showing the Muses on Mount Helicon with Apollo.

## Horus:

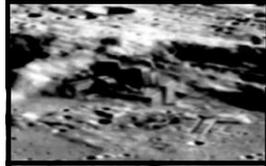


**Key words:** Horus, Egypt, ancient.

**Site:** <http://www.pbs.org>

**Notes:** This is a site of antiquities and shows this picture of Egyptian sculptures etc. Whereas this site focuses on Egypt, some of the other sites below have coverage of Egypt and its off-world links. The reader will find real raw data on this site.

## **Moon:**



**Key words:** moon, buildings, mystery, structure.

**Site:** <http://www.ozpolitic.com>

**Notes:** What is best about this site is that there are two frames of this picture and the buildings are seen from different positions of parallax. It is hard not to agree that these artificial looking shapes may be buildings with some kind of landing bay to the front and left.

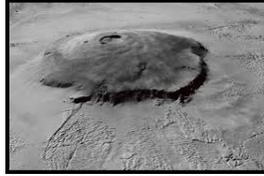


**Key words:** moon, anomaly, mystery, structure.

**Site:** <http://www.thelivingmoon.com>

**Notes:** More showing anomalies. These shapes or holes in the lunar surface – if they were on Earth they would be accepted as mines. It is difficult to think of natural ways for these shapes to otherwise exist.

## **Olympus Mons:**



**Key words:** Olympus Mons, Mars.

**Notes:** See the overflow from the caldera that is 85 km wide. This is the biggest known volcano in the solar system. This is a good site from Jet Propulsion Laboratory, which works with NASA.



**Key words:** Olympus Mons, Mars.

**Site:** <http://www.marsprogram.jpl.nasa.gov>

**Notes:** View from further out showing the size of the volcano and the curvature of Mars. The lava overflow has a cliff height of 10 km. The base is over 630 km across.

## **Pegasus:**

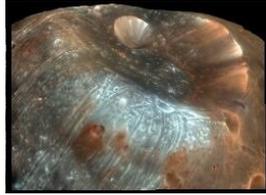


**Key words:** Pegasus, flying horse, Greek, gods.

**Site:** <http://www.theoi.com>

**Notes:** Good site. This is an enameled historic antique vase from Greece showing Pegasus.

## Phobos:

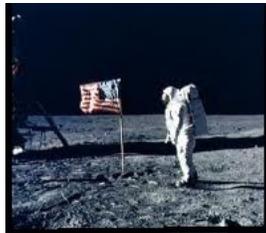


**Key words:** Phobos, moon, Mars.

**Site:** <http://www.nineplanets.org>

**Notes:** This moon is around 22 km across. Mars has two moons and its second moon is about a third of the diameter of Phobos. This is a straight look at what is in our solar system and has good photographs.

## Sea of Tranquility:



**Key words:** Apollo 11, moon, sea of tranquility, Buzz, Aldrin.

**Notes:** The landing site of Apollo 11 has had reports of UFOs. Buzz Aldrin, astronaut who went to the moon explains the strange phenomena he encountered in space and on the moon and what happened when he reported it at the time.

ψ

## List of Sequetus Series Books:

### THE NEW EARTH MINISERIES

- Book 1. Advance on Sequetus 3
- Book 2. Over Sequetus 3
- Book 3. Chariots of Sequetus 3
- Book 4. Magi
- Book 5. The Silent Enemy
- Book 6. The Federation Unravels
- Book 7. Savior of Sequetus 3
- Book 8. New Federation

### THE TEMPLAR MINISERIES

- Book 9. Temples of Sequetus 3
- Book 10. Temples and the Juggernaut
- Book 11. Escape From Federation
- Book 12. The Book of War

### THE JUGGERNAUT MINISERIES

- Book 13. Juggernauts
- Book 14. Temple Worlds
- Book 15. Far Outer Worlds and Sequetus 3
- Book 16. The Talkron Hunter – Part I
- Book 17. The Talkron Hunter – Part II

### THE EARTH SYNDROME MINISERIES

- Book 18. The Earth Syndrome
- Book 19. Final Passage
- Book 20. Vigil
- Book 21. Maluka Rising
- Book 22. Orbat
- Book 23. Galaxy

**NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS:**

Writing is a cultural art. So is drawing and painting. The artwork in this series is from [www.dreamstime.com](http://www.dreamstime.com) and others. The artists, photographers and models who participated in these works are very talented.

**DIAGRAMS:**

The author created maps and diagrams to explain some of the events in these books. These works are copyright to the author. They may be used later to create more sophisticated works.

The author needed these diagrams to refer back to. So if he needed them, he expects you may also.

The author took the philosophy that he had a story to tell, and he uses pictures, to aid the story.

The Glossary is the same. The author initially constructed the glossary so that he could keep track of events, as he recorded the world of the Federation. He has now included the glossary, as it evolved further in each book. So, in this book now, you get the glossary, as it had evolved up until this book's end.

The characters of the book may seem like real people. The author wrote it that way. They feel, bleed, drink coffee (or kalo) and they have emotions. They have personality. But in saying this, no character in these books is designed around anyone the author knows or has read about.

Thank you for reading the *SEQUETUS SERIES* books.

Sincerely yours

*Nick Broadhurst*

[◀Return](#)

ψ



We hope you enjoyed reading *Advance on Sequetus 3*, the first book in the Sequetus Series. We trust you found the book interesting, enjoyable, and maybe you learned a little. The rest of the series expands on what you have read and experienced so far.

Thank you for coming with us. We hope that you have enjoyed reading to date and will continue reading the next books, and recommend these books to your friends.

ψ