

# THE ZEVASH CODEX

## ENTRY #1: THE SURVEY TEAM

### **FORWARD:**

**[MESSAGE RECEIVED AND DECRYPTED]**

**[SEND DATE: 08 / 11 / 3987]**

**[FROM: CMDR. UTAL BRENZ]**

Lieutenant,

The following document has been cleared for release by Coalition Information Command, following confirmation of incident [\[THZV-00018\]](#). Downloaded materials have been declassified for your immediate attention. Notes originate from a compromised datapad located on [\[Thatmo Zevash\]](#), believed to be currently in the possession of former [\[Project: Zevash-Exploitation\]](#) lead researcher and citizen of interest [\[Frillke Kata\]](#). Top-level security clearance has been successfully approved by command, and redactions have been avoided for full analysis of sensitive materials.

Per general Y'ziti, you are due to have a full report by no later than 08:00 hours, on 30 / 11 / 3987 summarizing relevant information for the Zevash Exploitation Board Holders briefing.

PS: I swung by the cantina and saw you-know-who. I'd double time it on your report.

**[MESSAGE RECEIVED AND DECRYPTED]**

**[SEND DATE: 08 / 11 / 3987]**

**[FROM: LT. JEN XHO-JEX]**

Sup Noob!

Don't worry, just because you're new here doesn't mean we're gonna haze you on your first assignment. You're a lot shorter than I imagined. Anyway, you'll fit right in! You-know-who is riding on everyone's tails trying to get this stuff sifted out, I've been digging through the reports and I found an internal memo you'll wanna review before you get into the data logs someone uploaded from the [Utak Relay] we have on scan.

PS: Commander Brenz is super cool, you should write to him when you have a summary handy. Remember to record all of your mission-critical documents encase we get audited. You-know-who says we have to.

**[MESSAGE RECEIVED AND DECRYPTED]**

**[SEND DATE: 08 / 11 / 3987]**

**[FROM: LT. JEN XHO-JEX, FORWARDED FROM: GENERAL ISICS Y'ZITI]**

**Incident Report Summary:** Transmission received from known Black-Out region known as the Zevash Cluster on 6/11/3987. Signal originated likely from TZXK-0198-05 "Utak", with standard encryption codes used by the Skanton Mineral TZXK Sub-corporation. Initial confirmation of transmission was at 06:00, automatic receipt confirmation relayed within 15 seconds per standard communication relay response software. Shortly after transmission, relay ping was sent to confirm coordinates to booster at TZXK-0198-05, resulting in failure.

**Contents:** Transmission contents included substantial amounts of internal memos, as well as a full file upload of what appears to be personnel documents. Packet included a raw text "read-me" file, which claims to have been penned by Chairman of the Zevash Exploitation Board, Vend Altmeri. Text excerpt provided summarizes the main claims.

*To whomever is reading this: Forward this documentation directly to General Y'ziti of the Coalition Navy Intelligence Offices. We have been isolated from Coalition communications for nearly 4 years and are in need of immediate military support. Insurrection on Zevash Prime TZXK-0198-04 has resulted in a hostile takeover of colonists by hostile xenofauna! Exploitation Board members have suffered 90%*

*casualties, Nova Ordnance Systems security is overwhelmed, and emergency measures taken upon destruction of Coalition Garrison failed. Known Tanu fleet of two Corvettes and one Frigate responsible for loss of communications. Utak-05 relay has only enough power presently to send SOS, all relevant information, and Coordinates. SEND HELP!*

**Planned Action:** Based on the contents of the “read-me” and the rough method of packaging the data, it appears that the Exploitation Board has suffered massive attrition and loss of personnel, as well as substantial damage to their communication systems. Command direction is to immediately begin investigation of the data and propose action at an upcoming summit with the home organizations for the Exploitation Board’s company stakeholders, as well as Coalition government stakeholders. Coalition Navy Intelligence will begin review upon assignment, with at least 3 weeks deadline for review, considering the abundance of documentation attached.

## **[RECORDED DOCUMENTS BEGIN]**

[ENTRY 001]

Type: Text Document [non-secured]

Created: 02 / 08 / 3979 [T 16:35]

Origin: Received electronic transmission from approved sender.

## **NOTICE OF HIRE**

Good Day,

My name is Board Recruiter Yaven, we spoke earlier this month regarding your application to the Ethical Exploitation Program! I know you were bummed to hear about the plans for the Bright System falling through on account of the facility becoming compromised by previously undocumented tectonic systems, but count yourself lucky! It seems that they’ve had to rush to deploy Iskaan engineers due to the aquatic conditions, and based on initial safety screenings, you’re sadly not a strong enough swimmer to escape what they’re calling “anchor tides”. Based on what I read, there’s not much going on with the biology department anyway, the planet’s biosphere seems currently devoid of macro-organisms worthy of your time.

However, the Board just got approval for the Prime candidate system, designated as Thatmo Zevash! Based on initial scans from probes, it looks like there’s a host of macro-organisms that might be of worth and interest. There’s some strange electrical interference on the planet that the probes detected, but based on ionizing particles detected, it may just be due to unshielded scanners on the old Mk III’s. Besides, you’re young

and a little neutron bombardment won't hurt you any more than a bad diet these days. I've attached the contract you'll be agreeing to, if you take the assignment. Because Thatmo Zevash is classified as a G-Class Biohazardous Environment, you're going to be getting bonus credits towards your college debt at a rate of 10.15%! That works out well enough if your DebtChecker account is up to date and you've not already gone back to school, because with that little extra, you could be done paying off your degree in three short years!

I look forward to hearing from you earnestly!

Yaven Xing, Board Recruiter

THE COALITION EXPLOITATION MANAGEMENT AGENCY

*"CEMA, bringing the universe to the citizenry"*

**[ATTACHMENT CORRUPT: CANNOT CONTACT SERVER]**

[ENTRY 002]

Type: Text Document [non-secured]

Created: 02 / 08 / 3979 [T 16:51]

Origin: From device electronic messaging outbox.

**YES PLEASE! (RE: NOTICE OF HIRE)**

Hey again Yaven!

I didn't think I'd hear back from CEMA so quickly! It's a shame that those folks on Bright got sucked down, it was all over the news this week. I don't have gills anyway, so it's probably for the best. I had a look through the contract, and have a few questions I'd like to get answers to if you could make a date for us to meet up and discuss. The Mesmos University System is notorious for rejecting contracts that pay-back bonus rates, so we'd have to provide adequate documentation showing that the system is properly categorized. It's a Mesmos thing, I know you'll understand.

I am looking forward to going if things work out! I've attached my amended Contract Form 1-102-D as per CEMA guidelines in hopes that'll smooth things over.

Eager as always!

Frillke Kata, Ph-DDD

**[ATTACHMENT CORRUPT: CANNOT CONTACT SERVER]**

[ENTRY 003]

Type: Text Document [non-secured]

Created: 03 / 08 / 3979 [T 09:18]

Origin: Received electronic transmission from approved sender.

**SAVE THE DATE! (RE: YES PLEASE! (RE: NOTICE OF HIRE))**

Frillke,

Good morning once again. I've scheduled a follow-up appointment to review contract details with myself and some representatives from the Exploitation Board. Just a few pieces of advice since they can request a denial if they don't like something: dress professional, groom well, and practice speaking in a confident voice with good eye contact. You'll want to have a firm handshake, but don't believe the myth about the 5000 Newton Death-grip, that's only relevant for the Private Military folks.

I'll be seeing you at the Skanton Corporate Center, down past grid 101-19-06 at roughly 08:00, on 09 / 08 / 3979. There will be complimentary caffeinated beverages and breakfast food appropriate for Mesmian and Epostian dietary traditions. Wish you the best, and see you soon!

PS: I printed a paper copy of the amended contract, Skanton prefers physical media copies of everything.

Yaven Xing, Board Recruiter

*“CEMA, bringing the universe to the citizenry”*

[Entry 004]

Type: Text Document [Encrypted, Personal Password]

Created: 15 / 08 / 3979 [T 01:18]

Origin: Word processing software installed on device.

### **Daily Journal Entry #109**

Thank the old dragons, I actually got the job! I kept replaying that interview over and over in my head, but today I got a notice on ConTracker that I'd been approved! Onboarding starts tomorrow... erm wait. Today in 6 hours! I can't sleep, been hitting the bean juice all night and repacking my bags after my fourth checklist of things I think I might need. They said pack light, so I had to parse down as much as I could to hit the 15 Kilogram limit on possessions. Thankfully, I found an ultralight battery unit for my personal data pad! I just have to be kind of careful, last thing I want to do is leak uranium-substrate because I fell on a rock or something. To solve that problem, I got a reinforced case. It did mean I ran about 100 grams over the limit, but I already sacrificed my nice toothbrush to the weight limit dragons.

I got an extra document from the CEMA folks, a liability waiver. G-Class biohazardous planets can get dicey, Professor Wortham lost an arm (but got a cool upgrade in exchange for the PTSD, so win-win) and I'm hoping that if I had to make such a trade, I could get some of those Model X powered legs. It'd make the battery implant I already have so much more worth the money, I've got enough juice to run those legs for 18 days

without a charge! Then again, maybe it'd be a liability to do Fringe work with powered legs, their low power mode would be awful if I was being chased by some prehistoric megafauna! I'd have to hope the war dragon would pop out of Mesmian myth and into reality, and based on current data the probability is asymptotically approaching 0 at an alarming rate.

Dad called again, too. He said he's proud of me and once he finishes his current project at the materials lab, he'll be free enough to take a day to see me off. He once again chastised me for going into the biological sciences, traitor that I am. Never trust a materials scientist to have good instincts on parenting advice, they can only relate to the cold inanimate nano materials of our modern society. Since this Datapad will be going up into exoplanetary orbit with me, I should clear out my old logs and make room. Three years isn't that much time to fill a Datapad of this model, but once I get home it'll be a whole generation out of date and that'll be a perfect time to get the next model! I ended up downloading a lot of textbooks and research journals too. I think I have probably 30% of my storage left for personal work but you never know what obscure citation you'll need access to during a power outage!

*"Science waits for no one and no thing, not even life-threatening megafauna!" – Professor Wortham*

**[INPUT RECEIVED, DOCUMENTING DELETION OF SELECTED LOGS]**

**[DATA EXPUNGED LOGS 005 TO 039]**

**[REASON: IRRELEVANT USER INFORMATION]**

#### **NOTES:**

These entries detail routine experiences in a three-week training program for CEMA candidates. While C.O.I. [\[Frillke Kata\]](#) is considered adept enough at the physical tasks, a repeat poor performance on the aquatic survival tasks was noted and is considered of relevance for review. Frillke is however very quick on reaction time trials, particularly self-defense methods. Of special notice is that Frillke is of the Mesmer lizard species, and as usual for members of the species, Frillke can project a neurologically disrupting pseudo-psychic attack due to a combination of disorienting contrasting patterning on his frill, and a directed electromagnetic pulse created by organs at the top of his cranium.

During one sparring match, Frillke disabled an opponent with this ability reflexively. Instructor L.K.M. did not discipline Frillke for the use, taking time to teach Frillke's cohort candidates about atypical attacks (such as the acidic excretions of Tanu). Frillke began his training on 16 / 08 / 3979 and concluded with a graduation from onboarding on 28 / 08 / 3979. Logs resume with his first entry upon assignment to the [\[Thatmo Zevash Research Team\]](#) as Head Researcher.

## **[DATA LOG RESUMES]**

[Entry 040]

Type: Text Document [Encrypted, Personal Password]

Created: 31 / 08 / 3979 [T 03:18]

Origin: Word processing software installed on device.

### **Zevash Mission Log: Day -1**

I'm the Head Researcher. Not a team lead, not a shift lead, not some guy filling up vials of specimen with testing substrate... I'm the HEAD! HEAD RESEARCHER! AAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!

~~I can't even begin to describe how excited I am about this entire thing!~~

Calm. Calm thoughts, breathe. The tranquility of a thousand sleeping dragons. Okay, let me explain: Back when we graduated, I was under the impression from the initial projections that the honor would go to Dr. Alleti Sugvral (MD and several other diplomas and all). However, apparently Alleti is not *that kind of doctor*, but rather a Trauma Surgeon with a black-bar record! I learned a little about his experiences, the Tanu Uprising from 3966 in particular. He's got a lot of the "old man" syndromes, distant gaze, callous speech, oddly sexual (though not sexist, amazingly) choice of words, the works. But if his record isn't to be believed, that time one of



the other Candidates got shot in the leg by an improperly disabled handlaz is certainly of relevance. This guy doesn't move quick until someone's hurt, and then it's a blur of greying fur and medical equipment.

I have under me two other Science Team candidates, plus a Coalition Navy pilot and a Corporate Security guard from Nova Ordinance Systems. I put together some scans the CEMA folks provided me, and wrote up some quick personnel biographies for the record. I'll be submitting these Biographies for recordkeeping and the appropriate checkboxing. But! Before I get into those bios, I got not only the lead position because I am the most academically adept of my fellow Science Team members, but also because apparently I am the only person who has interpersonal conflict resolution training, period. Even Alleti hasn't got that, and I thought it was standard for medical doctors. Supposedly, he was trained during the 3954 Third Fleet Piracy scare when medical trainings were lax, so thusly here I am. On top of being Head Researcher, which is basically my scholarly duties plus Project command, I also am the "Morale Officer", so not only do I have to steer the ship and describe the ship, I also have to keep the crew of the ship from fighting each other or feeling sad or whatever. They're supposed to hire a shrink for this, but Amendment XOZ-10128-A2 to CEMA Exploitation Team Regulations removed that need in favor for a more flexible "Morale Officer" position.

I really hope I don't have to put someone into a Safety Hold. I'm very small. We go through pre-departure briefing ~~tomorrow~~ in 5 hours. I'm writing a mission summary afterwards, bean juice dragon guide me to a swift victory!

[Entry 041]

Type: Multi-Media Text Document [Encrypted, Personal Password]

Created: 31 / 08 / 3979 [T 05:12]

Origin: Word processing software installed on device. Images imported from image editing software.

**PERSONNEL BIOGRAPHIES: My Science Team**

3m

2m

1m

ALETTI OFTEN SMOKES FROM HIS HAND-MADE PIPE. WHITTling AND PEN MAKING ARE HIS FAVORITE HOBBIES.

PS: THIS PEN HE GAVE ME WORKS IN ZERO-G!?

HIS EYESIGHT IS DEMINISHING BUT HE WEARS GLASSES "BECAUSE YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN CANNOT RESIST A SCHOLARLY MAN".

I SHOULD TRY THAT...



AGE: 59 GSY    WEIGHT: 118 KG

PERSONELLE INFORMATION

NAME: ALLETI SUGVRAL  
SPECIES: RAT  
HOMEWORLD: EPOS  
GENDER: MALE (HE/HIM/HIS)  
SPECIALIZATIONS: EMERGENCY MEDICINE  
EXO-VIROLOGY  
SURGICAL SCIENCE

LIFE HISTORY [MISSION RELEVANT BIO]  
ALLETI IS THE OLDEST MEMBER OF THE SCIENCE TEAM. HIS PERSONALITY IS A PERFECT MATCH, STOICH AND RESERVED. I DON'T THINK I'VE HELD A CONVERSATION WITH HIM THUS FAR THAT HASN'T ENDED WITH SOME KIND OF ADVICE.

ALETTI HAS DONE A TRAUMA MEDICINE TOUR OR THREE IN HIS TIME (HIS RECORDS ARE INCOMPLETE), AND HIS THICK ACCENT IS DISTRACTINGLY SUAVE. HE IS SLOW ON HIS FEET DUE TO HIS AGE. HOWEVER, HE (LIKE MOST OF HIS SPECIES) IS STILL QUITE FECUND BY HIS SELF-REPORT.

SUPPOSEDLY, THAT KIND OF ACTIVITY IS A RELIABLE WAY TO KEEP ONE OF HIS AGE UP AND PEPPY.

FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CALIBRATION



DELIGHT



DISAPPOINTMENT

FAILURE TO CALIBRATE

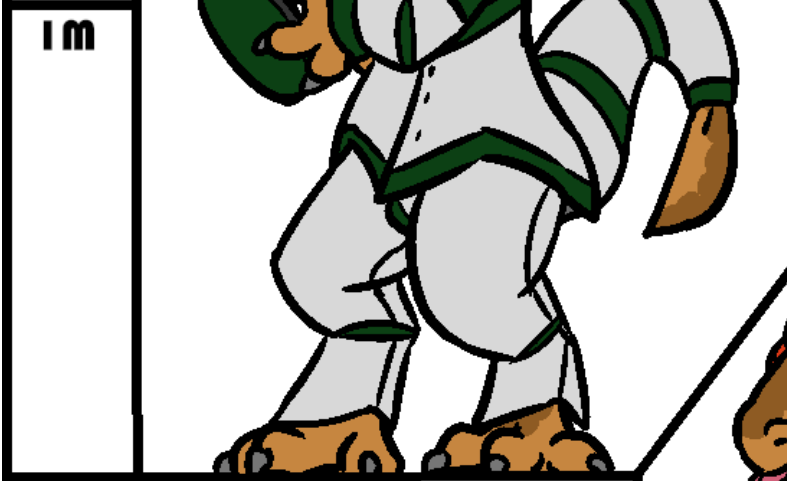
3m

REALLY, REALLY QUIET. WATCHED THEM DROP A HEAVY ITEM ON ONE OF THEIR TOES, DIDN'T EVEN PEEP. QUIETLY REACTED AND QUICKLY LEFT THE SCENE.

GOT A MESSAGE LATER MENTIONING THAT THEY NEEDED SOME HELP FINDING ALLETI.

2m

GOGGLES ALLOW FOR AUGMENTED REALITY, MANDATE BREAKS TO AVOID EYE STRAIN



AGE: 31 GSY    WEIGHT: 76 KG

PERSONELLE INFORMATION

NAME: SKELTS MERCZ  
SPECIES: CRESTED LEAFTAIL GECKO  
HOMEWORLD: ILEATA  
GENDER: NEUTRAL (THEY/THEM/THEIR)  
SPECIALIZATIONS: EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY  
EXO-ECOLOGY  
I.T. SCIENCE

LIFE HISTORY [MISSION RELEVANT BIO]  
SKELTS IS A CURIOUS ADDITION TO THE SCIENCE TEAM. LACKING MUCH EXTERNAL INTEREST IN OTHERS, THEY ARE RESERVED AND SEEMINGLY ALWAYS LOST IN A DATA PAD OR OTHERWISE OCCUPIED WITH QUIET WORK. THEY'RE ESPECIALLY SCHOLARLY, AND HAVE ALREADY DRAFTED A LITANY OF PROPOSALS REGARDING POTENTIAL FLORA AND FAUNA TO ANTICIPATE ON ZEVASH.

RARELY SPEAKS, BARELY MAKES ANY SEEN EFFORTS TO DO SO WITH ANYONE, MYSELF INCLUDED. PREFERS TO COMMUNICATE VIA TEXT BASED INSTANT-MESSAGING DEVICES.

PS: HAS STICKY PADS WHICH ALLOW FOR HANGING UPSIDE DOWN OR ON THE SIDES OF SHEER SURFACES. UTILIZES THESE ROUTINELY, NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE SKELTS WEIRDLY PERCHED IN THE LABS.




FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CALIBRATION

REHERSED EXPRESSION? IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME.

HISSES.

DELIGHT

DISAPPOINTMENT

3m	<p>NOTES:</p> <p>ENJOYS ALCHOL CONSUMPTION AND ROWDYNESS, RECOMMENDED TO KEEP AN EYE ON UNTIMELY CONDUCT, OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. THIS IS DUE TO HER TRUANCY ISSUES AT UNIVERSITY.</p>	<b>PERSONNEL INFORMATION:</b> <p>NAME: VASH WAGNO SPECIES: PANGOLIN HOMEWORLD: GYRAST GENDER: FEMALE (SHE/HER/HERS) SPECIALIZATIONS: EXO-GEOLOGY ASTROPHYSICS GEO-ENGINEERING</p> <p>LIFE HISTORY [MISSION RELEVANT BIO]</p> <p>VASH IS A TOP-OF-HER-CLASS GEOLOGIST WHO GRADUATED NOT MORE THAN A YEAR AGO. SHE IS CONFIDENT IN HERSELF AND VERY ENERGETIC. SHE'S A QUICK STUDY, CONCEPTUALIZES AND DRAFTS OUT ALL KINDS OF PHYSICAL MODELS SUPER QUICK.</p> <p>BADLY NEARSIGHTED, REFUSES TO HAVE CORRECTIVE SURGERY, RELYING INSTEAD UPON EXTERNAL LIGHT-ADJUSTING LENSES TO MANAGE HER VISUAL ISSUES. XHO IS PEEVED BY THAT, FOR SOME REASON.</p> <p>PS: VERY SOCIALLY ACTIVE, FRATERNIZES WITH NON SCIENCE TEAM MEMBERS READILY AND IS GREAT AT SIMPLIFYING COMPLEX CONCEPTS IN COMMON TERMS.</p> <p>PSS: ABSOLUTELY DESPISES THE CONTRACT HOLDER SKANTON MINERAL INC., "IT'S A STORY FOR LATER".</p>	
2m	<p>GOGGLES CORRECT FOR HER EYE CONDITION, SHE CANNOT LEAVE HER QUARTERS WITHOUT THEM</p>		
1m	 <p>HYC IS THE UNIVERSITY THAT SHE GRADUATED FROM... "SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT", SHE SAYS.</p>		
<p>AGE: 29 GSY    WEIGHT: 68 KG</p>		<b>FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CALIBRATION</b>	
		 <p>DELIGHT</p>	 <p>DISAPPOINTMENT</p>

3m

2m

1m

**\*CAPTURE TATTOO FOR SCANS**  
**XHO WILL NOT OFFER IT FREELY.**

**\*CAPTURE SCAR OVER**  
**LEFT EYE FOR SCANS**

**AGE: 35 GSY    WEIGHT: 89 KG**

**PERSONNEL INFORMATION:**

**NAME:** XHOTOC "XHO" IZIT  
**SPECIES:** EPOSTILE  
**HOMEWORLD:** EPOS  
**GENDER:** [REASSIGNED] MALE (HE/HIM/HIS)  
**SPECIALIZATIONS:** COMBAT PILOT  
COALITION COMMS.  
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

**LIFE HISTORY [MISSION-RELEVANT BIO]**  
XHOTOC IS A TRANSITIONED MALE, WHO IS AN ACE COALITION INTERCEPTOR PILOT WITH A HISTORY OF FRINGE-WORLD ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS. WITH 17 CONFIRMED KILLS (13 CLAIMED BUT UN-VERIFIED), XHO POSSESSES THE MOST COMBINED COMBAT EXPERIENCE IN THE STAR CLUSTER. HE IS FAMILIAR IN VIRTUALLY ALL SPACE-WORTHY VESSELS THAT ARE APPROVED BY THE COALITION.

**XHO IDENTIFIES AS MALE, REMEMBER THAT DETAIL! HE TRANSITIONED FAIRLY EARLY IN HIS CAREER.**

**PS: TALL, AND FLIRTY WITH ME. REMINDER THAT THE DOCUMENTATION ON GENDER STATUS CHANGES HAVE BEEN ALTERED TO BE MORE HOSTILE TOWARDS THOSE WHO HAVE CHANGED THEIR GENDER STATUS.**

**FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CAUBRATION**




**DELIGHT**

**DISAPPOINTMENT**



3m	<p>IS PARTICULARLY FOND OF WEARING THEIR ARMOR AT ALL TIMES, DESPITE HAVING ADEQUATE PERSONAL SHIELDING IN EXCESS OF 1,000NME*</p> <p>[COMPARABLE TO THE ROUGH NEUTONIAN DISRUPTION EQUIVALENT OF A SMALL AUTOCAR FULLY JUICED UP]</p>	<h2>PERSONELLE INFORMATION</h2> <p><b>NAME:</b> RUCHAL VETTS</p> <p><b>SPECIES:</b> WOLF</p> <p><b>HOMEWORLD:</b> SULGEN</p> <p><b>GENDER:</b> FEMALE (SHE/HER/HERS)</p> <p><b>SPECIALIZATIONS:</b> SECURITY OPERATIONS PLASMA WEAPONRY HAND TO HAND COMBAT</p>					
2m	<p>SOUR DISPOSITION OFTEN IS DEFEATED BY HUMOR OR ANY MUTUAL PHYSICAL BELIGERENCE.</p>	<p><b>LIFE HISTORY [MISSION RELEVANT BIO]</b></p> <p>A "LOANER" FROM THE N.O.S. MERCINARY COMPANY, RUCHAL WAS ASSIGNED TO US AS A NECESSARY ADDITION TO THE TEAM FOR SURFACE LEVEL OPERATIONS, IN LIGHT OF PROBE INCIDENT KZ-021 [05/11/3978].</p> <p>RUCHAL UNLIKE MOST WOLVES FROM SULGEN PRESENTS WITH HETEROGENEOUS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SEX INDICATORS WHICH MAKES FOR CONFUSION BY SOME STAFF EXTERNAL TO THE SCIENCE TEAM. AS A COURTESY, RUCHAL WILL ORIENT NEW STAFF MEMBERS TO THE SCIENCE TEAM AS NEEDED, AND WILL SCREEN FOR ANY LIKELY THREATS OR CONTRABAND.</p> <p>PS: CRICKET POPPERS ARE CONSIDERED CONTRABAND DUE TO RISK OF LIVE CRICKETS ESCAPING ON-SITE LIKE I'D MISS OUT ON A LIVE BONUS CRICKET...</p>					
1m		<h3>FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CALIBRATION</h3> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 1207 1161 1480">  </td> <td data-bbox="1161 1207 1528 1480">  </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 1480 1161 1522">DELIGHT</td> <td data-bbox="1161 1480 1528 1522">DISAPPOINTMENT</td> </tr> </table>				DELIGHT	DISAPPOINTMENT
							
DELIGHT	DISAPPOINTMENT						
<p><b>AGE: 22 GSY    WEIGHT: 91 KG</b></p>							

[Notes]: Dr. Kata, please provide a Personnel Biography for yourself. – Xhotoc.

3m	<p>PS: I HAVE A LOT OF SPACE IN THESE PROFILE SCANS, AND WORRINGLY THE PREDICTIVE AI SOFTWARE SHOWS ME UH... WHAT EVERYONE LOOKS LIKE NAKED AND WITH THEIR...</p> <p>...SEX ORGANS...</p> <p>VISIBLE. NOTE TO SELF TO KEEP THOSE UH, ALTERNATE SCANS IN A SECURE FILE HOST.</p> <p>...FOR UM.</p>	<p><b>PERSONNEL INFORMATION:</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> FRILLKE "FRILLS" KATA</p> <p><b>SPECIES:</b> MESMER LIZARD</p> <p><b>HOMEWORLD:</b> MESMOS</p> <p><b>GENDER:</b> MALE (HE/HIM/HIS)</p> <p><b>SPECIALIZATIONS:</b> NEUROANATOMY XENO-BIOLOGY XENO-SOCIOLOGY</p> <p><b>LIFE HISTORY [MISSION-RELEVANT BIO]</b></p>	
2m	<p>...RESEARCH PURPOSES.</p>	<p>OH. I HAVE TO DO MY OWN. RIGHT, I AM THE LEAD RESEARCHER, FRILLKE, BOARDING SCIENTIFIC STATION TZXK-0198-4, WHICH IS DESIGNATED AS "ZEVASH STATION" FOR EASE OF REFERENCE.</p> <p>I HAVE A BACKGROUND IN XENOBIOLLOGY, XENOSOCIOLOGY, AND NEUROANATOMY, AND THAT QUALIFIES ME PER COALITION GUIDE-LINES TO BE THE "MORALE OFFICER" FOR THE SCIENCE TEAM HERE. I'M NOT EXACTLY COMFORTABLE SERVING AS THE SHRINK AND LEAD RESEARCHER, SINCE I DECIDED TO SKIP XENOPSYCHOLOGY IN FAVOR OF A MORE ERM... SCHOLARLY BACKGROUND.</p>	
1m		<p>I ALSO HAVE TRAUMA MEDICINE TRAINING, HOPE THAT DOESN'T EVER MATTER...</p> <p><b>FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE CALIBRATION</b></p>	
<p>AGE: 23 GSY    WEIGHT: 67 KG</p>		 <p>DELIGHT</p>	 <p>DISAPPOINTMENT</p>

**[REVIEW ADDENDUM: INCIDENT KZ-021 05 / 11 / 3978]**

Known documented encounter with a large native organism on Zevash by probe KZ-021. Probe considered lost, following loss of telemetry and backup power supply. Recovered Images show sizable hexapod in excess of 8 meters in length. See later documentation regarding known X-Class Biohazardous Organisms on Zevash. Probe location remains unknown in all documentation found on coalition databanks.

[Entry 042]

Type: Text Document [Encrypted, Personal Password]

Created: 31 / 08 / 3979 [T 18:45]

Origin: Word processing software installed on device.

## **Zevash Mission Log: Day 0**

**Mission:** Ethical Resource Exploitation Research of planet Thatmo Zevash

### **Objectives:**

1. Establish orbital research base for planet-side operations.
2. Begin Survey of planet via robotic exploration probes.
3. Analyze planetary composition, observed flora and fauna, and report findings to Exploitation Board.
  - a. If viable, begin away missions for on-planet specimen collection.
  - b. Identify possible locations of import where concentrations of at-interest materials exist.
4. Determine viability of resource extraction.
  - a. Rule-out existing sentient habitation per guideline Thalm-7.
  - b. Assess terrain for recommendation of minimal impact extraction techniques.
5. Determine viability of temporary or permanent colonial habitation, per guideline Thalm-18.
6. Assist in taxonomy and classification of relevant flora and fauna.
7. Document all findings in a hand-off summary for later researchers, per guideline Thalm-99.

**Expected Mission Time:** 3 years.

**Agreed Contract Length:** 2 to 5 years (extensions negotiated after 5).

**Home-Port Vacation:** 14 days, every 1 year of deployment.

### **Parties Represented and Invested:**

1. Coalition Galactic Government.
  - a. Coalition Exploitation Management Agency (CEMA)
  - b. Coalition Naval Forces (382<sup>nd</sup> Fringe Patrol)
  - c. Coalition Fringeworld Colonial Interest Agency (CFCIA)
  - d. Coalition Resource Labor Regulation Agency (CRLRA)
2. Corporate Exploitation Board.
  - a. Skanton Mineral INC. (Resource Extraction and Refinement)
  - b. Nova Ordinance Systems LPMC. (Private Security and Arms Vendor)



- c. CoreThermics CO. (Power Generation and Terraforming)
- d. Build-n-Go CO. (Rapid Modular Construction)
- e. Ecco Labs INC. (Pharmaceutical and Agriculture)
- f. Epistrophe Manufacturing CORP. (Materials Processing, Manufacturing)
- g. Galaxa-Port INC. (Logistics and Transportation Supplier)

### **Discovery Summary:**

On 19 / 07 / 3977 the star cluster previously classified as TZXK-0198 was investigated for possible Fringe Expansion by private parties represented within the Coalition Citizenry. With continued economic tensions at the core worlds due to resource scarcity for raw materials, survey was approved by a 9 to 0 vote by CEMA oversight committee. Initial sleeper-probes were dispersed in a standard pattern to establish first-line relay beacon signaling, with two successful probe responses documented by 30 / 12 / 3977. Relay beacon TZXK-0198-01 through 07 was established over the next two months in seven distinct solar systems.

Thatmo Zevash is the designation for a desert planet with adequate levels of oxygen and atmospheric integrity for all known biological requirements for current understanding of xeno-organisms on exoplanets. Located in the star system TZXK-0198-04, it is considered the most favorable habitable planet following failures to establish meaningful planet-side laboratories at TZXK-0198-02 “Bright”. Initial surveys of the star cluster had led it to be named as the Zevash Cluster, due to TZXK-0198-04’s Prime planet being the most likely to be successfully colonized. Thusly, TZXK-0198 is now referred to as the Zevash Cluster, with Thatmo Zevash being the Prime colony target. Since the failure of Zevash-02 Bright, resource extraction grants were expedited.

*(Delete this later Trivia: “Thatmo Zevash” is old Epostile for “A promising mudball”)*

### **Stakeholder Summary of Interests and Agendas:**

#### **Failure of Zevash-02 Bright:**

Bright is an aquatic world with very minimal surface terrain of note. Initial orbital laboratories targeted one of the larger landmasses for planet-side research facilities to be constructed, but sadly this turned out to be a mistake. Bright has a unique and hard to predict changes in island positions, which cause landmasses visible from space to be suddenly “depressed”. It was later discovered this is because the segments of crust are not anchored to tectonically stable terrain, resulting in what is being referred to as an “Anchor Tide” amongst surviving research team members. Anchor Tides are a unique phenomenon where-in terrain displacement due to tectonic shifts causes a ‘dip’ to form, sucking visible masses beneath the waves. While this process is rapid, it is not unavoidable. Iskaan and other aquatic Coalition researchers successfully prevented 68% of staff from becoming casualties. Sadly, the remaining 32% of staff were not recovered, making Bright the most recent

mass-casualty incident in a chain of incidents involving Skanton Mineral's exploitation management. CEMA has requested a temporary pause to operations on Zevash-02, in favor of consolidation of staff for Zevash-04.

#### **Zevash-4, AKA Zevash Prime:**

Zevash Prime is a sizable desert world, approximately 120,000,000km from the star. On an extreme axial tilt of 40 degrees, Zevash also has a 20 hour rotation. Observed seasonal patterns indicate that there is an 11/9 hour day/night equinox, and a 13/7 hour day/night solstice. The year length is approximately 354 days in total, with four quarterly periods observed reliably as indicators for some visible seasonal weather patterns. It has a sizable moon designated as Zevash Minor. The planet has an atmospheric oxygen concentration of 18%. This figure is deceptively high due to very little visible flora, excepting the growth around land-locked seas that feed into massive river systems. It is hypothesized from these observations that the bulk of water on Zevash is located underground, as measurements of the atmosphere's composition and observed rainfall is sufficient enough to rule-out atmospheric origin of water vapors. It would seem the moon is of relevance for tidal conditions, and may be involved in some movement of water underground.

Of interest is the spot-on appearance of Zevash Prime to the chosen lingual designation of the system. Its atmosphere from orbit appears muddy, a high degree of dust and debris is present in the upper layers of the atmosphere due to high winds. It looks like a prime candidate for terraforming, particularly because of the magnetosphere being described by Exploitation Board researchers as "unruly". Probes transmitting images back show a sunbaked desert in most areas, the types of desert vary from lush plant-filled craigs and banks, to shockingly tall mountains and buttes, and incredible ravines and canyons. There are few comparable regions on Mesmer to how remarkably barren and sand-blasted the surface of Zevash appears. Curiously because of the dust and presumably the light spectrum that can penetrate it, the sky is a pink-red; making it similar to Gyrast, which is the most immediately relevant Coalition core world to compare it with.

Already, our resident Geologist and Physicist Vash Wagno has been speculating about unusual magnetic resonance readings in the crust of the planet, she's got equipment requisitions that fill three full pages of just *equipment titles*, and her proposal for each piece of equipment comes in at a minimum of 14 pages before citations. It's refreshing to see someone who knows how to write a good requisition, and I've approved them for now and sent them to the Board for supply decisions to be made whilst we're in transit to Zevash Prime. Based on surface level observations by probes, Skelts Mercz has been hard at work writing projective proposals for flora and fauna we may encounter. Proposals include megafauna, carnivorous plants, and they are predicting "an ecosystem of unusual reliance upon minute magnetic changes in their perceptive ranges". Curiously, they're unable to back this with much more than speculation due to the odd magnetism observed by probes. Skelts thinks it could be more than a feeling, due to the radiological data the probes have gathered based on air samples and soil samples.

## **Crew Assignments:**

At the fore-front of this mission is the Science Team, which is currently limited to Four Interloper-Class candidates. Of them, the roles are Head Researcher Frillke Kata, Xeno-Biology Specialist Skeltz Mercz, Xeno-Geology Specialist Vash Wagno, and Medical Doctor Alleti Sugvral. Coalition Navy Intelligence Services have assigned Lieutenant Xhotoc Izit to assist with liaison with Coalition interests and as pilot for research craft, as well as Nova Ordinance Systems' Petty Officer Ruchal Vetts who will act as liaison with Exploitation Board representatives, and manage security operations for the science team. Supporting the Science Team will be 15 members of the Build-n-Go Corporation's Space Station construction team, 10 members of the Nova Ordinance Systems' Field-Security Staff, 2 scientific consultants from Ecco Labs, 5 exploitation consultants from Skanton Mineral, and 8 Piloting Crew from Galaxa-Port. 14 Adjunct Staff (technicians, cooks, and other essential support members) have been contracted via negotiations external to the CEMA hiring process.

(Delete later:  $6+15+10+2+5+8+14 = 60$  staff total, though I can at least subtract myself from my case-load...)

This brings Zevash Station's initial deployment to 60 individuals, of which only 18 (30%) are rated as having met the CEMA exploration requirements. This means that in the event of an emergency, crew will be required to follow a strict chain of command. To ensure operational success, Interloper-Class personnel will be assigned a crew-list to manage during training exercises and actual emergencies. By spreading the numbers out, each Interloper-Class crew member will have 2 or 3 individuals under their command. Overall Chain of Command has three levels of redundancy: Xhotoc Izit is in command first, Alleti Sugvral second, and Frillke Kata as third. In the event of a mass-casualty event involving the Science Team, command will be handed over against protocol to level 2 of the Chain of Command. This puts the Security Team from Nova Ordinance Systems under the command of Ruchal Vetts as defacto leadership. Crew will be rotated out periodically, following CEMA prolonged-deployment standards of 1 staff per 10 from different sectors of the crew. Replacement crew will be provided by Exploitation Board reserves, following CEMA requirements.

(Note: I think this means that we'll be pulling straws for the first vacation in about 6 months in science-land)

## **Pre-Deployment Research Station Assembly:**

Prior to arrival, the crews from Build-n-Go and Galaxa-Port will be coordinating the construction of Research Station THZV-01. The floorplan of THZV-01 includes a spacious atrium, accommodations for our crew, common areas, exercise rooms, and laboratories. All main access doorways are required per CEMA guidelines to be 2.5 meters wide, by 3.5 meters tall. This is to permit large equipment and personnel to pass through doorways without meaningful obstruction. Doorways are built to automatically slam shut in the event

of a depressurization or security breach, and as such must be highlighted with standard Caution Indicators. Halls should have color-differentiated and emergency light equipped floor plating which indicates clearly the route a particular area will take someone. THZV-01 is constructed using a central hexagonal structure, with one extrusion on the sixth face. This platform is intended to serve as a zero-atmosphere external dock with airlocked entrance. As THZV-01 currently lacks the facilities for internal docking, this unusual approach will be required to allow transit of material, supplies, and personnel between craft and station. External Shielding is equipped via multiple projectors on each face, topside, and underside of the structure and is rated for objects up to 1800kg traveling at 1500m/s. Finally, THZV-01 will have an expansion Column that runs through the central structure and down approximately 100 meters. Expansion slots for equipment, as well as elevators, and other attachments are already installed to allow for quick add-ons to the facility.

Current plans include the installation of a communications array and power supply hosted externally and tethered via an ultra-dense shielded utility cable. The array will include onboard fission power supply as the primary power supply, the station will have a secondary and inactive supply onboard. This secondary supply will be activated automatically in the event of power loss with the primary source. Chief Engineering duties in that case would be passed to Vash Wagno, who is familiar with power supplies provided by CoreThermics. The main function of the external array is to provide telemetry and communications services per Relay-Beacon guidelines. This would make Thatmo Zevash host to a redundant Relay-Beacon, as well as having a more modern model with the communications upgrades. Such a model of beacon can sustain transmissions from a colony of more than 1.8 Billion active connections, which makes it ideal for initial colonization selections. Expansions in the forms of adjunct labs with safety redundancies and observation decking is planned for later work, as well as the addition of a properly enclosed hangar bay. These are considered CEMA standardized blueprints, provided and constructed by Build-n-Go.

### **Pre-Launch Agenda:**

Before mission launch, the Morale Officer must complete the following tasks:

1. Contraband Items Check for Crew
2. Initial Crew Psychological Evaluations
3. Kick-Off Speech prior to Launch
4. Assemble teams into vessels for Launch
5. Begin active Journaling for supporting documentation and relevant notes.

(Oh hey, I can do #5 right now... I'll draft up some notes if we encounter intelligent life!)

[Entry 043]

Type: Text Document [Encrypted, Personal Password]

Created: 31 / 08 / 3979 [T 23:18]

Origin: Word processing software installed on device.

## **Introduction to the Coalition for intelligent Xenofauna: “Where are we, Who are we.”**

### **Introduction:**

Greetings! My name is Head Researcher Frillke Kata, and I have been assigned on this intrepid adventure onto your planet! I am known in my civilization as a Scientist, and have the pleasure of using my collection of knowledge to teach you (the hypothetical xenofauna) all about the Galactic Coalition, and so many other things if I remember everything that you need to know. Hopefully by the time I am going over these notes, you'll already be versed in rudimentary mathematics, basic physics, hopefully a little historical or sociological study, and of course have a Translator Codex that can work well enough to avoid ambiguity. If you're reading this and you notice words from your culture in the place of words from my culture, that's because of the Translator Codex. For instance, when I say [Newtons / Joules] you should see an equivalent version translated into your native tongue. There are so many words that rely on history, many civilizations name key discoveries and technologies such as scientific concepts of distance, time, and velocity after events or people or locations.

Since you've gotten this far in the document, I am hopefully aware that you're Sapient (can reason with knowledge and experiences), Sentient (capable of experiencing things through the senses), and ideally you're non-hostile and are taking your time going through this information with me! I hope I'm not dead when you read this. Anyway, welcome to being a member of the Galactic Community! Let's talk about the Coalition Government, and whatever else seems relevant to orienting a new member of our society to being a Citizen!

### **Where We Are:**

I hope that when I show you this chart, you have already been taught a thing or two about Galaxies, and space in general. These charts are simplified for your ease of understanding, and do not represent a perfect reality, but rather a model of reality!

# Zeng-Qon: "Our Humble Land"

You know it as: Messier 106

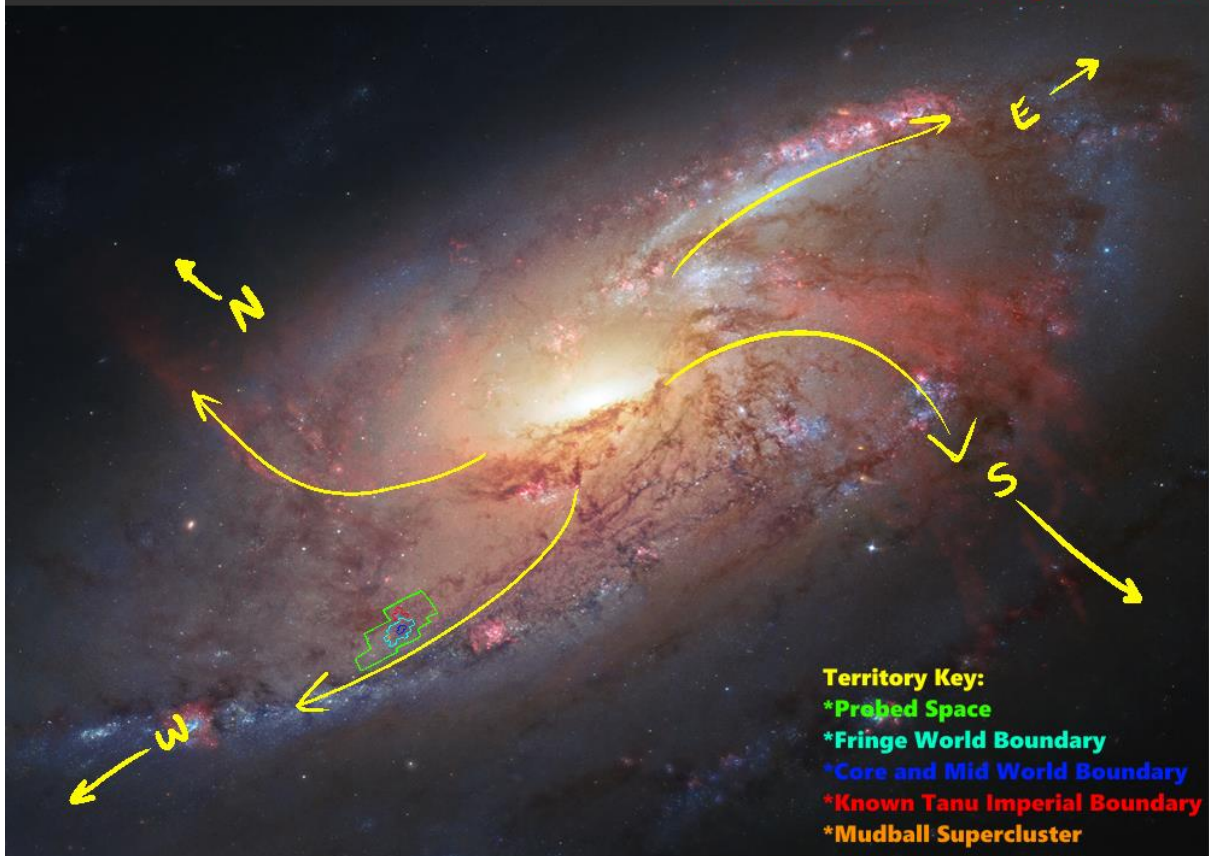
Type: Intermediate Spiral Galaxy

Size: Modest (Diameter 135,000 LY)

Nearest Neighbor: NGC4217 (Companion Galaxy)

Original Photo Credit:

NASA, ESA, Hubble Heritage Team, et al.

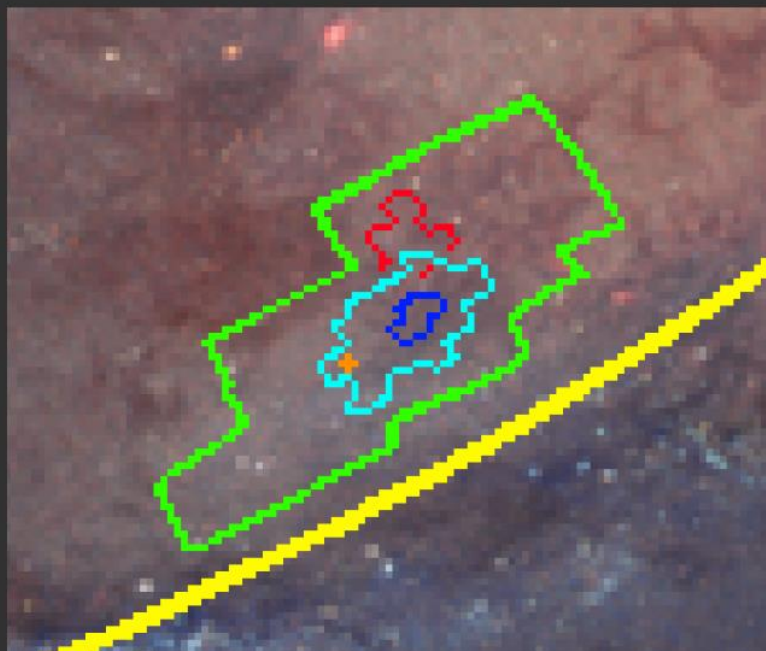


The Galaxy features an interesting phenomena, where the central disk (the East and West Arms) emits Infrared Light, but the smaller secondary disk (the North and South Arms) emit X-rays. This early and well documented phenomena made the galaxy of particular ease for Epostile Navigation, as they were able to adapt a compass rose like analogue to these unique navigational features.

## IT ALL HAPPENS HERE:

This really large chunk of space is where all of the events that matter today have taken place. Every life begun, every life ended, happiness, tragedy, invention, regression, all of it took place in this sizable, yet small area of our galaxy. We know so little of what could be out there, who else might be among the stars, and that brings about feelings of both peril and wonderment.

To think that only 7 solar systems in the Mudball Supercluster have been charted... it makes the mind spin and reel at the sheer scale! This planet is so far away from home, but the events that have lead our civiliation here are both so rare, and so miraculous!



**All territory sizes exaggerated for ease.**

## Who We Are:

The Galactic Coalition is a 106-year-old civilization, formed initially by a species known as the Epsotile when they first made contact and successfully integrated the Mesmians. The Galactic Coalition (the Coalition for short) is a democratic entity which has 38 planets we call “Core Worlds”, 73 “Mid Worlds”, and over 200 in-development “Fringe Worlds”. In its time, the 38 Core Worlds have all become sitting members of the Coalition’s Governmental Chamber, with 5 minor representatives, and 1 leader each. The Epsotile built the government such that with each addition of a species to full assimilation into the Coalition, their needs and interests would be elevated for 10 years as they integrated and adapted to the society. As you may have noticed, 38 Core Worlds means that 37 were added in the 106-year span of the Coalition. This has been documented in the additions having spiraled quite suddenly, with what we call the First Age of Contact.

The First Age of Contact is a period of 45 years in which the Coalition added 20 planets (and their denizens) as Core Worlds. During this period, many lessons were learned about the addition of various species and civilizations to the galactic community. The Epsotile always lead by “elevating” species to their level of technology as soon as possible. Many species in planets that were contested by more than one major government experienced planetary wars. The wars were eventually resolved for many of these planets, but the various bitter arguments on each planet were only exacerbated when resource issues began to plague Epos, the Epsotile’s home world. Epos had a huge population, and their needs were not being met in terms of raw resources to produce items. As such, a new emphasis was enacted on resource extraction and the Epsotile focused the Coalition’s efforts towards that end. For most of the First Age of Contact, the Coalition only extracted resources from asteroids and comets. As the needs expanded with the development of the newly added Core Worlds, those nearby celestial objects became in short supply in the Core Worlds’ various solar systems.

The Second Age of Contact is the next 38 years of Coalition History. Many navigational issues made moving towards the extreme arms of the Galaxy we are inside of, and new Technology was developed to help with these movements. Devices we call the Relay Beacons were created to guide ships using faster-than-light travel, providing real-time telemetry and information that could be updated at a speed higher than the speed the ship was moving at. The actual method of exceeding the speed of light isn’t truly faster than the speed of light, rather, space-time is contracted ahead of the craft and expanded behind it. You might recognize this method of travel as a “warp” drive driven space ship. The Star Cluster that the Coalition occupied was unusually dense, making interstellar navigation far easier and requiring less information. After losses of various ships, new methods had to be devised. The remainder of what we know as the Core Worlds were added during this time, and every one of the 38 Core Worlds began negotiating access to uninhabited but life-supporting worlds we call the “Mid Worlds”. Most consider the Second Age to end when the Tanu Uprising of 3966 begins.



Presently, many consider this era of exploration to be the Third Age of Contact. The distinction between First, Second, and Third is largely based on historical short hand, rather than distinct events which separate one era from the other. As noted, the last 23 years have been in this “Third Age”, and that includes my entire natural lifespan! The Relay Beacon technology is roughly 40 years old and has developed rapidly seemingly every few years. But because of the time it takes to produce these devices, Beacons that are initially deployed are quite old technology and cheap to produce in bulk. The Coalition when charting worlds for Exploitation will often saturate several close proximity star-clusters with many Relay Beacons based on mathematical calculations for probability of successful transport of the device to a Gravity Well. These devices automatically cease their warping of space-time when they hit an appropriately massive gravity well, though moons and large asteroids can often result in them decelerating into unfavorable conditions, resulting in the loss of the device.

As you may have already guessed, the Coalition’s 38 Core Worlds consume a lot of resources. We came to your planet, which has been designated by the Coalition as “Thatmo Zevash”, which is Epostile for “A promising mudball”. If we get you to become part of the Coalition, your planet’s name in our records will be adjusted to one you have used for it. As you might have guessed, Mid Worlds are developing permeant populations, and Fringe Worlds are the Exploitation areas which may transition to Mid World status. Often Fringe Worlds are planets without any substantial intelligent life on them. This isn’t true in every case (yours included!), a species we call the Tanu were discovered by explorers from Ileata 45 years ago. Their settlement was sophisticated technologically, but was unable to adequately produce the materials required for their interstellar equipment. It seemed that the academically and technologically adept members of their society had perished, leaving knowledge without teachers. The planet had a massive population of over 1.8 Billion individuals, largely Tanu and a few subservient species of mammalian and lizard like evolutionary origin. As it turns out, this was our equivalent of a Mid World to the Tanu Empire! We’d unwittingly discovered what we thought was a new society, and found out 35 years later it was a colony that had lost contact with the home world. The Tanu use similar faster than light travel technology, and these ones had become stranded.

The Tanu have their own government, and before their homeworld had been contacted, the Tanu on this world (Known now as Etien Tanash, or “A False Start” in Epostile) rose up and took hostile action with the technology given to them per Coalition contact guidelines. This resulted in a brief war with the most proximal Core World, Ileata, and we know this as the Tanu Uprising. Many Tanu were killed, their home civilization is war-like and rewards conquest to commanders with access to their rare female mates. As it turns out, the Tanu are a species of largely slavers with militaristic domination in mind. They’ve made for uneasy neighbors with the Coalition, resource extraction conflicts with the smaller Tanu Empire have resulted in routine breakdowns of civility in the Coalition Government Chambers. Independent agents from Tanu Imperial planets often form pirate organizations, the 3954 Third Fleet Piracy crisis has continually been used as a template for managing these pirate fleets. The Tanu have been coming around however, as cooperation has lead to a surge in their



planetary holdings following technology and information exchanges, and the subservient species in Tanu Imperial space are being given more rights!

Oh right! When the Coalition makes contact with an intelligent species (or plural, as we mentioned with the Tanu having subservient species in their hierarchy), we give the planet a special status and pause any and all exploitation efforts, as your planet's resources will be your property and you will need them to join us all in interstellar space! It helps if you have a centralized government we can recognize as the leadership over the planet, but you want to ensure that other governments are represented in your relations with us. That government can even be one where every segment of the population / nations / whatever designation for territory of power-holding rulers have a seat in a government entity which only manages the relations of the Coalition with your planet. It's important that we follow the guidelines laid out in the Epostiles' 100 Thalms of exploration. These 100 rules dictate what we do in various events or happenings, such as Thalm-7's summary:

*"Any charted and exploitation-planned planet determined to have a civilization of extant species who are sentient and sapient shall not have their liberties infringed. Contact will be made if they are approaching spacefaring age, and we shall give freely our knowledge and our ideals for them to contemplate. If they choose to join us in our quest to explore the stars, they shall be not be denied any technology, luxury, nor right that a member of our Coalition is entitled to. We shall immediately, with their consent granted, enact the process of assimilating their government(s) into ours. They shall be given fair and equal representation, no matter the size of their specie's total membership. They shall be given special import in legislative actions to manage internal affairs within the Coalition, and with approval of 80% of the Coalition Chambers, entitled to participation as a Core World. The rights, privileges, and rewards from the Coalition shall be given without malice nor manipulative intent, so as to free them of petty burdens of societies who covet power and territory."*

### **The Epostile:**

The Epostile are a species of tall, flightless, avian creatures who evolved on their home world of Epos. Epos was a terran planet with large continents separated by many contiguous bodies of water. Virtually all naming conventions for planets and spacecraft come from the Epostile, as well as navigational shorthands and many other mathematically relevant discoveries. The Epostile civilization that made it to space is one that united the planet under the ideologies of personal freedom and exploration. The Epostile were so good at exploration that they developed Faster-Than-Light travel some 200 years ago. They focused their initial exploration efforts on finding life on any of their nearby star systems, but it took the proximity to Mesmer's solar system for them to detect the tell-tale signs of intelligent life. That interaction was what lead to the start of the creation of the Coalition, as Mesmians are all about cooperation and academic curiosities. The Epostile had

solved many societal issues that the Mesmian people struggled with, and their technology and leadership helped “right a listing ship”, as they liked to put it back in the day.

The Epostile evolved from a flightless bird that had retained taloned forelimbs, and originally hunted in a pack-like behavior. They still bear vestigial marks of the original anatomy, a rare genetic variant called “Killer Claw” causes their feet to occasionally have the rear digit instead grow midway up the foot! Their plumage on females is normally undecorated, and the males generally have bright colors on their neck and head plumage. Epostile came from pack-hunters to grow into a nomadic travel-focused people who were late to discovering agriculture. However, Extinction Events were rare on Epos, such so that the planet still has the bulk of its extant species which evolved their initial body plans over 200 million years ago! Wild! I promise! It’s really rare that a planet with evolving life on it avoids mass extinction events! The planet has a very stable ecosystem, which the Epostile have cultivated to last long after they leave for the stars for-good. There are plans to turn Epos into a natural habitat with less than 1 million Epostile residing on it, and the steps to do so are in motion. The planet has in the last century had its population decrease by 4 billion individuals, while the species has swollen to over 38 billion individuals! They are still outnumbered by the older Core World mammalian species, but you can find Epostile literally everywhere, doing whatever they want.

The only major societal boon the Epostile left themselves is that they can petition for debt-relief without need for qualification, without question of the amount of debt to be relieved. This is rarely a problem, as Epostile often work high paying and dangerous jobs which make most debts menial. The Epostile also believe in Universal Basic Income, and the Coalition continues to employ the practice for all members.

### **The Mesmians:**

My homeworld of Mesmos is host to a species called the Mesmer Lizard. We’re short, kind of stout, and have these big frills. Our colors include contrasting scales in various spots on our bodies, which make us easy to spot but also communicate danger. We evolved to project electromagnetic signals from special organs on our cranium, and that resulted in our species evolving into a brain-heavy and eventually upright walking species. Mesmer is a beautiful planet full of tropical beaches, sweeping vistas, mountains and oh so many species of delicious crickets! Before the Epostile, however, we weren’t doing so good. The Mesmian people were one who were studious and deliberate. We became very capable of automating our farming, most of our infrastructure, and had sort of become an entire species of bookworms. Our society was on the verge of collapse, largely because Mesmians became disinterested in reproduction, the arts, entertainment, and living in the moment; everything was about tomorrow.

When the Epostile made contact with one of our listening stations, Mesmian society ground to a halt. Debates filled the halls of virtually every academic hall, and it took a year of committees and referendums to deliberate on how to even begin the process of deciding who would even create an outline proposal for future

discussions to reference as code of conduct! The Epostile did the work for us, and the Mesmian people were humbled as the first Mesmian translated messages were sent **by the Epostile**. In the time it took the Mesmians to even figure out how to decide on the preliminary steps to determining who will write our first hello to an alien species, the Epostile had translated our language and accessed most of our databanks! The Epostile had been quicker, more thorough studies, and Mesmos was so humiliated it immediately surrendered. I do mean we surrendered, to a species that was not war-like.

We call this humiliation “The Great Awakening from Deliberation”, the Epostile call it the Vultchen An’Inkanta, which translates directly as “A Crow calls to a lizard”. We are known as Mesmer Lizards, and we were pathetic scholars unable to govern themselves. The Epostile shared their knowledge freely, and we went from barely having explored our solar system, to leading the way in developing new technologies and ships to help the Epostile on their mission to explore all of reality. Our story isn’t unique, but it is the first in many stories the Epostile helped the continuation of.