

FOREVER WORLDS™

ADVENTURE PATH: PART 2 OF 4

PRELUDE TO WAR: STATE OF CHAOS

JON BRAZER
ENTERPRISES

Sample file



TRAVELLERS' AID SOCIETY

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Chaos Everywhere

I came late to Traveller, starting with the Mongoose Traveller playtest. Since Mongoose didn't publish adventures during the playtest, I needed something to run, so I downloaded a number of T20 adventures published by ComStar Games since I worked with William Anderson on some unrelated projects. The *Call of the Wild* adventure, written by Martin J. Dougherty, was my first real exposure to Traveller. After reading that adventure and several others by him, I remember thinking that I hoped to work with the author sometime on a project.

So, when I was laying out this adventure path, Martin J. Dougherty was at the top of my list of authors that I wanted to work with. His adventures have always been a fun read and enjoyable to run. This adventure is my favorite of his yet.

State of Chaos is the second adventure in the *Prelude to War* adventure path. This adventure showcases what exactly SORAG is capable of doing if left unchecked and should impress upon the players that SORAG needs to be stopped at all costs.

While we are going to have a full article detailing exactly who SORAG is, the structure of the organization, how they operate, and dossiers on their personnel and materiel, this adventure features the first actual SORAG agent the travellers will encounter. SORAG does not direct the chaos it creates, merely empowering those who want to cause chaos while keeping their own hands clean.

In this adventure, the travellers will be extracting people caught in the middle of all this trouble, from Imperial scouts to scientists forced to aid neobarbarians and potential heirs to the monarchy. The Imperium protects their own and

wants to see peace return to the region. However, the Zhodani Consulate also wants to see stability restored, and they choose to do so by taking over the region instead. This means that the travellers have to sneak past Zhodani troops and patrols.

This adventure has the potential to go wildly differently than one would expect upon first reading. That is okay. Have fun with this potential insanity. Also, you can add in your own little side stories quite easily. As a Referee, this adventure offers you a fun chance to shine.

Island of Stability

About half of the people that the travellers have to extract are on Queen's Heart. While this system still has a functional government, make sure to emphasize the chaos roiling around them. While the planet's food production is ramped up to meet the region's quickly-shifting needs, that food does not necessarily get to where it should be going. A cargo ship can be hijacked by pirates, shot down by another rebel group, or impounded by the Zhodani military. The chaos of the nearby worlds can wreck the system's economy and everyone is worried about just such a scenario.

Mind you, that scenario is nothing compared to the news coming out of all the nearby systems. Bombed-out cities, people lying dead in the streets, and war drones shooting down news camera drones are regular images on the planetary network. Then there are the refugees—those fleeing the war-torn regions of the Monarchy talk of how bad life is on other worlds, and how much better Queen's Heart is. You should emphasize the tenuous nature of life in this system when running games here. All of this should make for a memorable gaming experience.

Dale C. McCoy, Jr

President of Jon Brazer Enterprises

This adventure for the *Traveller Roleplaying Game* is designed for 4-6 travellers of any background. No particular skillset is required to complete the adventure, though a broad range of skills will increase the options available to the travellers. The ability to operate a starship will be useful, as may skills connected with combat, persuasion and information-gathering.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The assassination of Princess Renee Sforza plunged the Torres Monarchy into chaos and warfare, and that was only the beginning of its problems. Factions battle for control of critical assets or just for survival, while Zhodani forces sent to restore order have simply become one more side in a multilateral conflict that seems unlikely to produce a winner any time in the near future.

For some, this is a moment of opportunity and freedom—a chance to make a great deal of money or achieve a position of power that would not have been possible in a stable period. For most, it is a fearful and dangerous time, and not only because of the present. What comes after, when order has been restored and someone else is in charge, is a source of real terror for many people in Alespron Subsector. For every person who wants it all to end, any way at all, there are others who consider some outcomes unthinkable and who will fight to the end to prevent them.

There are also those who need to be elsewhere. Some of them want to leave the war-torn Monarchy; others are willing to stay. However, there are some people who cannot be permitted to remain in the Monarchy because of what they know, what they have done, or what they might do. There are some who want to stay and indeed should stay, but are going to be removed to suit an outsider's agenda—whether they like it or not.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The travellers are hired, inspired, ordered, or coerced to journey into the Torres Monarchy and retrieve several high-value individuals. Some of these are willing to leave—even desperate to do so. Others will have to be removed against their will. Most of the targets are known to be on Queen's Heart, but others may have to be tracked down.

The travellers are given use of a nondescript Scout/Courier for their mission, along with a contact point where they can transfer the targets to a ship out of the Torres Monarchy. They will be operating on a deniable “don't-get-caught” basis.

The travellers will have to locate each of the targets and then decide on an approach. Some can be simply offered passage out of the Monarchy, while others may have to be snatched. In some cases even making contact will be difficult, and the travellers will have to proceed as they think best.

STATE OF CHAOS

Mission Briefing

The travellers receive an “invitation” to meet with Juliet Klein, their Imperial Secret Service contact (or another member of the same service, if Juliet is unavailable for some reason). The location of the meeting will be a typical starport bar wherever the travellers happen to be at the time. It is noisy, busy, and a bit tacky, but sees a lot of ship crews and portside workers pass through; nobody will take any notice of another bunch of travellers having a few drinks and maybe a second-rate dinner in the place.

The meeting starts with the usual chit chat, then proceeds to business without any obvious transition. Klein acts just like any portside broker or patron hiring a ship crew for some trivial task, but the mission she presents is a little more than

that. The short version is that the travellers are to enter the troubled Torres Monarchy and extract seven high-value people, some of whom are in immediate danger. Others are not, but must be removed before something happens to them or they come to the attention of their enemies.

Ms. Klein briefs the travellers on the events that made the Torres Monarchy what it is today. She emphasizes that while it was a dissident from one of the local anti-monarchy groups who carried out the assassination of the ruling Princess, Imperial Intelligence believes it was SORAG who encouraged and facilitated that assassination.

Since the Torres Monarchy is difficult to reach with a jump-2 ship, Ms. Klein has made a reservation for their ship to dock with the *Dlaftapr*, a cargo liner that routinely docks with ships and carries them a long way. The *Dlaftapr* frequently goes from Fessor to Vlekor (Foreven, 1712) and back again.

The largest concentration of targets is on Queen's Heart. The others are scattered across other worlds of the Monarchy, or possibly in transit. The travellers are to locate each one, extract them from their present situation, and deliver them to a rendezvous point with a ship that will take them out of the Monarchy. Not all of the targets will want to be extracted, but orders are to get them all if possible. In some cases, the target must be terminated if they cannot be removed. This is a last resort; the travellers are urged to make all possible efforts to remove the target before resorting to the final option.

Dossiers on the seven targets are presented to the travellers, although the information is in places rather sketchy. They will have to undertake some information-gathering of their own before making the extractions and would be well advised to make a reconnaissance of the situation before the attempt is made.

The rendezvous and handover of personnel will be made on the surface of one of the outsystem rockball planets of the Majesty system. The travellers will be met there by a long-range vessel

which will take the targets to a safe location far beyond the Monarchy. If the travellers take a long time over the course of the extractions, other ships may be rotated in to meet them; identification codes are provided for all possible contacts, but the travellers should not expect to be met by the same vessel each time. Fuel and some supplies will be stashed for their use at the handover point, but the quantities will not be large—the travellers should not be wasteful, as resources for the mission are finite.

Referee's Note: Some players may want to take the easy route and simply kill some of the targets, later claiming they could not be extracted. Others will not want to kill anyone under any circumstances. It is up to the players to reconcile their own morality and preferences with the mission brief, but they need to be aware that casually terminating people they are supposed to extract might have repercussions—such as the intelligence service treating them as equally disposable. Likewise, those who will not terminate a target will need to find a way to retrieve them against all odds.

Travelling to Alespron

Getting to and from the Torres Monarchy is hardly an easy thing with a ship that can only jump 2 parsecs. To cover that, Ms. Klein made reservations for the travellers to dock with the *Dlaftapr*. This will take them from Fessor to Vlekor. If you and your players want to bypass this part, they can simply dock with the ship and spend several weeks training for new skill points. However, if the players want to roleplay during their time, they can use this opportunity to make new contacts, learn about life for the Zhodani that live outside the Consulate, gain valuable trading tips for the region, have a few side adventures, and much more. See page 28 for more information on the *Dlaftapr* and the transit to and from the Torres Monarchy region.

Dossiers

Juliet Klein gives the travellers the following information about their targets:

“Orbital” Karrington: Royalhope

“Orbital” Karrington is a young hotshot smuggler who has pulled off numerous successful operations—and one highly unsuccessful one. Her ship was downed on Royalhope, and she was captured by one of the factions there. She is known to be alive and at large, albeit under guard wherever she goes. The most likely situation is that she is being coerced into working with the rebels on whatever their project is, and she will be a source of considerable information about this and other subjects if she can be rescued.

Dr. Lagrange Hallsten: Lady Flower

Doctor Lagrange Hallsten is a cultural researcher who rather unwisely travelled to Lady Flower to study the effects of social collapse there. He was caught up in a more chaotic situation than expected and was not able to reach the ship sent to pull the rest of the research team out. He is somewhere on Lady Flower, situation unknown, and may or may not be alive. His research would be valuable to the intelligence services, and in addition, he negotiated a rescue clause into his mission brief which imposes penalties on his patrons if no credible attempt at rescue is made.

Amix Kar: Queen’s Heart

Amix Kar is a rebel leader who has emerged on Queen’s Heart, a world that has seen relatively little of the turbulence besetting the rest of the Monarchy. Her origins are unknown, but she is thought to be a local citizen with no connections to the existing ruling elite or corporations. The client wants her extracted for reasons that will not be divulged and has issued a “kill if extraction not possible” order.

Rue Okskue Oghzraeguedzduek: King’s Landing

Rue Okskue Oghzraeguedzduek is a Vargr, as the name might imply, and a former member of the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service who happened to be on-planet when the conflict broke out. He is on the extraction list because he is an Imperial citizen and a member of its services—the Imperials look after their own. Anti-Imperial factions might use him against the Imperium in some way, so extracting him is a priority. Force may be used, but he is not to be seriously harmed.

Lady Amelie Guarangein: Queen’s Heart

Lady Amelie Guarangein is a minor member of a noble house distantly connected to the throne of the Torres Monarchy. In the grand scheme of its politics she and her relatives are utterly inconsequential, and she has no Imperial affiliation. No reason is given for her extraction, but she is to be brought out alive and well.

Hakfrinchvlidr Zdal: Queen’s Heart Orbital Station

Hakfrinchvlidr Zdal is a Zhodani official assigned to one of the small orbital stations over Queen’s Heart. He has requested extraction from this situation to the Imperium for reasons unknown. It is not known if he is psionic.

Eird Naissen: Whereabouts Unknown

Eird Naissen is the chief engineer of a safari ship named *Lucky Rat*, which plies the space lanes between Lady Flower and Royalhope. Its exact location at any given time is unpredictable, as the ship does not always make end-to-end runs. He is believed to have connections to SORAG and is wanted alive. He is to be terminated if capture is not possible. Even if Eird cannot be extracted alive, obtaining his computer files is considered a partial success. Intelligence hopes to extract the name of his SORAG contact from him or his data.