ADVENTURES IN THE IMPERIUM



M A S T E R S O F D U N E C A M P A I G N B O O K









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And our wonderful partners at Legendary and the extraordinary filmmakers without whom this game could not have been made.

And Frank Herbert, author and creator of the Dune Universe, whose singular vision and imagination have inspired us all.



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There exists a limit to the force even the most powerful may apply without destroying themselves. Judging this limit is the true artistry of government. Misuse of power is the fatal sin. The law cannot be a tool of vengeance, never a hostage, nor a fortification against the martyrs it has created. You cannot threaten any individual and escape the consequences.

—Muad'Dib on Law, The Stilgar Commentary

WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

he fate of the player characters' House is about to be determined on the sands of Arrakis.

In this campaign, the player characters take the place of House Atreides and gain dominion over the planet Arrakis, mining the spice for the Imperium. While there is potential for great power and profit, a thousand enemies are ready to plunge their knives into the House's collective back at the slightest misstep.

Will they prevail and earn glory and influence, or is this the final chapter in the history of their House?

Masters of Dune follows Agents of Dune and takes your player characters on an adventure across the Imperium. While it is not necessary to play Agents of Dune first, you will get the most out of this campaign if you do. Masters of Dune continues that story, but takes the action in whatever direction the players want to go. They can play through any section of the campaign in any order, even entirely bypassing some sections, if they wish.

In each section, the player characters encounter and appeal for aid from a particular faction of the Imperium. In some cases, they must try to learn the secrets their enemies are trying to keep from them, such as who their allies truly are. Depending on how they do and whom they trust, the reputation and fortune of their House will rise and fall as the adventures progress. Eventually, their enemies make their move, but the outcome of this final conflict depends very much on what allegiances and support the player characters have acquired for their House.

DO I NEED OTHER BOOKS?

While Masters of Dune is a complete adventure, you need access to the game rules to play. The Dune Core Rulebook has these rules in their most complete form. However, Agents of Dune also contains all you need to play. It is also possible to play using the rules from Wormsign, the free Quickstart guide available at www.modiphius.net, but it may require considerable improvisation.

THE STORY SO FAR...

House Corrino has entrusted the feudal right to oversee Arrakis to the player characters' House to appease the Major Houses, concerned as they are with the way House Harkonnen has managed spice production. The Corrinos believe the player characters' House is small enough to control, as they are concerned the Harkonnens might be growing powerful enough to challenge them. Thus, the Harkonnens must learn a lesson in humility. Additionally, the player characters' House has angered the Emperor somehow. The exact reason becomes clear later in the adventure. Whatever the cause, the Emperor plans to take some form of petty revenge upon the player characters' House as well, using the Harkonnens to do their dirty work.

In Agents of Dune, the player characters learned their House is taking over the governorship of Arrakis from House Harkonnen. Sent by their House to the Harkonnen's homeworld of Giedi Prime to train in spice production and learn a few other "life skills", in the attempt to manage a seamless takeover of Arrakis. After all, the spice must always flow. While the Harkonnens might seem a strange choice to help their successors, the Harkonnens had officially been given more shares in CHOAM to balance their loss of Arrakis. So, it was in their interest to make sure the player characters' House was ready to take over and keep the profits flowing. It appeared as if the Harkonnens had effectively been promoted for their service, taking greater profits without having to do the work of harvesting.

Unfortunately, House Harkonnen was unwilling to bow out gracefully over such a rich prize as Arrakis and schemed to take control again. They assassinated the ruler of the player characters' House, hoping to end the matter and force the Emperor to return Arrakis to them. However, the siblings and retainers of the House (the player characters) proved adept enough to take the reins of their House and continue to hold Arrakis. They are now embroiled in the conspiracy and politics of the Imperium, as the Harkonnens step up the pressure as they attempt to reclaim Arrakis.

Masters of Dune picks up the story with the player characters' discovery that the Harkonnens are their true enemy. They need to decide what to do, and more importantly, maintain and improve spice production. How the player characters go about gaining allies and defeating the Harkonnens is up to them, and we offer several different avenues they can pursue. This allows the players to experience the grand vision of the **Dune** universe.

HOUSE NAGARA

In Agents of Dune, the player characters can be assumed to be part of House Nagara, a major House of the Imperium. However, it is possible to play a House of your own design instead. The same applies for Masters of Dune, with the player characters continuing as House Nagara or as a House they have created themselves. While

the player characters should be part of a House Major, even a minor House could be granted governorship of Arrakis. After all, the Emperor wants someone he believes he can control in the position.

If you want to use House Nagara as your player characters' House, you should define it using the House creation rules in the **Dune Core Rulebook**. It is a House Major and therefore has one primary domain and two secondary domains. The primary domain should be Science (Machinery), representing the device the House had developed in **Agents of Dune**. The secondary domains are up to the players, but at least one should be from a domain related to the type of House chosen. This might be Military (Maula Rifle), Scientific (Alithiascope), Farming (Blight Scanner), Espionage (Nightshade), or Industrial (Omnigenerator).

The players should define the House traits depending on how they played **Agents of Dune**. However, House Harkonnen must be one of their enemies. The level of hatred between the two Houses is up to the player characters, depending on how slighted they feel by the Harkonnen betrayal. However, as the Harkonnens assassinated Countess Nagara, relations should be anything but cordial. They can assuredly know that the Harkonnens seek their destruction.

As House Nagara is the player characters' House in **Agents** of **Dune**, we have continued this assumption in the text of **Masters of Dune**. But if you are using a different House or one of your own creation, simply substitute any mentions of House Nagara for your own player characters' House.

SCALING DOWN

This adventure is designed to run as an epic campaign where the player characters have the opportunity to take the place of House Atreides and see what they might do instead. However, you may want to use this adventure as part of a less ambitious campaign, one that continues from adventures like the one in the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

In this case, the player characters' House won't have control of all of Arrakis, but will be harvesting spice under the Harkonnen's governorship. Normally, the Harkonnens only allow other Houses to operate franchises in the less profitable areas. But for reasons beyond their knowing, the player characters have been granted the rights to a large and very profitable part of Arrakis. Naturally, the Harkonnens want it back. Fortunately for the player characters, the Harkonnens cannot act too directly, as they also must follow the will of the Emperor. But they will do everything they can to take back what they believe to be theirs.

So, the adventure will run exactly as presented here, but the size of the contested area is what changes. Instead of all of Arrakis, the adventure concerns just part of it. Each adventure provides detail on how to adapt them for this level of campaign.

OVERVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN

The **Masters of Dune** campaign is not a formal progression of scenes as it might be in a standard campaign. Instead, the players have several options at the start and it is up to them which direction they take. Different groups might create very different experiences, and players might replay the adventure to see how they can prevail by making different choices.

The campaign begins with an opening adventure to set the scene. It is then followed by seven further adventures that can be tackled in any order, or even bypassed completely, depending on choices the players make. In some cases, these adventures might even be done in parallel. The player characters might manage several plots at the same time or take longer to nurture their allegiances. Everything is then rounded up in a final climax that considers what successes and failures the player characters have had over their adventures.

CHAPTER 1: THE SANDS OF ARRAKIS

In the opening chapter the scene is set, reminding the players how the Harkonnens are still after Arrakis for themselves and are planning to fight for it. The player characters also begin to manage their own spice mining operation and learn its problems and pitfalls. Their advisors also suggest various ways in which they might gain new allies, or strike against their enemies. Each of these options forms the beginning of one of the following chapters. It is up to the player characters which leads they follow. While the campaign starts with this adventure, from here on the chapters can be done in any order.



CHAPTER 2: GIEDI PRIME

While the Harkonnens are clearly the enemy, perhaps they can be negotiated with. Traveling to their homeworld of Giedi Prime, the player characters offer a parley. But will the Harkonnens see this as a sign of weakness? While Giedi Prime holds many dangers, there may be opportunities here as well. Perhaps an uprising or the clever placement of an agent or two might keep the Harkonnens too occupied to cause more trouble.



CHAPTER 3: THE EMPEROR

Thinking the Emperor supports their House, the player characters may travel to Kaitain to try and ingratiate themselves a little more. There may be an opportunity to weave a few tales about how well their new venture is progressing, even if these claims are lies. But Kaitain is a complicated place, and the player characters may come away with more enemies than friends. However, they may also discover the true intent behind the Emperor's plans.



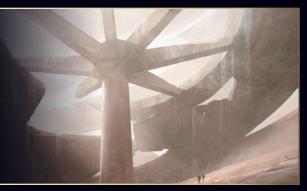
CHAPTER 4: THE ATTACK

Instead of being a choice, this section is triggered by certain actions on the player characters' part. If they leave themselves too vulnerable or give the Harkonnens an excuse, their enemies lead an attack to destroy them. This chapter involves a climactic battle that might lead to the near destruction of the player characters' House. If they fail to defend themselves, they might lose everything.



CHAPTER 5: THE FREMEN

Whether they need to hide out among them or seek them as allies, the player characters can make an alliance with the Fremen. However, if they negotiate badly, they may make implacable enemies of the desert people. With the right approach, the player characters might convince the Fremen that they are the leaders who have been foretold to them.



CHAPTER 6: THE GREAT HOUSES

Seeking out more allies, the player characters may try to contact some of the other Great Houses of the Landsraad. However, it may be difficult to convince the other Houses to stand with them against the Harkonnens, especially if they think the Emperor is allied against them. Possibly the Emperor and the Harkonnens have more enemies than they know, enemies looking for another House to take the risk of making the first move against them.



CHAPTER 7: THE BENE GESSERIT

The Sisterhood rarely takes sides, but perhaps something special about the player characters intrigues them. The player characters might court the Sisterhood secretly or travel to Wallach IX to deal with the Bene Gesserit directly. Either way, this chapter will test the player characters. While the Bene Gesserit does not offer its loyalty easily, the player characters may convince them to share some of the secrets they have learned.



CHAPTER 8: THE GUILD

While they are loath to take sides, the Guild depends on spice, allowing the player characters an audience with a Guild Navigator. If the player characters have proved they can keep the spice flowing, the Guild may consider it in their interest to support the player characters' House. Perhaps the player characters may even try to threaten the Guild with cutting off the spice, if they choose to take this risk.



CHAPTER 9: THE CRUCIBLE

The final chapter is triggered when the player characters decide to face the Harkonnens or if they make enough mistakes to force the Emperor to intervene. Their time is up, they must confront the Harkonnens and possibly the Emperor. Can they retain their control of Arrakis or reach higher, claiming the Lion Throne itself?



INFLUENCE INDICES

As the player characters engage with the story, the allies they make grant resources, resources that their newfound enemies will likely try to neutralize or take away. How they act and what they do in the various chapters affects their House's standing among their peers and the various powers of the Imperium. This standing is represented by a series of indexes, marked from ±5, where a rating of 0 represents ambivalence from that particular power.

Certain events on the adventure (such as the Harkonnen's attack) are triggered if these ratings fall too low. But in all cases, the support the player characters can expect from their peers also depends on these ratings.

The indices begin at 0 for the player characters' House (except for Imperial support). They cover the following areas of influence, presented in alphabetical order:

HONOR

In a universe of deals and reputation, your word is often your bond. A high honor doesn't always mean the player characters' House is loved, but they are known to be trustworthy. There is no point in the player characters' House making a deal with anyone they don't trust to keep up their end. To gain a higher rating in this index, the player characters must prove themselves. The more deals they fail to uphold, or the more people they betray, the lower it will go.

IMPERIAL SUPPORT

One of the most powerful allies that the player characters' House might have is the Emperor himself. While the Emperor rarely openly supports a particular House or forms specific alliances (everyone is assumed to be loyal to the throne after all), some House rulers have a special bond with the crown. A high Imperial Support index means the Emperor trusts the House and considers their advice worthwhile. The Imperial court will lean on the judicial system a little to make sure any problems come down in the player character House's favor as much as possible, though without doing so overtly. By contrast, making an enemy of the Emperor by having a negative Imperial Support index can be lethal.

At the beginning of **Masters of Dune**, the gamemaster should tell the player characters they have an Imperial Support index of +2. This is because they have the Emperor's favor, and he has rewarded them with control of Arrakis. **However, the gamemaster should keep a secret note that the rating is actually –2 (–4 to what they believe is the correct indice).** When the players attempt to use the bonus they believe they have for Imperial Support, the gamemaster should allow it but amend the results of the test according to the actual index level. If this means a test fails instead of succeeds or results in less Momentum than expected, the

gamemaster should explain that maybe the players are unaware of some modifier to the test. Depending on the result and any other factors in play, it should not be long before the players realize they have the wrong idea about the starting value of this index, and some reverse engineering on their test results may give them a closer idea of the actual number.

LANDSRAAD SUPPORT

While the Emperor's support is all very well, the House's standing in the Landsraad, the council of its peers, can sometimes be more useful. For the most part, the Landsraad supports anything that improves the position of its members. If the player characters' House has convinced them it can provide useful counsel and financial advantage, they will find much support for their enterprises. If the Landsraad is against the player characters' House, their enemies will multiply, and they will find that even friends consider them too dangerous to support.

MILITARY POWER

One of the most expensive things to maintain is the House military. This includes not only soldiers but assassins and spies as well. It also describes the personal armaments of the House's forces and the number of tanks, troop carriers, aircraft, and defensive systems. A strong military can make the House a force to be reckoned with, but only if attacked. A House that manages to keep on the right side of its allies and enemies, or make itself useful in the right ways, might never need to consider this index.

RUTHLESSNESS

If one cannot be loved, it is sometimes better to be feared. While the player characters' House can be known as decent and honorable, a high Ruthlessness index shows that it is not afraid to fight for what it has. This shows the lengths the House goes to when protecting its holdings and defending its allies. A negative score might mean the House appears weak or is at least reluctant to take a stand against its enemies.

SPICE PRODUCTION

As the player characters' House controls spice production on Arrakis, they must keep the spice flowing. This index shows how the rest of the Imperium perceives how well spice production is going. Suppose harvesting is spectacularly good, but the player characters' House is stockpiling most of it secretly. In that case, the rating is low, as the Imperium is not receiving the amount of spice it requires.

Keeping this rating high is a key aspect in almost any negotiation. But focusing on the spice harvest may take too much time from the player characters. If they spend all their time harvesting spice, they may only give their enemies more time to plot against them.

INDICES

	Honor	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Imperial Support	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Landsraad Support	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Military Power	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1 -1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Ruthlessness	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
1	Spice Production	-5	4//	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Wealth	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
	Sietch Korba Trust	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5

SPENDING WEALTH

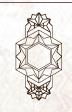
- Adding a point or half-point to the Military Power rating (equal to the Wealth expenditure) with the purchase of new soldiers and weapons.
- Adding a point or half-point to the Landsraad Support rating (equal to the Wealth expenditure) with bribes and gifts to curry favor among your peers.
- 3. Chartering a Guild Heighliner (half a point) to come to your planet and go straight to one of your choosing. This allows you to move any amount of House resources. You will not have the only use of the Heighliner, but theirholds are so vast you could not possibly fill it. So, the charge is to inconvenience other travelers and prioritize your travel needs.
 - Buying a frigate (1 point) a faster-thanlight capable spacecraft that might carry around 100 passengers (or soldiers).
 - Expanding your spice operation (variable cost—see Chapter 10) in terms of new harvesters, workers, and equipment to cover more of Arrakis.

SPICE HARVESTING

	RESULT							
SESSION	PRECEDING CHAPTER	GOING BADLY	MEETING TARGETS	EXCEEDING TARGETS	STOCKPILE?			
1.	3							
2.								
3.		\Diamond						
4.		\Diamond						
5.			\Diamond	\Diamond				
6.		\Diamond	\Diamond					
7.				\Diamond				
8.	18 3 7 7 7 7 7 7 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	\Diamond	\Diamond		\Diamond			

Stockpile –Reduce result by 1 step to gain +1 Wealth

GUILD FAVOR



BENE GESSERIT FAVOR



WEALTH

Money is power, and spice will bring wealth. This index is a little different than the others as it also represents the personal equipment the House can afford to buy for the player characters. The players can reduce this index to make large purchases for their House. This might be mining rights on a moon, buying a spacecraft, or offering a spectacular bribe to claim the allegiance of another House, or even major faction, in their endeavors.

A high Wealth rating means the House is solvent with many funds in the bank. At 0, they have enough revenue incoming to match their outgoing expenses and still afford the living standard of noble luxury. But if the Wealth index falls into negative numbers, the House is acquiring debt. Thankfully their credit rating keeps them afloat, but if the Wealth index drops to –5, they have run out of credit and fallen to bankruptcy (see 'Spending Wealth' below for more detail).

USING THE INDICES

Each index has a simple game effect. They modify the Difficulty by their rating of any test where their rating may apply. A positive rating reduces the Difficulty, and a negative one penalizes it with an increase. So, a test to charm the Emperor is modified by the Imperial Support index. If that rating is at +2, the Difficulty of the charm attempt is modified by -2. An index cannot reduce the Difficulty below 0 or above 5 in this manner.

At certain points during the campaign, the player characters' actions offer them a chance to amend any of the indices. What points these occur at depends on their actions. For example, the Spice Production index is directly affected by how the player characters manage the spice harvest. But their Honor index will rise or drop depending on how they break or fulfill obligations to other Houses and the people of Arrakis. Some actions might provoke an adjustment of multiple indices and even raise one and lower another simultaneously.

For the most part, the player characters are aware of these adjustments, as they know how the Imperium perceives them. But the gamemaster can adjust the indices without telling the player characters if they have no way to know the results of a particular action. For example, after a sterling speech to the Landsraad, the players might believe they have increased their House's Landsraad Support index. But the gamemaster need not tell them whether they have or not. Instead, the gamemaster should amend their own track and keep all the 'real' index ratings secret. The players won't know if they have actually gained an improvement until it is time to test it, and even then, they might not know if it is just the result of a lucky dice roll.

Some reverse engineering of dice test results might give the players a clearer idea of their actual ratings, and the gamemaster should encourage them to keep their own track of what they think the ratings are. But the actual levels will only ever be known by the gamemaster. Essentially, players can only discover the real ratings when they test them. Therefore, they must accept when the gamemaster tells them a test had failed (or passed) when they expected another result. As this may happen frequently, the gamemaster should explain this from the start of the adventure so the players understand that there is no cheating or amending dice tests unfairly.

Indices can rise or fall by one of only two steps. Either a full point or a half-point is awarded or taken away. These are indicated in the adventure for any tests, and the more important the test, the more likely the rating of an index will change. Sometimes just the success or failure of a test can change a rating if the test is important enough. A speech before the Landsraad as above has a good chance of swaying how the Landsraad feels. A special service for the Emperor might improve how he regards the House. However, while success brings rewards, failing those same tests brings a reduction. A bad speech makes the player character look foolish, and a failed service provokes disappointment.

Depending on exceptionally good or bad tests, the players can also control their ratings a little. It costs 3 Momentum to increase a rating by half a point and they can buy off a complication by decreasing a rating by half a point. However, the players should never know the costs of these options.

After any successful dice roll where the gamemaster believes great success might potentially cause a rating to be improved, they can ask the players if they would like to spend Momentum to improve their rating in X index. The gamemaster should ask this before the players know the exact result of the test (and, therefore, how much Momentum has actually been gained or lost). If the players ask how much, the gamemaster should say they cannot tell them. As such, the gamemaster should only make the offer if the Momentum pool (plus the Momentum resulting from the successful test) can cover the cost. If they agree, the gamemaster then amends the Momentum pool to reflect this expenditure. This will also make it harder for the players to figure out how a rating might have adjusted the Difficulty of the test, as they won't know exactly what Momentum they earned with it.

Buying off complications works in a similar way. When a complication is rolled on a test that might make a difference to an index, the gamemaster may offer to reduce a rating to allow the players to remove the complication. Again, the players won't know by how much. They will just know their complication effectively became a reduction in their House's standing in some way.

All of this does mean the gamemaster will have to keep their cards close to their chest. But this is not just to frustrate the players. There is no way for them to know exactly how they are regarded for their actions in the shadowy labyrinth that is the Imperium's political arena. This system keeps them in the dark but allows them a

little idea of the rough values, so they know what they might be able to risk.

While this may seem harsh, there are no assurances in the Imperium, and placing trust is often an act of faith.

THE GUILD AND BENE GESSERIT

The Spacing Guild and Bene Gesserit like to keep their agendas a secret, even with their allies. As such, there are no ratings that reflect their interest in the player characters. However, it is possible to gain the favor of either faction in a limited way. At rare moments the player characters might collect a **favor point** from one or both of these groups. The player characters can trade in a favor point for a one-time offer of assistance. It might be diverting a Guild ship, the use of a Bene Gesserit Sister as a spy or agent, or simply information on their enemies. More detail is provided in the chapter on each, but for the most part, the use of such favors depends on the cunning of the player characters.

What is important to note is that once such favor is used, all additional goodwill goes with it. While the Spacing Guild and Bene Gesserit may look kindly on those who prove useful allies, they will never offer any assistance beyond favor points.

SPENDING WEALTH

Unlike other ratings, the Wealth index can be reduced by choice to allow the player characters to make large purchases. This doesn't represent the actual solaris spent so much as the strain on the House's finances. Making a large purchase leans on credit options and takes away some of the day-to-day cash available to scions of the House.

As the adventure progresses, player characters can make large purchases for their House, any one of which will drop the Wealth rating by a half or full point. But shrewd investment and successful space harvests will help restore the House's fortunes. In the meantime, a few examples of expenditures that player characters can make are:

- Adding a point or half-point to the Military Power rating (equal to the Wealth expenditure) with the purchase of new soldiers and weapons.
- Adding a point or half-point to the Landsraad Support rating (equal to the Wealth expenditure) with bribes and gifts to curry favor among your peers.
- Chartering a Guild heighliner (half a point) to come to your planet and go straight to one of your choosing. This allows you to move any amount of House resources. You will not have the only use of the heighliner, but their holds are so vast you could not possibly fill it. So, the charge is to inconvenience other travelers and prioritize your travel needs.

- O Buying a frigate (1 point) a faster-than-light capable spacecraft that might carry around 100 passengers (or soldiers).
- Chapter 10) in terms of new harvesters, workers, and equipment to cover more of Arrakis.

The Wealth rating always represents the current credit score of the House as well. As such, it modifies the Difficulty of any trade negotiation. This may be offset by the House's Honor rating, as a House with bad credit but a reputation for paying its debts is still a worthy trade partner. But a House with a negative credit rating will always be considered a bad risk and one people will not want to do business with.

Finally, Wealth determines the purchasing power available to the player characters when they want personal items. Only when a house's Wealth rating is either 0 or positive can player characters use House resources to acquire new personal assets. A negative rating means there is no credit for luxuries. Personal items can be bought without affecting the House's Wealth rating, but only if the Wealth rating is high enough. If the player characters want to buy something they need with a rating 1 point higher than they have, making that purchase reduces the Wealth rating by half a point.

Example: Darin wants to buy a small personal ornithopter, which the gamemaster decides requires a Wealth rating of +4. If his House has a Wealth of +4, he can make the purchase without affecting the Wealth rating. If his house has a rating of +3, he can make the same purchase, but doing so reduces the Wealth rating to 2.5. If the Wealth rating is +2 or lower, he simply cannot make the purchase.

If player characters are reckless with their expenditures, the gamemaster can reduce the Wealth rating as they see fit, but must warn the players they will do so before making the purchase. Just because a House can buy an ornithopter at a rating of +4, it doesn't mean they can equip everyone in the House with one. So, if the player characters seem to be abusing the system (such as by buying 50 ornithopters) the gamemaster can tell them doing so will reduce the Wealth rating by one or a half point, or even more.

EXAMPLE PURCHASES

- O- 0 Wealth: Ubiquitous items such as knives and good clothes, but of noble quality.
- O+1 Wealth: Valuable ubiquitous items that look impressive. Advanced technology, such as personal shields.
- O- +2 Wealth: Specialized equipment, such as Fremen stillsuits or Tleilaxu eyes.
- O +3 Wealth: The attention of a Suk doctor, a decent bribe to a high ranking official.

- O +4 Wealth: Large ground vehicles (too dangerous to use in the open desert), personal ornithopters, unique poisons.
- O +5 Wealth: Large ornithopters, spacecraft, large residences.

See Chapter 7: Assets in the **Dune Core Rulebook** for more information on these.

NEGATIVE WEALTH

For the most part, negative Wealth only affects trade and business tests in terms of Difficulty. While the player characters can't make personal purchases, the level of negative Wealth rating does not make things worse. They still work for a noble House, and that grants them a certain amount of credit among their peers. The assumption is that they are temporarily troubled rather than the House being unable to support itself.

If a House with a negative Wealth wants to pay off some of its debts, it can reduce its military or ask its allies to help pay their debts. Such actions reduce either the Military Power or Landsraad Support index by 1 point (but only if they have a positive rating) to increase the Wealth rating by 1 point. This can only be done to bring a House back to a zero Wealth rating.

If a House ever reaches –5 Wealth, they have become bankrupt. They must not only sell off vital resources to pay off brutal debts, but their social standing will suffer. They must immediately reduce their Military Power, Landsraad Support, Imperial Support, and Honor ratings to 0. If any of these ratings are already negative, the House does not have enough credit or goodwill to maintain their status. They immediately lose Arrakis and must retreat to their home world to try and recover their position. If all the ratings are negative, the House's reputation is so bad they are declared renegade by both the Emperor and the Landsraad. The player characters are then forced to go into hiding as their House's holdings are divided among the Landsraad. It is the end of not only the adventure but of the House itself.

SPICE HARVESTING

Throughout this adventure, the player characters' House is in control of spice mining on Arrakis. No matter what is going on, the Imperium expects spice to continue to flow from Arrakis. No amount of spice will ever be enough to answer the demand, and so shortages gain the ire of the entire Known Universe. So, it is up to the player characters to continue to produce spice, because if they cannot they will be replaced, and quickly.

A 'spice session' should take place after each chapter of **Masters of Dune** has been played, regardless of the order it is played in. The result will modify the Spice Production index (which offers a general track to overall success) and other indices as well. The House's future

and reputation all rest on successful spice mining. This is, of course, if they are still in charge of Arrakis. If their House has been destroyed or driven from Arrakis, they cannot run the spice operation and can only watch as others take it over.

Each spice session takes place outside the normal flow of scenes. As such, the Momentum and Threat pools should be frozen as they are and returned to for the next chapter. It is a good idea to write these totals down for reference. For the spice session, both pools begin at 0, but can be increased and used as normal. At the end of the spice session both pools revert to what they were at the end of the previous chapter (–1 each for changing scenes). No Momentum or Threat from a spice session carries over.

The gamemaster may grant themselves an additional 2 points of Threat if they judge the player characters have not earned the trust of the Fremen and 4 Threat if they have earned the Fremen's enmity. If the player characters have earned the trust of the Fremen, they begin the spice session with 1 point of Momentum. The gamemaster may also grant themselves up to another 2 points of Threat if the player characters have not been giving spice production the appropriate amount of attention. While the adventure may take them off Arrakis, they can still make sure the harvesting is in good hands before they leave.

USING AGENTS OF DUNE

In the **Agents of Dune** Boxed Set, there is a system for managing spice. This system can also be used for **Masters of Dune**. Spice harvesting works just the same as it does in **Agents of Dune** and all the various tokens and maps are used as before. The difference lies in interpreting the results (see below).

NOT USING AGENTS OF DUNE

If you do not have **Agents of Dune**, or you prefer a simpler system, you can still run spice harvesting sessions. Each session requires three stages, each of which requires a test to see how well the operation is being managed. Each of these tests should be made by a different player character as it is such a vast operation no single character can run every aspect and still be effective. If a player character has already attempted a test in the current session, the Difficulty of all subsequent tests is increased by +1. This penalty is cumulative, so if a single character makes all three tests the Difficulty increases by +1 for the second and +2 for the third. The gamemaster may waive this modifier if there are fewer than three player characters.

SPICE ANALYSIS

The player characters must make an analysis of the previous harvest and planetary conditions so they might make some predictions about where spice blows are likely to occur. This is often little more than a guess as they are almost impossible to predict, but sometimes patterns can emerge.

The player character should make a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test. If they do well, they gain Momentum to help the next tests.

PLACING HARVESTERS

Next, the player characters must assign and place the harvester fleet, and ensure they are properly crewed and have carryall support. Careful management here allows the harvester fleet to be effectively deployed when spice blows occur.

The player character should make a Challenging (D2) **Communicate** or **Discipline** test (player choice). If they fail, the Difficulty of the next stage is increased by +1. Success gains Momentum as usual.

AVOIDING DANGERS

Finally, the last test is to manage the placement of harvesters and defend them against potential Fremen and sandworm attacks. This requires a Challenging (D2) **Battle** or **Move** test.

The result of this final test reveals how well the spice operation has gone for this session:

O- Failure: Spice session is Going Badly

O Success: Spice session is Meeting Targets

O- 4+ Successes: Spice session is Exceeding Targets

ASSISTANCE

Any player character who has not made a spice session test can assist on any test as normal (they may roll 1d20

and add the successes to the total). However, if they do, they may not assist or perform any other tests this session. They have the same options for skill use as the player character making the test they are assisting and need not pick the same ones.

SPICE HARVESTING RESULTS

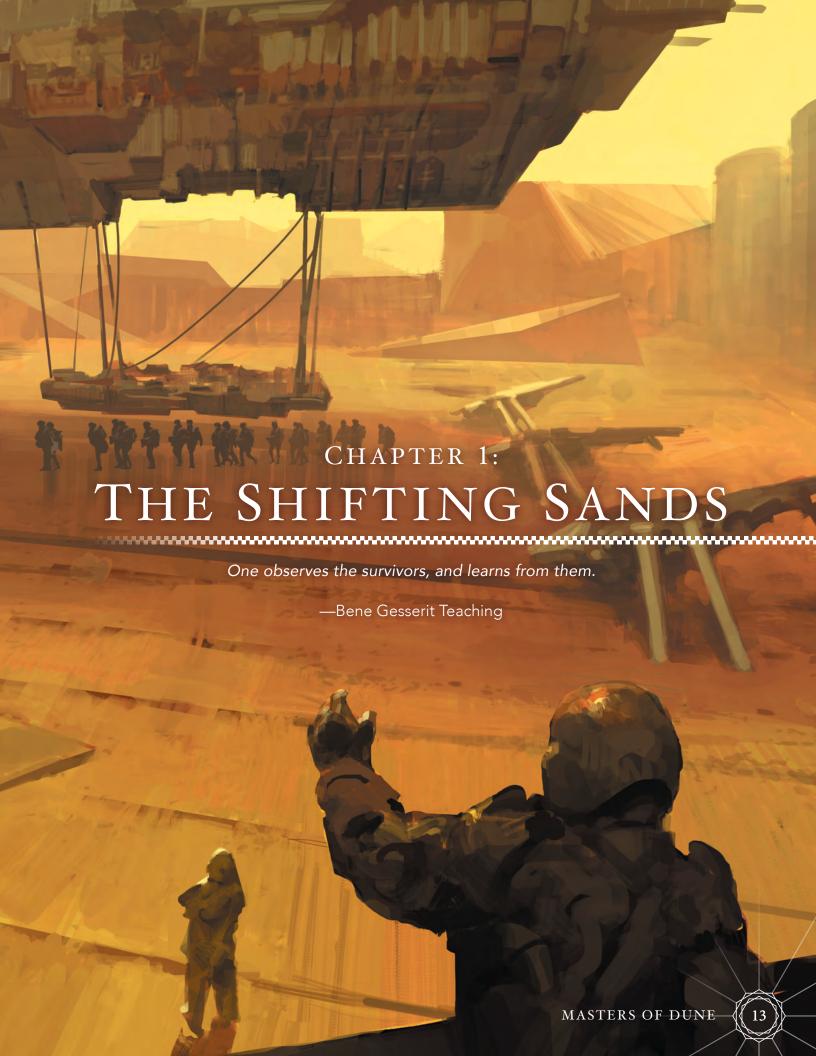
Each spice session will, just as before, produce one of three results: Exceeding Targets, Meeting Targets, or Going Badly. So, for each spice session:

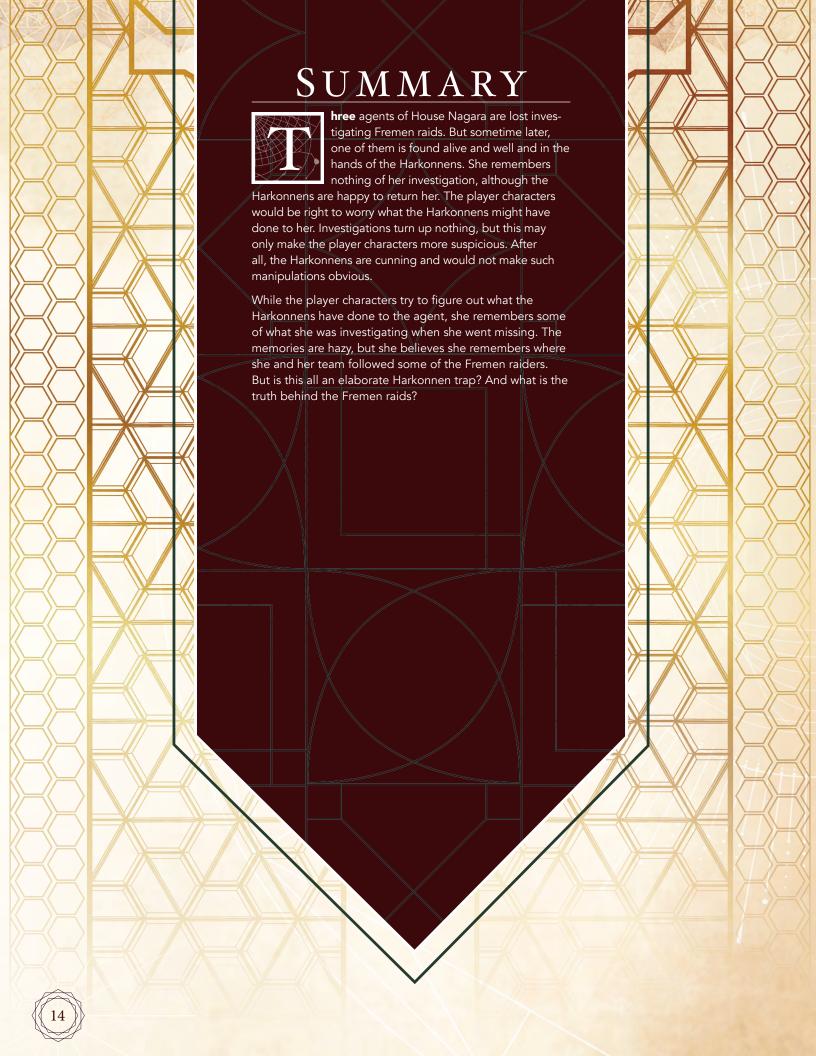
- O If the result is **Meeting Targets**, the player characters suffer no modifiers to the indices.
- If the result is Exceeding Targets the player characters may improve the Spice Production,
 Landsraad Support, and Imperial Support indices by +1 point each.
- If the result is Going Badly the player characters must decrease the Spice Production, Landsraad Support, and Imperial Support by -1 point each.

Additionally, the player characters can stockpile spice and make some money on the side. If they choose to reduce their result by one stage (turn an Exceeding Targets result into Meeting Targets) they may increase their Wealth index by +1. While they can reduce Meeting Targets to Going Badly, it is not recommended unless they really need the money. If the result was already Going Badly the player characters cannot use this option.









PRELUDE

In the six months since their arrival on Arrakis (in Agents of Dune), the player characters' House has continued to persevere in adapting to live on a desert world and maintaining the production of spice. The Harkonnens still occupy Carthag for the time being, saying that they are undertaking a "phased withdrawal" from the planet. Tensions remain high between House Nagara and House Harkonnen, thanks to their role in the death of Countess Nagara.

While not willing to engage in outright warfare, the Harkonnens still look for opportunities to weaken their rivals. Their latest scheme was to hire a team of mercenaries to conduct guerilla-style hit-and-run raids in the Nagara-held city of Arrakeen. To add a layer of Harkonnen guile (as well as plausible deniability), the mercenaries are disguised as Fremen, intended to confuse any witness reports. Besides, stirring up anti-Fremen sentiment among the pyons of Arrakeen would be a nice bonus for the Harkonnens.

The faux Fremen are a small group of off-world mercenaries led by a man named Ulako Hibb — and nicknamed 'One-Eye' for obvious reasons. In the last few weeks, One-Eye and his team have already attacked two sites in Arrakeen: a food storage facility and an auxiliary power plant. After the second attack, three investigators for the player characters' House — Geeta Nagara, Talaval Weir, and Soram Vieno — discovered the underground hideout of the mercenaries in a residential district, but in the ensuing fight they were overwhelmed. Talaval and Soram died in the fight, and Geeta barely survived an incapacitating knife wound.

To score a bonus from his patrons, One-Eye delivered Geeta to the Harkonnens, handing her (and her comrades' bodies) off to them at an abandoned Fremen sietch. The Harkonnens left Talaval and Soram and their gear to the sandworms, and returned with Geeta to Carthag. Once there, Baron Harkonnen's twisted Mentat, Piter de Vries, had Geeta's short-term memory erased and her wounds healed. Piter also may have had additional modifications performed upon his recovering guest, though this is for the gamemaster to decide. In either event, Piter plans to return Geeta to the player characters' House — if nothing else, as a twisted mind game he will enjoy watching unfold.

As the adventure begins, One-Eye and his team have just fled the site of their third attack. Meanwhile, a Harkonnen envoy is approaching Arrakeen with news of Geeta's fate...

Gamemaster Note: Geeta Nagara can serve as a wild card for the rest of the campaign, if the gamemaster wishes. This adventure sets up the possibility that she has been suborned by the Harkonnens in some way, but other possibilities exist as well. She could easily be an ally to the Fremen, either with or without her House's knowledge and approval. She could be a spy for the Spacing Guild, the Bene Gesserit, the Emperor, or a rival House. She could even be more than one of these! Or she can simply be a useful ally for the player characters whenever they need one. (And if this last one is true, and the players don't trust her because of Piter's machinations, then that's a bit of a victory for House Harkonnen, isn't it?)

RAIDED BY FREMEN

Raiders, most likely Fremen, have been attacking House Nagara targets in guerilla-style hit-and-run raids over the last three weeks. The first caused a fire in a food storage site on the eastern side of Arrakeen. The second involved the sabotage of key power generator components at an auxiliary power plant. These attacks cost 14 lives.

Three agents of House Nagara were sent to investigate after the second raid but never returned. The missing investigators' names are Geeta Nagara, Talaval Weir, and Soram Vieno.

Ask the players what sort of relationship their characters might have with these three missing members of their House. Having a connection is not mandatory, but it is likely that all the player characters have at least heard of these three. (Talaval and Soram are already

dead at the start of the adventure, but the players don't know that yet, and having a connection with them can add impact when their fate becomes clear.)

- O Geeta Nagara is a brash young House noble who frequently leads scouting expeditions. She could be a cousin or even sibling of a player character. If the players don't choose a connection, she is a niece of a recently deceased member of House Nagara, perhaps the Countess herself (from Agents of Dune).
- O- Talaval Weir is an investigator for the House guard. Anyone involved in security would likely know him.
- O Soram Vieno is a technician who maintains all manner of machinery for House Nagara in Arrakeen. He would be familiar to any pilots or other techoriented types.

Once the players have decided if and how they know any of the investigators, the player characters are contacted by Farren, one of the Nagara House stewards, via an audio transmission.

"Emergency alert... the Eastside medical clinic is under attack. Witnesses report an out-of-control fire and many injured."

If the player characters choose to visit the clinic, continue with the rest of this encounter. If they do not, skip ahead to **Holding Court in Arrakeen**, giving the players a summary of the clinic's damage and death count from a House-affiliated non-player character. In this case, do not give them the clues they would have learned in person (below), and assume the maximum death toll of seven and the loss of the clinic.

FIRE AT THE EASTSIDE MEDICAL CLINIC

If the player characters go to the medical center in the east side of Arrakeen to manage the rescue operation personally, they find smoke pouring from the building and bystanders trying to help the few injured they have dragged from the building to safety. Shouts from inside make it clear that not everyone has made it out. Emergency crews and local people are crowding around trying to help, but many are just getting in the way in the panic.

The player characters can get involved in a few ways:

- O Rescuing Survivors from the Clinic: Ten survivors are trapped inside, behind blocked doors, under fallen debris, or because previous injuries prevent them from walking. Daring characters attempting to enter the clinic and rescue those inside may try an Average (D1) Move test. If successful they can save one person. They can spend Momentum to rescue additional survivors, on a one-for-one basis. Any number of player characters can make an attempt, but if they fail, they save no one and are overcome with smoke inhalation and incapacitated (but not unconscious) for the rest of the scene. Each player character not overcome can enter the building multiple times, but each time the Difficulty is increased by +1.
- O Treating the Injured: Ten more injured citizens lie in various places nearby, where they were brought by bystanders after the attack. Treating them is an Average (D1) Understand test which prevents injuries from worsening and morale from dropping further.
- O Fighting the Fire: Player characters can join the few volunteers present who are trying to douse the fire using devices called Sandthrowers brought from a nearby emergency station. Resolve this as an extended Discipline task with a Difficulty of 1 and a requirement of 8, which must be achieved within three rounds or the clinic is lost to the fire.



- O Questioning Witnesses: Several witnesses can convey the basics of the attack: that a small group of people in stillsuits ran up to the building and threw objects through the doorway and windows, instantly starting a fire. Gathering deeper information requires talking to witnesses with an Average (D1) Communicate test. Each of the following clues can come from a different witness, or all can come from one with Momentum spent to Obtain Information.
 - Though there has been recent talk of Fremen attacks, this does not seem like the way they operate. In fact, the previous two attacks don't either, despite the claims that Fremen gear was involved in those. (See Asking about the Previous Attacks, following, for more on them.)
 - One of the attackers was a man with one eye. The eye wasn't covered, just scarred from some apparent injury. He was wearing a hood, so the witness didn't make out any other details.
 - The attackers fled in the direction of a nearby neighborhood called the South Suburb. (See The South Suburb, following.)
- O Asking about the Previous Attacks: Given a lot of local people are clustered around the medical center, the player characters may wish to ask if anyone knows anything about the previous attacks. With a successful Average (D1) Communicate test, the locals share the following:
 - The fire in the food storage site. Witnesses say they saw a few attackers in stillsuits run from the burning building after killing the ten workers inside. One of the attackers matches the description of the one-eyed man described in Questioning Witnesses, prior. The player characters will already know that much of the food was destroyed, consisting of several tons of tabaroot, dates, rice, and the salted meat of desert animals.
 - The sabotage of key power generator components. There were no witnesses. It was while investigating this attack that the team sent to investigate (Geeta Nagara, Talaval Weir, and Soram Vieno) disappeared. If the player characters wish to follow up and examine the site (which is still abandoned) for themselves, they must make an Average (D1) Understand test. Success reveals that whoever sabotaged the site had an advanced knowledge of power technology this was no amateur job. Failure provides inconclusive information, and a complication might even implicate someone from House Nagara.

O Examining the Scene of the Attack:

- ◆ A successful Average (D1) Battle or Understand test reveals footprints in the sand of a small group that recently stood outside the clinic and then ran toward a nearby neighborhood called the South Suburb. (See The South Suburb, following.) Spending 1 point of Momentum to Obtain Information tells the character the group consisted of three or four individuals.
- ➡ A successful Challenging (D2) Battle test can determine what started the fire: several homemade bottles of fuel containing impact detonators (colloquially called Pyrebottles). These are not especially uncommon.

THE SOUTH SUBURB

This is a neighborhood of humble residences, made up of two dozen streets holding perhaps 300 dwellings, in the form of both small apartment buildings and individual hovels. The suburb has no street signs, and the roads seem randomly placed.

If a player character succeeds at a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test, they find a distinctive well-made, but well-worn dagger with the House Nagara seal. Anyone who knows Talaval Weir is certain it belongs to the man, because he was proud of this particular weapon. The trail then grows cold. The area is large, and the people are not talkative.

ENDING THE INVESTIGATION

When the player characters have gathered all the available clues, or it does not look like they are likely to, Farren the steward calls to remind them they are due at the Arrakeen Residency for the morning audience with the people of Arrakeen. For this, proceed to the next scene.

HOLDING COURT IN ARRAKEEN

Returning to the Residency, the player characters are met by the House steward Farren, who escorts them inside. Though Farren gives the physical impression of great age — wrinkled, white-haired, and slightly stooped — he is far from frail, and he threatens to leave the player characters behind as he leads the way into the Great Hall. (If the player characters have defined another figure as their House's steward, use this person instead of Farren.)

This room is enormous, its arched ceiling rising two stories overhead. It is mostly open space bordered by giant windows, buttressed walls, and great wooden doors. A carpet leads down the center of the room to a dais with seating for the House's leaders and distinguished visitors. Several guests have arrived to seek an audience.

Citizens from Arrakeen have come to the Residency to have their concerns heard by the leaders of House Nagara, as they do on a regular basis. (Whether this happens daily, weekly, or more rarely is up to the players.) The following is a representative list of petitions and grievances from individual members of the populace. Typically, each petitioner approaches the House officials one at a time, or in a small group if they share a concern. Use only as many as the gamemaster and players find entertaining, and feel free to invent additional ones.

It is up to the player characters who sit in judgment on behalf of their House. It might be all of them, or just one of them, although at least one player character must perform this rolet. However, the gamemaster should encourage all the players to offer their opinions on how these situations should be resolved, even if they have agreed upon one of the characters to represent the voice of authority for the House. Their House might be a democratic one, or even if not, the leader would surely be open to the opinions of trusted advisors.

This audience encounter need not involve dice rolls, though it may if players want to discern lies (Communicate at Difficulty 2), know of a useful law or background on a claim (Understand at Difficulty 1 or 2), or attempt other such things. It is up to the gamemaster if each claim is a lie, spurious, or an honest problem. Some encounters have the potential to affect the House's Honor and Ruthlessness indices by a point (see page XX), and even the ones that don't call this out explicitly can do so if the gamemaster wants.

- Complaint about a Merchant: Goral Adena claims that the tool vendors in the market have been colluding on prices and are now charging nearly triple what they were a few months ago.
- O Conflict Between Security and the Harvesters:

 Bussot Alger, a representative of the House spice harvesters, and Michi Valadar, a representative for House security, says they need a ruling on whether the new shipment of five ornithopters should go to military patrols or to act as spotters for harvester operations. Depending on the answer, this could affect the Spice Production and/or Military Power indies by a point likely raising one and lowering the other or changing neither if the players suggest an equitable split, preferably with some form of sharing beyond "You get three and you get two."
- O Request for Relief Due to 'Acts of God': A recent sandstorm devastated a popular local restaurant and entertainment venue called Rain. Its owner, Adena Rain, says the city's morale is suffering, and insists she wants her business repaired for the sake of the populace, not herself.

- O Plea from Starving Citizens: Clothing maker Tecla
 Darr and a small group ask what the House will do
 about the growing numbers of starving citizens,
 thanks to the recent destruction of food by the
 Fremen raiders. If the player characters pledge to
 resolve the food shortage immediately, this increases
 their Honor index by a point. If they do so without
 a well-reasoned plan, it also decreases their Wealth
 index by the same amount.
- O Interpersonal Problem Between House Members and Other Citizens: Hescal Saim has accused House security guard Viker Langan of assaulting him while off duty in a tavern. No witnesses have come forward.
- O Claims of Harkonnen Spying: Technician Igna Dolbo is convinced her neighbor, dancer Hauta Urgan (also present), is a Harkonnen spy because Hauta seems to always be watching her. Igna has no evidence otherwise, and the player characters will not find any either.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

As the audience nears an end, Farren announces the arrival of a special visitor: a Harkonnen envoy. (If the players refuse to allow entry to a Harkonnen, perhaps still harboring bad feelings from the events of **Agents of Dune**, then they can receive the information in this encounter from a transmission the envoy sends after being rebuffed, or the envoy might try and approach a player character in the streets of Arrakeen after the audience ends.)

The Harkonnen envoy strides up the central walkway in the Great Hall, ostentatious in her maroon jumpsuit and glossy black boots. Farren introduces her as Esseda Ulako.

After the player characters acknowledge the visitor, she smiles and gives them an exaggerated bow.

"It is a pleasure to meet you, noble leaders of House Nagara. I thank you for your warm welcome. My masters send me with an important message: The Harkonnens are holding a member of your House at our stronghold in Carthag."

A CURIOUS FAVOR

Before engaging in further conversation, Esseda Ulako says that she's parched and asks if her hosts would kindly provide her with a drink. Regardless of the answer, she calmly proceeds.

"You will be happy to hear that we have rescued Geeta Nagara from certain death, and she is recovering in the Harkonnen Residency."

Remind the players that Geeta is one of the three who went missing while investigating the sabotage of the power generator.

The player characters likely have follow-up questions for the envoy. Here are some possible answers.

Who found Geeta, and where?

"A friendly Harkonnen 'thopter patrol followed a smoke trail, which turned out to be coming from the ruins of a Fremen sietch. Inside this sietch the soldiers found your Geeta, apparently the only survivor of some conflict there. The place was gutted by fire, and everyone else was dead. Geeta was unconscious, and the patrol brought her back to Carthag for medical treatment."

Did anyone find Talaval Weir or Soram Vieno?

"Alas, no. We found no other stray members of your fine House."

What is Geeta's condition?

"She's recovering from her injuries in our hospital. In addition to various bumps and bruises, she had a nasty wound, likely from a Fremen crysknife. Rest assured, she's comfortable and as happy as we can make her."

What do you want from us?

"Absolutely nothing! Other than your friendship, of course."

A successful Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test reveals that this is not true but does not expose any specific ulterior motives.

Why didn't you bring her here?

"Geeta is still recovering from her wounds, but is nearly well enough to travel. In fact..."

Proceed to The Invitation, below.

THE INVITATION

Once the player characters have asked all the questions they wish, or they insist on knowing when they can get Geeta back, the envoy says the following:

"We would like to invite you, the leaders of House Nagara, to a dinner party in the Carthag fortress tonight. During this event we will return your kin to you — provided her doctor says she is well enough to travel, of course. Think of this as an olive branch to help soothe any tensions that exist between our two Houses. Sadly, the Baron himself will be unable to attend, but he has left a special representative who wants to meet you."

Even if the players decide to hold Esseda Ulako captive, she retains her poise. This does not affect the characters' invitation to dinner with the Harkonnens. Either way, the envoy says the player characters can fly their own ornithopter to the Carthag Residency at dinner time tonight.

A DINNER PARTY

The following scene takes place at the Harkonnen Residency in Carthag. Some players may be hesitant to send their characters into the heart of what they may see as enemy territory — if so, remind them that they may play the roles of supporting characters that they send to the party in their place, allowing them to still take part in this scene. Players who do not have a character at the dinner party will not have much to do in this act otherwise.

The player characters' ornithopter settles down on a rooftop landing pad at the Harkonnen Residency, a palace that is surely the largest structure in the city. Guards in stiff uniforms and polished boots escort them from the ornithopter. Down below in the square in front of the palace they can see a conveniently timed military parade marching with rigid precision. Then they are led into the building and down an elevator to a large reception hall with many doorways. Four guards take up positions nearby. Before long, a man enters and strides across the expensive-looking carpet to greet the player characters. The man is tall and slim, with soft, elegant features and stained lips emblematic of Sapho juice usage.

"Ah, our guests from House Nagara. Welcome, welcome. I am Piter de Vries, Mentat to Baron Vladimir Harkonnen. The Baron is off-world right now, otherwise he would of course meet you himself. He has asked me to be your host tonight. And who are each of you?"

Note that Piter does not mention Geeta Nagara until the player characters ask about her. This is one of several games he enjoys playing. (If they do ask about her, Piter vaguely says that she will be along shortly.) Piter is described on page 252 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**. In case the players do anything that would

bring the guards into the action, use the description of House Soldier/Guard on page 283 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

The players should be encouraged to roleplay their introductions to Piter, who works hard not to take offense at anything pointed the player characters might say. Afterward Piter says that dinner is about to be served. He escorts them (along with the four guards) to a nearby dining hall.

The dining hall is a long, narrow room featuring a rectangular table with enough place settings for the player characters' party plus three others. The guards assume positions on each side and servants begin bringing out plates of food. Piter sits at the head of the table. The two seats flanking him are marked as reserved. He gestures for the player characters to be seated.

The player characters may sit wherever they wish, and Piter does not object even if player characters take the reserved spots.

Three people serve food to everyone seated. One woman is a well-dressed servant wearing a black suit, and the other man and woman wear humble, rough gray tunics with collars that are somehow reminiscent of metal bands — clearly slaves. The servant tends to Piter while the slaves serve the player characters.

After the appetizer course of fruits and cheeses not seen on Arrakis — likely sprinkled with a few questions for Piter (see his answers in **Questions & Answers**, following) — Piter's servant approaches him and whispers in his ear. Piter claps his hands once and stands.

"My new friends, thank you for your patience. Your wayward comrade is joining us now."

Piter remains standing as Geeta Nagara enters, accompanied by a short bald man. Geeta seems healthy, but looks out of place in the gray hospital tunic she's been dressed in. She towers over the man beside her, who wears a white suit with red piping. He bears the Suk emblem upon his forehead, indicating his allegiance to that school.

Piter continues.

"Good to see you again, m'Lady. Everyone, this gentleman is Doctor Gatley, Geeta's physician and, dare I say it, savior. Please, be seated everyone."

Assuming the player characters haven't modified the reserved seating, the servants seat Geeta at Piter's right hand and Doctor Gatley at his left. If Doctor Gatley's abilities prove necessary, use the entry for the Healer on page 282 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

Now the player characters may enjoy their meal with Piter, Dr. Gatley, and their lost-and-found ally Geeta Nagara. The main information they can get out of everyone present is detailed below in **Questions & Answers**. If the players are enjoying the banter with Piter and company, improvise more of it using the sample questions and answers provided.

The dinner itself features foods that are exceedingly expensive on a desert planet: swordfish, an elegant herbed salad, a delicate soup, a variety of off-world tubers, followed by coffee and chocolate delicacies for dessert. All have been prepared with exquisite skill and presentation, on the fanciest Harkonnen dinnerware, likely only reserved to impress others with their refined taste.

Piter spends the dinner probing Geeta with questions of his own — was she perhaps involved in a deal with Fremen that went wrong; does she feel some hostility toward the Fremen; is it possible her rumored hotheadedness led her into some action she now regrets — but she answers all of these in the emphatically negative. Other than that, Piter enjoys hinting how indebted the player characters should feel to him, acting so overly polite it feels insulting, and mildly (and a little creepily) flirting with Geeta — fixing her with long stares and calling her "m'Lady."

For her part, other than answering questions, Geeta says very little. Doctor Gatley says very little also, but does so in many words; he takes every chance to talk in medical terminology, bragging about the brilliant techniques (his words) he used to restore Geeta to health. He says he will miss having her as a patient. Geeta does not seem as positive about their relationship but makes no specific complaint.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The following question and answer sections present some questions the players are likely to ask, as well as the accompanying answers from the non-player character in question. Some answers include parenthetical notes of what a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test can reveal regarding the truthfulness of that answer, as determined by the **What Did the Harkonnens Do to Geeta?** sidebar.

QUESTIONING PITER DE VRIES

Note that Piter also knows all the details the players could have learned from Esseda Ulako in the previous scene, A Curious Favor.

How/where did you find Geeta?

"One of our ornithopter patrols found her outside a Fremen sietch she had apparently fled after she and her crew attacked it. They said Geeta was the only one still alive. It appeared her crew and the Fremen had died fighting each other." (All partial truth.)

Do you expect us to believe you just found Geeta at that sietch?

"It is God's honest truth." (This is a lie.)

Where are the bodies of Talaval Weir and Soram Vieno?

"Our patrol didn't bring back dead bodies. The next time a patrol checked the site, no bodies were there. (Both sentences are true.)

Have you harmed her or done anything inappropriate?

"We have treated her like family. (A lie.) Nothing was done to her. (A possible lie, up to the gamemaster to determine.) House Harkonnen has treated her with the greatest respect." (True.)

Did you interrogate Geeta?

"How can you even think we would do that?" (If the players press the question, he continues.) "All we have asked her is how we can make her more comfortable during her healing journey." (A lie.)

Did you <perform specific modification, e.g., brainwash her, plant a tracking device, etc.>?

Piter avoids a direct answer, unless the gamemaster decides the Harkonnens did nothing nefarious after all, in which case he replies that "We did nothing of the sort!"

What do you want from us?

See Piter Asks for Something, below — but if it is still early in the dinner, he only says: "Our only wish is to return your lost relative to you!"

QUESTIONING GEETA

How are you feeling? How were you treated?

"I feel...normal. Seems my injuries are healed. Though I feel naked without my stillsuit. Funny how quickly we get used to things, isn't it?"

Have the Harkonnens done anything nefarious to you?

"Not that I'm aware of. I haven't noticed anything physical, and mentally, I feel like I'm still... me."

What happened to you at the power plant in Arrakeen? How did you get to the Fremen sietch you were found in?

"The three of us checked the perimeter of the power plant first, then moved inside. We couldn't find anyone who had witnessed what happened at the plant. I remember Soram saying he thought the sabotage looked like it was beyond what a tribe of desert-dwellers could do. And that's about the last thing I remember. I sure don't recall being at any Fremen sietch."

What happened to Talaval Weir and Soram Vieno?

"I... I don't remember. They were with me the last I remember, before I woke up here."

QUESTIONING DOCTOR GATLEY

What did you do to her?

"I merely healed her wounds, of course." (A possible lie, depending on the gamemaster's plan for her.) "She'd been stabbed in the ribs, likely by a Fremen crysknife, from the shape and depth of the injury. She should be more careful, you know. She could get herself killed going to places like a Fremen sietch. Those people are animals."

What kind of doctor are you?

"My specialty is experimental medicine. Life extension, cybernetics, enhancements beyond the human norm, things of that nature. But I'm fully rated as an emergency medic and general-purpose surgeon as well. Nothing to worry about, your comrade was in capable hands, weren't you dear?" Geeta does not respond to him.

If we find out you did something inappropriate to Geeta, we'll be coming back for you.

"I'm offended at the very suggestion!"

QUESTIONING THE SERVANT AND SLAVES

The servant and slaves are not talkative (and have indeed been instructed to remain quiet), but if a player character can get one alone, a successful Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test can coax out a few comments (provided all at once or requiring Momentum spends to Obtain Information, depending on how the gamemaster wishes to handle it):

- Yes, the two plainly dressed servers are slaves.
- O They say they are well-treated, but their fear in answering says they are not.
- One of them has heard a lot of talk about Geeta Nagara in the time that she's been here, but no hints of anything bad.

PITER ASKS FOR SOMETHING

After the players have had a chance to cover the conversational points mentioned in the **Questions & Answers** section that the gamemaster considers important, Piter declares a toast:

GEETA NAGARA YOUNG HOUSE NAGARA NOBLE

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

One of the younger adult nobles in House Nagara, Geeta has always been restless and eager to follow her nose into trouble. After showing that she could also get herself back out of it, she ended up undertaking official scouting, surveying, and exploration missions for the House. Geeta enjoys being able to see more of Arrakis in the service of her House, but she longs to leave the planet and explore the universe.

Like many in her House, Geeta has developed a strong dislike of House Harkonnen. She would love to contribute to their downfall.

Geeta is tall and athletic, with dark skin and short hair. She quickly adapted to stillsuit use, but when she's not wearing one, she likes simple, unencumbering garb.



Traits: Scout for House Nagara, Daring and Proud

TALENTS:

O Find Trouble: Wherever Geeta is, once per adventure, she can always contact the criminal underworld or black market (as long as there is one in that area). This doesn't mean they will be well disposed toward her, just that she can find a contact.

O Nimble: When attempting a Move test to move over, around, or through difficult terrain or similar physical obstacles (such as during a duel or skirmish), Geeta may reduce the Difficulty of the test by 2. If this reduces the Difficulty to 0, she may move over or around that obstacle freely as if it wasn't there.

Assets: Knife, Stillsuit

WHAT DID THE HARKONNENS DO TO GEETA?

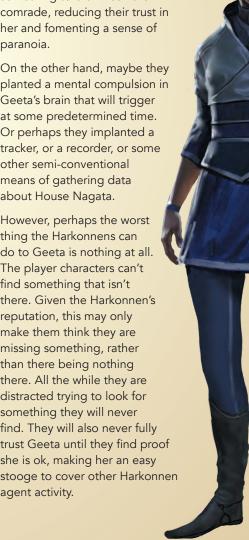
This is entirely up to the gamemaster, depending

on how they want to use Geeta in later adventures. If there are no particular plans, then perhaps the Harkonnens have done nothing unusual to her, in which case all of their 'possible lie' claims in the Questions & Answers section are instead the truth. Maybe they helped her as a test to see House Nagara's reaction, or to make them feel indebted to House Harkonnen. Maybe they wanted to sow discord by making the player characters suspect they've done something to brainwash their comrade, reducing their trust in

On the other hand, maybe they planted a mental compulsion in Geeta's brain that will trigger at some predetermined time. Or perhaps they implanted a tracker, or a recorder, or some other semi-conventional means of gathering data about House Nagata.

paranoia.

However, perhaps the worst thing the Harkonnens can do to Geeta is nothing at all. The player characters can't find something that isn't there. Given the Harkonnen's reputation, this may only make them think they are missing something, rather than there being nothing there. All the while they are distracted trying to look for something they will never find. They will also never fully trust Geeta until they find proof she is ok, making her an easy stooge to cover other Harkonnen agent activity.



"To House Nagara, our valued neighbors and allies. We of House Harkonnen know that you value the life of every member of your House, and that for the return of your beloved family member, you will certainly offer something to us as compensation. Of course, nothing matches the value of the life of a loved one, but nonetheless I look forward to seeing what your powerful House might offer. After all, we did rescue, treat, and care for this child of Nagara, as if she were our own."

Piter's smile is large but may not fill the player characters with warmth.

The player characters are welcome to propose ideas for compensating the Harkonnens. Piter doesn't have anything in particular in mind — he just wants to know what the player characters are willing to offer, if anything. If they offer anything at all that seems genuine, Piter accepts graciously — and quickly enough to probably cause any suspicious players to wonder at Piter's ulterior motives. If they do not offer compensation, or they offer something insulting, Piter suggests they don't seem serious about wanting their family member back. However, he does not allow this to escalate tensions too much. If necessary, he agrees to let the player characters have Geeta back with no obligation. If the players offer an extravagant amount of compensation, such as a large quantity of water, solaris, or equipment, that should reduce the House's Wealth index by half a point.

ENDING THE DINNER

When the party is winding down — indicated by the players running out of questions to ask or things they want to do here — the dessert course should end, and with it, the dinner. Piter stands, thanks everyone for coming, and says he hopes to see all of them again very soon. The party — including Geeta Nagara — is free to go. Piter has the guards escort the player characters and Geeta back to the roof to their waiting ornithopter, and all are free to leave Carthag.

NEXT STEPS

The player characters have several directions they can choose to go after leaving Carthag. Details for three of the most likely appear in the three sections following:

Medical Exam, The Sietch, and The Power Plant (exploring, perhaps for a second time, the power generator Geeta was investigating when she disappeared). After the player characters have finished chasing down these leads — or if they decide not to — cut to Geeta Remembers.

Geeta asks to stay with the player characters for the rest of the adventure, especially if they are continuing to investigate what happened to her. She hopes that exploring the details of her recent past might help her recover her memory of what occurred after her last

memory at the power plant. (It won't break the adventure if the players leave Geeta behind, but her presence—and the players' concern about whether they can trust her—may add a layer of interest to the story.)

MEDICAL EXAM

The player characters can have Geeta examined by their own doctors at Arrakeen, or a player character with medical training — or excellent powers of observation — can do so themselves. If a player character examines her, it is a Daunting (D3) Understand test (to which medical-related focuses would likely apply). Success reveals an almost-healed knife wound on Geeta's abdomen, which matches the forensics of a Harkonnen or Corrino blade better than that of a crysknife (which might be expected of a fight with Fremen). If the gamemaster has decided that the Harkonnens performed any secret modifications to Geeta while she was under their care, then a Momentum spend to Obtain Information can glean a clue about that. (For example, if the Harkonnens have brainwashed her, with the exact results emerging at a later phase in the campaign, the examination might show signs of psychological trauma, but nothing specific... just enough to keep the player characters worried and mistrustful.) Otherwise, the examination shows no signs of physical tampering or mental conditioning.

If a non-player character doctor examines Geeta, they get the information about the knife wound, but whether they learn a clue about any possible alterations to Geeta is at the gamemaster's discretion.

Geeta herself reports that she feels normal. However, she understands that Harkonnen captives have been known to be brainwashed or otherwise compromised, so she understands any misgivings or precautions on the part of the player characters. She believes she is ready for duty again and promises to speak up if she feels any signs that something isn't right about her body or mind.

THE SIETCH

If the player characters want to check out the Fremen sietch where the Harkonnens say they found Geeta, they have two ways of finding its location. The easiest is to have Geeta herself help them find it, because while she was recuperating in Carthag she overheard a few details she thinks will help her spot it (including a few rocky landmarks between the sietch and Carthag, and a mention of the rough longitude). Another is to ask the Harkonnens, requiring a Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test (in addition to asking for help from the hated Harkonnens).

Either way requires another character to make an Average (D1) **Move** or **Understand** test to pilot an ornithopter to find the sietch. If Geeta is along, she can assist in this test. If this test is a failure, the player character can succeed at a cost, in this case meaning a



sudden maneuver causes Geeta to feel a stab of pain in her mostly-healed stab wound. (This won't lead to any further trouble unless the gamemaster wants it to; it's merely to remind the players Geeta was under Harkonnen care recently.)

Arriving at the site of the sietch, aerial examination shows it is located in a fissure in a minor rocky landmass surrounded by the wider desert. The place is not smoking, as Esseda Ulako or Piter de Vries might have mentioned it had been when the Harkonnen patrol found the sietch.

There's nowhere safe to land other than the sand, which is vulnerable to attracting sandworms. The characters can keep their ornithopter circling while some of them explore the site, or they can land and have to rush to take off again when they hear the approach of a sandworm a few minutes later, a Challenging (D2) Move test that can succeed at the cost of a player character losing an asset, or simply generating 2 Threat.

Exploring the site, the player characters can confirm that it is empty but was once inhabited. It shows signs of use in the dust patterns, footprints, and a few abandoned pieces of worn-out furniture and clothing. A Challenging (D2) **Understand** test reveals that there are no signs of combat, or indeed indications of

struggle of any kind. Furthermore, another Challenging (D2) **Understand** test reveals no signs of a fire, and an estimate that this sietch has not been occupied in months. None of these details match what the player characters may have learned from earlier conversations (with Esseda Ulako or Piter de Vries). Sadly, there's also no sign of Talaval Weir or Soram Vieno.

If the gamemaster wishes, the visit to the sietch can possibly lead to **Chapter 5: The Fremen**. Nearby Fremen might notice the player characters exploring their former sietch and approach to find out why, leading to either a roleplaying encounter or just a Simple (D0) **Communicate** test. In fact, a meeting with Fremen may be the best chance the player characters have for closure regarding Talaval Weir or Soram Vieno, because the Harkonnens dumped their bodies into the sand near this sietch to get rid of the evidence. Fremen in this area might have witnessed this. If necessary, refer to the Fremen Elder and Fremen Warrior described on pages 279–280 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

After the party searches the sietch for a while, if Geeta is along she reports that while she still has no memory of ever being here, she does remember a fight with a Fremen — though she doesn't think it happened here. If the gamemaster is ready to move on to the final scene, or the players have already explored the power plant (below), proceed to Geeta Remembers (following).

THE POWER PLANT

The player characters may think of (or Geeta may suggest) visiting the power plant where she was investigating the second Fremen attack, just before she and her party disappeared. (Details of this attack were detailed on page XX.) After walking through the scene of the attack again, Geeta remembers tracking fresh footsteps to a nearby neighborhood. Continue to **Geeta Remembers**, following.

GEETA REMEMBERS

When the gamemaster is ready to move on to the final scene, Geeta finally remembers a critical detail. This can be triggered by a visit she made to one of the above locations, or if the player characters were too paranoid to take her along, she contacts them from the Arrakeen Residency (or wherever they left her) and tells them she had a sudden flash of memory.

Geeta remembers following the trail of the Fremen attackers into the south suburb, where Talaval found a concealed passage inside what appeared to be a large trash bin. Along with Talaval and Soram, Geeta followed the attackers into the underground passage, but she doesn't remember what happened after that.

Before the player characters enter the passage, Geeta stops them for a moment:

"Wait... am I making the same mistake again? I was too headstrong before. I led my team into danger and trusted myself to get them out. What if it happens again? I wouldn't be able to bear seeing any more of you die."

The gamemaster should provide the players this chance to give an encouraging speech... or continue their mistrust of their wayward ally. When the player characters (and presumably Geeta) enter the passage, continue to the next scene.

INTO THE PASSAGE

The passage leads downward, taking the player characters underneath a residential building. Whether intentional or not, it is a makeshift maze of boxes and crates, and it faintly smells of trash and fuel and sweat. Over a chest-high stack of crates the player characters can see into the next 'room', where several people are gathered around a table. The men and women are dressed similarly, in stillsuits covered in hooded robes. One man, apparently the leader from how he is giving orders, is missing one eye.

This is the one-eyed raider the player characters had a chance to learn about in **Act I**. He is backed up by allies equal to the number of player characters, modified by any reinforcements they might have brought with them.

If the player characters proceed quietly, have each make an Average (D1) **Move** test. If they are all successful, they can get closer without being seen. They can overhear their conversation which sounds like the group is planning to plant explosives in the merchant quarter.

If any player characters fail the **Move** test, the occupants of the hideout hear them and ready their weapons. A complication puts the player characters at the occupants' mercy, perhaps having them stumble into an ambush.

FIGHTING THE 'FREMEN'

In the likely event a fight breaks out, One-Eye and his mercenaries fight using their knives and One-Eye his maula pistol. They fight to the death, figuring (correctly) that their lives are worthless if they survive but the Baron finds out they failed to kill the people who found them out.

During the fight (or before if they have time to observe them) a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test allows a player character to spot a few clues that reveal these apparent Fremen are fakes. Although they have blueon-blue eyes, they are using common knives instead of crysknives, their stillsuits are not Fremen-quality, and their bodies are too water-soft.

If the player characters defeat One-Eye, they find a note on his body:

Continue the campaign. Make your fourth target the merchant quarter. If you can double the casualties, I will double your pay. —H

If One-Eye or one of his soldiers survives, questioning them might provide more information. It takes a successful Dire (D4) **Communicate** test to get them to admit that they are working for the Harkonnens. A successful Average (D1) **Communicate** test is enough to make them confirm that they committed the recent acts of sabotage, that they injured Geeta in a fight and took her to an abandoned sietch, and that Talaval Weir and Soram Vieno died in that same fight and they left their bodies for the sandworms at the sietch.

SEARCHING THE AREA

In addition to the note on One-Eye's body, a search of the area turns up a crate of explosives from Giedi Prime, fuel containers and contact detonators for pyrebottles, and maps of the recent guerilla raid sites. Collectively, the clues learned in this encounter point to the fact that these people disguised as Fremen were in fact mercenaries hired to disrupt life and business in Arrakeen while making it seem that Fremen were behind the attacks.

ONE-EYE

FAKE FREMEN MERCENARY

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Ulako Hibb has been a mercenary for half his life, fighting in skirmishes of every size for whoever will pay. Losing his eye in a melee during one of his first jobs only drove him to fight harder, after which he took on positions of leadership and eventually started his own mercenary band.

For the last half-year, Ulako (now affectionately called "One-Eye" by his troops) has operated on Arrakis, performing jobs for the Harkonnens that the Baron wishes to distance himself from. One-Eye's squad is small, but they work well together, having been a unit for several years now.

One-Eye is missing his left eye, though he does not wear a patch, taking a perverse pleasure to the reaction he gets to the scarring on his face. For his current job, he wears a stillsuit and a hooded robe.



Traits: Mercenary, Ruthless, Missing an Eye

TALENTS:

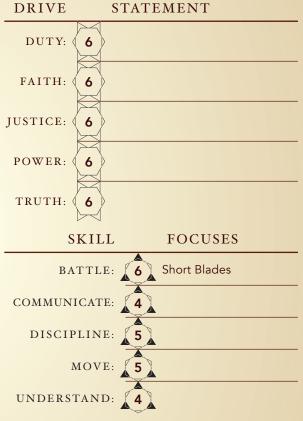
O Collaboration (Battle): Whenever an ally attempts a test using Battle, and One-Eye can communicate with them, he may spend 2 Threat to allow them to use his score for that skill, and his Short Blades Focus (if applicable).

O Improvised Weapon: Once per scene, One-Eye may create a Quality 0 asset (at no cost) that he can use in a personal or skirmish conflict. It might be a rock, broken bottle, or shard of glass, but it is enough to function as a weapon. The asset is removed at the end of any conflict it is used for, as it will be too badly damaged to use again.

Assets: Maula Pistol, Knife, Stillsuit

FAKE FREMEN MERCENARIES

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



Traits: Mercenary

Assets: Knife

WHAT'S NEXT FOR HOUSE NAGARA?

Once the player characters have finished their investigations involving Geeta Nagara and the false Fremen raids, Farren the steward has a few suggestions about their next course of action:

- They may wish to meet with Fremen (possibly for a second time if they met them in Act II) to discuss an alliance. Given that word of supposed Fremen raids will damage their reputation, the Fremen might be the ones to come to House Nagara. If so, see Chapter 5: The Fremen.
- O They may seek an alliance with another party, such as the Bene Gesserit (Chapter 7: Bene Gesserit) or the Spacing Guild (Chapter 8: The Guild).
- They may even wish to visit the Emperor, perhaps to discuss their continuing problems with House Harkonnen. For this, see Chapter 3: The Emperor.

The gamemaster should encourage the players to choose one of these directions or can pick one that suits the gamemaster's own plan, which might include an invitation to visit to the Harkonnen world of Giedi Prime (Chapter 2: Giedi Prime) or a summons to a meeting of the Landsraad (Chapter 6: The Great Houses).

If the player characters somehow fail to stop the 'Fremen' raids, the Spice Production index should drop 1 point as the raids intensify. The gamemaster may develop other plots to allow the player characters a chance to get to the bottom of the problem again. As their first acts as governors of Arrakis, there is a lot of attention focused upon them. Depending on how they publicly perform, the gamemaster might adjust the Honor, Ruthlessness, or Landsraad Support indices by a point up or down.



RECURRING CHARACTERS

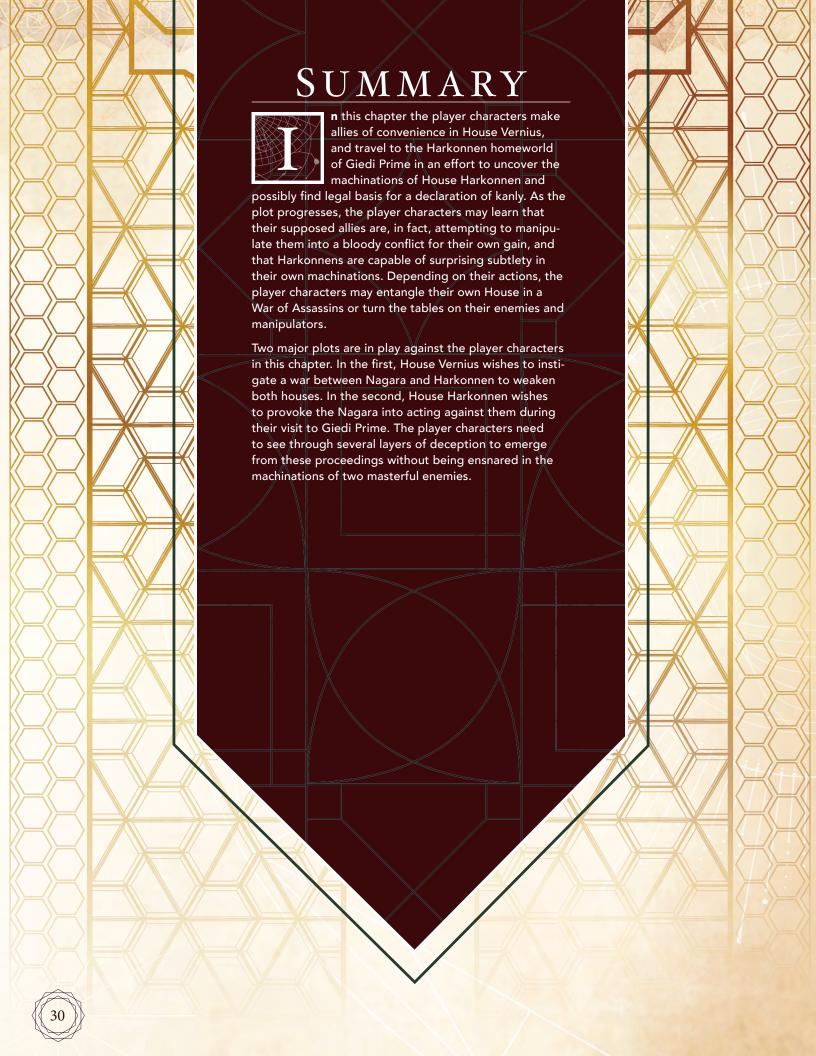
The following characters might now potentially weave into further chapters of this campaign, at the gamemaster's discretion:

- O House steward Ferren can be utilized whenever the player characters visit the Residency in Arrakeen. His dedication to House Nagara is unfailing, and he may even sacrifice his life in its service if it comes to that.
- O Geeta Nagara is eager to serve her House but may be compromised by Harkonnen brainwashing or other dirty tricks. She is filled with self-doubt about whether she has been compromised, and is both eager to prove herself and her loyalty, and torn with the desire to not place herself in a position where any hidden programming may emerge. Maybe she is an unwitting saboteur, or maybe the Harkonnens interfered with her just enough but not much more than to create episodes of doubts in her allies.
- O Piter de Vries and Doctor Gatley are useful whenever dealing with the Harkonnens, but Piter should be used sparingly, as he is considerably more deadly than he seems. Piter is usually smart enough to steer clear of dangerous situations, but Gatley knows much more about the inner workings of House Harkonnen than is healthy for him.

These summaries are presented at the end of each chapter and at opportune places throughout to help the gamemaster create a sense of continuity between adventures, using recurring characters and allowing their stories to evolve as the campaign transpires. None are necessary, but using them judiciously can create the sense of a living, breathing world where non-player characters are not simple vessels for information in a single adventure.



CHAPTER 2: GIEDI PRIME "What do you despise? By this are you truly known." —from the "Manual of Muad'Dib" by the Princess Irulan MASTERS OF DUNE



ACT I AN UNEXPECTED AMBASSADOR

Gathered at their seat of power on Arrakis, the player characters receive a visitor, Tamara Pilru, an envoy of the Ixian House Vernius, and her entourage. Pilru comes politely, bearing a request from her superiors in Vernius and humbly begs an audience with House Nagara, acknowledging the strife that exists between their families.

The player characters are likely very suspicious of Pilru, but she is polite and humble without being a pushover. If they agree to grant her an audience, she patiently waits through any contrived delays or other hassles they may throw her way.

If House Nagara does not grant the emissary an audience, House Vernius will start whispers among the other Houses concerning Nagara's lack of hospitality. The Landsraad Support index drops by a point, but that point can be restored by granting the audience. If the player characters are especially rude in their refusal, the gamemaster may reduce their Honor index by a point (which they will have to work to get back).

PARLEY

If received, the envoy is accompanied by her entourage, a pair of bodyguards (see the House Soldier/Guard on page 283 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**), and a personal assistant. Succeeding in an Average (D1) **Communicate** test suggests that she is making a gesture of trust and goodwill. By bringing only a token staff any attempts on her life by House Nagara would surely succeed, and she is keenly aware of this fact.

After conducting the introductions and etiquette expected from a formal meeting between representatives of great Houses, Pilru shares the following message on behalf of her masters.

"Noble cousins of House Nagara, it is our hope that you will heed our words and accept our gifts despite the difficulties that have previously existed between our families. It is our sincere desire to put an end to the strife that so foolishly occurred between us. It ultimately benefits none and while we do not accept total blame for the situation, we would like to make a first gesture of reconciliation. We offer you these fine vestments for each of you and hope you find them comely and becoming of your esteemed personages."

At this point, Pilru's entourage offers the player characters' retainer a set of beautiful Ixian garments for approval. The player characters will likely have them tested for poisons, espionage devices, and the like (a sensible precaution that will not be considered rude by Vernius) but the garments are harmless and of high

quality. Pilru continues to speak after the gifts have been accepted for perusal, and takes no offense if the characters decline or require security tests.

"We also offer a second, even more precious gift: information that we believe is of the highest value to you. We were saddened to hear of the death of Countess Nagara. She was a worthy adversary who deserved better than the end she found. What we say now must remain in the strictest of confidence. It has come to the attention of our agents that the Countess' death was not the result of the actions of a 'rogue agent,' but indeed was a deliberate act by House Harkonnen itself. Intelligent as you are, surely you already suspected as much but we offer the opportunity for proof. An agent of ours on Giedi Prime has this evidence in their possession, and will meet with you and submit to interrogation and truthsense to prove its veracity. Once this information is in your possession it should be sufficient to levy formal charges against House Harkonnen before the Landsraad, or justify a declaration of kanly or a war of assassins, as you choose. House Vernius cannot offer explicit support of an unknown course of action at this time, but be assured that Ix will look upon your decisions in this matter with great favor, whatever they may be."

Allow the player characters to question Pilru at length. She is humble and prepared to endure a certain amount of mild abuse, but she speaks what she believes is the truth and does not brook abuse from other members of the nobility in this civil proceedings. While she does not become irate, if pressed hard she simply says that she hopes the player characters will consider the opportunity that House Vernius offers in good faith and that the offer stands for the time being, though they do not know how long their operative on Giedi Prime will be able to escape detection by the Harkonnens.

If the player characters refuse an audience, she leaves them with a printed message conveying the essence of what she would have said in person. Before returning to lx, she makes two additional attempts to gain an audience if her first is refused.

The player characters have some time to discuss the situation in private before making a decision. The offer from Pilru and Vernius can be good for as long as the gamemaster finds convenient, and the player characters could potentially have time to explore other parts of the campaign while they consider their options. If they dawdle, House Vernius sends a courier informing the player characters that while their offer still stands, time is running short before they must extract their operative. The gamemaster should use their discretion to determine when and if House Vernius gives up on their plans.

TAMARA PILRU

ENVOY OF HOUSE VERNIUS

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Pilru is a loyal member of House Vernius and devoted to their agenda. A middle-aged woman, she takes pains to dress stylishly, but not extravagantly, to do honor to her House. Pilru is a skilled and cosmopolitan diplomat who has spent time at many courts of the Landsraad. She speaks truthfully and avoids deceit whenever possible. Her superiors have taken pains to keep her from knowing their true agenda in this matter with House Nagara, and she believes the information she has to share with the player characters is true. However, she is not naïve and assumes that there are always ulterior motives in play in all acts of diplomacy, including her own.

DRIVE	STATEMENT
DUTY: 〈	7 I serve Vernius, for they are just.
FAITH: 〈	5
JUSTICE: 〈	6
POWER: <	5
TRUTH: <	5



Traits: Diplomat, Arrogant

TALENT:

O Masterful Innuendo: When Tamara attempts a Communicate test, they may increase the Difficulty by 1 to conceal a hidden message within their words. People other than the intended recipient cannot usually discern the concealed message.

Assets: Diplomatic Envoy



THE PROPOSAL

If the characters agree to pursue this opportunity, Pilru thanks them for their trust and expresses her gratitude in this "first step towards repairing the breach between our great houses." She goes on to explain that House Vernius will broker a meeting between the characters and House Harkonnen, to take place on Giedi Prime, in the capitol city of Barony. This meeting is ostensibly focused on improving relations between the Harkonnens and Nagara, but of course, exists as a ruse to get the characters on Giedi Prime to meet with House Vernius' agent. While the Harkonnens may be enemies, if the Nagara arrive on Giedi Prime as guests of Vernius, they should be safe. Should anything happen to them, it is an insult to House Vernius as much as to House Nagara.

It takes a period of weeks for all the arrangements to be made (which may allow the player characters to pursue other adventures). House Vernius, through Pilru, initiates a correspondence between the player characters and House Harkonnen's agents. Pilru takes pains to ensure that all appropriate etiquette is obeyed and offers to help the player characters with their side of the dialogue. If a player character with a background in diplomacy is interested in drafting their parts of the correspondence, the gamemaster should encourage them to do so. If they draft a letter they may make a Dire (D4) **Communicate** test, and if successful they receive +1 point to the Landsraad Support index as the letter becomes a widely read piece of diplomatic grace.

Ultimately, unless the player characters truly botch the correspondence, House Vernius succeeds in brokering a meeting. The player characters receive a loquacious invitation from Baron Harkonnen himself, offering to host them and their entourage during a week of lavish games to be held in their honor, during which time they will repair relations between their Houses "in an atmosphere of convivial geniality". Player characters can attempt an Average (D1) Communicate test to realize that etiquette dictates they bring only a token guard of four to six House soldiers as part of their entourage along with their other, non-martial retainers. Bringing more guards would likely be considered an insult to their hosts.

The player characters are responsible for making their own arrangements for travel with the Spacing Guild and should put their affairs in order on Arrakis, and ensure that their retainers are prepared to manage their operations in their absence. Pilru sends word to the player characters that arrangements are being made to put them in contact with the Vernius agent after their arrival. The gamemaster may choose to introduce Cenric, a Spacing Guild Envoy and his plot from Chapter 8 at this juncture, although the player characters may know him from his appearance in **Agents of Dune**. The meeting Cenric requests could take place during the character's voyage to Giedi Prime.

A DINNER INVITATION

The player characters may well have been to Giedi Prime before, but the gamemaster should take some time to describe their descent from the Guild heighliner. From orbit, the planet appears much as any other heavily industrialized planet. Across its night side, lights illuminate the majority of the land, as if it consists of one, endless city. Breaking across the terminator, onto the day-lit side of the planet, the player characters can see that it's not just a vast city, but even more of the surface is given over to smoking factories and manufacturing facilities to a degree that boggles the mind. The pilot of the landing craft keeps to a high elevation, so the details of the landscape are obscured from view until the craft begins the final descent into the city of Barony.

As the ship descends, the player characters gain an increasingly clear view of Barony. The capital city is still an industrial center, but as details resolve, it is surprisingly clean and aesthetically well considered. Enormous civic centers dominate parts of the landscape, accompanied by monuments to famous Harkonnens and their victories on a truly staggering scale, punctuated by factories, foundries, and the reactors that power the city. Player characters who make an Average (D1) Understand test recognize the aesthetics of the city as being inspired by numerous classical examples of brutalist architecture and fascist art.

The ship eventually circles the Harkonnens' palace, an enormous series of structures that sprawl across several kilometers. In this final loop, the player characters are afforded a breathtaking view of both the palace and the enormous arena that sits adjacent. The arena is a part of the palace complex for all intents and purposes, and is obviously a place of Harkonnens' pride.

The ship lands upon a pad cantilevered out from a tower of the Harkonnen palace, jutting out into the surprisingly clear sky above the city far below. As they disembark, the doors to the tower slide open, revealing the looming, suspensor-born form of Baron Vladimir Harkonnen himself, accompanied by Tamara Pilru and a host of extravagantly dressed Harkonnen retainers.

Servants rush forward, offering the player characters a plethora of drinks and light refreshments before they have even stepped off the ramp of their ship. The corpulent Baron bows obsequiously, his suspensorharness dipping in an off-putting motion like a depraved courtesy. Smiling broadly, he speaks.

"My esteemed and most noble cousins of House Nagara, I, Siridar Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, welcome you once more to my humble domain of Giedi Prime and modest capital city of Barony. Please accept my apologies once again for the tragic circumstances in which your former Countess met her sad end during your last visit here. Though I know my words, or even

actions, can do little to assuage the pain in your hearts, it is my sincerest hope that our time together here can go some ways to healing the breach between our two Houses and kindle a light by which we may together lead the Landsraad, and indeed, all of our peers and lessers in the Landsraad into a brighter future for all!"

If the player characters pass a Challenging (D2)

Communicate test they discover that the Baron is only making the most superficial attempt at concealing his disdain for them and these proceedings. What true motivations he may have are neatly concealed beneath his open contempt. See page 251 of the Dune Core Rulebook for more information about the Baron, if desired.

The gamemaster should encourage the player characters to make whatever replies they see fit, with Tamara Pilru on hand to help smooth over any breaches of etiquette. The Baron is taking pains to meet the letter of the laws in these matters, but certainly not the spirit. When the niceties of introductions have been made the Baron speaks once more.

"Now, I am sure that you will wish to retire to your rooms. I've made ready an entire wing of the palace for your use and hope you will find our modest accommodations to your liking. My Mentat, Piter de Vries, will show you to your chambers." The Baron smirks before adding, "If you need anything, anything at all, do not hesitate to ask Piter, who will cater to your every whim!"

A FAMILIAR FACE

If the player characters have recently played through Chapter 1 immediately prior to this chapter, they have just encountered de Vries on Arrakis. Apparently, he arrived via the same Spacing Guild heighliner as they were on, an assumption he admits if asked, having been ferried down to the surface of Giedi Prime just before the Nagara landing craft was given clearance to exit the heighliner. If this chapter is being played through at a later juncture, then he explains that he returned from Arrakis shortly after their meeting.

If it is too incongruous that Piter is present here on Giedi Prime based on a prior encounter, the gamemaster may substitute Piter de Vries for another Harkonnen household Mentat (use the example from the **Dune Core Rulebook**, page 284) or even Feyd-Ruatha, the Baron's nephew and a promising gladiator himself (**Dune Core Rulebook**, page 253). If Feyd is used, he is far more engaged with the gladiatorial matches held during dinner and pays the player characters little attention unless he can see some way to use or glean pleasure from them, or both. As a pupil of de Vries, Feyd is fully capable of foliowing his twisted Mentat master's orders.

The Baron and his entourage withdraw, leaving Piter de Vries (see **Dune Core Rulebook**, pg. 252 for more information about Piter) to attend to the characters. The Mentat is a deeply unpleasant man and seems an odd choice to play valet to the player characters. In truth, he himself suggested that the Baron create an opportunity for the player characters to spend time with him.

De Vries hopes to observe the player characters' habits further, and thus glean weaknesses he might exploit himself or pass on to his superiors. By goading the player characters with hostile remarks, he believes the player characters may choose to abuse Harkonnen hospitality and provide a subtle breach of etiquette. This, then, he could leverage into a significant gaffe, thereby providing the Baron with advantage in the upcoming negotiations. Piter expects others to act with the same cruelty and self-serving behaviors as himself, though from a place of inferior intellect. He shows the characters to their chambers, answering basic questions about Giedi Prime and Barony with mild irritation, as if he was speaking with particularly dim children.

The twisted Mentat perfunctorily shows the player characters to their suite of rooms and informs them that the Baron will host a special dinner for them and the cream of Barony society that evening. He gestures to the vast arena below, dominating as it does the view from all the rooms in this wing, and informs them that dinner will be hosted in the Baron's own arena viewing box. The evening's games are to be hosted in House Nagara's honor. De Vries says that he will return to collect them in a few hours to escort them to the event. If the player characters object to this honor, Piter obsequiously replies that he'll be sure to make the Baron aware of their objections. He takes his leave.

The player characters have several hours to talk among themselves, rest, and get ready for dinner. By succeeding in a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test, the player characters discover no espionage devices in their suites. The rooms appear to be as private as can be expected. The player characters have plenty of time to discuss strategies for dinner and reveal their impressions of their hosts.

THE SCENIC ROUTE

Piter returns at the appointed time in the early evening and shows the player characters the way to their dinner at the arena. He takes the opportunity to agitate the player characters in minor ways, hoping to provoke them into rudeness, but he never steps across the lines of etiquette himself. The journey to the arena takes the better part of an hour as they traverse the imposing corridors of the Harkonnen palace, connecting to the massive arena by a sky bridge thousands of meters above the ground. It should be clear to the player characters that this journey was chosen by the Harkonnens

to showcase the scale of their accomplishments. The areas through which they pass alternately showcase the opulent luxury the Harkonnens enjoy or massive, brutalist structures, devoid of ornamentation, seemingly intended to make those who walk through them feel diminished and insignificant in the face of the planet's rulers.

When they finally arrive at the arena, they complete their journey by private tram from the top of the arena, direct to the Baron's viewing box at the lowest level. The track descends through the midst of the crowded seats. Their car is entirely enclosed and furnished with tinted windows preventing outsiders from peering in. The enormous stadium appears to be at capacity and the crowd cheers as the player characters' car passes. A successful Average (D1) Communicate test lets the player characters recognize that not all the cheers seem genuine, and that at least some of the audience responds out of obligation or fear. Finally, the car reaches its destination, docking at an adjacent but external station next to the box where Harkonnen guards watch their arrival with great attention.

DINNER AND DETONATIONS

Once past the security detail, the player characters enter the Baron's lavish private viewing box. The room is sumptuously decorated in the baroque Harkonnen style, and features several lounging areas, bars, and statuary likely to upset the sensibilities of the prudish. The room is dominated by a massive, slightly curved window affording a spectacular view of the arena just four meters above the killing floor. A table stretches much of the length of the window, and has been set with fine cutlery and plates, offering each diner a fine view of the evening's entertainment. The events have not started in earnest yet, but a parade of Harkonnen soldiers and military vehicles makes a slow procession around the enormous arena.

The player characters are not the first to arrive. As they enter, they find the Baron already holding court in one of the lounging areas, accompanied by Tamara Pilru. The Baron rises and greets the player characters, introducing them by their full titles to the others in attendance. In turn, he introduces the following guests.

- O Brind Elusa A minor Harkonnen noble and powerful industrialist. She is an attractive woman whose wealth is derived from Giedi Prime's slave trade. She's a charming woman who hopes to seduce one of the player characters and convince them to buy her chattel for use on Arrakis. If rebuked for her immoral business, she becomes conversationally vicious
- Andres Telgu Telgu is introduced as a prominent businessperson who controls several of Barony's foundries. In fact, Telgu is a vicious criminal whom

- the Baron considers a useful pawn in smuggling certain goods off-planet to avoid Imperial taxation. Telgu hopes to ingratiate himself with the player characters, due to their hold over the spice trade.
- Tamara Pilru Pilru is determined to see this dinner be a successful diplomatic moment and does her best to keep conversation pleasant and hopefully, productive. If the player characters begin to become argumentative, she intervenes and smoothes over any difficulties.
- O The Baron Harkonnen The Baron puts his considerable charm on display, hovering amidst the mingling guests and showering the player characters with unctuous praise. If the player characters are rude or broach topics of conversation that he finds uncomfortable, he laughs them off and privately resolves to make them suffer later.
- O Piter de Vries Piter is on his best behavior at this gathering. With a large audience he no longer tries to provoke the player characters, instead hoping that they will be rude to him for his earlier transgressions and create a diplomatic incident that the Harkonnens can leverage. See the A Familiar Face sidebar, page XX, if Piter de Vries is not being used.

The gamemaster should feel free to create additional dinner guests for the player characters to meet, envoys from other great or Harkonnen-subservient Houses, Imperial attaches, representatives of the Bene Gesserit, CHOAM, the Spacing Guild, or any other power of the Imperium that would have good reason to be in attendance. This is potentially a useful time to introduce characters from other chapters in this campaign, especially the nobles of House Jayger and Aurelius, introduced in Chapter 6, either as foreshadowing or as subsequent encounters, if the player characters have played through that chapter already.

The gamemaster should encourage the player characters to guide the dinner conversation. The Baron and Piter are eager to give House Nagara a proverbial rope to hang themselves with and will pay painstaking attention to matters of etiquette and politesse. They also expect this to be the first of many meetings and dinners over the course of the week and are in no rush to instigate conflict. The Harkonnens pepper their conversation with verbal landmines ("Such a shame the difficulties you've had on Arrakis meeting spice quotas.") in the hopes that the player characters take the bait, especially if delegates from other Houses or the Imperial House are present. Other guests present largely avoid becoming directly involved in an argument, if possible, but side with the Harkonnens if pressed; they know what befalls those who make enemies of the Harkonnens. The gamemaster can use this format for most formal interactions the player characters may have with the Baron and Piter throughout this adventure.



THE MAIN EVENT

Eventually, the master of ceremonies takes his place on a stage in the middle of the floor and the Baron points him out as Vas Vaktam, a minor relative of the Harkonnen nobility. Vaktam introduces the Baron with a long list of titles and accomplishments before turning everyone's attention to the Baron himself. The Baron thanks Vaktam for the introduction and then, at length, dedicates this week of games to his good friends and noble cousins of House Nagara. With a dramatic gesture, punctuated with a rise as his suspensor harness lifts him, he opens the events to roaring applause and a timed display of fireworks above the vast arena.

DINNER AND DUELING

For a group of player characters who enjoy combat, the gamemaster may wish to play out some of the arena fights. Players could create gladiators of their own or take the parts of Ishaan and Jaret while their actual characters enjoy their meal. The Dueling conflict system (from **Agents of Dune** or the **Dune Core Rulebook**) can be used to determine the winner of each round.

The initial matches are a series of mass combats between two to six skirmishing groups. While there is an emphasis on bloodshed few combatants die, though serious injuries appear common. The Harkonnens treat these battles as minor diversions from the eight-course dinner being served. They are more interested in the series of single combats that begin after the spectacle of the mass battles. Over the course of several hours, ten individual fighters battle in a tournament to be the winner of the night's games. These battles invariably end in the death of one combatant with the Baron giving a jocular thumbs down indicating the execution of the loser of each fight. These battles are interspersed by clowns and figures of jollity who jape for the crowd while arena workers remove the corpses of the previous matches' losers. Those of House Nagara may find the juxtaposition of small talk, discussions of the elegant food, and the bloody fights on the other side of the window to be somewhat jarring, but the Harkonnens and their guests are used to such brutality. Common cause might be made with more sympathetic dinner guests, who also find the sport not to their taste.

The Harkonnens and other guests make small wagers on the outcomes of these matches but watch with growing interest as two combatants emerge as the likely finalists of the night's bloodshed; Ishaan, a hulking gladiator whose armor consists of a single spiked pauldron which she has used to kill several opponents, armed with a pair of machete-like swords, and Jaret, a smaller, but still very large bald-headed man who has dispatched his foes with a pair of antiquated weapons: the trident and weighted net combination.

When the final match begins between this pair, the Baron and other guests watch with somewhat more interest, continuing to lay wagers of which the characters are welcome to partake. The final combat is tense, and the gladiators seem well-matched. The gamemaster is welcome to choose the winner to best complement the drama of the wagers and attendant conversation among those in the viewing box, but otherwise, assume the larger gladiator, Ishaan, is the victor.

Upon bloodily dispatching her opponent to raucous applause, Vaktam, the master of ceremonies, gestures for the gladiator to climb the arena's center stage. The Baron rises for the address and smiles beatifically, waving casually at the crowd as Ishaan's victories are recounted from the midst of the platform upon which the pair stand flanked by an honor guard of Harkonnen military personnel.

Vaktam finishes praising the winning gladiator and invites the Baron to speak. Before he can do so, Ishaan shouts,

"My victories before are nothing compared to the ones to come! I dedicate my death to the freedom of all from the bastard Baron and the Harkonnen scum! Freedom comes to Giedi Prime!"

With those words, Ishaan detonates a hidden suicide device secreted under her armored pauldron, instantly killing herself, Vaktam, and most of the Harkonnen honor guard. The crowd screams and panics, fleeing the stadium and mobbing across the tracks, making it impossible to leave by tram. The Baron and player characters are protected by a shield, so suffer no harm from the explosion.

In the viewing box, the Baron scowls, and loudly curses his security forces before reassuring his guests that this sort of "mild interruption will be cleaned up shortly and the games will resume."

He is clearly embarrassed but allows his security detail to shuffle him out of the box through a secret trap door just in case there are more bombers in the crowds. The rest of the guests are split up by the Harkonnens' security force and escorted out through the arena. A pair of guards usher the player characters and fellow guest, Andres Telgu, into the stadium seating, informing them that they'll be brought back to their quarters. The guards accompany the player characters through the crowds, shoving and stabbing a way forward.

In truth, the terrorist attack was coordinated in secret by Piter de Vries' own agents. While most of the

workers on Giedi Prime hate their masters, there is no organized rebellion. De Vries has set about creating a mock revolutionary organization to lure the player characters into taking violent action against the Harkonnens (or at least aiding and abetting those who do). Evidence of such actions will be used against House Nagara before the Emperor and the other Houses of the Landsraad.

REBEL ASSASSINS

Turning a corner out of the arena, the pair of Harkonnen guards both drop to the ground, thrown knives protruding from their necks. A group of shabbily dressed men and women armed with maula pistols and knives attack the player characters and anyone accompanying them. These attackers fight to the death and will kill the characters if possible. Telgu fights valiantly with the characters, attempting to disarm one of the attackers and take their weapon for himself.

Among their meager possessions, each of the thugs bears a small Harkonnen insignia on their persons, but close inspection suggests these fighters were mercenaries from a variety of worlds and are not native to Giedi Prime. The player characters might find this sufficient provocation and proof to bring charges against the Harkonnens or make a declaration of kanly. A successful Average(D1) Understand test reminds them that if the Harkonnens wanted to murder them on Giedi Prime, they'd hardly need to hire mercenaries to do so. If the player characters don't think of this on their own, Telgu slyly points it out instead.

At this juncture, Telgu bows and takes his leave, informing the player characters that if they need further aid in their time on Giedi Prime they should feel free to contact him via courier.

As the player characters make their way across the vast plaza to the Harkonnen palace, a slim figure approaches them warily, walking near them as if by mere coincidence in the crowd. He flashes a hand signal identifying him as a Vernius contact and then speaks quietly,

"Our mutual friend will meet with you tomorrow, after second shift. Find me at the gates to the fourth forgeward at shift change and I will lead you to them."

Without another word he slips back into the throngs of panicked people fleeing the attack at the arena.

The player characters can make their way back to the palace where they are admitted without issue. Once returned to their chambers, they have some time uninterrupted to discuss the nights' events and make plans to meet their informant tomorrow. They'll likely want to obtain a map of the city and consider how best to excuse their absence from the palace to the Baron.

REBEL THUGS

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS DRIVES 4 SKILL FOCUSES BATTLE: 6 Knife COMMUNICATE: 4 DISCIPLINE: 4 MOVE: 5

Assets: Maula Pistol, Knife

INTO THE MACHINE

After making their excuses to the Baron (via a predictably irritated Piter de Vries), the player characters head to their rendezvous. To detect their Harkonnen shadows they must pass a Daunting (D3) **Understand** test. If they wish to avoid losing their tails they must succeed in a Challenging (D2) **Move** test. If they succeed in the first test, they notice a pair of Harkonnen agents attempting to follow them. If they pass the second, they can then manage to lose the spies in the crowds of the city.

Their route via trams and conveyor belt walkways takes them far from the palace to the outskirts of the city. Here, at its edges, Barony's polished appearance begins to tarnish. The plazas, monuments, and efficient factories toured by visitors give way to a sprawl of increasingly filthy and ill-maintained facilities. The air grows thick with smog and the teeming crowds of workers look harried and gaunt. Sparks cascade onto the streets and the din of heavy industry is overwhelming. There is little clear delineation between factories, tenements, and throughways here, and it seems that some workers live in dwellings attached or even within their places of labor, creating hazardous conditions for all.

ONE LAYER AT A TIME

When the player characters arrive at the gates of the fourth forge-ward, shortly before shift change, they find a pair of massive steel gates shut, barring entrance to an expansive industrial facility. The heat of the forges within can be felt even from a distance and a crowd of sullen workers mills outside, awaiting the beginning of their

shift. Harkonnen guards man watchtowers to either side of the gates. While the player characters stand out, few guards challenge anyone of their social standing. Guests of the Baron go where they like. If the player characters disguise themselves as workers, no one looks twice at them if they blend into the crowds.

An ear-piercing electronic tone splits the air, signifying the change of shift. The gates swing open, and the press of bodies is intense as workers exit and enter the ward. The player characters see their contact, the red-headed man they met the previous night. He subtly gestures at them to follow. He does not speak and leads them through the crowd into the oppressive heat of the ward.

Passing factories and industrial facilities, they're led into a warren of narrow, filthy, and poorly-lit alleys. The people they see here look harrowed, even desperate. A few times, loitering groups of people, move menacingly towards the player characters, only backing off when their guide brandishes a maula pistol. He does his best not to speak with the player characters, only grunting answers to questions when required.

Eventually, the player characters are led to a perilous set of stairs descending into the basement of a dilapidated tenement building. Their contact knocks a certain pattern on the iron-bound door, and it swings open. He gestures them to enter and then departs without another word.

The room they find themselves in is a dingy, humid storage space a few dozen meters on each side. A few stained cots indicate that people sleep here amidst the boxes of junk and debris. A woman sits on a crate amidst the clutter. She wears the garments of a Harkonnen worker, with her hair tied back, her dark skin made even darker by soot and industrial grime. She looks haggard and nervous, waiting for the player characters to initiate conversation.

She quietly introduces herself as Selm and asks for a guarantee of safe passage from Giedi Prime in return for her information. Granted this, she rises, but before she can speak the whine of a dart gun can be heard, as a small metal spike slams into her from behind her and pierces her skull, killing her instantly. If the player characters manage to save her, she actually does have information that proves the Harkonnens' hand in the death of Countess Nagara. The player characters must find a way to smuggle her off Giedi Prime, as detailed in Act III.

A successful Daunting (D3) **Understand** test determines the attack vector of the missile, which now lays lodged in the young woman's head. If the player characters act fast, they can likely uncover the assassin. By succeeding in an Average (D1) **Move** test, they can track the assassin, occupying a hidden compartment in a back room of the basement. She is fumbling with a suicide pill as the player characters arrive. Her name is Orana. If they fail to restrain her, or kill her themselves, she bears the markings of a Harkonnen factory worker and little else of note. For Orana, use the Technician on page 293 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**, and add a dart-gun to her assets.

Orana is sullen and not easily intimidated. She is a Harkonnen worker employed by an outside employer she does not know (actually, House Vernius). She was hired and blackmailed by an anonymous agent who paid her a handsome fee and provided her with a suicide pill to be used in the event of her imminent capture. She believes her family will be paid a substantial additional fee if she takes her own life rather than be interrogated, so begs the characters to let her do so. The substantial funds her family would receive in this scenario would potentially allow them to afford passage off Giedi Prime in search of employment in a less hellish place. Realistically, the player characters may guess, her family is most likely going to be killed no matter what Orana does.

With a successful Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test, the player characters may be able to soothe Orana and gain her begrudging trust by offering to help her family out of their situation. In truth, the player characters have no authority to interfere in such a matter. Orana and her family are the feudal vassals of House Harkonnen and attempting to extricate these serfs from their indenture would technically be an act of theft.

While Orana doesn't know her handler, she is willing to let the player characters surreptitiously trail her to the appointed rendezvous at her home. Orana takes the player characters on a walking tour of the horrific working conditions of Barony. As they move ever

deeper into the industrial slums of outer Barony, they see overseers whipping and abusing workers, child laborers, and the occasional corpse in the street. The choking smog grows so thick that some workers wear makeshift respirators or simply water-soaked rags wrapped around their faces.

Orana eventually leads the player characters to her home, a tiny room on the ground floor of a rusted tenement. The dingy room has no windows and is dominated by a pair of cots, with a toilet in one corner for a bathroom and a simple hot plate in the opposite corner, functioning as a kitchen. Orana's two children and husband are both working their own shifts. Orana tells the player characters to wait opposite the tenement's entrance for her handler. She describes him as a thin man with hawkish features, and she expects him to arrive in approximately an hour.

The player characters have this time to lay their ambush. They must succeed in a Challenging (D2) **Move** test to remain hidden from him. To complicate matters, Orana's children, a boy and girl, six and ten years of age, return home just a moment behind the agent. He does not hesitate to use the children as hostages should the player characters attempt to capture him.

If they apprehend the handler, he initially claims to be Harkonnen, giving the false name Hasim. If the player characters believe this, he feigns reluctance but spills a lengthy story to buy time and escape. If the characters succeed in a Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test they realize he is lying. Under further duress and interrogation he reveals his true name Tauth and his identity as an agent of House Vernius.

Tauth is not privy to the details of House Vernius' schemes. By succeeding in an Average (D1) **Understand** test, the player characters realize that Tauth's testimony would probably not be sufficient to level charges against House Vernius before the Landsraad, but would most likely justify a War of Assassins or declaration of kanly. Clever player characters might realize that their better option might be to instead see if they can turn House Harkonnen against House Vernius, leading their enemies to battle one another.

Orana is grateful to the player characters for extricating her from Tauth's schemes, but unless they have plans to smuggle her off-world, she asks that they leave quickly before they draw attention to her and her family.

LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

During their time in the outer parts of Barony, the player characters may encounter workers, and even child laborers, being abused or maltreated by the Harkonnen overseers. If the player characters choose to intervene on behalf of a laborer, a pair of Harkonnen guards tell them to leave immediately. While the guards

are well-armed, they are reticent to attack the player characters, knowing them to be guests of their Baron. Only if attacked do they attempt to seriously harm the player characters, but they have no compunctions about using lethal force against the workers. If necessary, use the description of the House Soldier/Guard on page 283 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

If the player characters intervene and take up arms on behalf of the laborers, a riot quickly ensues. It is possible that the player characters will be reported as instigators. The riot spills out across several vast factory floors, quickly engulfing the whole ward as the Harkonnens deploy squads of their soldiers to suppress the crowd. The gamemaster can simply make this riot a narrative element, adding one or more steps of Difficulty to any actions the player characters attempt, or it can be handled as an environmental threat with a Quality 1. As the riot is not directed at the player characters, there is no reason to force them to engage in it. If, however, a more dangerous or engaging scene is desired, some rioters or Harkonnen soldiers might target the player characters for individual battles.

During the riot, the player characters see a stocky worker disarm one of the Harkonnen guards and turn his lasgun against the others. A small group of laborers form up around this man and make their way through the press of bodies towards the characters, making a gesture of parley. He shouts, "I saw what you did for us! Let me help you!" The hulking man and his guard shove a way forward for the player characters, leading them through the riot and into the warren of alleys that comprise much of the ward.

If the player characters take no pains to escape detection or turn down the aid of Hondo Marsh (see later), they quickly find themselves apprehended by a significant armed force led by Umman Kudu, commander of the Harkonnen guard force, and brought before the Baron for judgment occurring in Act III. For Kudu, use the House Soldier/Guard from page 238 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

The group ushers the player characters into a dilapidated warehouse, where the leader of the group informs them they'll need to be blindfolded to go any further. If the player characters demur, he thanks them once more for their aid and tells them that they're free to make their own way from there. If they agree, they have heavy hoods placed over their heads and are led on a convoluted route. The heat and humidity are oppressive. If the player characters manage to sneak a peek, they find that their newfound allies are leading them on a circuitous, convoluted route through a subterranean complex of narrow service tunnels, their path clearly intended to confuse their ability to backtrack. A Mentat might be able to remember this path with a successful Challenging (D2) **Understand** test.

CLANDESTINE MEETING

When the player characters finally reach their destination, their hoods are removed, and they find themselves blinking in the dim light of what seems to be a disused warehouse. A few men and women are there, a pair at a table full of mechanical parts and beakers of chemicals, while two more stand guard at bay doors, each armed with an old maula rifle.

Marsh is a Criminal as described in the **Dune Core Rulebook**, page 275.

The leader of the group who saved them from the riot introduces himself.

"Thank you again for what you did today. Those of us who live under the Harkonnen boot expect nothing from strangers, but your actions saved a life, and that's a rare thing to be done on Giedi Prime. I'm Hondo Marsh, and my people and I are working one knife at a time to overcome the tyranny of the Harkonnens. If you are truly the kind of people I believe you to be, we might have an opportunity to help one another one more time. We have the proof of the Harkonnens' hand in the death of your Countess. Prove your good intentions to us and we'll give you what you need to bring justice against the bastards."

In fact, Hondo is a Harkonnen agent in the employ of Piter de Vries. De Vries is counting on the player characters to side with the fictional resistance and use their actions to politically entrap them. Hondo won't give the details of his evidence until the player characters have proven themselves to him and the itinerant resistance, but he is telling the truth and his intentions are pure. If the characters agree, he speaks once more.

"I'm gladdened to hear it. We have a task for you, something that only off-worlders of your status can help us with. We have an accomplice in the Harkonnens' palace. Return to your quarters and expect a visitor tomorrow, immediately after the noontime meal. Do as she says, and we will provide you all you need to prove your case against the Baron."

If the player characters return to the palace, they need to have a strong alibi regarding their whereabouts for the day. The Harkonnens are suspicious and all too eager to assume that the player characters are conspiring against them. That evening, the player characters are invited once more to a night of dinner at the arena, this time it begins with the execution of several so-called dissidents, followed by more gladiatorial combat, sometimes cruelly combining the two activities by forcing the dissidents to fight one another or far superior Harkonnen gladiators.



SECRET MISSION

The next day, good to Marsh's word, there is a knock at the door to their suite just after the noontime meal. A woman enters, dressed in the simple black garb of a Harkonnen servant. She bows to the player characters and asks permission to clean their quarters. Any attempts to speak with her are met with silence, but as she departs, she places a small metal case on a table, and a slip beneath it, printed with a note. The note simply reads, "Leave package in Harkonnen viewing box."

Examining the case proves it readily to be a small explosive device, controlled remotely. If the player characters choose to follow through with this request, they do so without interference. After all, the Harkonnens hope to entrap the player characters, so they are conveniently creating "holes" and blind spots in their security coverage specifically to allow this attempt.

However, the player characters have no way of knowing this, so the gamemaster should play out their movements through Harkonnen security as they enter the tram and into the viewing box itself. If the player characters succeed in an Average (D1) **Understand** test, the gamemaster should let them know that it does seem as if it is easier to transport this explosive device than it should be. Piter de Vries considers them to be of low

intellect and does not anticipate them recognizing his subtle trap.

If the player characters complete their task, presumably leaving the bomb somewhere discreet within the viewing box, they can wait out the rest of the stressful evening of games and diplomatic chit-chat without issue, though the Baron and Piter ask several pointed questions leaving the player characters to wonder how much they know. The Harkonnens do not detonate their bomb until the following morning, and the player characters are awoken by Kudu's house guard, seeking to arrest them for their terrorist act, unless they've already fled the planet.

Whatever choices the player characters have now made result in a narrowing set of options. They may be in possession of evidence they could use against the Harkonnens, have uncovered the fact that House Vernius seems to be manipulating them, or committed acts of "theft" and insurrection against their hosts, the Harkonnens. No matter the case, the gamemaster should provide the player characters with some breathing room to discuss their options. The player characters should be reminded that as far as their hosts are concerned, they are still expected to attend a week of formal dinners and events in their honor. They should have the chance to discuss their course of action moving forward into Act III.

LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY...

The final act of this chapter can follow several paths, depending on the choices the player characters have made and the information they have uncovered. The following sections outline the most likely scenarios arising from the events of Act II, but it is likely that the player characters' actions will entangle them in several of these outcomes. The gamemaster should familiarize themself with all the following material and pick and choose those elements that apply to their campaign.

GETTING OFF-WORLD

It's possible the player characters will need to escape Giedi Prime due to their transgressions against the Harkonnens or need to help one of their newfound allies off-planet. If the player characters need to escape surreptitiously, they must first secure passage from the planet's surface to a Spacing Guild heighliner.

The Guild maintains a facility in Barony which functions as equal parts transit depot, bank, and embassy. Should the player characters wish to take the more official route they could purchase their fare directly here, though if they are fleeing, their Harkonnen host's patrols attempt to interdict them before they can enter. The Guild remains typically neutral, but may take a dim view of the player characters and substantially increase their fees if they are attempting to free Harkonnen workers. However, being in control of Arrakis and the all-important spice trade gives the player characters significant leverage in these negotiations, and they can most likely convince the Guild to turn a blind eye to their feudal transgressions against the Harkonnens.

If the player characters are unwilling to risk drawing attention to themselves at the Guild's facilities, their next best option is to contact Andres Telgu (page XX). Depending on how much attention they've drawn to themselves, Telgu may already be aware of their situation and initiate contact himself. His criminal network is well informed of the goings-on among the laborers and may be better informed on any riots or uprisings than the Harkonnens themselves.

Whatever the case, Telgu is eager to make a deal with them. He already has a smoothly operating smuggling operation on Giedi Prime and a few other Harkonnenheld worlds that he wishes to expand to include Arrakis. He asks that the player characters introduce him to the smugglers there and give him tacit permission to take over the illicit spice trade of Arrakis.

In return, he will arrange for the immediate transport of the player characters and up to three Harkonnen laborers off

Giedi Prime and to the safety of an orbiting Guild heighliner, though they must make their own payments to the Guild for transport to Arrakis. Naturally, he also generously offers to cut the player characters in for a substantial cut of the profits of his future spice smuggling operation.

If the player characters accept, they find their journey offworld to be fast, efficient, and free of drama. Telgu's operatives make contact with them almost immediately after their return to Arrakis to make good on their end of the deal.

VERNIUS' TRAP

It is entirely possible that the player characters do not discover the intentions of House Vernius on Giedi Prime. While their envoy, Pilru, is entirely innocent in their deceptions, her masters will be satisfied with any outcome that sees the player characters initiating open hostilities with House Harkonnen, or the reverse. If the player characters uncover the deceptions of Piter de Vries and his catspaw, Hondo Marsh, they would have sufficient cause to declare kanly or a War of Assassins against the Harkonnens. The player characters would be wise to wait until they have left Giedi Prime before doing so, as a declaration of hostilities while on Giedi Prime would likely result in their swift murders, regardless of their diplomatic status. If the player characters do pursue this course of action during their stay, they'll need to swiftly escape the planet. Pilru, a dupe herself, does what she can to smooth things over while the player characters attempt to escape. She may be able to buy them valuable time, but takes no actions that would knowingly create serious friction between Houses Vernius and Harkonnen.

If the player characters inform Pilru of the death of Selm and their failure to garner information about the death of Countess Nagara, she expresses her sincere sympathies and does what she can to help them extricate themselves from Giedi Prime. If House Nagara declares hostilities resulting in a War of Assassins or kanly with House Harkonnen they gain + 1 Honor and Landsraad Support but –2 to Military Power, as it will be a costly conflict, even if it is a righteous one.

Alternately, the Harkonnens might instigate hostilities. If the player characters are caught aiding rioters, helping pyons escape from Giedi Prime, or are otherwise apprehended while interfering in the business of the Harkonnen's feudal home, the Baron is delighted to play the wounded party before the Landsraad. Should the player characters be captured in the act, they are brought in chains before the Baron and Piter de Vries,

and subjected to a lengthy, gloating lecture before being imprisoned while the Baron makes efforts to formally accuse them of their crimes.

The player characters may be able to escape through their own means, but still need aid in fleeing the planet. A successful escape, however, might be taken as an admission of guilt by their peers. Ultimately, they'll be released under pressure from the Landsraad and permitted to return to Arrakis, as the Harkonnens simply declare kanly or engage in a sanctioned War of Assassins after dragging the name of House Nagara through the mud before the Landsraad. If the player characters are caught flat-footed and the Harkonnens bring charges against them, House Nagara's Landsraad Support and Military Power indices are both reduced by –2.

If the player characters successfully instigated any riots or labor disputes, they only lose –1 Military Power, as the Harkonnens must spend their own resources quelling rebellions and riots.

Either of the above scenarios describe the preferred outcome for House Vernius. Should the Harkonnens and House Nagara enter a protracted conflict, Vernius makes diplomatic overtures to both Houses, while providing no meaningful support to either side.

TURNING THE TABLES

If the player characters are clever and patient, they may be able to evade the traps set by their enemies, and instead set them against one another. This outcome is the only true success available to the player characters once they've stepped foot on Giedi Prime but is the most difficult to attain. To achieve this, they must have uncovered Vernius' plot by capturing and interrogating their operative Tauth and then convinced the Harkonnens to hear his testimony themselves.

This is easier said than done, as the Harkonnens do not have ready access to a Bene Gesserit with Truthsense. They are also inclined to believe the player characters are simply lying to evade their own malfeasance. If the player characters succeed at an Average (D1)

Communicate test, they can convince Piter de Vries to interrogate Tauth himself. Naturally, Tauth does not survive the twisted Mentat's ministrations. If this occurs, the Harkonnens expel the player characters from Giedi Prime immediately, claiming "a security issue."

As the player characters depart the palace, they witness a baffled and terrified Tamara Pilru being escorted away by Harkonnen guards respectfully but with implied menace. She pleads with the player characters to save her, but nothing short of outright violence sees her release. She is not heard from again (unless the gamemaster has additional plans for her). In this scenario, House Nagara gains +1 Ruthlessness and +1 Wealth as their resources are freed from House Vernius' interference.





"History is a tool to be used, a weapon to be wielded. The past must conform to the needs of the Imperium, otherwise an Emperor has failed utterly in his duty."

—Emperor Fondil III, The Hunter,
'Private Guidance on the Expansion of Imperial Archives on Kaitain"

SUMMARY ouse Nagara travels to Kaitain to give their first report on Arrakis to the CHOAM Board of Directors and the Emperor. Regular in-person meetings are infrequent, but Shaddam IV uses the recent change in Arrakis governorship to strong-arm the Directors into arriving in person. He intends to redeem himself after his failure during the Great Spice War by forcing a vote related to spice stockpiling, which he believes will pit the allies of House Harkonnen against House Nagara. Why does the Emperor want House Nagara eliminated? House Nagara has a blood tie to House Corrino through a bastard relation of Fondil III, which grants them a few additional shares in CHOAM. These shares have the power to shake long-established voting blocs and foil the Emperor's long-term plans. Because the CHOAM Board of Directors on Kaitan is significant, House Corrino turns this meeting into a multi day affair, filling it with various social events including an opera performance, an afterparty, a parade, and a royal ball. The adventure ends on the last day when House Nagara gives their report, and the Board of Directors vote on what to do about the melange stockpiles.

IN SEARCH OF A LITTLE ACTION

While the setting of Kaitain presents several unique political opportunities, there are few physical challenges. Almost every House, faction, and organization has an embassy on the planet. These embassies make establishing ties and tracking down information easier. However, it can limit combat as a tool. Open warfare on the streets of Corrinth City attracts attention, and those who disrupt the relative peace and tranquility of the Imperial Capital are likely to suffer severe repercussions.

To add an element of physical danger to Chapter 3, the gamemaster can have House Harkonnen dispatch a small group (1–3) of assassins armed with knives, poison, and hunter-seekers. These assassins track the heirs of House Nagara during their tour of Kaitain, waiting for the perfect moment to strike. They could ambush player characters coming out of the crypt or deploy a hunter-seeker during the military parade.

Intelligent assassins use disguises and **Move** to track the player characters via stealth. At least once per scene (no more than once per location), the player characters can use **Discipline** or **Understand** tests to spot them. For ease, use the Assassin described on page 272 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**.

THE EVENT OF THE SEASON

House Nagara's shuttle descends toward Kaitain, offering an awe-inspiring view of Corrinth City. No cloud obscures the sparkling vista of titanic skyscrapers and thin, elegant towers. These opulent buildings reflect sunlight as if each structure was a glittering jewel set in an emperor's crown. The pilot flies by the Landsraad Hall of Oratory, the tallest peak in a range of legislative and government offices surrounding a lush commons. Along its outer wall, the Great Houses' colorful banners flap in the gentle breeze and act like heralds announcing Corrinth City as the political center of the Known Universe.

After weaving between two colossal sculptures, the Imperial Palace emerges on the horizon. A tribute to Imperial power, never once have stormy skies diminished its splendor. As the shuttle lands on a velvet-clad platform, a fanfare of trumpets welcomes House Nagara.

Princess Josifa Corrino stands on the platform flanked by a dozen Imperial guards, adorned in impeccable gray and black uniforms. When the player characters exit the shuttle, she smiles.

"House Nagara. My father regrets that he could not greet you himself, but on behalf of the Court of Shaddam IV, 81st Padishah Emperor of the Known Universe, welcome to Kaitain. We trust your stay will be both enjoyable and productive. Indeed, we have awaited your arrival with great anticipation and hope you will enjoy the festivities held in your honor.

"Please allow me to accompany you to the Residency, where we will act as your hosts for the duration of your time with us."

The group travels by ground car to the Residency adjacent to the Grand Hall. Passing underneath an archway of crimson lava rock, Josifa explains how the ancient gateway survived the atomic devastation laid against Salusa Secundus generations ago. Past the archway is the central atrium, dominated by a magnificent golden statue of Emperor Shaddam Corrino IV in full Sardaukar regalia with a ceremonial sword raised high.

Once they reach the Residency, the Imperial guards escort the player characters and their belongings to their designated rooms 30 stories above the sophisticated metropolis below. Lavish by any standard, the apartments could house a dozen individuals. Tall windows look out over Corrinth City as gold and purple lights replace the setting sun. Two notable supporting characters lead a small army of servants eager to serve House Nagara. Jain is a social secretary who assists in making arrangements and maintains (with a

stranglehold) the itinerary. Lela is the butler in charge of the staff serving House Nagara. The pair are omnipresent, even when the characters might wish them otherwise. They are described on page XX, following.

If the player characters attempt to dismiss them from the apartments, they ask, "Are you rejecting the hospitality of the Emperor?"

During the prelude, the player characters can search the apartment for listening devices and spy-eyes they may (or may not) want to disable. They can attempt an **Understand** test as follows:

- A success with a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test has them find electronic spy-eyes in the main living room, kitchen, and hallways.
- Succeeding with a Dire (D4) Understand test, allows them to also find better-concealed spy-eyes within their assigned bedrooms.

Unfortunately, the possible culprits behind the spy-eyes are somewhat limitless. The list of individuals who may want inside information on the new stewards of Arrakis and their activities while on Kaitain include every House, faction, and organization within the Imperium. That said, if the player characters bring the matter to Jain and Lela, the pair apologize profusely and initiate a thorough search. They succeed in removing any surveillance devices for the remainder of the story.

Afterward, the player characters can review their tight social schedule. The Emperor has personally invited House Nagara to the opera, which begins in a few hours with an after-party to follow. The next day, the player characters have a late brunch at the Contemplation Tea House, followed by a formal parade and then a royal ball in the evening. The third day concludes events with a formal presentation on spice production before the CHOAM Board of Directors.

For reference, the CHOAM Board of Directors is different from the Landsraad High Council. Directors set economic policy for all goods and services exchanged within the Imperium. Directorships are granted by the Emperor, often as a reward, and while they usually only apply to Major Houses, some Minor Houses have managed to earn the position. By contrast, the Landsraad High Council merely handles disputes between Houses within the Imperium.



JAIN AND LELA

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Jain and Lela function as a pair and appear as if they could be related. They often pass themselves off as siblings even though they have no actual blood relation. Jain serves as the social secretary for the event, and his "sister" functions as the butler. The two were born on Kaitan and trained from birth to serve House Corrino. They are intimately familiar with every aspect of Court and remain obedient to a fault.

While other guests have approached Jain and Lela to meet with (or spy upon) the player characters, they take their instructions solely from Beely Ridondo, the Court Chamberlain, who has instructed them to make House Nagara as comfortable as possible for the duration of their visit.



Traits: Servant, Dedicated

TALENTS:

- O Constantly Watching: Whenever Jain or Lela attempt a skill test to detect danger or hidden enemies, they may reduce the Difficulty by 2, to a minimum of 0. In addition, once per scene, when an enemy chooses to Keep the Initiative, they can increase the cost by +2.
- O Nimble: When attempting a Move test over rugged terrain, Jain or Lela may reduce the test Difficulty by –2. If this reduces the Difficulty to 0, they may move over or around that obstacle freely.

Assets: Emergency Transmitter, Skeleton Key, Trusted Access

GAMES WITHIN GAMES

While the natural and "mostly correct" assumption is that Jain and Lela are spies, the two notable servants also provide a side plot. How the player characters treat them creates trustworthy accomplices or inconvenient enemies of them. Meeting specific criteria raises or lowers the Difficulty tests for giving them the slip in Corrinth City and may affect how the Emperor interacts with the player characters in Act IV.

The gamemaster should utilize a basic Loyalty scale rated 1–5 to represent the feelings of these two servants towards them. The player characters start at a neutral rating of 3. Falling to 1 will make Jain and Lela more suspicious and uncooperative when dealing with the player characters, whereas raising the scale to 5 represents their genuine cooperation and loyalty, even over that of their master, the Emperor.

Every time the player characters threaten, abuse, or belittle Jain or Lela, the scale should decrease by -1. Every time the player characters offer respect, trust, or appreciation, the scale should increase by +1. The scale cannot go below 1, and it cannot go any higher than 5.

If the scale is at 1, the social secretary and butler will thwart attempts to deviate from the schedule and will be obstinate about any aid to the player characters, reporting their every move to their superiors. If the scale is at 5, the two turn a blind eye.

THE ULTIMATE ARTFORM

As night falls on Corrinth City, weather satellites ensure a picture-perfect view of Kaitain's four moons against a backdrop of stars. A golden ground car gives the player characters a lift to the Hassik III Center for the Performing Arts.

BOX SEATS

The Hassik III Center for the Performing Arts is one of the Imperium's largest and most innovative performance halls. The cavernous building, with its prismatic windows, maximizes the vocal acoustics of each acclaimed talent to take the stage. Spectators can hear the nuance of a whisper in the highest row of the Balcony.

As the player characters exit the ground car and enter the performance center, they pass fountains of blue fire and a strange statue of a knight errant. Jain explains the sculpture depicts the character of Don Quixote, an ancient and charming legend, which was the first production ever performed there.

Once inside, white marble walls contrast a ruby red floor. Jain directs the player characters past Landsraad members, agents, diplomats, and emissaries, each dressed in formal military attire, post-Butlerian tuxedos, flowing gowns, and exquisite dresses in the latest fashions. Eventually, they arrive at box seats reserved for House Nagara, only to find a group of giggling young nobles already sitting there.

Jain apologizes for the confusion as he shoos these mischief-makers out, though not before a lady in a cream dress leaves her purse behind. With a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test, the player characters can deduce she did this on purpose and then decide to search it, return it, or keep it. Inside the purse is 100 solaris, a security key identifying the owner as Lady Magnolia Kae, and a program for tonight's event: 'The Revenger's Comedy', performed by the Royal Kaitain Company.

The player characters can track down Lady Kae during the intermission or at the after-party with a successful Challenging **Understand** (D2) test. They can also have Jain return the purse for them. If the player characters immediately return the purse, either personally or through their staff, the gamemaster can choose to increase the Loyalty scale for Jain by +1.

The Emperor arrives fashionably late, knowing, perhaps, the show will never start without him. His entourage includes Count Hasimir Fenring, Lady Margot Fenring, Princess Josifa, and Reverend Mother Montemagni. However, the gamemaster may also include agents

of the Spacing Guild, CHOAM officers, or dignitaries from any other faction as well. Depending on when this chapter occurs in the campaign, important figures from other chapters may also be in attendance. The player characters can interact with the royal family at the opera, during the intermission, and at the after-party.

As the production begins, the performers gesture in welcome to the Emperor, currently sitting in his box seat. Shaddam IV stands and raises his hand as the audience erupts in thunderous applause. He takes his time quieting the adulation before he proclaims:

"Sharing the stage with us this fine evening are the representatives of House Nagara. To the new siridar governors of Arrakis, we place our utmost trust and faith in your work and look forward to years of peace, prosperity, and progress!"

Another round of applause engulfs the room and draws silent as the production begins. 'The Revenger's Comedy,' a new operatic production performed by the Royal Kaitain Company, retells the story of House Tantor's use of atomics against House Corrino on Salusa Secundus and the forced relocation of the Imperial capital to Kaitain. With Emperor Hassik Corrino III as the central hero of the story, he spends four hours systematically destroying the entire bloodline of House Tantor. The production is humorous, if a little macabre, with copious amounts of fake blood splashed across the stage at every opportunity.

THE AFTER-PARTY

After the production ends, Jain escorts the player characters back to the Residency to join the after-party on the observation deck. The movers and shakers of the Known Universe chuckle and converse while gazing at the vast splendor of Corrinth City. Those in attendance include the Emperor and his entourage, but attendees can also include notable supporting characters from other chapters throughout Masters of Dune. The gamemaster can also insert notable supporting characters during the after-party to establish relationships for future chapters, ranging from representatives of House Jayger or House Aurelius (Chapter 6), a Bene Gesserit emissary (Chapter 7), or even Cenric, a Spacing Guild Envoy (Chapter 8). Descriptions of the Emperor, Count Fenring, and other notable supporting characters can be found in Chapter 9 of the Dune Core Rulebook.

The player characters may use this opportunity to return the purse to Lady Kae. If they have already returned her bag, Lady Kae can locate the player characters at the party to thank them. Lady Kae can approach the player characters and politely ask for it if they have not returned it. During this exchange, Lady Kae asks if they have had a chance to visit the tomb of Fondil III in the Mausoleum directly below the Residency. She goes one step further and suggests they meet her there during the Emperor's toast. Ultimately this can take a few minutes or a few hours. Success with an Average (D1) **Understand** test confirms Lady Kae has an ulterior motive, though there is no malice or treachery to her invitation.

To attend the clandestine meeting, one or more members of House Nagara need to ditch Jain and Lela, along with their guards and attendants, and sneak into the Mausoleum.

- O Do they charm, deceive, or intimidate a guard with a Challenging (D2) Communicate test?
- O Do they command an attendant to let them pass with a Daunting (D3) Discipline test?
- O Do they attempt to infiltrate the Mausoleum, masquerading as staff, with a Dire (D4) Discipline test?
- O Do they employ stealth, attempting to simply sneak out of the party with a Challenging (D2) **Move** test?
- O Do they smuggle someone out of the room with a Daunting (D3) **Understand** test?

The gamemaster should adjust the challenge based on the strategy of their player characters. If Jain and Lela currently have a negative view of them (2 or below on their Loyalty scale), increase the Difficulty of each action by +1. If they view the player characters positively (4+ on the Loyalty scale), decrease the Difficulty by -1.

A CRYPTIC MEETING

Beneath the Imperial Opal Palace is the Mausoleum. Generations of deceased Corrinos are honored there, each in their unique way. Precious, ornate urns hold cremated remains while ground bones of others were used to make funereal porcelain pieces. Transparent coffins, sealed within null-entropy fields, display other corpses such as the most recent editions to the Mausoleum: Fafnir, Shaddam IV's older brother; and Chalice, Shaddam IV's deceased daughter.

When the player characters reach the tomb of Fondil III, two taxidermied predators, a spiny ecadroghe from Ecaz and a saber-bear from III Delta Kaising, brace the pitted iron door. Instead of Lady Kae waiting for them, the player characters find Princess Josifa Corrino.

"Please forgive the clandestine nature of this surprise," she says. "And do forgive my friend, Lady Kae, for the deception. She was merely doing as I asked. I am not sure whether spies or gossips outnumber each other at the party."

She hesitates and disguises her anxiousness with a smile. "My father is a proud man with the weight of the universe on his shoulders. Decades on the throne have made him distrustful of anyone who might take power away from him. I know he appears to be your friend, but I must warn you, he isn't."

Glancing absently at the stuffed saber-bear, she says, "I chose this tomb specifically for our encounter. Fondil III. My great grandfather. He was something of a hunter, as you can see. His prey was the multitude of beasts of the Known Universe and, well, certain individuals who were not his wife."

Josifa's cheeks turn an innocent shade of pink. "It's a fascinating story, actually. You should investigate the Imperial Archives here on Kaitain. I think you'll find the official lineage of Fondil III quite shocking. I know I did because—"

Suddenly, a metal ringing echoes throughout the Mausoleum, cutting Josifa's monologue short. From the doorway, Reverend Mother Montemagni taps her metallic cane against the stone floor. The old Bene Gesserit shakes her head as she enters the scene, and the Corrino daughter transforms from social butterfly to chastened student. Montemagni asks Josifa why she would bring such honored guests to a crypt and suggests everyone return to the party immediately. Josifa makes a polite excuse for everyone and leads the group out of the Mausoleum. The player characters are free to return to the party or retire for the evening.

Bene Gesserit player characters (or those with Bene Gesserit training) notice the hand signals exchanged between the two women. At the same time Montemagni was questioning Josifa's decision to bring them to the tomb, a Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test reveals Montemagni was also upset with Josifa for interfering with her father's plans. This test can only be made by those with Bene Gesserit training.

PRINCESS JOSIFA CORRINO

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Quiet and composed, Josifa lacks the ruthlessness found in her father or her older sister, Wensicia. Her genuine empathy for the poor has garnered her esteem from members of the Landsraad, but has also earned enmity from Imperial Court rivals.

As the second youngest of the Corrino daughters, Josifa is not responsible for carrying the same political weight as her older sisters, Irulan and Wensicia. She will marry some noble to fulfill one of her father's schemes or as part of the Bene Gesserit breeding program. Still, she is relieved the responsibility of carrying on the family name falls elsewhere. Spared this duty, she devotes most of her time toward academia and the arts. She also serves on the boards of charities and museums and finances productions at the Hassik III Center for the Performing Arts.

DRIVE STATEMENT DUTY: 4 FAITH: 6 JUSTICE: 5 POWER: 4 TRUTH: 7 There is always something new to learn. SKILL FOCUSES BATTLE: 3 COMMUNICATE: 6 Empathy

Traits: Princess, Academic, Bene Gesserit

DISCIPLINE:

UNDERSTAND:

MOVE:

TALENTS:

Once per scene, Josifa may use her Understand skill on a single skill test instead of any other skill, which counts as a Focus for that test.

Etiquette,

Imperial Politics

O- Prana-Bindu: Josifa can re-roll 1d20 on a Move or Discipline test.

Assets: Court Influence, Emergency Transmitter,

REVEREND MOTHER MONTEMAGNI

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Montemagni's origins are a mystery among rank-and-file Bene Gesserit. When Josifa Corrino was born, Wallach IX dispatched Montemagni to Kaitain to train the young princess. Protective of her ward, Montemagni is less cruel than her counterparts, though no less strict.

When Josifa appeared less interested in the machinations of court politics, Montemagni guided the young Corrino toward art and education. Rumors suggest Montemagni has something of a friendly rivalry with Reverend Mother Gaius Helen Mohiam, though she hotly denies such claims.

,			
DRIVE	STATI	EMENT	
DUTY: 7	The Sist	erhood above all things.	
FAITH: 6			
JUSTICE: 5			
POWER: 5			
TRUTH: 5			
SKI	LL	FOCUSES	
BATTLE: 3			
COMMUNICA	TE: 6	Secret Language (Bene Gesserit), Teaching	
DISCIPLI	NE: 7	Observe	
МО	VE: 5		
UNDERSTAN	ND: 7		

Traits: Bene Gesserit, Reverend Mother

TALENTS

- O Hyperawareness: Whenever Montemagni spends
 Threat to Obtain Information, she may ask two questions
 for each point spent. Further, the limits of what others
 would be able to notice do not apply to her.
- O- Prana-bindu: Montemagni can re-roll 1d20 on a Move or Discipline test.
- O- Voice: Montemagni can spend 1–3 Threat to buy that many automatic successes on a Communicate test.

Assets: Bene Gesserit Students, Gom Jabbar, Robes of a Reverend Mother

PRIDE OF LIONS

Brunch at the Contemplation Tea House allows the player characters to reconnect with dignitaries they may have met at the opera. Adjacent to the Opal Palace, ornate gardens blooming with color and crawling with wildlife from a dozen different planets surround the exclusive restaurant. The player characters may realize that they can use the Contemplation Tea House to have private meetings with others at any time while they're on Kaitain.

A CONTEMPLATIVE BRUNCH

During brunch, Count Hasimir Fenring approaches the table. Confidant to the Emperor, the notorious Count cuts through the teahouse with ease as guests hide and recoil from his presence.

"Mm-mmm-ah. Esteemed representatives of House Nagara. I knew I'd find you here. You will hmm mm-mm-meet with the CHOAM Board of Directors tomorrow, ah, yes? Good. This is good. After you give your... presentation... on spice production, the Emperor would like to see you put forward a... hmm-mm, a motion. One that is in the best interests of House Corrino and Nagara. Specifically, a m-m-measure to audit all Houses of the Landsraad for illegal spice stockpiling. Doing so will be an... eh-eh excellent step towards repairing the damage between you and the Emperor."

The Count pauses for effect.

"Wha-what damage, you ask? Did not the Emperor grant you the siridar governorship of Arrakis, the mm-mm-mh-ah most lucrative planet in the Universe? And last evening, at the opera and the ah-after-party, before the entire Landsraad, did you not fail to thank him for his generosity publicly? Ah-ah..a grave faux pas. Grave indeed. Lethal, perhaps."

Fenring is described on page 259 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**. A successful Daunting (D3) **Understand** test allows a player character to realize that his verbal stammer is, in fact, a conscious affectation, likely feigned to cause others to underestimate him. The player characters should likely know who Fenring is, but what they know about him is up to the gamemaster's discretion.

While Fenring claims this presentation is for the benefit of House Corrino and Nagara, in truth, this motion will infuriate House Harkonnen and its allies (who have been stockpiling spice for years). In retaliation, House Harkonnen and Nagara may become more embroiled in war while the Emperor, as a new power grab similar to the Great Spice War of 10,175 (see the sidebar, following), benefits from the Landsraad losing their illegal melange

reserves. Though it risks more conflict, a successful vote would make House Nagara more powerful, wealthier, and smooth the Emperor's ruffled mane.

It is within House Nagara's power to put forward the measure during their report. Unfortunately, Fenring explains how the Emperor is in the minority. House Harkkonen and their allies can overrule the motion with a simple majority vote. The fate of a successful audit rests on a few key swing votes.

Savvy player characters may also see how this could foment resentment and earn House Nagara additional enemies during a precarious time. If the player characters work to swing the vote toward the Emperor, they will please Shaddam but anger stockpiling Directors. If the player characters never raise the motion or deliberately kill it, they maintain the status quo while simultaneously angering Shaddam. And on each side of the dilemma are influential people with deep pockets and long memories.

The CHOAM Board of Directors consists of many Houses, but most are already committed either as firm allies of House Nagara or as jealous enemies. Before departing, Fenring provides the motion for the audit, already pre-written, along with the names of the five swing votes. They include Captain Phillipa Del Rio of House Ecaz, Lady Behati, Viscountess of House Soot, Minister Rahm of House Obada, Ambassador Marion Trau of House Hagal, and Master Vercing Koji of House Thorvald. To pass the motion, three of the five must declare in favor of it.

OPPOSITION RESEARCH

Any player character with a Focus in House or Imperial Politics can make an Average (D1) **Understand** test to gather information on each of the five swing votes. Player characters can also reach out to their espionage and intrigue assets or research the five Houses at the Imperial Archives. If Jain and Lela have 5 Loyalty, they can also provide background information. Finally, if all else fails, the player characters can gain knowledge directly from guests at the royal ball later in A Royal Ball (pages XX–XX).

O Captain Phillipa Del Rio of House Ecaz: A Great House, Ecaz mass produces unique substances and narcotics, including Sapho juice, elacca, semuta, and verite. Ruled by Archduke Armand Ecaz, the Ecaz won their War of Assassins against House Moritani 25 years ago. But Ecaz hasn't recovered economically from the conflict, and the aging Archduke is without an heir. They are no friend to the Harkonnens, but neither are they steadfast allies of the Emperor. Captain Del Rio served in the war against the Moritani and is a humorless, stern figure, immune to bribery or flattery.

- O Lady Behati, Viscountess of House Soot: A woman of means and excess, Lady Behati gestures boldly, wears colorful gowns, and has a scintillating laugh that can slice through a crowded room. Her House specializes in textile construction, and rumors suggest the stylists in her employ also function as spies, gathering intelligence from the lords and ladies they dress. Though technically a Minor House under the auspice of House Harkonnen, their loyalty is purchasable. They are currently in direct competition with House Obada and are petitioning for an exclusive contract on Arrakis to manufacture stillsuits.
- O Minister Rahm of House Obada: A large, cheerful figure, Minister Rahm officially represents the interests of House Obada on Kaitain. Unofficially, he is in the Imperial Capital to secure a loan from CHOAM. House Obada specializes in stillsuit construction, complicated by the substantial debt they owe House Harkonnen and the years of conflict with their chief competitor, House Soot. Procuring a loan or an exclusive stillsuit manufacturing contract on Arrakis might solve their problem.
- O Ambassador Marion Trau of House Hagal: Though technically a Great House, House Hagal is in decline. Once rich in precious jewels, soostones, and fire opals, their homeworld has been stripped bare by excessive mining, and relocating has proved to be a logistical nightmare. Intrigue assets, or those with access to courtly rumor and gossip, can add information about Ambassador Trau's task of keeping an eye on Edwin Hagal, heir to his House. The young noble is a troublemaker, and after refusing the hand of Fabrizi Thorvald, has been challenged to a duel by Master Koji. Espionage assets, or those with criminal contacts, note Edwin's addiction to semuta.
- O Master Vercing Koji of House Thorvald: Hailing from the planet Ipyr, Earl Memnon Thorvald rules the House. The Earl has grown bitter in recent years, ever since his sister, Firenza Thorvald, became the fifth wife to Shaddam IV and died after only six months of wedlock. Those in the courtly know or with access to political contacts reveal the Earl's recent attempt to wed his niece, Fabrizi Thorvald, to Edwin Hagal. Unfortunately, the heir to House Hagal refused. The enraged Earl has instructed his envoy on Kaitain, Master Koji, to kill the young Edwin. Master Koji, though not as skilled as a Ginaz Swordmaster, has a reputation as an excellent duelist.

THE GREAT SPICE WAR

In 10,175, Emperor Shaddam IV invoked a generally ignored clause in the agreement with the Landsraad over the limits of stockpiling spice. He decided to enforce the rule with his Sardaukar and brutally punish any House discovered to be hoarding more spice than they were legally allowed. This declaration caused great chaos as almost every House maintained stockpiles far and away larger than the official legislation permitted.

The threat of the Sardaukar was enough to ensure no House wanted to be the first to voice its dissent. Fear of reprisal was further compounded when the Emperor launched three brutal attacks as punishment for spice hoarding. The planet Zanovar of House Taligari was laid waste. The research moon Korona (the primary scientific facility for House Richese) was destroyed before it could be fully evacuated. Then the planet Beakkal suffered a suspicious crop blight, allowing the Emperor to quarantine the planet and sentence the population to near starvation.

Finally, the Emperor personally led a vast force to Arrakis and threatened to destroy the source of the spice. For the Spacing Guild, however, this was the last straw, and they marooned the entire fleet orbiting the planet. Faced with being stranded forever, the Emperor was forced to relent and sue for peace among the Houses of the Landsraad. No one really knows what the Emperor hoped to achieve with his action except for proving his military power. However it could be said the only true victors were the Guild, who proved that it was they who truly held power in the Imperium.

THE MILITARY PARADE

After brunch, Jain and Lela escort the player characters to the next item on their itinerary: a military parade. As thousands of Corrinth City residents line the main boulevard, the player characters view the festivities from an elevated platform. To the sound of trumpets, drums, and cheers, the parade procession includes rows of Sardaukar soldiers, ballistic weaponry, sonic tanks, and formations of actual Harmonthep lions.

Princess Josifa and Reverend Mother Montemagni join the player characters. Though Josifa is polite and cheerful during the affair, the Bene Gesserit does not disguise her ever-watchful gaze. The player characters can speak to Josifa on various matters, including general information on the five swing votes. Still, Montemagni prevents the Princess from revealing anything further about their conversation in the Mausoleum. However, coincidentally (or perhaps not), the player characters' view of the parade is next to the Imperial Archives.

To sneak into the Imperial Archives, at least one member of House Nagara needs to ditch the parade. Alternatively, someone from House Nagara, or the entire group, can also sneak into the Archives sometime later, either before the royal ball or possibly during the party.

- O They can persuade their escorts with charm, deception, or intimidation with a Challenging (D2) Communicate test.
- O They can command Jain and Lela to escort them to the Archives with a Daunting (D3) **Discipline** test.
- They can sneak away from the parade and enter the Archives with a Challenging (D2) **Move** test.

Once again, if Jain and Lela view the player characters negatively (Loyalty 2 or below), increase the Difficulty of each action by +1. If they have a favorable view of the player characters (Loyalty 4+), decrease the difficulty by –1.

THE ARCHIVES

The Imperial Archives are a massive circular tower. A domed ceiling basks the chamber in soothing light, and marble floors create an echo with each footstep. Sealed documents from a thousand different worlds line the curved walls, and a small army of Mentats operate the Archives, eager to assist those in search of knowledge. Their presence, joined by a fleet of suspensor-buoys, make retrieving any document relatively simple, no matter its location or height. Today, with the military parade in full swing, the Archives are largely empty of visitors. The player characters can ask a Mentat for quick assistance or locate the official lineage of Fondil III with a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test.

The documents, coated in specialized plastic, making them both flexible and resistant, highlight the lineage of Fondil Corrino III, 79th Padishah Emperor of the Known Universe. Son of Vutier Corrino II, father of Elrood Corrino IX, and grandfather of Shaddam IV, Fondil was known as "the Hunter" for destroying various rebellions through strategy and brute force. Whether Josifa lied outright about Fondil's nickname or was simply naïve to it is immaterial. In addition to Fondil's son and heir, Elrood, the Hunter had numerous wives and countless sons and daughters, each married to various Houses and underscoring the incestuous nature of most royal lineages within the Imperium.

There is, however, one highlighted note: a bastard child of Fondil III. According to the Imperial Archives, a different House adopted this bastard. His lineage, two generations later, gave birth to the late Countess Nagara. A notation in the manuscript claims that while the descendants of said bastard are ineligible for full Corrino membership, they are eligible for increased CHOAM shares. Any Bene Gesserit player characters, or anyone familiar with Bene Gesserit methodology, realize the Wallach IX Archives may also confirm this discovery.

If the player characters speak with one of the archival Mentats, an Average (D1) Communicate test reveals the ancestry of Fondil III was accessed several weeks ago by Count Hasimir Fenring. Furthermore, this fact can be discovered independently in the official logbook with an Average (D1) Understand test. The player characters may then theorize the Emperor is also aware of their ancestry and their potential for additional CHOAM shares, which, if claimed, would lessen the Emperor's available shares and his voting strength.

A ROYAL BALL

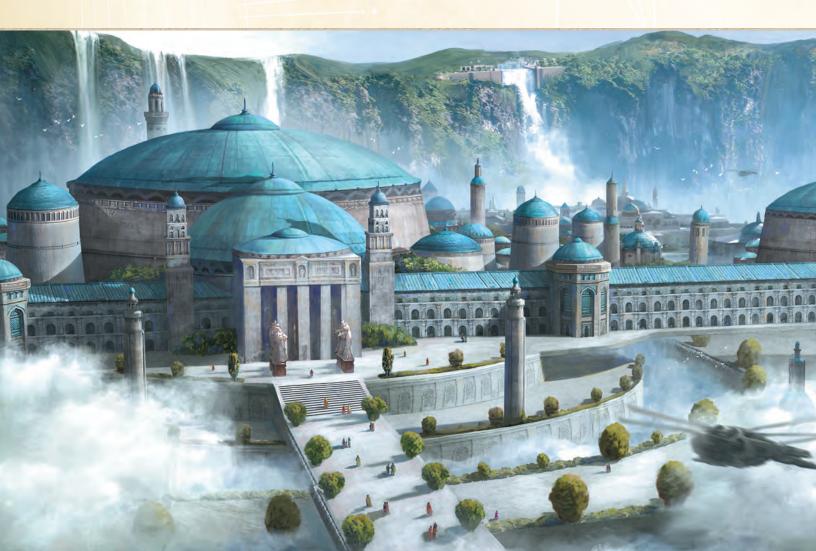
After the military parade, Jain and Lela help the player characters dress for the royal ball. The function is at the Silver Needle, one of the tallest buildings on Kaitain, and headquarters of CHOAM. Thrown by President Frankos Aru, the event takes place on the 21st floor of the Needle, which has a curved window, offering a beautiful panoramic view of Corrinth City. Glowglobes float throughout the room, and as the sun sets on Kaitain, the ceiling shifts into a mirror, transforming the chamber's ceiling into a sky of amber stars.

Though the Emperor isn't present, Count Fenring, Princess Josifa and her teacher, Reverend Mother Montemagni, are, along with any other supporting character the gamemaster wants to use, including representatives of the Bene Gesserit and the Spacing Guild. Beyond the Corrinos, citizens and dignitaries from across the Landsraad gather for this high-society affair with fashion and glamor that puts the previous evening to shame. The venue serves as the perfect opportunity for the player characters to meet with the five swing votes and, hopefully, convince them to vote in favor of the motion, as long as the player characters don't commit an embarrassing social faux pas.

While the Bene Gesserit and Spacing Guild maintain a neutral position on the CHOAM Board of Directors, they could sway others, depending on the player characters' relationship with their representative. Following is a breakdown of what each swing vote wants.

- O- Captain Phillipa Del Rio: The envoy to House Ecaz is old-fashioned, believing in honor and duty in a society that often only claims to do so. As a result, any attempt to threaten or bribe Del Rio ultimately fails and pushes the Ecaz into the anti-motion camp. However, House Ecaz is in financial hardship. Del Rio requests additional spice shares for her House if asked directly, which the player characters have the legal power to grant. However, giving the Ecaz additional shares means taking shares away from someone else, which results in further jealousy and resentment within the Landsraad. Additionally, as Archduke Armand Ecaz is without an heir, if the player characters secure a formal courtship between him and an eligible young lady, such as Fabrizi Thorvald, Del Rio agrees to vote for the motion. And finally, because Del Rio is an even handed individual, a Daunting (D3) Communicate test might persuade her to vote for the motion.
- O- Lady Behati: As natural allies of House Harkonnen, Lady Behati can only vote for the audit with an Epic

- (D5) **Communicate** test. However, she agrees to vote in favor of the audit if House Nagara grants House Soot an exclusive ten-year contract to manufacture stillsuits on Arrakis. Doing so harms their main competitor, House Obada.
- O Minister Rahm: Given the desperate position of House Obada, they are unlikely to be persuaded by anything that is not in their self-interest, at least not without an Epic (D5) Communicate test. However, if House Nagara can stabilize or pay off the debt House Obada owes to the Harkonnens, they earn a vote in favor of the motion. Granting House Obada an exclusive ten-year contract to manufacture stillsuits on Arrakis (thus cutting out House Soot) would do this. The player characters can also persuade CHOAM President Frankos Aru to grant the loan to House Obada with a Daunting (D3) Communicate test. If successful, this option would allow the player characters to gain House Obada's vote without granting them a stillsuit contract.
- O Ambassador Marion Trau: Barring a successful Dire (D4) Communicate test, House Hagal needs an incentive to vote in favor of the motion. One option is getting the Spacing Guild to assist House Hagal with their planetary migration, though this requires some pre-existing goodwill with the Guild. Another



option is to focus on Edwin Hagal. The young heir is in several different kinds of trouble, which player characters could help alleviate or exacerbate. When it comes to House Thorvald, the player characters can decide to compete in the duel against Master Koji on behalf of House Hagal. Win or lose, fighting in Edwin's stead wins over House Hagal but loses House Thorvald. Furthermore, if the player characters are aware of Edwin's semuta addiction, they can threaten to publicly expose the matter with a Challenging (D2) Communicate test. Conversely, they can procure a unique semuta antidote from House Ecaz, but only if Captain Del Rio has agreed to vote in favor of the motion. If acquired, Ambassador Trau agrees without the need for further incentive.

O Master Vercing Koji: Convincing House Thorvald also warrants a Dire (D4) Communicate test. Their primary concern is finding a suitable suitor for Fabrizi Thorvald. They do not require a wedding ring — merely a formal introduction, one which does not force Fabrizi into anything, but may yet offer the potential for love and marriage. The first and most obvious course of action is to convince Edwin Hagal to follow through on his initial promise. This requires a Daunting (D3) Communicate test on Edwin. If successful, it convinces House Thorvald to vote in favor of the motion. This also eliminates the need for a duel with Master Koji, and by default, convinces House Hagal as well. An alternative option is to arrange an introduction between Fabrizi and

Archduke Armand Ecaz. As the aging sovereign is without an heir, Captain Del Rio can assure the player characters of Armand's agreement to such a proposal. Lastly, a final option is a suitor from House Nagara's player or supporting characters.

Use the Courtier (page 276), House Soldier (page 283), or Noble (pages 286–287) descriptions from Chapter 9, of the **Dune Core Rulebook** if needed.

Remember also that House Nagara has a resource other than spice. At the beginning of **Agents of Dune**, the players chose a particular product that House Nagara was famed for, which gave them certain strategic advantages while they sought to tame Arrakis and improve spice production. Unless for some unforeseen reason the player characters chose to have their House forsake production of that asset, this asset is a resource they can potentially bring to bear in the negotiations above, if appropriate. The gamemaster should judge the efficacy of such usage, even if it is simply as direct as House Nagara offering to make some portion of the asset available to another House in return for their favor.

As this is a premier event, the eyes of the Imperium are watching the behavior of all assembled, especially that of the new custodians of Arrakis. Unless the player characters have not made any impression at all on the assembly the gamemaster should modify the indices to reflect how they come across. The gamemaster should either add or subtract one point from either the Honor, Ruthlessness, or Landsraad Support indices at the end of the gathering.

THE ENEMIES I HAVE MADE

Regardless of how many days the player characters spend on Kaitain (or elsewhere), the final scene of this story is House Nagara's report to the CHOAM Board of Directors, which may include a surprise motion to audit all Houses for illegal spice stockpiling. If necessary, the power and influence held by House Nagara puts them in an excellent position to delay the meeting by several days or weeks. The gamemaster and players can determine how much time passes from the end of the royal ball to the Board of Directors meeting.

Josifa could also add other social engagement and festivities, or House Nagara could use the extended time to set up private meetings, jumping to different chapters within **Masters of Dune**, or attending other events of the gamemaster's choosing. The conclusion only comes when the player characters decide to walk into the boardroom. If they have secured the votes they need (or created an alternate plan), the gamemaster can conclude the adventure with the tally.

COUNT THE VOTE

The presentation to the CHOAM Board of Directors is an all-day corporate affair. Housed inside the Silver Needle, the meeting is in an enclosed amphitheater. Hosted by President Aru, each Director has a set of allotted minutes to speak. There are numerous breaks, side meetings, and working lunches. There are only three steadfast rules: no outside communication during the meeting, no leaving the Silver Needle while the meeting is in session, and meetings must conclude by the end of the day.

When player characters present their report on spice production on Arrakis, they may choose to be honest about their numbers or choose to inflate them. During their presentation, other Directors (who deep down believe they would be better governors of Arrakis) bombard them with dozens of questions.

Given the continuing volatility in the market with the recent withdrawal of House Harkonnen, when can we expect a normalization of spice production?"

- "What is being done to curb the smugglers operating out of Carthag?"
- "Are these numbers accurate? They appear much lower than previous years, unless, of course, House Harkonnen was inflating their numbers to mask their actual rate of spice production?"
- "Are you at all concerned about the aging harvesters in your employ?"
- O- "What is the status of the sandworm population?"
- "What is your strategy for preventing sandworm attacks on spice production?"
- "Why were profits down one-eighth of a percent in the first quarter of last year?"
- "Do you believe the current market value of melange should be fixed for the next quarter or remain elastic?"
- O- "When can we expect an increase in dividends?"
- "When do you plan on re-evaluating off-world water shipment contracts in and out of Arrakeen?"
- "I have reported on increases in Fremen activity in the deep desert. What will you do about these people?"
- "What is House Nagara doing to improve shareholder relations?"

Answering these questions is more about offering the players a sense of pressure in this highly political atmosphere. How the player characters answer these questions won't affect the swing vote already secured, and most can be shrugged off with a simple "We're

looking into it." However, player character answers can add complications or additional flavor to future scenes or even subsequent chapters in this campaign, based on expectations set.

After their report, the player characters are free to present their motion, should they wish to do so.

President Aru takes up the motion, and after reading it aloud, calls for a vote. In the end, there are three predetermined outcomes:

- O House Nagara chooses not to submit the motion.
 In this instance, they gain no new allies or enemies within the Landsraad, but the Emperor is furious. The Imperial Support index is reduced by -1.
- O House Nagara submits the motion but fails to acquire three of the five swing votes. This emboldens House Harkonnen and Harkonnen allies while House Nagara's supporters leave the meeting discouraged. The Emperor is also displeased. The Imperial Support and Landsraad Support indices both decrease by -1.
- → House Nagara submits the motion and succeeds with at least three of the five swing votes. In this scenario, House Harkonnen and Harkonnen allies depart the meeting enraged and may even swear revenge on their way out. However, the vote bolsters the influence of House Nagara in the Landsraad and leaves the Emperor pleased. The Imperial Support index is raised by +1.



A ROYAL SUMMONS

When House Nagara is ready to depart Kaitain, a platoon of Sardaukar guards arrive at the door. The Emperor requires the player characters' presence and ushers them to the palace, refusing to take no for an answer. Jain and Lela also join the procession.

The audience chamber of the Golden Lion Throne is expansive. Multicolored floor tiles extend throughout the sprawling space and into the many wings and alcoves past emperors added as the Imperium grew. Each tile is a natural stone, cut and polished, from each member planet. Atop a raised dais is the throne, carved from a single piece of Hagal quartz. The Emperor watches a demonstration from his throne, flanked by Count Fenring to his right and Beely Ridondo, the Court Chamberlain, to his left.

A Sardaukar Bashar steps forward bearing a prototype lasgun, at which point there is a momentary whisper as a few of the onlookers deactivate shields, and the rest fearfully check they do not have one activated. The Bashar takes aim at a row of (unshielded) targets lining the far wall. The targets take the form of wolves, the symbol of House Nagara, or if the player characters are heirs to another House with a different symbol, the gamemaster should replace the targets with that heraldry. The Bashar fires the weapon and disintegrates the first target.

If House Nagara's special asset, chosen at the beginning of **Agents of Dune**, is the improved maula rifle, the gamemaster may wish to substitute that weapon instead of a prototype lasgun, a heavy-handed metaphor for an asset the House produces being used to destroy it. Rather than disintegrating the targets, the maula rifle merely puts holes into them.

Meanwhile, the Sardaukar escort forms a line behind the player characters, clearly to block their exit.

The Bashar lowers his weapon and invites the Emperor to take a turn with it. Eager to play with this new toy, Shaddam IV smirks as he descends the dais. After a short demonstration of how the lasgun works, he fires and disintegrates a second target. The Emperor lets out a delighted chuckle before he blasts another wolfshaped target into oblivion.

Afterward, the Emperor lowers the lasgun, congratulates the Sardaukar Bashar with a clap on the shoulder, and focuses squarely on the player characters. Based on how the adventure resolved, he publicly praises or chastises them in this tense moment. His response is proportional to three specific questions:

- Have the player characters kept their blood tie to House Corrino a secret?
- O Did the player characters submit a motion to audit the Landsraad, and was it successful?
- ◆ By the end of the chapter, do Jain and Lela have a positive view of the player characters?

If the player characters can answer "yes" to two of those three questions, the Emperor responds favorably. Otherwise, he continues to target the remaining wolves with his lasgun during his monologue.

THE EMPEROR'S REWARD

If the Emperor views the player characters favorably, he praises them and their Imperial Support index is raised by +2.

"Directors Nagara. I do hope my city has been a respite from the rigors of Arrakis. My daughter, Josifa, worked very hard to ensure your visit was as enjoyable as possible. I am glad to see that her efforts were not in vain."

The Emperor hands the lasgun back to the Bashar.

"I'm also hearted that choosing you for the siridar governorship of Arrakis was one of my more brilliant ideas. And while I am fully aware of the... issues between yourself and the Harkonnen, and while it would be inappropriate for me to interfere directly in disputes between Houses, you may leave Kaitain knowing you have my full support and confidence in your endeavors."

If the player characters also managed to win the motion, the Emperor tacks on one last statement:

"Oh — and excellent work on the vote. We'll crack down on these sniveling thieves and reap the rewards. To peace, prosperity, and progress!"

THE EMPEROR'S REBUKE

If the Emperor views the player characters negatively, he rebukes them, and the Imperial Support index drops by -1.

"Directors Nagara. I do hope my city has been a respite from the rigors of Arrakis. My daughter, Josifa, worked very hard to ensure your visit was as enjoyable as possible. I am disappointed that her efforts were in vain."

The Emperor's eyes narrow as he shoots the next target.

"Why would you cause me to regret choosing you for the siridar governorship of Arrakis? Did I not offer you an opportunity any other House in the Landsraad would clamor for?"

He obliterates another target.

"And I'm fully aware of the... issues between yourself and the Harkonnens."

He fires the lasgun at a final target before handing the weapon back to the Bashar.

"I suggest you resolve your dispute with the Baron quickly, stabilize spice production on Arrakis, and leave Kaitain with this single revelation: you are replaceable." If the player characters managed to win the motion, even with the Emperor's rebuke, Shaddam would add one last statement.

"Passing the motion shows me you may yet have promise. Do not make me regret extending my patience."



CONCLUSION

At the end of his speech, the Emperor dismisses the player characters, who are now free to leave Kaitain. Regardless of their success or failure, their choices have lasting repercussions and affect chapters throughout Masters of Dune.

WHAT ABOUT THE CORRINO BLOODTIE?

If the player characters ventured into the Imperial Archives, they know they have a distant blood relation to Emperor Fondil III. They can petition CHOAM for ownership of these additional shares, which, if successful, angers the Emperor. However, CHOAM is a complicated bureaucracy, and with the Emperor disputing the claim, the player characters may not see an actual increase for years, if not decades. But if the player characters travel to Wallach IX in Chapter 7 and get the Bene Gesserit to confirm their lineage, they can expedite the resolution.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHOAM MOTION?

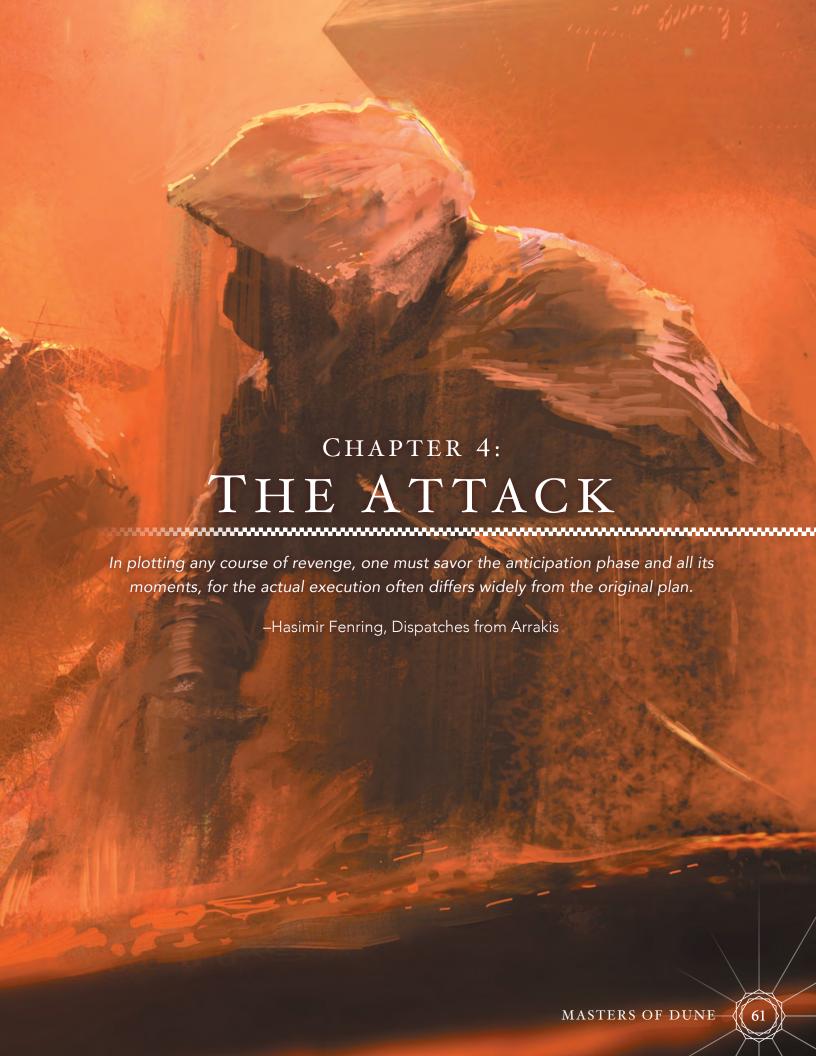
If the player characters don't call the motion, the position of the Landsraad remains unchanged. If they do call it, House Harkonnen moves more aggressively against House Nagara. They may even retaliate, culminating in an outright assault during Chapter 4. Or they may reach out to House Jayger, justifying the vote of no confidence scheduled in Chapter 6.

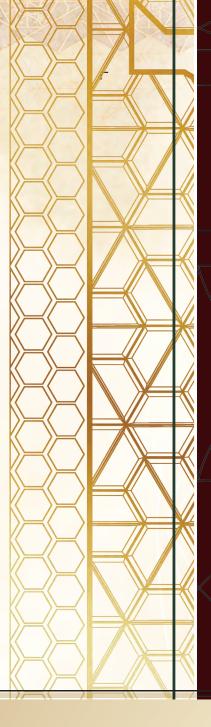
WHAT ABOUT THE EMPEROR?

Unless House Nagara attempts something truly suicidal, such as assassinating or overthrowing the Emperor, Shaddam IV does little to campaign against the player characters actively. Even if House Nagara brings up the blood tie and demands more CHOAM shares, and even if they ignored the audit request, the Emperor uses proxies to express his disappointment. After all, he just granted House Nagara sovereignty over Arrakis — it wouldn't look good to remove them suddenly. It might appear as if he made a mistake. So, instead, the Emperor leans on outside forces to harass and thwart the player characters and their House.

However, if the player characters have been diplomatic and made efforts to ingratiate themselves to the most powerful person in the Known Universe, the Emperor may reward House Nagara. Thus, the Emperor may be convinced to assist the player characters in achieving their goals while refraining from doing all the work for them. He could arrange a direct introduction to a Guild Navigator or provide a writ of Imperial immunity while on Giedi Prime. Or perhaps this means funding an army of mercenaries to help defend Arrakeen during Chapter 4. However, no matter how indebted the Emperor feels he is to House Nagara, they are not allowed to receive legions of Sardaukar — those are only reserved for the Emperor's personal use.







SUMMARY



or some time, House Harkonnen has sought to remove House Nagara from Arrakis so they can resume control. If Nagara gains too many enemies or no longer has a reputation for strength, the Harkonnens try to take

Arrakis back by force. Unless the player characters intervene, the Harkonnens get away with it. The Harkonnens have plenty of resources left on Arrakis from their time in control. By shifting these resources into play a little at a time, they hope to build up to their attack unnoticed by House Nagara forces. First, the Harkonnens soften up House Nagara's power and infrastructure, then when that fails to drive them off, they attempt to destroy them once and for all. The Harkonnens' goal here is simple, take back Arrakis by removing House Nagara, either by showing they are too weak to maintain control, or failing that, by killing the remaining House Nagara leadership. This chapter culminates in a climactic battle that could lead to the destruction of House Nagara. If they fail to defend themselves, they might lose everything. The effects of this chapter can significantly affect the other chapters. However, even if the House is routed from Arrakis they can still return to their home planet and continue the adventure either across the Imperium or by returning in secret to Arrakis. Depending on how things have been going for the House in previous chapters, they may be able to call on many different allies for aid in the conflict. Time is limited here, but the Fremen, House Vernius, the Bene Gesserit, or even the Emperor himself may be successfully petitioned for aid in the conflict, depending on where the House stands with each, and how quickly it realizes an attack is imminent. The gamemaster should consult the appropriate indices to see where the House stands with these different factions, and act accordingly. Of course, no resources will get to Arrakis to aid them without negotiating with the Spacing Guild.



Instead of being a choice like other chapters, the events in this chapter are triggered when the House Nagara indices drop to certain points. If their Landsraad Support, Imperial Support, and Spice Production indices all drop to -3 or below, the events of this chapter should be triggered.

Essentially, the attack is a bold move for House Harkonnen. They avoid punitive measures from the Landsraad only if House Nagara is actively disliked and has failed to produce enough spice. Then the Harkonnens simply declare they are taking control for the benefit of the Imperium, and few people are bothered to look into the legality of their actions.

However, the gamemaster is free to trigger this chapter when they like if they feel House Nagara is proving to be a tempting target. While a lack of popularity will embolden the Harkonnens, so does a lack of military power or wealth make them a weaker target. Also, no matter how popular they are, failure to produce the quantities of spice the Imperium requires gives the Harkonnens the only real excuse they require.

Note that while the Harkonnens could appeal to the Landsraad to be reinstated, such bureaucracy takes time, and the Harkonnens dearly wish to teach House Nagara a lesson. The attack removes their enemy and allows them to take control. By the time the dust settles, as long as the spice continues to flow from Arrakis no one cares who is in charge.

PRELUDE TO WAR

The Harkonnens do not initially make a military assault. First, they try to reconnoiter the House and its forces, then they sabotage infrastructure to try and soften up the House before launching their attack. It starts with a series of encounters that can be sprinkled between scenes from other chapters, to best effect. The player characters may notice strange things happening around the city and palace (see Harkonnen Recon, following). These incidents escalate into minor conflicts between the player characters and saboteurs (see Sabotage, page XX).

Should these incidents cause the player characters to get a little paranoid, the gamemaster can remind them they can use their Wealth index to purchase an increase in their Military Power index if they fear an attack.

This chapter assumes that the player characters' House is centered in Arrakeen. If otherwise, the gamemaster may shift the focus to Carthag, the only other city on Arrakis.

HARKONNEN RECON

Harkonnen spies begin trying to infiltrate the House at several levels. This part outlines several ways they attempt to do so, and ways in which the House might be able to discover or prevent it. These scenes can be mixed with scenes from other chapters to begin the build-up to war.

These scenes do not use an Espionage conflict, since the House Harkonnen forces are the ones doing the espionage, and it is up to the House Nagara leadership to slowly learn that over time. If it was done as an Espionage conflict, it would quickly give away what is going on in a few rounds of checks, rather than slowly over time between other scenes.

THE TAIL

While the House Nagara characters are going about their lives in the city, they have the chance to notice that they are being followed. This results in the possibility of a chase scene through the city, and the capture of a spy (who kills himself using a poison tooth).

Rikalian Nolm is a member of a Harkonnen sleeper cell in Arrakeen, and the cell has been activated to begin gathering intel on House Nagara's operations in the city. Nolm picks a player character that spends time out and about in the city and begins tailing them, spying on them to gather information. Noticing him requires a Challenging (D3) **Understand** test.

If Nolm is unnoticed, he continues to gather information on as many House Nagara player characters as he

RIKALIAN NOLM

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Rikalian Nolm is a master spy and saboteur. His loyalty to the House was originally to the money he made, but he has done enough illegal acts for the Harkonnens that any attempt to leave their service now would mean exposure of any number of crimes. He knows the Baron would have him assassinated rather than risk that. His fervor is therefore now for his own survival, as he is in too deep to ever be out of the Baron's employ.



Traits: Desperate, Spy Master

TALENT:

O- Cautious (Move): When using Threat to buy extra d20s on Move tests, Nolm can re-roll one die.

Assets: Blade, Cibus Hood, Lockpicks, Poison Tooth, Shield Belt

can. Repeat the above test until Nolm is seen (possibly during other chapters and adventures). Each time the player characters fail to notice Nolm the gamemaster gains 1 Threat, which will be mainly useful in **Act II:**Hostilities Break Out (pages XX–XX).

When Nolm is seen, if the player characters try to confront him, he flees. Catching him is a **Move** contest, using his writeup (following). If Nolm succeeds, he gets away, only to continue to try and gather intel as above. If any player character wins out over Nolm, he is caught and uses his poison tooth asset. Unless the player characters do something especially clever (at the gamemaster's discretion) they cannot stop Nolm from using his tooth. But a search of his body and a Daunting (D3) **Understand** test reveals a few subtle but clear signs he was a skilled Harkonnen agent.



THE CACHE

During an otherwise ordinary day in the palace, the House Nagara player characters find evidence that someone is using secret passages in the Residency. Exploring the passage, they will find a small hidden cache where someone has obviously been staying and spying on them.

As they are going about their day in the Residency, the player characters should all attempt a Daunting (D3) **Understand** test. Any who succeed notice something odd about one of the walls in the room they are in: a secret door that leads into one of the myriad of passages within the Residency's walls.

Following the passage leads the player characters to a small room within the secret tunnels. There they find an old crate being used as a table, a lit lantern with fresh batteries, and some food wrappers that still have remnants of food stuck to them. Someone has been here, recently.

Unfortunately, whoever was here is gone, and has left a nasty surprise behind. If anyone disturbs the lantern it emits a puff of poison gas. Anyone in the room will need to attempt a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test to escape the cloud without breathing the toxic gas. Those who fail are not able to participate in the next scene as they need to recover. For the next scene they can participate in, they suffer the complication 'Sickened'. An amount of Threat is generated equal to the number of player characters defeated in the scene.

If the player characters do not experience this first hand, the gamemaster can introduce it in the form of members of the House's security personnel finding the cache, perhaps calling it to the player characters' attention before entering the passages.

SABOTAGE

Now that they have gathered intel, the Harkonnens begin to try and soften up House Nagara's hold on Arrakis by turning the locals against them through agitation and by destroying critical infrastructure. Again, multiple scenes are presented here for the gamemaster to use. The scenes can be mixed in with scenes from other chapters, to complete the escalation to open conflict.

INVESTIGATING THE BREAKDOWNS

The player characters are told about a series of infrastructure failures. It could just be old pipes and water traps breaking down, but as water is such an important thing, why would anyone neglect it? On investigation, they find that the breakages are intentional. Someone is sabotaging Arrakeen resources.

The leaders of House Nagara first learn of the infrastructure issues through reports or servants who mention the water difficulties in the city. Water scarcity is always a problem in Arrakeen, and rationing is a constant, but the rations are starting to be reduced out of necessity.

It turns out the problem is that several pipes have broken, a number of water traps have failed, and even a few distribution pumps have stopped working. As some of the local people are quietly collecting some of the leaking water, they are reluctant to talk about the problem. So an Average (D1) **Communicate** test is necessary to get more information. Success gains the player characters some Momentum to use as they investigate the cause.

Investigating the failures requires some in-person investigation of the equipment. A Challenging (D2) Understand (to investigate the system) or Communicate (to learn from the local workers) test reveals that the gear has not simply failed, but was sabotaged. It is the same at each of the failing pieces of equipment. Someone snuck into the facilities and replaced good parts with shoddy or damaged parts, destined to fail. Valves that cannot take pressure, pipes with plugged holes designed to burst, regulators that do not actually work, etc. If the player characters fail the test they find no evidence of sabotage, simply poor workmanship and careless maintenance. Unless they are already paranoid this should not lead them to investigate for further acts of sabotage, until bombs start going off (see below).

CATCHING THE SABOTEURS

Now that the player characters know a saboteur is about, they should begin taking precautions. But the attacks on the water system are just a distraction. The saboteurs are really here to set explosives on all the major defense sites around the city. If the player characters focus on the water systems, they may not realize their defenses have been compromised. Eventually the

player characters should be able to catch the band of saboteurs in the act and have a skirmish conflict to defeat them.

Led by Rikalian Nolm (if he is still alive) a group of five saboteurs have moved from the water facilities to something far more important, the air defense batteries. If their attempt to place explosives in the batteries is successful, they move on to other targets.

The rest of the scene is an Espionage conflict to find the saboteurs and their bombs before they can do too much damage. In this conflict the gamemaster secretly moves the five saboteurs around the zones in Arrakeen, aiming to get them in the best place to do the most damage. The conflict ends when either all the bombs have been detonated, or discovered and defused.

If the player characters are aware there is sabotage, they can begin the Espionage Conflict after the last scene. If they failed to discover the sabotage of the water system, the first thing they know about the sabotage is one of the bombs going off (gamemaster's choice where). Once they know to look for sabotage it is a simple matter to identify the most likely zones in Arrakeen that may be targeted, granting the player characters the zone map.

There are 20 zones forming a web around the city, several of the larger areas have more than one zone representing them depending on the complexity or vulnerability of certain areas. The zones are the City Shield (3), the Spaceport (1), Water Treatment plants (3), Food Production plants (3), Supply Depots (2), Troops Barracks (2), Residency Shield Generator (1), and Anti-air Batteries (5).

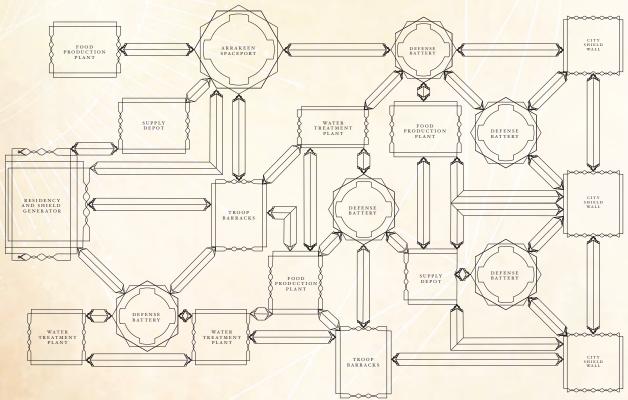
The gamemaster should secretly record where the five bombers begin the conflict. Each bomber may start in any of the Water Treatment or Food Production plant zones. The player characters all begin in the Residency Shield Generator zone.

On each turn the gamemaster and players take turns as detailed in the **Dune Core Rulebook**. The player characters may use up to eight 'House Guard Unit' assets to investigate each zone as architects, or they could go to the zones themselves as agents.

As an action, a player character may investigate a zone they or one of their guard assets is in. Doing so is a Challenging (D3) **Understand** test. If the test is successful the gamemaster must reveal if there is a bomber in that zone. If there is not, and the test was successful, the player character may spend 2 Momentum to Gain Information to discover if a bomber has ever been in that zone. In this way, even if they cannot find bombers, they may be able to track their movements.

If a bomber is discovered, the player character must engage them to stop them detonating their explosive. This requires a Challenging (D3) **Battle** test. If successful, the bomber is neutralized, and their device disarmed. If the test fails, the bomber can detonate their device before capture.

On the gamemaster's turn, a bomber may detonate a device as an action. Doing so requires a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test on the part of the bomber. The Difficulty is increased by +1 for each asset or player character in that zone, even though they may be unaware of



HOUSE HARKONNEN SABOTEUR BOMBERS

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

These saboteurs were left behind as irregular troops by House Harkonnen when they left Arrakis. They stand ready to do whatever is necessary, whether that is spy on House Nagara, sabotage the water facilities, or bomb city defenses. Nothing about them identifies them as House Harkonnen, but their mannerisms, demeanor, and training might lead someone to a Daunting (D3) **Understand** test to discover their origin.

SKILL FOCUSES

BATTLE: 5

COMMUNICATE: 4

DISCIPLINE: 6 Resolve

MOVE: 5

Traits: Deep Cover, Infiltrators

UNDERSTAND:

Assets: Assassin's Blade, Cibus Hood, Poison Tooth

the bomber. If successful, the bomber can plant the bomb and detonate it. If the test fails, the bomber must move to another zone before they can attempt the action again, as they have found no opportunity or access to carry out their mission there.

If a bomb is detonated in a zone, any assets in that zone are removed from play. Any player characters in the zone are removed from this conflict and suffer the complication 'Injured' for the next scene. The zone itself is also removed from play and cannot be entered or passed through, as it is just a heap of rubble, potentially still on fire.

During the conflict, the bombers are following Nolm's plan. His statistics should be used for any tests. He is running the operation as an architect. If he has been killed, the bombers must improvise, and their statistics should be used. The statistics are also provided should the gamemaster wish to run full Skirmish or Duel conflicts to take down each bomber when they are located. Note that the bombs have been constructed on Arrakis from smuggled components as taking any ordnance aboard Guild vessels is strictly prohibited by the Guild.

The plan is for the five bombs to be deployed at: the Spaceport, one of the Troops Barracks, the Residency Shield Generator, and two of the Anti-air Batteries. The amount of these targets that have been destroyed determines the Difficulty of some of the tests in the next act, as battle commences.

The conflict ends when all the saboteurs are dead, or all five bombs have been neutralized or detonated.



HOSTILITIES BREAK OUT

The explosions across Arrakeen signal that the time for buildup has ended and the Harkonnens are launching their attack. Using hidden forces from Carthag, they make a major assault on Arrakeen and the Residency.

The Harkonnens never fully left Arrakis. They stationed combat veterans in a base on one of the moons and dispersed a large number of military irregulars among the population, mostly in Carthag, but some in Arrakeen. When the hostilities break out, they focus on being able to get their forces into Arrakeen by attacking the city's shield and using commandos to attack any remaining defense batteries.

BATTLE FOR ARRAKEEN

This act is essentially three different Warfare Conflicts. The first determines if the Harkonnens can breach the city and bring the battle into Arrakeen. The second is a battle through Arrakeen as the Harkonnens fight their way towards the Residency. The final conflict is the battle for control of the Residency, potentially a last stand for the player characters.

BREACHING THE CITY

The build up to war is over, and hostilities finally commence. Key outlying strategic locations along the city's shield wall are attacked, as are the local defense batteries. Will the batteries hold, making the city easier to defend or fall, paving the way for direct air support by the Harkonnen?

This first conflict is a battle for control of the city defense systems. With them deactivated, the Harkonnens can bring in air support and push towards the Residency. House Nagara must get their troops to the anti-aircraft batteries and defend any breaches in the city wall. While the gamemaster can make this a full conflict with different zones, the following means may be used to warm up the players to the conflict system.

For all the following actions, the Difficulty for the player characters is determined by how many bombs found their targets in the previous section. As there were five specific targets, the base Difficulty is the number of those targets that were destroyed. If the player characters stopped all the detonations, the Difficulty should still be at least 1. A failure to stop any of the bombs leaves the player characters with a base Difficulty of 5 in this conflict.

The first test the player characters must attempt is to get their troops in position. This is a **Move** test at the set Difficulty. If successful, they can engage the Harkonnens, but if it fails the defenses have fallen before the troops can arrive and the gamemaster should proceed to the next conflict.

With troops positioned at the various defenses, the player characters must hold for three different waves of attack on the various positions. If they can do so, the Harkonnens are forced to give up on overrunning the defenses and instead commit their troops to the streets of Arrakeen.

To defend against each wave, one player character makes a **Battle** test at the set Difficulty. Up to three other player characters can assist (adding an extra d20). While anyone can assist on any of the tests, a different player character must make each **Battle** test, as the attack waves are happening against different sections of the city defenses and one character can't be everywhere.

If the player characters succeed in all three tests, the Harkonnens fail to take control of the defenses. They push forward but have a harder time in the next conflict. If one or more of the tests fail, the Harkonnens breach the defenses and open a path into the city.

The gamemaster should take a note of how many of the three tests the player characters succeed in, as this affects the Difficulty of the Harkonnen troops in the next conflict.

FIGHTING STREET BY STREET

Whether they take control of the city defenses or not, the Harkonnens push their troops forward into the streets, aiming to take control of the Residency. With control of the Residency they can be said to control the city. They also hope to get the chance to face the player characters themselves and either kill or capture them, both of which will bring down their House.

This conflict is fought using the zone map of Arrakeen, with several units in play on both sides.

All Nagara assets must begin at the Residency, Spaceport, or the City Shield. How many units and how spread out is up to the player characters. House Nagara has five guard units and four air support assets. They may add one additional unit for each positive point of Military Power they have (and remove one for each negative point). If House Nagara has made friends with the Fremen, the gamemaster may allow them to add 2 – 3 assets of Elite Fremen troops. However, that is only if they can get word to them in time.

All of the Harkonnen's units must begin at the City Shield or the Spaceport, placed by the gamemaster. The Harkonnens have eight assault squads and six air support assets. Some of these may have been lost in the fight to break into the city. For each of the three tests the player characters successfully made in the previous conflict they may remove one Harkonnen asset.

Before any assets are placed on the map, one of the player characters should make a Daunting (D3) Understand test to analyze the Harkonnen's attack. If they are successful, the gamemaster must place all of the Harkonnen's assets first. If they fail, the player characters must place their assets on the map first.

During the conflict, it is assumed that ground based units have anti-aircraft weapons, so they can engage air support assets, but the Difficulty is considered one higher for them to do so. Note that the Difficulty of any action can never be greater than 5. The gamemaster should use Aratan Tulan's statistics for any tests (page XX), as he is the Harkonnen commander running the operation.

During the conflict, the gamemaster gains 1 Threat each time a Harkonnen assault squad enters a zone the Harkonnens have not entered before. So, while the player characters may be tempted to hold out at the Residency, if the Harkonnens take too much of the city, the gamemaster has more Threat for the final fight.

The conflict is a defensive one for House Nagara. It ends if the Harkonnens manage to make a successful attack action at the Residency with an assault squad. However, if House Nagara can destroy all the Harkonnen's forces, they will have successfully defended the city.

THE RESIDENCY SIEGE

If the Harkonnens manage to make a successful attack at the Residency, the battle moves to a final stand for House Nagara. This conflict will be played out in Act III (pages XX–XX).

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

A few personal scenes are also presented here that can be sprinkled throughout the Warfare Conflict. In these scenes, the House Nagara characters can stand side-by-side with their military or civilian followers, and see the horrors of war. These scenes allow chances where they can bolster their House's morale for the upcoming battles. If the group prefers to focus on roleplaying rather than battle, the player characters' performance in these scenes might be what determines the fate of their House, rather than the conflict options detailed above.

While most of the focus is on the defense of the city's shield and exterior walls, and its air defense batteries, there are many things that non-military player characters can be doing. At this point, everything is about readying defenses should the Harkonnens penetrate the wall. Politically-focused player characters can use their leadership skills to rally forces to the right locations. Cunning player characters like spies can attempt to get advance notice of where the Harkonnens are focusing

ASSAULT SQUAD

This group of around 10–15 soldiers is trained in infiltration and assault. As Harkonnen troops, they are not picky about their targets, or looking to use much subtlety. They are well-armed, with rifles and close combat weapons.

As an Asset: They are mobile, brutal, and efficient troops, but still very much blunt objects. While not elite, they are well-trained and more than just cannon fodder.

Keywords: Adaptable, Brutal, Mobile

GUARD UNITS

House Nagara have a solid defense force in the form of their House soldiers. Each unit is made up of around 10–15 soldiers with varying amounts of experience. While not as well-armored as the Harkonnen troops, they are on average more skilled and dedicated. Like the Harkonnens, they carry both close combat and ranged weapons and know the city well.

As an Asset: These troops are designed to defend rather than attack and their knowledge of the city allows them to create traps, crossfires, and kill zones as the enemy advances.

Keywords: Adaptable, Cunning, Defensive

AIR SUPPORT

These units are made up of 4–6 ornithopters. While fast, they are not well-armed, although the ability to fire on troops from the air is exceptionally effective. However, with the right weapons it does not take too many hits to bring an ornithopter down.

As an Asset: As they are only useful in flight, these units can't take control of an area and can only support ground troops by firing on their enemies. They are good for observation and scouting, allowing pilots to relay troop movements to their commanders.

Keywords: Fast, Maneuverable, Scout

their forces. All player characters can be affected as chaos begins to break out in the city, as fearful citizens begin to turn on each other out of fear.

When one or more player characters are traveling through the city to help in the defense, they notice a few of their House's soldiers barricading up a side street. The soldiers are scared. They have been ordered to the front lines, but their fear of the Harkonnens has gotten the best of them. How will the player characters react? Will they **Understand** what is happening? If they succeed, do they Communicate with the men to convince them to get to their originally assigned stations? If they fail in the above, do they punish the soldiers, removing valuable resources from the fight? Or will they leave them here and try to later use this position to their advantage in the skirmish? If any of these tests succeed, then the unit is considered an Asset either for the current Warfare Conflict or the one in the next section.

Information is key in a battle, and some player characters may want to not be involved in the **Battle** but instead look to create Assets or Traits through their cunning. They can **Move** into advantageous positions to better see Harkonnen troop movement. Or they can be a go-between, **Communicating** between various House Nagara forces. Or perhaps they sift through all the various battlefield reports and **Understand** the Harkonnen's overall strategy. Succeeding in any of the above tests creates a Trait to use in the current or coming battle, whichever seems more appropriate.

Finally, some player characters might get caught up in the turmoil erupting throughout the city. When the Harkonnens attack, many citizens are driven by fear or anger to turn against each other. The city lived long under the brutal rule of the Harkonnens, and few want to go back to it.

Depending on how House Nagara has fared with the citizenry in Arrakeen, they may be viewed as merely another foot wearing the same boot: that of the Imperium. It may even be that some of the more craven city-dwellers seek to curry favor with the returning Harkonnens and turn against the Nagara forces. The Harkonnens have likely been using such offers to tempt city-folk into aiding their efforts, offering amnesty and preferential treatment to those who aid them in re-acquiring Arrakis.

Others in Arrakeen accuse each other of sympathizing with one House or the other, and old feuds between neighbors quickly spiral out of control. It is up to the leadership of House Nagara to get a handle on the situation and keep the city from tearing itself apart before the Harkonnen are even through the walls. The first action to resolve most of these situations is the use of a well-placed **Communicate** test. Barring that, strong **Discipline** or even a dose of **Understand**ing might go

a long way to settle the situation down. If this threat is not dealt with, it will create a negative Trait of 'Chaos', Quality 2, within the city, a situation that the Harkonnens definitely take advantage of.

CITY FLASHPOINTS

These scenes play out if the city's shield and exterior walls fall. Multiple smaller skirmishes play out for control of key points in the city.

The Harkonnens are now in Arrakeen. They start by trying to take over key facilities and strategic points. The main thoroughfare, the Spaceport, and the market area are all targeted.

Again, the player characters need to allocate their military forces for a Warfare Conflict. Personal scenes are presented where the player characters can have a more personal interaction within the greater war effort by defending civilians, defeating Harkonnen irregulars, etc.

GETTING THEIR HANDS DIRTY

Now that the Harkonnens are within the city, the leadership of House Nagara must do everything they can to help those around them and win the day. These personal encounters are intended to personalize the brutal nature of the Warfare Conflict. Like in the previous Warfare Conflict, success or failure of these scenes can impact the greater course of events.

When a player character is on a main thoroughfare in a firefight with Harkonnen forces, a nearby building erupts in flames. Screams sound from inside. Will the player character risk a **Move** test through the street to get into the building? Once inside, are they able to find the trapped residents using **Understanding**? Can they guide them out to safety by convincing them with **Communicate** or **Discipline** to follow them? Succeeding in this scene can create the residents from that building as an asset that can be used in the following act.

During the fight for the Spaceport, a ship captain and their crew get cut off from their ship. They have no way to get to their ship and get to safety. Will the player characters be able to help? The player characters might use **Move** to escort the crew through the fighting, **Understand** to find a way around, or even **Battle** to take the fight to the Harkonnens and break through for the captain and crew. Succeeding in this scene creates an asset that can be used in Act III, as the grateful captain comes back to help House Nagara.

Meanwhile, back at the Residence, preparations are getting underway for defense of the complex, should the Harkonnens make it that far. The Residence's servants and staff are scared, however, assuming that in the end they will take the brunt of the Harkonnen attack, while the nobles will be ransomed. If they are not bolstered, then the defense of the Residence faces

an uphill battle. Can the player characters rally them with **Discipline**? Or stir their passions for House Nagara with **Communicate**? Or come up with a brilliant defense plan for the Residence with **Battle**, one previously not thought of? Failing at this scene causes a negative Trait of 'Unprepared', Quality –2 to be applied to the defense of the Residence in the next act.

FIGHTING FOR THE HEART OF THE CITY

This is another Warfare conflict that takes place once the Harkonnen's forces have breached one of the wall zones. All the same zones and forces should remain in place from the last Warfare conflict. Pick one of the city ring zones to contain the main thoroughfare, one for the market, and one to contain the Spaceport.

If there are not at least as many Harkonnen forces left as House Nagara forces, the carriers launch back into orbit to ferry more soldiers down via military drop shuttles or armored troop carriers.

The Harkonnens' tactics here are to use the breach in the wall to flood the city with troops, focusing on taking key points in the city away from House Nagara as they stage to take the Residence. The Harkonnens also

attempt to destroy any remaining artillery batteries or the city's shield, so that they can bring in reinforcements as needed.

The gamemaster should keep the pressure on House Nagara through this conflict without overwhelming them. The goal is to get to the defense of the Residence with just enough Harkonnen and Nagara forces to make it interesting. If necessary, spend Threat to generate more forces. Every 2 Threat spent should count as one new Harkonnen soldier assets. New Harkonnen soldier assets arrive in orbit and must be ferried down with carriers.

NAGARA'S OPPONENTS

Throughout the next few sections, House Nagara faces off with many of the Harkonnen military's forces. Statistics for all are listed below. Often, the soldiers are just an asset used in the campaign against Tulan's forces, but if the player characters come face to face with them, they may need to be represented as Minor characters.



ARATAN TULAN

HARKONNEN GENERAL OFFICER

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Aratan Tulan has served House Harkonnen since the day of his birth. He joined the military when he was of age and has climbed the ranks ever since. He has led campaigns on Arrakis and around the Imperium, always the guiding hand behind some of Baron Harkonnen's most successful military campaigns. When he was recently ordered to leave Arrakis with Harkonnen forces, he knew that he would be back at the head of an invading force sent to destroy House Nagara. He just had to bide his time until the new administrators angered the Baron enough for him to finally strike.

DRIVE STATEMENT DUTY: 4 All glory to House Harkonnen. FAITH: 6 JUSTICE: 5 POWER: 4 TRUTH: 7 There is always something new to learn. SKILL FOCUSES



Traits: Officer, Cunning

TALENTS:

- O Bolster: Spend 2 Threat to allow an ally to re-roll their dice pool. The ally may use Tulan's Discipline instead of their skill as well.
- O- Tactician: At the start of a Warfare Conflict, Tulan can spend 1 Threat to increase the Quality of one unit under his command by +1.
- O- Unquestionable Loyalty: Add 1 Threat during any Warfare Conflict where Tulan is in command of Harkonnen forces.

Assets: Blade, House Harkonnen Commandos, Shield Belt

HARKONNEN COMMANDOS

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Highly trained, with years of experience either on Arrakis or in conflicts across the Imperium, these men and women are some of the most skilled killers other than the Emperor's own Sardaukar. Armed for war and utterly loyal to their House, their only failing is the fact that their brutality is well known and expected. Despite this, this is a quality the commandos pride themselves on and work to maintain.



Traits: Brutal, Commando

Assets: Lasgun, Shield Belt, Sword

If used as an asset in a Warfare Conflict, they are Quality 3.

HARKONNEN SOLDIERS

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

These are the rank-and-file soldiers. Well trained, with at least a year of experience either on Arrakis or elsewhere in the Imperium, these troops will lay down their life for House Harkonnen. This sort of conflict is what they train for every day, and today is a chance to prove themselves.



Traits: Soldier

Assets: Lasgun, Shield Belt, Sword

If used as an asset in a Warfare Conflict, they are Quality 1.

THE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

This is the culmination of the battle with the Harkonnens on Arrakis. These scenes do not need to be played in order. If House Nagara is already losing, they may move straight to **Fighting Retreat** (page XX). If they are decisively winning, the Harkonnens may be pushed into retreat instead. If the Harkonnens never breached the city walls, then it is possible neither of these scenes happen. Otherwise, a final climactic battle will occur in **Heart of the Storm** (following).

Like Act II, the success or failure of scenes from Act I and Act II directly influences the Difficulty ratings used in the following scenes.

HEART OF THE STORM

This scene is the battle for the heart of Arrakeen. This is the final Warfare Conflict, influenced by all the other conflicts leading up to this point. The outcome of this battle determines which side loses, and how badly they lose determines their retreat options, if any.

Personal scenes are again presented where the player characters can defend the Residency or get noncombatants to safety. These personal scenes should be played first, as their results can affect the outcome of this final Warfare Conflict.



WITHIN THE RESIDENCY

As the battle outside the Residency begins, the leaders of House Nagara must keep things from deteriorating inside. The following scenes should be played out as the battle progresses or near the beginning so that the impact of these scenes is felt during the battle's progression.

Several servants and staff take up arms for the defense of the Residency, but the noncombatants must be escorted to safety, a **Move** test. This test could be aided by an **Understanding** or **Battle** test. Attentive players may remember the tunnels discovered earlier and declare them as an asset for this test. Knowing the noncombatants are safe boosts the spirit of those defending the Residency, a 'Morale' Trait, Quality +1, that can be used in the Warfare Conflict.

Additionally, there is information vital to the House and its operations that must be saved in the event that the House leadership is forced to flee. The player

characters need to **Understand** what information is important or use **Discipline** to gather that information while the battle rages nearby. Success allows for the information to be saved. Doing so will reduce one loss to the House's indices by 1 point, should the House have to flee into exile.

Finally, later in the fight, a group of Harkonnen commandos captures several noncombatants that took up arms in the fight but failed to defend themselves. The Harkonnen try to use the hostages against House Nagara. If the leadership of House Nagara is callously indifferent to their plight, they could negatively affect the Morale of their own forces. Will they be able to rescue them? Or will they have to convince their own forces that there is nothing that could be done? Failing to do either reduces their own forces' Morale.

DEFENDING THE RESIDENCY

This Warfare Conflict takes place entirely within the five city zones and the two zones above it. The Harkonnens are tightening their noose and look to finally take the Residence. The forces at this point should be set, other than any new forces the Harkonnens bring in through the use of Threat. Again, every 2 Threat spent creates a single new Harkonnen soldier asset in the Orbit zone that must be ferried down to the city via a military carrier or shuttle.

The Harkonnens' tactics here are simple: throw everything they have remaining at the city center to take the Residency. If they succeed, they win everything. If they fail, they are humiliated and must flee.

This is also the point that House Nagara should be calling in any last favors they believe they are owed. If they have played their cards right to this point, there may be several allies that they can call on or who might lend them a little aid. These include the Fremen, smugglers, the Spacing Guild, the other Houses, and potentially the Imperial household itself, based on actions in the other chapters of this campaign.

This assistance should be requested, not suggested.

The gamemaster is cautioned against an outside force just showing up to save the day, this will sap some sense of agency from the players and their characters. Instead, it is the player characters who should be calling upon aid from their hard-won allies. If things get desperate, the gamemaster could call for an **Understand** roll to have the House Nagara leadership think of calling on allies if the players themselves have not already thought of it, but ultimately, the campaign can continue with either House Nagara in defeat and flight or having roundly defeated the Harkonnen insurgency.

Remember, too, that actions in the Imperium are not always what they seem, and that favors often come with visible and invisible strings attached. An ally may politely refuse to aid House Nagara in this conflict, only to secretly offer them assistance at a later phase. Similarly, an ally may promise all manner of support but then balk at the last minute, giving the semblance of assistance but risking nothing. In helping House Nagara against the Harkonnens, any ally is painting a target upon their own back, a consequence they may not be willing to suffer.

In some cases, a potential ally may simply be unsuitable for assistance in this matter. The Bene Gesserit, however powerful in the game of politics and influence amongst the noble Houses of the Landsraad, are of little use in a direct skirmish and do not wish to act so openly or aggressively against the Harkonnens.

If, on the other hand, House Nagara has gone it solo all along, angering or ostracizing one or more of their potential allies, then if they are overwhelmed by Harkonnen military forces they will have reaped what they sowed.

THE BATTLE'S OUTCOME

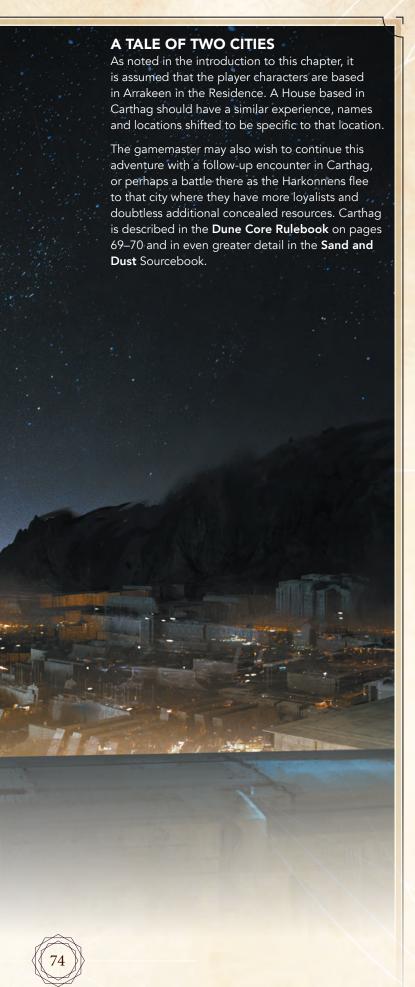
This Warfare Conflict ends when the last soldier asset from either side is destroyed. Either House Harkonnen is chasing down the last remnants of House Nagara, or House Nagara stands victorious over their invaders and are chasing down the Harkonnen general in charge of the invasion. That captive can make a powerful asset to use in the Landsraad or Imperial courts. Either way, this triggers the **Fighting Retreat** scene (following).

FIGHTING RETREAT

Either House Nagara or House Harkonnen's forces have won in the **Heart of the Storm** (prior). Now the losing side's leadership needs to escape the city. House Harkonnen will not let House Nagara's leaders go without a chase, and it is likely House Nagara will try to capture the Harkonnen commanders. This triggers a chase through the city, with the last of the battle still raging around them.

Retreat options are seeking refuge in the Shield Wall's many caves, into the desert, or escaping aboard a fleeing starship. Possible ships they might flee on





include ones stolen from the opposing side, any of their own that were not yet destroyed, or with smugglers fleeing the violence (with as much stolen goods and spice as they can get their hands on).

ESCAPE OPTIONS

There are three main avenues of escape for the losing side. They can try to reach ships either in the Spaceport (for House Nagara) or stationed outside of Arrakeen (for House Harkonnen). They could also flee to the many caves of the Shield Wall outside Arrakeen. The steep cliff face's walls are riddled with many caves and losing pursuers there would be trivial. Lastly, one could try to flee into the desert.

This last option is a death sentence without support from the Fremen, but if the fleeing House is friendly with the Fremen, the desert folk might be willing to rescue them or offer sanctuary. See Chapter 5: The Fremen (pages XX–XX) for more on this potential outcome.

THE CHASE

This is a chase through the streets of Arrakeen. It is initiated when either side loses the Warfare Conflict in the previous section or if the Harkonnens lose any of the previous three Warfare conflicts from the prior sections. If the Harkonnens lose, then it is they who are fleeing to try and get off-planet as the House Nagara forces close in upon them. If House Nagara loses, then it is a desperate attempt to flee Arrakeen either to the spaceport, the Shield Wall caves, or into the desert beyond.

Rather than set up individual zones for part of the city, the zones for this chase are divided into five distances: Near, Close, Medium, Long, and Far. The fleeing House's forces and relevant characters are placed in the Long zone, and the chasing House's forces are placed in the Near zone. Any movement actions are considered in context between the two forces: move the fleeing forces, while the chasing forces remain in the Near zone, unless some part of them manage to break away, which might move them into a different zone. Thus, if both sides successfully move in the same direction, then no forces are actually moved. If the fleeing forces move, but the chasing forces do not follow or are unsuccessful, then move the fleeing forces out one zone. If the chasing forces move and the fleeing forces do not, then move the fleeing forces closer one zone.

The conflict ends when the last character or unit of forces controlled by the fleeing force is either caught (by entering the Near zone) or gets away (by exiting out of the far side of the Far zone).

CONCLUSION

The battle is over, and as the smoke and dust settles over the debris-filled city, it is time for the aftermath of the conflict. If House Nagara has won, they will gain influence with key factions throughout the Imperium. If they lost, the impact to their House and the repercussions throughout the rest of the campaign are severe.

VICTORIOUS

House Nagara stands victorious. There is a lot of debris and mess to clean up throughout the city and at the Residence. The people of Arrakeen look to the House's leadership for aid and guidance. They also demand justice to be meted against the captured Harkonnen troops and leaders.

How the House Nagara leaders comport themselves through the challenges ahead could have a major impact on how they are seen by the populace and their enemies and allies throughout the Imperium. How the House fared in the battle also affects how they are seen by those outside of the House. If they fought honorably, then the battle gains them +1 to their Honor, Imperial Support, and Landsraad Support indices at the cost of -1 to their Wealth and Military Power indices (unless the gamemaster feels that House Nagara easily routed

the Harkonnen, with minimal losses). The gamemaster should feel free to adjust these numbers based on player actions and Warfare Conflict outcomes.

DEFEAT

If House Nagara lost, then they either retreated, surrendered, or were captured or killed. If the majority of the House leadership (mainly the player characters) survived the battle, then the House as an entity can continue to exist, but as a much smaller entity with far fewer resources and influence.

Loss of the battle will firstly remove the Spice Production index entirely. Nagara is not running the operation and cannot make any spice harvesting rolls. With so much tied up in the new venture, the House also loses –2 to their Wealth. The battle has taken a toll as well, losing either –1 or –2 to Military Power, depending on how early they decided to retreat and preserve their forces.

Depending on how they fought, the gamemaster may allow a gain or loss of Honor or Ruthlessness, possibly even asking the players how they felt their characters led the battle. The loss of Arrakis also makes the House look weak and a failure, and thus, both Imperial Support and Landsraad Support drop by –2 each.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

If House Nagara fought off the Harkonnens, the campaign continues as normal. The Harkonnens are unlikely to try an open attack again and their failure may have gained Nagara more status within the Landsraad. The Harkonnens will seek out other ways to destroy their enemy, of this there is no doubt.

If House Nagara was forced into the Arrakeen desert, the events in Chapter 5: The Fremen are likely to begin almost immediately.

If House Nagara lost, they suffer a severe setback, but it is not the end of the campaign. The House as a whole must leave Arrakis with what little it has left and return to one of its other planetary holdings. It is possible that a loss will linger with the player characters to the

point of derailing the campaign. If they decide the only way to restore their honor is to retake Arrakis, the gamemaster is encouraged to let them make the attempt. They must work out a plan to restore their military, but once they do, they can try and make an assault. In this case, essentially the gamemaster can run the events of this chapter again, but with the sides reversed.

However this chapter ends, the player characters can still get involved in the story, more so as they need to restore what their House has lost. Each following chapter should still play out as written, just without the player characters having the extra reputation as the undisputed Masters of Dune.





"Like the knowledge of your own being, the sietch forms a firm base from which you move out into the world and into the universe."

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—Fremen teaching

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SUMMARY his adventure consists of three acts which can run in any order. It can run as a single unit or interspersed with other adventures, or episodes from other adventures in this book or from elsewhere. The main thrust of this chapter is about how the player characters interact with the Fremen and whether they can persuade the wary Fremen of Sietch Korba to trust them. The prelude suggests a way to explain how the player characters become stranded far from mapped territories, but if something else fits better with prior events in the campaign, it will work just as well. For example, one outcome of Chapter 4: The Attack could be that the player characters are fleeing Arrakeen, being routed by the Harkonnens, a natural beginning for this chapter. Act I - Life in the Sietch concerns the player characters' reactions to daily life in the sietch and how they persuade the Fremen of Sietch Korba to allow them to live. They have an interview with Antrin, the sietch's naib. He is keen to learn about their House and their intentions on Arrakis, especially when he learns they are effectively the rulers of his planet. They have an ally in the sietch but also an implacable enemy who tries to discredit or kill them. Act II - The Sietch Tau is set in Sietch Tau and describes a spice orgy. The player characters have a chance to join in and get closer to the Fremen and learn more of their ways. They can also explore the sietch unobserved and learn some of its secrets. In this act, it is possible for a fully prepared Bene Gesserit player character to partake of the Water of Life and gain Other Memory. Act III - Out on the Sands starts on the burning desert sands. The player characters may be escaping from the sietch, or if they have gained the tribe's trust, they learn more about the planet they have inherited. The Fremen capture an intruder who is spying on their activities and the player characters may intervene on either side. This act also deals with the player characters' return to Arrakeen.

SIETCH KORBA TRUST POINTS

This is a suggested mechanic for keeping track of how the player characters are doing at gaining or losing the trust of Sietch Korba. The value, called Sietch Korba Trust, works in the same fashion as the other indices in this campaign, beginning at 0. It has no effect on other Fremen unless the gamemaster wishes it to do so. Should Sietch Korba Trust reach 6 and remain at 6 or higher for the duration of this scenario, Sietch Korba regards the player characters as allies. Should it drop to –6 or below, the tribe regards the player characters as enemies and attempts to kill them either in a fight or by abandonment in the deep desert. Should the player characters survive this adventure, the enmity of Sietch Korba persists.

MEETING THE FREMEN

The player characters are flying over the desert in an ornithopter (for reasons the gamemaster should determine) when a huge coriolis storm blows up without warning. There was no sign of it on the weather report, but these things can happen suddenly. The pilot does their best to stay on course, but there is not much they can do. The storm picks up the ornithopter like a feather and blows it far to the South, into uncharted territory, and dumps it on the sand. The pilot fights the controls and makes a crash landing. The storm is still blowing and none of the instrumentation works. Any crew the player characters have bought along with them are fatally injured. The player characters should make a Simple (D1) Understand test to effectively evacuate the injured on foot without resulting in even more deaths. Should the player characters insist on evacuating any supporting characters, they must make a Epic (D5) Move test, as they risk injuring themselves if they fail.

Inspection reveals the ornithopter to be irreparable with the tools available. If they make an Average (D1) **Understand** test, they see nothing is intrinsically wrong with their communicators. The problem is interference

due to the storm. A quick assessment reveals that the communicators should work perfectly again once the storm subsides, provided they suffer no further damage from the sand still blowing about. If the player characters have already alienated the Fremen or have been actively investigating Fremen secrets (gamemaster discretion), an Average (D1) **Understand** test shows signs of sabotage. The source of this sabotage is not immediately apparent.

As the storm subsides and the player characters attempt to orientate themselves and consider how to proceed, they notice a couple of Fremen, sheltering in a nearby rocky outcropping. There are no signs of any form of transport, unsurprising as the Fremen do not go anywhere except for on foot. An Average (D1) Discipline or Understand test leads the player characters to realize the Fremen presence implies there is a safe space to ride out the remains of the storm, likely somewhere not too distant. The Fremen must have come from somewhere, and presumably they intend to return to the place from whence they came.

Closer inspection, whether by approaching or through oil lens, shows one of the Fremen is injured. They are



TYRA

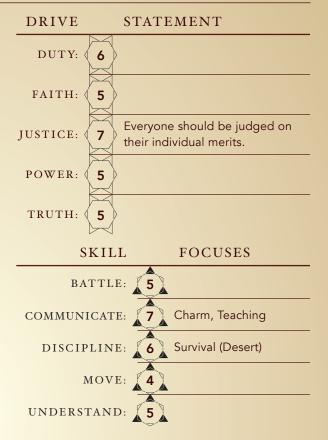
FREMEN TRIBESWOMAN

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Tyra is a young Fremen who has led a sheltered life within Sietch Korba. One of the highlights of her life to date was a couple of years ago, when her father took her to Arrakeen to trade for coffee. She was fascinated by everything she saw, though she only understood half of it. She is open-minded, intelligent, and very keen to learn about and interact with the 'outside world'. She speaks excellent, though accented, Galach, although it is not her mother tongue, having mostly learned it from the few shigawire reels and filmbooks in the sietch.

While she maintains a degree of dedication to Sietch Korba and to the Fremen cause, she believes off-worlders have a wealth of knowledge to share with her people. She feels that unless the Fremen adapt and adopt outside influences where beneficial, their culture will die. And, of course, the off-worlders would benefit from a freer exchange of lore than is possible at present. Off-worlders have access to assets unavailable on Arrakis, Tyra believes it is possible to make a mutually beneficial deal and is pragmatic enough to realize that the off-worlders are a reality on Arrakis all Fremen must accept. Particularly, she is eager to know of the ecology of other worlds. If the newcomers to Arrakis could share plants, the greening of the planet would be faster and easier.

Unless the player characters do something to offend her seriously, Tyra advocates for them at every turn, to a degree that becomes clear that she is happy to challenge the sietch elders and is using them for this purpose. She is grudgingly respected for her talents, but also is a constant thorn in the naib's boot. She has ambitions to work as a diplomat or trader but, as yet these are not roles her tribe recognizes. For now, she enjoys helping with the plantings.



Traits: Fremen Diplomat, Staunch Ally

TALENT:

O- Collaboration (Communicate): Tyra can spend 2
Threat to allow an ally to use her named skill as
their own.

Assets: Crysknife, Fremkit, Maker Hooks

watching the player characters, as the spectacle of an ornithopter crash is obvious to anyone near and far. Approaching the Fremen or calling out to them peaceably allows the player characters to approach and talk with them. If the player characters ignore them, after a short while, one of the two Fremen, female, crosses the distance and attempts to parley. She asks for the player characters' help, and tells them that a worm may be attracted to their crashed ornithopter if they keep lingering around it.

She introduces herself as Tyra and her injured companion as Torben, her younger brother. He is in considerable pain and uncommunicative, though he grunts and grumbles and objects to the presence of outsiders. The player characters may make an Average (D1) **Understand** test to determine the injury to be a probable broken leg, suffered from a fall while climbing the rocky incline nearby (a handhold turned out to be incapable of supporting his weight, and he tumbled down the rocks, landing on his leg).

A Challenging (D2) **Understand** test enables the player character to stabilize the fracture. Tyra is worried about her brother, and though reluctant to do so, pleads with the player characters for assistance in getting her brother home. Once stabilized, Torben grumbles some more and raises objections to allowing strangers to learn the location of the sietch. He clearly believes the outsiders should die and insists they certainly will if they discover the sietch. Tyra waves his objections aside — her brother is in no fit state to argue, let alone fight anyone.

If the player characters agree to help Torben, Tyra takes them to Sietch Korba, an isolated deep desert sietch. If they refuse to help, they can use their communicators to call for rescue in 12 hours—though if they make a Simple (D0) **Understand** test they realize their chances of survival until rescue comes are small, especially now hostile Fremen know they are here. If the player characters have run into the desert to escape the fall of their House after an attack or the like, they may not want anyone to find them anyway.

At this point, the player characters may believe the Fremen are violent, primitive rebels, few and no use to anyone. Alternatively, they might believe the Fremen, few though they are, could make useful allies if treated reasonably. The Fremen, on the other hand, believe off-worlders are a threat to their way of life, if not to their very existence. They make no distinction between the Harkonnens and other Houses. The Fremen in this isolated sietch are not even aware House Nagara has taken over from the Harkonnens. They assume the player characters are either Harkonnen or working for the Harkonnens.

The player characters must decide what to do. They could kill Torben and Tyra. Torben is a fighter but

impeded by his broken leg. Use the description of the Fremen Warrior on page 280 of the **Dune Core Rulebook** if necessary. In the event of a skirmish, consider his **Battle** to be 4 and his **Move** to be 2 due to his injury, and thus he is easily overcome. Tyra has a crysknife and uses it to defend herself if anyone attacks her or her brother, but should not present too great a challenge, particularly not if the player characters are armed.

The problem with killing the Fremen youngsters is two-fold. Firstly, the Fremen won't forgive the player characters if they learn of their part in the killing, and House Nagara will have made themselves powerful enemies. Secondly, they are still stuck out in the desert until their communicators start working again and they can call for assistance (if such is even possible or advisable, depending on circumstances). In that time, someone might come looking for the missing Fremen. Another possibility is to leave the Fremen to fend for themselves and carry on with whatever they were doing. This, at least, does not alter the Fremen's attitude to unhelpful off-worlders.

If the player characters agree to help Tyra get her brother back to the sietch, it is a long walk, especially as the player characters may have few desert survival skills. Tyra can teach them to walk without rhythm to some degree, but they must stick to rocks where they can or they will accidentally attract a worm. Encountering a worm may end the adventure in tragedy, with all the player characters swallowed, but the gamemaster may decide to include opportunities for a few narrow escapes, such as a race across open sand to find shelter in rocks. In the event that wormsign is spotted, Tyra sets a thumper to lead it away, but the encounter should remind the player characters that without her they would not have made it past a day in the open desert.

AN ALTERNATIVE BEGINNING

See Act III below. If this prelude does not fit the course of the campaign thus far, the gamemaster can introduce Jarood at this stage, instead of the two young Fremen. The Fremen, assuming they are in cahoots with Jarood, capture them and take them back to the sietch for interrogation. Should the player characters try to resist, Act III details the band of Fremen they need to Battle. Even if they can convince the naib they are in no way involved with Jarood, the Fremen keep the player characters prisoner until they prove themselves trustworthy or until the Fremen are sure they have either learned nothing from Jarood or have not shared this information with anyone. At this point the Fremen could execute them (though, of course, escape remains a possibility).

LIFE IN THE SIETCH

Sietch Korba is isolated. Situated deep in the unexplored southern region, it has few dealings with Arrakeen or Carthag. There is some trade for items the sietch cannot produce for itself (notably coffee), but only a few of the tribe are involved in such exchanges. Most have never been to Arrakeen or Carthag, many have never seen an off-worlder in person. On arrival at the sietch, Fremen whisk Torben away to have his wounds tended. Fremen healers inspect any first aid the player characters have tried to administer. If the first aid has been effective, the player characters gain 1 point of Sietch Korba Trust with the Fremen there.

When the party arrives at the sietch entrance, many of the tribe's children run to wonder at these strange, alien beings with non-blue eyes, likely wearing inferior quality stillsuits. There is a lot of chatter, some of it in recognizable, though accented, Galach and some in the Fremen's own language, though the western dialect that is less common in Arrakeen. The children fire off questions at random: "Why do you not have a proper stillsuit?", "Why are your eyes this strange color?", and finally, "Why have you come here?"

The player characters have scant chance to answer before warriors turn up, insisting they surrender any communicators and weapons they may be carrying before entering the sietch. They may keep any purely defensive items (e.g., shields) or items which appear

IF A PLAYER CHARACTER IS FREMEN OR HAS STRONG CONNECTIONS

This has advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, such a player character knows Fremen ways and can advise on how to act, what to do, what not to do, and what to say. At the same time, the Fremen of Sietch Korba are suspicious. What is a Fremen doing keeping company with off-worlders, even seeming to serve as one of their House? What is their home sietch? Are they a spy? Would the Fremen player character betray House Nagara if it came to a straight choice between their adopted friends and their Fremen origins?

In the case of someone who is not Fremen but has strong Fremen connections, this is inherently suspicious to Fremen. Who taught them Fremen ways, and for what reason? If the player character has any connection to those isolated Fremen who stand outside the Ichwan Bedwine, the broad brother-hood that encompasses all Fremen, the Sietch Korba Fremen view them with thinly-disguised disgust, even contempt.

entirely inoffensive. Anyone with a shield is told to keep it deactivated, else it will bring worms to the sands outside. Each player character can make a Daunting (D3) **Move** test to conceal a single item from the Fremens' gaze.

However, meekly handing over their equipment does not impress the Fremen: instead, it shows weakness.

Blank refusal does not impress them either. They expect the party to raise objections, put up a bit of a fight, but no player character carrying an unconcealed weapon or communicator may enter the sietch.

Even if the player characters have been in a sietch before, they find Korba strange and alien. Even the most traditional sietches close to Carthag and Arrakeen have made some concessions to off-worlder ways. Sietch Korba has not done so. Here the player characters see little the sietch cannot provide for itself. Coffee is available, but few other off-world foods or substances. There are no doors, and all the fabrics are homespun from fibers of tough desert plants. Not everyone here speaks Galach, though those assigned to guide and guard the player characters are able to.

Most of the adult Fremen are initially hostile. On a successful Challenging (D2) **Understand** the player characters realize a small majority of the adults think the intruders should be killed out of hand. The player characters have a chance to plead for mercy and their lives — a Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test—helped by Tyra's insistence that the naib should have input into this situation. Someone goes to get him. Alternately, they can handle this with less finesse, demanding sanctuary, or immediately offering rewards for their safe return. Neither tactic is particularly welcome to the members of this isolationist sietch.

The player characters are quickly brought before the sietch's naib, Antrim, for coffee and to decide their fate.

THE NAIB

Naib Antrin turns out to be a reasonable man, less prone to prejudice and anger than many of his tribe. He is initially well-disposed towards the player characters, acknowledging that Korba owes them a water debt if they brought Torben back safely, even more so if they started to heal his broken leg. He also turns out to be quite surprisingly politically astute, although at first he assumes the player characters are Harkonnens. He is unaware a new House has taken over the management of spice production and is very keen to learn how Nagara mean to handle their new responsibility. This is a contested **Communicate** test for one or more of the player characters opposed by the naib.

The naib is keen to extract information. He wants to know what the player characters were doing this deep in the desert. He asks pertinent and searching questions about relations between House Nagara and the Harkonnens, and between both these Houses and the Emperor. It is likely Antrin learns more about House Nagara and their plans than the player characters learn about the Fremen, at least initially. Given the way the Harkonnens treated his people, Antrin may decide to favor the new overlords, should they prove more reasonable. He is, throughout the scenario, willing to deal but can only speak for Sietch Korba. He is a single voice in the counsels of the Ichwan Bedwine. The player characters can persuade him to let them live but he still doesn't trust them entirely. During this interview, the player characters can earn 2 Sietch Korba Trust Points.

However well the player characters get on with the naib, the sietch continues to be wary of them. The player characters should remain aware that any false moves on their part would almost certainly result in their death. Combat capable though at least some of the player characters may be, they are surrounded by a great many Fremen, many skilled warriors who know every nook and cranny of the sietch, well versed in desert survival.

After the interview, Naib Antrim asks Tyra to conduct the player characters to their assigned quarters. There is no door, only a curtain so they can leave the room assigned to them, but any casual attempt to explore the sietch without an escort results in being returned to their quarters with as much force as necessary. Exploration is, of course, possible, but requires some planning and a Dire (D4) **Move** test. Being caught sneaking around the sietch is bound to make the Fremen more hostile towards their 'guests', resulting in a loss of a number of Sietch Korba Trust points proportionate to how much sneaking has been done and how apologetic the player characters are about their unauthorized activities.

Tyra proves to be a firm advocate and ally, arguing the player characters' cause at every turn, even to the point where it is apparent that she often finds herself at odds with others of her sietch. She acts as the player characters' guide, translator, and advisor, but stops short of doing anything that could damage her community. She is curious about life in Arrakeen and how off-worlders conduct themselves in general.

The player characters get constant reminders that some within the sietch would like to see them killed. The most vocal member of this faction is Nulan, a Fremen warrior with an implacable hatred of offworlders and everything they represent.



ANTRIN

NAIB OF SIETCH KORBA

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Antrin has been naib of the sietch for over a decade. He is still physically capable but beyond his best years as a warrior. What he lacks in combat fitness he makes up for in diplomacy. He holds the various factions within his sietch in harmony and has made good deals with nearby sietches which give his people an advantage in trade. There are some in the sietch who feel a more warlike individual should replace Antrin, but most recognize the advantages of a diplomatic leader who has plenty of Fedaykin at his disposal.

STATEMENT DRIVE DUTY: FAITH: < Everyone should be judged on JUSTICE: their individual merits. POWER: TRUTH: SKILL **FOCUSES** BATTLE: Charm, Teaching COMMUNICATE: DISCIPLINE: Survival (Desert) MOVE: UNDERSTAND

Traits: Fremen Elder, Naib of Sietch Korba

TALENTS:

- O Binding Promise: May spend 1, 2, or 3 Threat to make an agreement binding. To break it, an opponent must spend twice this in Momentum.
- O- Cautious (Discipline): Antrin may re-roll a single d20 gained from spending Threat.

Assets: Band of Fremen Warriors, Crysknife, Maker Hooks, Stillsuit

NULAN

FREMEN WARRIOR

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Nulan is a seasoned warrior, veteran of many battles with the Harkonnens. He has seen how the Harkonnens act — how they care nothing for the planet and torture without mercy if they think it can bring them profit. The Harkonnens killed many of Nulan's comrades and relatives. Most notably, they killed his lover, a Fremen from another sietch and he has never recovered from this loss. When someone argues "not all off-worlders are alike" he is unable to hear them. He dares not disobey the naib, but he does everything he can to undermine the player characters and turn the rest of the sietch against them. Confident of his ability as a fighter, he tries his best to provoke one of the player characters into dueling with him.

DRIVE	STATEMENT				
DUTY: 6					
FAITH: 5					
JUSTICE: 7	Everyone should be judged on their individual merits.				
POWER: 5					
TRUTH: 5					
SKII	LL FOCUSES				
BATTLE: 5					
COMMUNICATE: 7 Charm, Teaching					
DISCIPLIN	IE: 6 Survival (Desert)				
DIO GII EII	IE: 6 Survival (Desert)				
MOV					

Traits: Fremen Warrior, Isolationist

TALENTS:

- O- Nimble: When attempting a **Move** test over difficult terrain, Nulan may reduce the Difficulty of the test by –2. If this reduces the Difficulty to 0, he may move over or around that obstacle freely.
- O- Resilience (Battle): Nulan may Resist Defeat twice in a scene when in a conflict, using the Battle skill.

Assets: Crysknife, Fremkit, Stillsuit

GETTING SETTLED

The day starts early in the sietch so the tribe can complete chores before the blazing heat of the day makes physical labor outside dangerous. Tyra brings the player characters breakfast — a spice-laden meal washed down with coffee. There is no water for drinking or washing, the player characters must rely on water reclaimed from their own bodily wastes, filtered by their stillsuits. If any object or show signs of revulsion at this practicality of desert life, the Fremen are less inclined to allow them to live and they lose 1 Sietch Korba Trust point.

The Fremen assign menial tasks to the player characters; sweeping their room, helping prepare the communal meal, shaking out the bedding etc. Again, any sign they feel these tasks are beneath them loses them trust points in the sietch. Do they understand water discipline? Do they treat members of the sietch (including small children) with respect? Do they ask stupid questions? Do they waste time, effort, and water? Do they tire of the lack of attention and do something foolhardy?

Nulan and his faction treat the player characters with a total lack of respect, harping on about any minor

misunderstandings of how to conduct oneself in the sietch and insisting loudly, at every turn, that the only solution is to turn them out to the desert for Shai Hulud. They try to trip the player characters up, literally as well as metaphorically. A member of this faction might 'accidentally' bump into a player character, causing them to drop whatever they are carrying, then tell them off for being clumsy.

With a successful Average (D1) Understand test, the player characters realize Nulan is trying to provoke one of them into dueling with him. If a player character rises to this challenge, the community is impressed should the player characters conduct themselves with honor. The positive impression is even greater if they manage to kill Nulan, provided they take part in the duel with all due respect and return Nulan's water to the tribe, a portion to be given to them in the form of water rings. A successful duel can net the player characters 2 Sietch Korba Trust points. Should Nulan die, his brother swears revenge and takes his place as the player characters' implacable enemy. If the player character is slain, the tribe expects their possessions to be given to Nulan and the corpse's water reclaimed, a portion going to Nulan.

THE SIETCH TAU

On the third day comes a buzz of activity as men, women, and children lend a hand with preparing food, sweeping sand and shaking out hangings and bedding. Bright fabrics come out of storage chests to adorn communal areas deep in the heart of the sietch. It is obvious the community is preparing for a special occasion. If anyone asks Tyra, she freely explains how later this evening the Sayyadina will drink the Water of Life (a deadly poison) and transform it so the community can share it. Tyra informs the player characters that before the Water of Life ceremony the Sayyadina traditionally tells tales of the history of the tribes and of Sietch Korba. She says taking the transformed Water of Life is an ecstatic and religious experience and there is always a great celebration afterwards in which all adult members of the sietch take part.

Getting more information requires a successful Communicate test, the Difficulty based on what the player characters are trying to discover. On a successful Average (D1) Understand test, any player character with Bene Gesserit training understands that the Sayyadina's drinking of the Water of Life resembles the spice agony undergone by Acolytes who wish to become Reverend Mothers. One significant difference is that the Bene Gesserit doesn't share the agony-inducing drug with the rest of their community.

If asked about the effect of the neutralized substance on the community, any non-hostile Fremen reveals it is an honor and a joyful experience, uninhibited and without the unpleasant side-effects of alcohol. Tyra does not freely reveal how the Water of Life is created. Should anyone ask, she grows silent, but with a successful Challenging (D2) Communicate test, she confesses that she doesn't know how it is done. "These are secrets of the Sayyadina", she explains. Using Obtain Information reveals she is lying about her lack of knowledge. If probed on this, she suddenly finds she has something to do elsewhere, and the player characters lose 1 point of Sietch Korba Trust.

If the player characters have not disgraced themselves and have a positive Sietch Korba Trust rating they may attend and participate in the Water of Life ceremony.

The ceremony is held within a large chamber within the sietch, one the player characters have not yet been to. Religious hangings decorate the walls, and all of the Fremen present are in plain clothing, no stillsuits within sight, and bearing no weapons. Hair is worn loose and the Fremen are arrayed, kneeling before the Sayyadina, who sits on a woven cushion, behind which is a long woven ceremonial mat. An assistant stands near her with a large amphora with a long, narrow neck.

The Sayyadina ritually recites the history of Sietch Korba, celebrating its heroes past and present and expressing hope for the future, speaking in the Western Fremen dialect. She tells how the tribe first came to Arrakis many generations ago, after a long time spent wandering from star to star without finding a home. Arrakis then, as it is now, was arid and inhospitable. The Fremen, being a hardy people, adapted to the conditions, occupying rocky outcroppings and developing the sietches, trapping water, hunting and gathering the scant bounty of Arrakis' nature. She tells the story of Korba and her faithful band of Fedaykin who discovered the place that would become the sietch named after her, and how she was lost in a storm in her 35th year, mourned and remembered by the tribe. She tells the story of Rystum, brave defender of the tribe who fell to a Harkonnen raid only ten years ago. Avenged by his children, Nulan and Castrom, both of whom are with the tribe today. All praise their bravery in the face of the enemy. This all goes on for some time and, as it is in a language the player characters may not understand, some of them may be as bored as others are fascinated. The Sayyadina concludes with a prayer for the coming of the Lisan al-Gaib.

Player characters who experienced the events described in Agents of Dune may remember this term. A successful Average (D1) Communicate test convinces any friendly nearby Fremen to explain that the Lisan al-Gaib refers to a prophecy concerning an off-worlder who comes to Arrakis to lead the Fremen to victory in an endless war of conquest. Might one of the player characters think they could assume this messianic role? This would be an epic endeavor, taking many months, if not years. Mentioning this ambition casually causes hilarity among the Fremen at best, and a reduction of Sietch Korba Trust by at least 1 point at worst. Working steadily towards such a goal, adopting Fremen culture and their religion, and acting as an honorable defender of the tribe requires repeated actions to increase the Fremens' trust in the player characters and is beyond the scope of this adventure.

At any point after the beginning of the history lesson and sermon, the player characters might realize the Fremen are distracted, focused as they are on the ritual. There are no adults missing from the ceremony chamber and therefore, presumably, no one to guard the deeper regions of the sietch. The player characters may decide this is an unmissable opportunity to explore and a chance to retrieve any confiscated equipment. All attempts to sneakily explore the sietch require Average (D1) **Move** tests while the ritual is in progress and straightforward actions are Simple (D0).

The weapons and communicators are deep in the sietch, in a storage cavern just off the water basin.

This area is normally inaccessible to the player characters, but during the ceremony no one is watching. If a player character pays any attention at all to the water basin, on a successful Average (D1) **Understand** test they notice there is rather more water there than they would expect to see, given the amount of care the sietch takes to conserve it. Should they choose to explore the water basin a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test shows water slowly but steadily entering the basin.

Further exploration reveals the inlet is a qanat. Exiting the sietch via the qanat requires a Daunting (D3) **Move** test, leaving whoever manages this feat stranded, by night, in the desert. Any player character who achieves this feat and has a communicator with them can escape the sietch and follow the qanat for as far as they wish before calling for rescue. The group's Sietch Korba Trust rating falls by 2 points after this, more at the gamemaster's discretion if the trespass was especially egregious, such as taking water for oneself.

If they chose to explore the water basin from inside the sietch, a Daunting (D3) **Discipline** test reveals small chambers leading off the basin which can be filled and emptied by a simple mechanism. The purpose of these chambers is a mystery. Any player character putting a hand or other part of their anatomy into the water discovers hungry predatory fish which may form part of the Fremen diet. If the player characters get here undisturbed, a Simple (D1) **Discipline** test takes them to the chamber where their communicators and weapons are stored.

There they also find parts of their crashed ornithopter and a variety of off-world tech. If examined, it originates from several different sources and eras. Some bear the Harkonnen crest, other items appear to be of Imperial origin. Apparently, the Fremen have been assembling this cache for quite some time. Removing any items and hiding them in their quarters is an extended Move task with a requirement of 6. The gamemaster should increase the requirement if the player characters try to purloin a great number of items and reduce it if they take no more than they can hide on their persons. The player characters may make three tests before any Fremen arrive and discover them. If they have not met the requirement by then, their theft is spotted. Reduce their Sietch Korba Trust immediately by -3.

If the player characters forgo the chance to explore the sietch and stay for the rest of the ceremony, they see the Sayyadina drink of the Water of Life, lying upon the cushioned mat as she does so. She obviously struggles with pain and difficulty, thrashing and moaning as she does so, occasionally gasping out words of prayer. It is possible for one or more

of the player characters to attempt to drink the un-transformed Water of Life. The Sayyadina warns them failure is almost inevitably fatal —there is no known medical treatment for failure to metabolize the poison. See **The Spice Agony** sidebar for more information on this potential action.

After almost an hour, the Water of Life the Sayyadina consumed is then regurgitated into the rest of the untransformed Water of Life. Once this is done, a chemical reaction transforms the rest into a liquid that can be safely drunk by others. All may partake of the neutralized drug, and all present are expected to. Refusal to do so creates a bad impression with the Fremen, modifying their Sietch Korba Trust rating by -1. A player character may use Move or Communicate — a Challenging (D2) test — to fool the Fremen into believing they have partaken of the intoxicating liquid without actually imbibing it, but failure to do so modifies the Sietch Korba Trust rating by -3. Trying to take any of the liquid from the chamber results in all the Fremen responding with force to stop them.

It tastes bitter and heavy of spice, and immediately the narcotic effect becomes apparent. The sietch begins to experience a state of tau, the oneness of the sietch and all its members. At this point, the Fremen begin the next phase of the Water of Life ritual, including prayers and chanting, some standing and some remaining in a kneeling position, rocking back and forth and praying as they do so. Identities blur and wild dancing commences, and some Fremen begin to shed their clothing, revealing their lean, muscled forms, embracing one another with abandon.

Thus begins the rumored Fremen spice orgy. The player characters can participate to any degree they feel comfortable with: this tau is not a place for judgment or pressure.

Gamemaster Note: There is no need to be more explicit about the goings on during the spice orgy, and the gamemaster should ensure that anyone uncomfortable with this scene can halt or downplay the action by using the safety measures already put in place. It's easy to draw a veil across scenes like this which may add little to the forward movement of the story.

However, the celebration plays out, wasting water, interfering with the proceedings, or objecting to scenes taking place around them while under the influence leads modifies Sietch Korba Trust by –2. If any of the player characters participated in the dancing or other expressions of tau, add +1–3 points to their Sietch Korba Trust rating.

THE SPICE AGONY

Any player character with a significant degree of Bene Gesserit training may recognize the Fremen ritual as part of the Panoplia Propheticus, a term describing the collective secrets and superstitions seeded by the Bene Gesserit throughout the Imperium to use as a tool for survival and influence. Such a character may make an Average (D1) Understand test to see what the Sayyadina is doing when she neutralizes the toxins in the Water of Life. If the player character believes she is sufficiently advanced in their training and if they can convince the Sayyadina to allow the attempt — a Daunting (D3) Communicate test — they may also drink the un-neutralized Water. The Sayyadina warns that failure to transform the Water of Life is inevitably fatal. Surviving the spice agony requires a Epic (D5) Discipline test. If a male attempts this feat, they die automatically. Also, any player character without Bene Gesserit training attempting it dies, in equal agony.

Successful transformation makes the imbiber a Revered Mother and provides an opportunity to acquire the talent Other Memory. Failure to transform the Water of Life results in almost certainly a highly painful death.

OUT ON THE SANDS

After the ceremony, the player characters are awakened and told to prepare themselves, then escorted outward from the sietch quietly. They are told to wear their stillsuits, and may have retrieved confiscated weapons and communicators, as no one is watching them as they get ready. At no point do the Fremen explain what is to happen, and if present, even Tyra seems unusually subdued. It does not take a test to realize that she has been ordered to silence. The player characters are escorted to a spot in the undisturbed sand several kilometers from the sietch, and the Fremen escorts withdraw, leaving them alone on the sands.

The tribe continues to watch from a distance. This is a harsh test of the player characters' resilience, common sense, and ability to survive in the desert. This is their chance to put everything they have learned so far into practice. The Fremen watch carefully to see what they do. If the player characters still have, or managed to retrieve their communicators, they can contact their House or other allies and request rescue. Should they do so in sight of the sietch, a band of Fedaykin rushes out from the sietch and with a cry of "Ya hya chouhada", attacking any rescue team as it arrives. Use the writeup on page 280 of the **Dune Core Rulebook** if necessary. Although the rescuers outnumber the Fedaykin, the two sides are evenly matched.

The player characters' actions determine the outcome of this fight. This might result in rescue, and the eternal enmity of Sietch Korba (and almost certainly other Fremen once word gets out), it might result in player characters contributing to the defeat of their own soldiers, or House Nagara may decide to stand the rescue team down. The Fremen won't tolerate having their location revealed to anyone they do not trust. The Harkonnens have, after all, repeatedly threatened to reduce every sietch to rubble and House Nagara has yet to convince the tribe they are different.

If the player characters previously noticed the qanat leading to the water basin in the sietch, this is an opportunity to explore it further. The qanat leads across about 100 meters of sand (insufficient to attract a worm) to a rocky outcrop. Following the likely underground line of the qanat requires a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test. After about an hour of hard walking, they come to the place they first found Tyra. There is no trace of the ruins of their ornithopter or anything else they may have left on the sand, and the sand has either completely covered the site of the impact or it has been carefully

concealed. Walking here with rhythm attracts a worm, but the location of the ornithopter crash is close enough to the rocky outcrop for the player characters to escape the voracious monster should they make an Average (D2) **Move** with alacrity. The consequences for failing this roll are obvious.

From this location, if any of the player characters have communicators, they can request rescue without serious offense to the Fremen. In this case, Nagara's standing with the Ichwan Bedwine is unchanged, though members of Sietch Korba remain hostile towards these individuals, should they meet with them in future.

THE TEST OF THE WORM

If the player characters have gained the Fremen's trust (a Sietch Korba Trust rating of 3+) and if they act sensibly on the sands, a band of Fremen (including Tyra) emerge from the dunes and teach the basics of desert survival. The player characters can learn further about how (and why) to walk without rhythm. They learn more about the safe and economical use of their stillsuits, and are taught how to adjust them desert-fashion, in the Fremen way. If the player characters learn their lessons well, the Fremen set a thumper some distance away on the sand, obviously to attract a worm. The tribe retreats again away from the player characters and observes their reactions.

What do the off-worlders do when the colossal, terrifying predator approaches? Do they run and seek shelter? Do they run with or without rhythm? Or do they calmly and carefully observe the Fremen as the desert folk ready their maker hooks?

The sandworm is truly terrifying with its gaping mouth full of sharp, shiny teeth, with its fiery exhalations stinking of melange. Each player character must make a Dire (D4) Discipline test to stand their ground and not panic. A truly courageous and determined character might even copy the Fremen, grabbing spare maker hooks (the Fremen brought some extras should the player characters pass the test) and joining the riders on the worm. This is a Daunting (D3) Move test, and success impresses the Fremen greatly (increasing the Sietch Korba Trust rating by +2). The worm, the Fremen riders, and any player characters who have joined them disappear into the deep desert. The others are free to re-enter the sietch or continue any attempt to escape their captors. If the gamemaster wishes to play out a full

worm-riding scene, additional details are found in **Sand and Dust**, page 47.

If the player characters do not take part in this transport, they are escorted back into the sietch by a somewhat disappointed Tyra, who implies that she had hoped they would rise to that test. They are left alone until later, when the Fremen return with a captive. See **Back at the Sietch** (page XX) for more information on this.

THE MAN IN THE DUNES

While the players are in the deep desert with or without the Fremen, a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test allows them to notice plantings on some of the dunes — clusters of small plants that appear to be deliberate. The Fremen, if asked about these, are evasive unless the player characters already have a Sietch Korba Trust rating of 5+. The Fremen discourage close examination of the plantings. A Daunting (D3) **agony** or **Understand** test reveals the plantings seem to be stabilizing the dunes. Closer examination may also reveal wind traps — these plantings are using precious water — but what is the point of them and why are they so important to the Fremen?

Before the player characters can investigate further, a daunting (D3) **Discipline** test reveals a lone figure atop a planted ridge. Whether the player characters notice this or not, a Simple (D0) **Discipline** test reveals the more observant Fremen have seen something that alarms them. Add +1 to Sietch Korba Trust if the player characters spot the lone figure before the Fremen do, especially if they alert the Fremen to the stranger's presence.

Fremen warriors move swiftly up the ridge, carefully avoiding damaging the plantings and the wind traps set among them. Any player character who wishes to join these Fremen must make Challenging (D2) **Move** tests to carefully get up the ridge without damaging the plantings. Should the plants be damaged, the Fremen attempt to immobilize the clumsy offworlder, though their motivation is to prevent further damage rather than to hurt the player character. No Sietch Korba Trust is lost, as the Fremen do not expect competence from non-Fremen.

Unless the player characters intervene in a drastic manner, the Fremen capture the intruder. The intruder is male and has the characteristic Arrakeen blue-in-blue eyes. He refuses to speak to them initially, except in brief terms in the Eastern dialect of the Fremen tongue, though he can answer in Galach if spoken to in that language. He does not appear to be a Fremen, however. His stillsuit is of Arrakeen

manufacture, but on an Average (D1) **Understand** test it is easy to see it is of superior quality. Most of the Fremen want to kill the intruder out of hand, but others argue it would be better to interrogate him so they can deal with whoever he reports to. The player characters can intervene on either side. They can, if they wish, get rough with him, but attempting to **Communicate** with the intruder is likely to be more effective in enabling them to get their way.

Further examination of his garments fails to reveal any identifying documentation on his person. Unless the Fremen kill him, they immobilize him, bind him securely, and say they will take him to a convenient location for interrogation, a shallow cave in a nearby rock formation. The player characters may wish to contribute to the discussion about where to perform the interrogation. Some of the Fremen want to take the intruder back to Sietch Korba, as their naib is known to be an expert interrogator and can doubtless extract more information. Others, however, are concerned about yet another outsider learning the location of the sietch, even continuing to be suspicious of the player characters if they advocate for this approach. If the player characters make an Average (D1) Understand test, they realize that if the intruder enters the sietch, he will certainly die before he leaves it.

Once questioned, Jarood claims to be a Spacing Guild agent at first and enters a Communicate contest with whoever is interrogating him. If Jarron wins, his claim is taken at face value. If the interrogator wins, they realize he is not actually a Guild agent due to a lack of conviction in his voice when he claims so. In any case, Jarood insists that the Guild are unaware of his activities, hoping to buy his survival by claiming that they are ignorant of what he knows. This is true in a sense — the Guild, as a whole, has no idea what Jarood is doing and has gone to considerable effort to maintain plausible deniability. However, a successful Challenging (D2) **Understand** test reminds the player character that it is extraordinarily unlikely a Guild agent would act against the Guild, or even without their full knowledge. This alone is enough to reveal that Jarood is lying. If discovered, he uses his poison tooth rather than reveal the names of his contacts, though he could be induced to provide clues such as where and how he communicates with them.

Unless Jarood is pressed hard enough to use his tooth or the Fremen decide to kill him out of hand, he reveals his motivation is his fear that the Fremen are acting to reduce the supply of spice. This is something the Guild clearly cannot afford to tolerate.

Why does Jarood think the Fremen are trying to reduce the flow of spice? Jarood merely shrugs and

JAROOD

ARRAKEEN NATIVE, IMPOSTER

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

The stranger on the dunes, Jarood, claims to be a Guild Agent. However, he is not one, but would very much like to be. He is an Arrakeen native who believes he has found information of value to the Guild, being in a relationship with one of Perro's household who has let slip a few secrets about the greening of Arrakis. Jarood does not know much, but he is convinced the sandworms have something to do with the production of spice. He is not aware of the precise relationship. Similarly, he is aware that water and sandworms do not mix well. His solitary explorations of the far south portions of the planet have convinced him someone here is trying to change the ecology of the planet. Changing the ecology of the planet is likely not going to be good for the flow of spice.

Jarood is attempting to find out who is behind the efforts to bring more water to Arrakis and to put a stop to their activities. He has contacts in the Spacing Guild who are interested in his speculations and explorations — they know far more than he does about the matter — though they cannot sponsor him openly and thus deny he even exists, if confronted.



Traits: Arrakeen native, Deceitful

TALENT:

O Hidden Motives: When an opponent fails an Understand or Communicate test against Jarood, he may immediately create a Trait which reflects a mistaken belief they have about him.

Assets: Poison Tooth, Scout Ornithopter, Stillsuit

says he doesn't know. As he breaks down under interrogation, he rambles vaguely about some kind of causal relationship between sandworms and spice and some kind of relationship between sandworms and water. He points towards the plantings (or mutters something about plants if they are out of sight). At this point, the Fremen attempt to kill Jarood. The player characters can prevent this with a Daunting (D3) test of an appropriate skill. Preventing the Fremen from killing him before he says more is an Epic (D5) test and requires some creative thinking on the part of the player characters to convince the Fremen that keeping him alive is in their best interests. If they choose to simply declare Jarood under their protection, their Sietch Korba Trust is reduced by -3.

What do the player characters do, should they learn of the Fremen ambition to 'green' Arrakis would stop the spice from flowing? Do they even believe this?

Whatever Jarood's fate, the intruder's ornithopter is about 250 meters away, barely hidden in a hollow on the unplanted side of the dune. A Simple (D0) **Discipline** test is sufficient to find it (should anyone attempt to do so). It contains some cryptic charts, and food and water rations for three days, but no identifying information. It has more than enough fuel

for the return journey to Arrakeen. Should the player characters decide to commandeer it, they can use it to fly back to Arrakeen.

Back in the city, the player characters can make enquiries about Jarood, if they can make a successful Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test to find someone to talk to. It appears the 'thopter legitimately belongs to the man they have captured. Jarood himself has no criminal record and has connections with a member of Asham Perro's household (see **Agents of Dune**), with no formal connection to the Spacing Guild. An Obtain Information Momentum spend reveals that Jarood is in the habit of drinking with a Spacing Guild agent in a shady bar in the backstreets of Arrakeen.

Most likely, Jarood does not survive his interrogation. If pressed hard enough, he uses his poison tooth. Unless the Fremen kill him first, which they certainly do if they learn he intends to sabotage their efforts to bring water to Arrakis. The question here is how much he reveals under interrogation. Should he be taken to Sietch Korba, he will be slain, his water taken by the tribe. If he is released to the player characters, his ultimate fate is up to them, but the members of the sietch express their dissatisfaction at this arrangement, and quickly dismantle their plantings, relocating them to another area several kilometers away.



FREMEN BAND

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

The Fremen regard tracking down the pesky off-worlders as a training exercise and do not do the player characters the honor of sending Fedaykin or other seasoned warriors. The youngsters, however, are determined to do well and to prove themselves. The number of Fremen in the band should be one fewer than the number of player characters, or two fewer if the Nagara party is largely non-combatant.



TALENT:

O- Resilience (Move): The Fremen may Resist Defeat twice in a scene when in a conflict using the **Move** skill.

Assets: Crysknives, Stillsuits



MOVING ON

The conclusion of this adventure depends on how far the player characters have managed to gain the Fremens' trust and how the gamemaster intends to lead into the next chapter. It is possible, though unlikely, the player characters have a sietch full of dedicated Fremen at their summons, ready to take on any enemy and flow out across the universe, converting everyone they encounter to House Nagara's cause and causing death and destruction to those who object. A worst-case scenario includes eventualities such as the death of one or more of the player characters at the hands of offended Fremen or the harsh environment of the desert. Far more likely (and more conducive to an ongoing story) is that the outcome is somewhere between these two extremes.

Sietch Korba does not want House Nagara carrying
Fremen secrets back to the Harkonnens or other offworlders, and the player characters probably do not wish
to stay out in the deep desert for the rest of their lives.
Doing so would not increase any of the essential indices
of success, except, maybe Honor and Sietch Korba Trust,
and those would be known to no one except the Fremen.

There are several points here at which it is possible for the player characters to escape. Unless they have some means to contact their household and supporters in Arrakeen, finding their way through the trackless desert is an extended challenge with a requirement of 20, likely bringing all the player characters' skills into play. How do they find their way? How do they avoid being eaten by a worm? How do they deal with any bands of wandering Fremen, smugglers, and members of rival Houses should they run across them? If they have come into the desert fleeing the Harkonnens, how will they avoid being apprehended? If they signal for help, what prevents their enemies from intercepting those communications and racing to find and kill them?

Should the player characters manage to retrieve some or all their weapons, communicators, and other equipment, escape back to Arrakeen is far easier. They can call in support, and provided they are far enough from Sietch Korba for the Fremen not to spot the incoming soldiers soon enough to intervene, the player characters can be lifted back to safety. In this case, Sietch Korba does not seek them out to kill them, but House Nagara's reputation with the Fremen suffers a telling blow (reduce Sietch Korba Trust by –5). This is not necessarily irretrievable, as Sietch Korba will not boast of their failure to terminate the player characters. Unless the player characters have done something terrible, or the sietch knows they have learned secrets that endanger the Fremen agenda, there is no need for the rest of the Ichwan Bedwine to get involved.

If one or more of the player characters has caused serious offense, with or without intending to do so,

the Fremen make implacable enemies. The Fremen of Sietch Korba may not come to Arrakeen to hunt the player character(s) down, but they use their influence and contacts to create difficulties and complications at every turn. They may intervene and hinder spice production, modifying the Spice Production index by —3 or even more. It is also worth remembering the Fremen have a secret deal with the Guild. As the player characters may be unaware of this, being out of favor with the Guild makes export of spice more difficult, and the gamemaster should adjust the Wealth and Imperial Support indices by –2 (or more) to reflect this.

At several points, if the player characters prove untrustworthy, the Fremen may eject them from the sietch. This works in the same way as escaping (with or without communicators) but there is an additional challenge here as the Fremen try to track them down to confirm that the desert has killed them. This is an extended **Move** contest between the player characters and a Fremen band. If the Fremen band catches up with the player characters, the chase develops into a skirmish. Again, the player characters should have a good chance of escaping but should any of the Fremen band die in the process, House Nagara's reputation with the sietch deteriorates even further, modifying Sietch Korba Trust by –5.

If the Fremen have come to trust the player characters to the extent they hope to influence House Nagara to be more supportive of the Fremen and their cause, they allow the player characters to return to Arrakeen with the next trading party. The escort takes steps to ensure none of the player characters find it easy to locate Sietch Korba again without a guide. The Fremen leading the trade party makes an Average (D1) **Move** test. The player characters may notice this, in which case the challenge becomes opposed.

At some point in the future Sietch Korba might contact the player characters again, hoping for the help or support of House Nagara, or seeking to warn of a danger affecting the whole of Arrakis. The Fremen return the player characters' personal property once everyone is back in Arrakeen.

Greater trust could lead to an invitation to visit the sietch again (maybe to play out any remaining parts of the scenario). It is possible, if the player characters have made an extremely positive impression, that the opportunity exists for them to become members of the tribe, though this might be something for the future. It is important they realize tribe membership carries grave responsibilities, as well as benefits. Their duties to the tribe and their duties to House Nagara are not going to be entirely compatible.

Making allies of these Fremen increases the Military Power index by +2 and Spice Production by +1. If the player characters have lost their governorship of Arrakis at this point, the assistance of Sietch Korba might offer them a new home to regroup in.



CHAPTER 6: THE GREAT HOUSES

Like the knowledge of your own being, the sietch forms a firm base from which you]Even the poorest House can be rich in loyalty. Allegiance that must be purchased by bribes or wages is hollow and flawed, and could break at the worst possible moment. Allegiance that comes from the heart, though, is stronger than adamantium and more valuable than purest melange.

—Duke Paulus Atreides

SUMMARY he player characters must make their way to Kaitain and deal with a challenge to their claim on Arrakis. The challenge is put forth by House Alexin as a vote in the Landsraad which will cover Act I. The current lord for House Alexin is a young man recently elevated to lead it. The real power is his uncle, a Mentat military commander who has kept House Alexin powerful. The young lord is more interested in music than politics, so the player characters can work that angle to gain an audience. If a one-of-a-kind extremely rare musical instrument can be procured as a gift, this gets the characters a meeting with House Alexin. However, the instrument must be acquired from House Haurez, a Minor House that asks for a favor. They require a Suk Doctor for their House. This detour introduces the player characters to the web of interdependence and connections that allow the Houses of the Imperium to function. Astute bargaining in favors, goods, and political arrangements are necessary to move up the ranks of the Imperium's feudal system. In Act II another Major House (Ecaz) is courted to find more allies and help shore up the vote in favor of the player characters' House. Again, bargaining and eliciting information on the politics of the Imperium is the lifeblood of sustaining one's House. Also, other Houses are encountered in this act and the player characters must make further negotiations to gain more votes Act III introduces the player characters to inter-factional conflict. The many actors that make up a Major House often have differing views on how the House should be conducting its business. Sometimes the only solution is violence and a sudden change of leadership. The ambassador for the player characters' House has made arrangements and meetings with many Houses of the Landsraad, in the hopes that the vote can be swayed to allow them to keep a hold on Arrakis. It is, after all, the fulcrum on which the Imperium moves, and as such, would be a great loss for the ambitions of any House.

VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE

The Landsraad has convened on Kaitain, and the High Council is in session, ruminating on the latest grievances filed by the nobles of the Imperium. A vote of no-confidence is expected to be raised by House Alexin regarding the current situation on Arrakis. The flow of spice cannot be interrupted, and House Nagara (or the player characters' House, if not Nagara) is on the verge of losing their claim on Arrakis. The nature of the complaint is that spice production is down (or the supply has become erratic) and House Nagara's inexperience may jeopardize adequate supply for Imperium business, and more importantly, the geriatric needs of the Houses of the Landsraad. If this motion passes, it means that the spice claim is revoked for House Nagara, its new stewards to be determined by the Emperor. Such a loss may well be the end for the player characters' House altogether, as the loss of reputation could leave them as political exiles with no other Houses willing to do business with them. This is, to the House Nagara, clearly a plot by the Baron Harkonnen, an attempt at an end-run to discredit House Nagara and regain the Harkonnen's former monopoly on Arrakis.

A desperate plea is sent by House Nagara's ambassador, Zetan Ben Zeev, urging the player characters to immediately return to Kaitain and convince House Alexin to withdraw their motion for a no-confidence vote to have House Nagara ousted from Arrakis. The motion will be raised on the Landsraad floor in one week's time, and immediate political action is needed to prevent the loss of Arrakis. If House Nagara has already lost Arrakis due to a Harkonnen attack, the vote is instead to legitimize and make formal the Harkonnens' renewed claim on the governorship.

The player characters have a modest dwelling on Kaitain, a mansion, yet humble compared to the opulent palaces many other Houses have in the High Council District. This domicile serves as the home of Zetan Ben Zeev, along with two dozen soldiers and servants loyal to the player characters' House. They can base their operations on Kaitain from this household. The mansion is equipped with all modern appliances and vehicles for attending to business on Kaitain. The player characters are encouraged to add any other conveniences within reason they require to be successful on Kaitain, and Zetan will make sure all requirements are there on arrival.

Along with the ambassador, a noble of the House is required to be present on the floor of the Landsraad when the vote of no-confidence is held. They are expected to speak to the charges and enter a plea before judgment.

TRANSPORT TO KAITAIN

If the player characters' House is in control of a base of operations and spice production is normal, transport to Kaitain is easily achieved. They can accompany the next trade shipment to Kaitain, paying a trivial passenger charge. However, if the player characters are in a dire situation on Arrakis, they may need to hire smugglers to get them offworld and to a Guild heighliner, prevailing upon the Guild to transport them to Kaitain. They can either cash in a favor or reduce their Wealth index by –1 to buy passage to Kaitain from Arrakis.

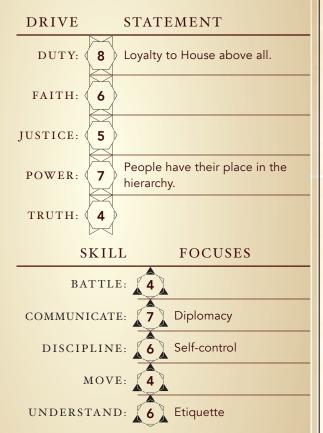
SPICE PRODUCTION

If the spice production is going well on Arrakis, the player characters are instead summoned to Kaitain, as clearly false information is being reported to the Landsraad, part of a set-up to engineer the fall of their House. If detailed ledgers and proof are brought by the player characters and entered as evidence during the hearing, a successful Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test earns them one vote towards their cause. If this tactic does not occur to the player characters, Zetan hints that this might be a tactic worth pursuing.

ZETAN BEN ZEEV HOUSE NAGARA AMBASSADOR

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Zetan has been in the service of the House for over a century, much of it spent on Kaitain. As such, he is somewhat removed from the House itself, far more accustomed to the Imperial capital than he is his own House's homeworld, which he has only rarely been to. Cautious by nature and reserved, he plays the politics game for the long-term strategy, and is well-versed in knowing how things are done on Kaitain and within Corrinth City, the planet's major city and host to the Landsraad and Imperial Court. Though loyal to fault, Zetan is at times criticized for not being aggressive in the interests of the House, preferring to let issues resolve themselves naturally.



Traits: Ambassador of House Nagara, Cautious

TALENT:

O Deep Knowledge: Once per adventure, Zetan can provide knowledge about a political event, a House, or a person related to the political scene on Kaitain.

Assets: Communinet Receiver, Ixian Damper, Mansion in the Landsraad District

The player characters are encouraged to have a speech ready, and based on the quality of the speech, the gamemaster may reward or penalize them votes. An alternative is to try and succeed in a Dire (D4) Communication test. Each success above the Difficulty rewards an additional vote in House Nagara's favor. If the test is failed, no votes are awarded.

ARRIVING ON KAITAIN

Upon arriving on Kaitain and Corrinth City, the Emperor's capital city, the player characters are met by Zetan and a small guard detail at the spaceport. They are quickly transported to their mansion in the Landsraad district. Refreshments are served and a quick overview on the situation is provided by Zetan. He asks the player characters what the next step is on dealing with the current crisis.

Zetan can provide details on House Alexin and recommends that they be the first on the agenda to mitigate the vote of no-confidence pending at the end of the week.

House Ecaz is another entity the House should approach, as they have a hostile history with the Harkonnens that may be leveraged for additional support as an ally. Also, more Houses have been contacted, but many proved to be dead-ends or unresponsive to communication. Zetan has made arrangements to speak with those few that might be fruitful, given the short time-frame pending the vote.

THE VOTE

A vote of no-confidence will be raised by House Alexin, on behalf of House Harkonnen. In the event House Alexin can be convinced to withdraw their motion, Baron Harkonnen will have another House bought off to raise the vote instead. The player characters need to swing the vote by ten members to avoid losing their claim on Arrakis. The higher the number of votes they can swing in their favor, the more allies they will find on the Landsraad for future political machinations.

Additional votes can be gathered by cashing in favors with the powerful organizations of the Imperium. While these organizations don't have direct seats on the Landsraad, they do hold substantial influence over the Houses. Each favor from the Guild, the Bene Gesserit, CHOAM, and the Emperor can be cashed in for one vote each in their favor. See the Vote Results table (page XX) for the outcome of the vote. At the gamemaster's discretion, a successful Challenging (D2) **Understand** test informs them of the likely results for each outcome, or Zetan can speculate about the effects it will have upon the House's present and future.

O Claim on Arrakis is revoked. House Nagara is expected to pack up and depart as soon as possible. O Clarre on Arrakis is revoked. House success of this endeavor. The gamemaster should keep a running tally of votes. There are many different elements in this adventure, and its sequencing may not follow a linear path. Thus, some confusion may occur about where the player characters stand on the vote count. O Wealth index reduced by -2, as it's harder to do business with other Houses. The gamemaster is encouraged to impose further penalties the closer the vote is to 0. O Claim on Arrakis is placed under review. Spice mining results are expected to impose expected at the next Landsraad session in one month's time. O Wealth index reduced by -1, as it's harder to do business with other Houses. O Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. C Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. C Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. If the vote result is substantially higher than 10, the gamemaster may reward other favors to the player characters and benefits to their House, within reason.	VOTE R	ESULTS	TRACKING VOTES
 Claim on Arrakis is revoked. House Nagara is expected to pack up and depart as soon as possible. O Operations of spice harvesting are returned to Harkonnen directorship. The Landsraad Support index is reduced by -3 due to loss of reputation. Wealth index reduced by -2, as it's harder to do business with other Houses. The gamemaster is encouraged to impose further penalties the closer the vote is to 0. Claim on Arrakis is placed under review. Spice mining results are expected to improve, or another vote of confidence is expected at the next Landsraad session in one month's time. Wealth index reduced by -1, as it's harder to do business with other Houses. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. Claim on Arrakis is upheld. No other penalties or gains. 	VOTES	THEN	
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penalties or gains. C Claim on Arrakis is upheld. C Many Houses of the Landsraad are impressed by the conduct of House Nagara and the Landsraad Support index is increased by +1. If the vote result is substantially higher than 10, the gamemaster may reward other favors to the player characters and benefits	6–9	Spice mining results are expected to improve, or another vote of confidence is expected at the next Landsraad session in one month's time. • Wealth index reduced by -1, as it's	claim on Arrakis due to a counting error.
O Many Houses of the Landsraad are impressed by the conduct of House Nagara and the Landsraad Support index is increased by +1. If the vote result is substantially higher than 10, the gamemaster may reward other favors to the player characters and benefits	10		
	11+	 ▶ Many Houses of the Landsraad are impressed by the conduct of House Nagara and the Landsraad Support index is increased by +1. If the vote result is substantially higher than 10, the gamemaster may reward other favors to the player characters and benefits 	

HOUSE ALEXIN

HOUSE ALEXIN

The original source of wealth and influence for House Alexin stems from a humble gourd native to their home world Keres. The gourd has a unique property of not decaying and being viable for a decade or longer. Once the gourd is boiled in water it becomes fleshy and edible. It can also be processed into breads and textured protein to be used in many food preparations. Due to the longevity of this food without need of refrigeration or other preserving methods, it's a popular ration among the Imperium's military forces and other places without abundant resources.

As such, House Alexin has specialized in industrial agriculture and food production and been rewarded with immense wealth. The wealth gained from this source has allowed them to expand into transportation and logistics. Currently, they occupy multiple agricultural worlds and serve as a primary food supplier to the Imperium. The vast resources at their command also allow them to field an impressive defensive military. As a powerful House, they are often courted by many other factions as an ally.

The House banner is a wheatsheaf on a harvest yellow background. It has been a source of derision at times, but the House founder intended it to be a reminder for his descendants of their humble origins. Many of the regal portraits hanging in the palace of the ruling line show them posing with some sort of farm produce held proudly in hand.



House Alexin is currently in good standing with all other factions and has no current wars or active enemies. The House has great influence in the Landsraad and many will follow their lead in matters of the business of the Imperium. They are generally well respected and considered in the upper echelon of the Major Houses, with a seat on the High Council.

MEETING HOUSE ALEXIN

Zetan Ben Zeev has tried to contact House Alexin for a meeting, but his communications have been ignored. The tactic he suggests is to offer a gift that will get their attention. The ideal gift, he has learned, is a musical instrument, a particular baliset crafted by the hand of Varota, the famed crafter from Chusuk. Ownership of this legendary one-of-a-kind instrument is prestigious. The baliset is in the care of House Haurez, another House of the Landsraad of status and size roughly equal to House Nagara.

Through intermediaries, Zetan has learned that House Haurez needs a Suk School doctor, and that their attempts to purchase one have been fruitless due the recent high demand. A current state of tension between many Houses has caused many to seek Suk Doctors, and thus they are hard to get, with the wealthier and more powerful Houses getting them first. A past failure on the part of House Haurez has left them without any influence when it comes to the Suk School, and they could use some help from an outside source. Fortunately, the Suk School has a delegation upon Kaitain in Corrinth City and can be easily contacted.

Provided the player characters can conduct successful negotiations with the Suk School by offering a generous donation to get a signed contract for the services of a Suk Doctor for House Haurez, they are given the musical instrument. The negotiation with the Suk School is a Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test. Successful the cost for the contract reduces the Wealth index by –.5 (half a point) and failure modifies it by –1. Once the wealth is transferred, the Suk School presents a signed document guaranteeing that a Suk Doctor will be dispatched to House Haurez from the next graduating class.

Upon receiving the signed document from the player characters, House Haurez makes arrangements to have the instrument delivered to House Alexin as a gift, accompanied with a message from the player characters.



The gift of the instrument immediately earns the player characters an invite to attend the court of House Alexin the following evening. They quickly learn that House Alexin was promised wealth and favors by Baron Harkonnen for raising this vote of no-confidence before the Landsraad. Provided the player characters appeal to the vanity of the Prince, they walk away with House Alexin not raising their House's competency as an item for the Landsraad's consideration. Depending on how well the meeting goes, they may even earn House Alexin support in the Landsraad.

VISITING PRINCE KOLE

Providing the player characters accept the invitation to the palace of House Alexin, the following can be paraphrased or read directly to the player characters:

The journey by ornithopter is a short one to House Alexin, their palace located outside Corrinth City, as are many residences of the Major Houses. As the vehicle swoops within sight of the Alexin palace, it offers a majestic view with embankments that hide shield generators and numerous barracks for an extensive infantry force. The grounds are immaculate, and staff can be made out attending to the plants and lawn care. The craft is directed to set down in the rear yard where numerous other vehicles of both military and civilian type are parked.

A House steward waits. House guards line the entryway and more can be seen lining the hallways inside. The steward greets you silently with a bow and motions you to follow him into the palace. After a brief walk, you arrive at a set of ornate double doors that open as you approach. The steward gestures you to go inside and departs further down the hallway without a word.

Peering into the great hall, you see a young man seated on a throne. Standing on his right is an older bearded man in formal military dress. More guards line the hall's sides, all wearing the olive green and yellow livery of House Alexin. The guards are equipped with halberds, sidearms, and personal shields.

Prince Kole Alexin waits as you approach the throne. The hall itself is fairly spartan, with a dozen or so regal portraits lining the walls and a few display cases housing musical instruments. There is nothing else in the room. The Prince speaks:

"Greetings from House Alexin. Be welcome. Know I am pleased with your gift and am at your service for this evening."

The room is quiet, awaiting a response. Etiquette would dictate the player characters introduce themselves and wait for the host to indicate where they go next. The

Prince continues:

"Well met. Judging by the generosity of your gift you must have some pressing business. It is well known that I care little for the bickering between Houses or the power games of the Imperium...still my uncle tells me these are things that must be attended to. Very well, then... make your request."

The room is silent again, waiting for the player characters' response. The Prince will then speak:

"It is my belief that the divine can only be represented in art, and human destiny only understood within that context. What are your notions of this...introspection?"

The answer to this question is very important in determining if House Alexin sides with the player characters or against them. The player characters can make a Challenging (D2) **Understand** skill test to understand the nature of the question and how the Prince might respond to their answer. If they agree with the sentiment of the Prince, they have House Alexin's favor. In this case, he replies so:

"It is not many who are considerate of things beyond power. I am pleased you at least humor my sentiment. Be at peace. House Alexin will withdraw our motion. Enjoy the hospitality for the rest of the evening. I apologize, but I must attend to my studies for now, so my uncle is your host."

If they argue or are disrespectful, the Prince judges against them. In this case, he replies:

"Well... your response explains much about the current state we find ourselves in. If I could ignore the needs of the Imperium, we could perhaps be of aid, but my House cannot have the reputation for reneging on deals. We must uphold our end of the bargain with the Harkonnens. Enjoy the hospitality for the rest of the evening. I must now attend to my studies. My uncle will be your host, should you choose to remain here."

After either statement, the Prince abruptly stands and leaves by a side door to the left of the throne. Godwyn, his uncle, steps forward and claps his hands twice. Quickly servants enter the throne-room and a ballet ensues of tables and chairs being arranged carefully, then food and drink is brought and placed for a banquet. A quartet of musicians take their positions within an alcove set into one of the walls and begin to play softly, a composition of the Prince's.

Godwyn motions for the player characters to be seated. He speaks:

"Please be seated. Enjoy our hospitality. Business can be discussed later."

KOLE ALEXIN

PRINCE OF HOUSE ALEXIN, MUSICAL PRODIGY

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

The prince is not interested in the traditional pursuits of power and has devoted his time and resources to the study of music, both composition and performance. Kole is an extremely gifted musical prodigy who has mastered many musical instruments and written a few well received operas. In dealings of a non-musical nature Kole is obviously bored and seeks to dismiss whatever the business at hand is and return to his music, deferring to his uncle in all manners relating to the House's management. However, he is known to be impulsive and occasionally overrules his uncle's counsel, usually for his own esoteric reasons.

STATEMENT DRIVE DUTY: < All glory to House Harkonnen. FAITH: (JUSTICE: POWER: There is always something TRUTH: new to learn. SKILL **FOCUSES** BATTLE: COMMUNICATE: DISCIPLINE: Leadership MOVE: UNDERSTAND:

Traits: Noble, Philosophical

TALENT:

O- Intense Study: Once per scene, Kole may use his Understand skill on a single skill test instead of any other skill, and he is counted as having a Focus for that test.

Assets: Elite Troops, Palace Fortress

GODWYN ALEXIN

NOBLE, WARMASTER MENTAT

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Godwyn is uncle to Prince Kole and the real power behind House Alexin. As a Mentat military commander and logistics genius, he has made the House even more powerful in his generation. Despite its agricultural focus, it maintains a seasoned military force. Every business and political deal with the House goes through Godwyn. The Prince implicitly trusts his uncle in all dealings and generally defers to his judgment, rarely choosing to intervene.

DRIVE	STATEMENT	
DUTY: 4	All glory to House Harkonnen.	
FAITH: 6		
JUSTICE: 5		
POWER: 4		
TRUTH: 7	There is always something new to learn.	
SKIL	L FOCUSES	
BATTLI	E: 3	
COMMUNICATE: 6		
DISCIPLINI	E: 5 Leadership	
MOVI	E: 4	
		

Traits: Noble, Logistical Genius

TALENTS:

- O- Advisor (Battle): Whenever Godwyn assists an ally and uses Battle, that ally may re-roll a single d20 in their dice pool.
- O Mentat Discipline (Mentat Talent): Godwyn has almost perfect recall, for even the most complex data. When making an **Understand** test that applies to recalling data, one of the d20s in his pool may be considered to have rolled a 1 instead of rolling it.
- O Verify (Mentat Talent): Godwyn may spend a point of Threat to determine if a piece of information is true or false. He does not need to be making a skill test, such as with Obtain Information, and the data can be his supposition as much as a specific document or rumor.

Assets: Elite Troops, House Assassins, Palace Fortress



THE DEAL

If the decision goes against the player characters, then nothing of consequence happens other than small talk and a pleasant evening with good food and music. If the Prince sides with the player characters, at some point in the evening Godwyn takes aside one person into his office in a side-room from the throne-room to work out where the relationship goes into the future. Godwyn explains:

"Seeing as we will not be continuing with the Harkonnens, it will leave us substantially short on the profitability of that endeavor. Perhaps we can come to the same arrangement and serve our interest in Arrakis to mutual benefit. I offer you the same deal we had negotiated with the Baron."

Godwyn presents the player characters with various papers, memory crystals, and maps that detail out the logistical and business assets that would be put into play with this deal. It boils down to a trade of 1 point in the Wealth index for a +1 to the Spice Production index. Furthermore, 1 additional point in Wealth can be traded for an equal increase in the

Military Power index. The player characters can take this deal or negotiate something new with Godwyn.

If they choose to negotiate, it requires a contested skill test against Godwyn. One test for Spice Production and one test for Military Power. If they win, the cost of the index is .5 points each for the Spice Production and Military Power indices. If they lose, the cost is 1.5 points for each. At the end of the deal Godwyn informs the player characters of the following:

"The spies of the Baron are no doubt aware of this visit and are likely to deduce its nature. The Baron Harkonnen is certain to have more than one actor in this endeavor. If we are to succeed, we must make sure we have more allies among the other Houses to support your claim on Arrakis."

With that last warning, the player characters are rejoined, for an uneventful evening. In sum, the player characters have the opportunity to gain House Alexin's support, with one vote in their favor, in addition to the changes to the indices mentioned prior. With their business concluded, the player characters can depart House Alexin at their leisure.

VIOLENCE ON KAITAIN

The Emperor has a monopoly on using force in the Imperium, but on Kaitain specifically this is enforced to a much greater degree. His elite forces ensure peace is kept and malcontents are swiftly dealt with and harshly punished.

Still, some player characters may be tempted to use force as a means to an end. A small scuffle or a bar fight might be overlooked or settled with a small fine, but large-scale violence will certainly incur the wrath of the Emperor, or more likely his agents.

If the player characters for example, try and strongarm House Alexin, it will most certainly not end well for them. Alexin's House guard is more than capable of defending the nobles, and if need be, to the Imperial forces are only a summons away to enforce the peace.

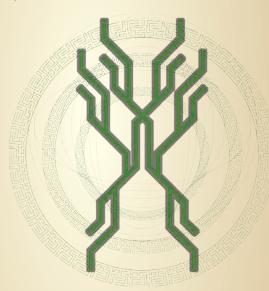
In the event such a tactic is tried, the party responsible is captured and tried by a magistrate of the Emperor. At the gamesmaster's discretion, any nobles may be ransomed back to their House, but other members partaking in the violence will be executed, or at the very least, imprisoned and put on trial. The Wealth index penalty for such a ransom should be severe, matched by a reduction in the Landsraad Support index. Assaults on a noble's person are a very serious crime in the Imperium and more so on Kaitain. However, a duel by consent is well within the law, and is considered fair game.

MORE ALLIES

HOUSE ECAZ

House Ecaz is currently in decline from once being a major force in the Landsraad. With the Archduke Armand in retirement and all his heirs having been killed in the war with House Moritani, it falls on the lesser nobles to rebuild what remains of the House and regain their former glory. Lady Caranda Ecaz, a distant niece of Archduke Armand, is the current head of the House's presence on Kaitain and within the Landsraad. The House is currently in good standing with the other Great and Minor Houses of the Landsraad, other than Houses Moritani and Harkonnen, and has no active wars or feuds.

Lady Caranda Ecaz has risen through sheer will and determination up the ranks to become head of the Ecaz household. She is determined to get revenge on the Harkonnens for their role in the death of her noble cousins and the harm done to her House. House Ecaz is not as powerful as it was in Archduke Armand's prime, but now actively seeks alliances and opportunities to strengthen their hand in openly declaring kanly against the Harkonnens.



In this act, several other Houses are contacted and can be played out in any order. The main emphasis is to showcase the interdependence the Houses have in the running of the Imperium and why the Landsraad is necessary for the society to function. Firstly, it is a neutral meeting place in which business and trade in favors can be conducted with some security provided by the oversight of peer judgment and review. Also, the Landsraad serves as a check against the potential tyranny of the Emperor against any one single House.

MEETING LADY ECAZ

Zetan Ben Zeev suggests they invite over Lady Ecaz to discuss how they may be able to work together to gain mutual advantage over their shared enemy, the Harkonnens. Provided the player characters consent to this plan, Zetan makes the arrangements to host House Ecaz. Player characters who pay attention to events in the Landsraad and the Great Houses may know that House Ecaz is dwindling in power and influence, though still respected. The deaths of Archduke Armand Ecaz's three eldest daughters left him devastated and withdrawn, and the administration of the House on the Landsraad left to a distant cousin, injured terribly in the bombing by House Moritani that slew the archduke's last remaining daughter.

On the appointed day, Lady Ecaz arrives by ground transport with a small entourage. Her accompaniment consists of two servants, two elite guards, and an assistant Mentat. She is relatively young, but apparently frail, and is escorted in upon a suspensor chair, guided by her servants. She is robed and veiled, the transparency of the cloth only hinting at the terrible scars beneath, and she clearly depends upon the assistance of her Mentat for most physical tasks. She introduces the Mentat, an older woman with a somber demeanor, as Simona Kowyss but does not provide any more than that.

After a formal greeting, the meeting moves to the large hall of the palace. Any of the player characters with Bene Gesserit training recognize that she is from their ranks. At a certain point she asks for the player characters' indulgence in a certain matter. Her Mentat hands her a small packet wrapped in patterned silk. With trembling hands, Lady Ecaz unwraps it to reveal a stack of elongated cards, one of many types used for divination throughout the Imperium. This particular set is emblazoned with imagery from the Orange Catholic Bible, and the central tenets of the Buddislamic faith.

Any player character paying attention to her sees a web of white and pink scar tissue upon one of her hands, the telltale remnants of considerable amounts of surgery. Lady Ecaz shuffles the cards loosely, with a wavering but practiced grasp, waving off any attempts at assisting her. She explains:

"I know that these are somewhat of a superstition, but I have found that the cards often provide non-intuitive insights and the seeming patterns that emerge to be quite useful. I turned to them often in my convalescence, and they brought me great comfort. Please..."

She asks one of the player characters to cut the cards for her into three groups, then to stack them again. The cards go into a pile on the arm of her suspensor chair, and she asks the highest-ranking noble player character to draw one from the top. She urges them to set it aside, on a nearby table thoughtfully and discreetly provided by one of your House servants.

As a note to the gamemaster, this fortune pertains to House Nagara and the events in **Agents of Dune**. If the player characters did not play through that sequence of events, another fortune should be presented, or interpretations varied as appropriate.

"The first card represents your past."

"This is 'ludicium'. Judgment... but reversed." she reads, the card depicting a roiling cloud above a verdant plain, some sort of angelic being looking down from afar, beckoning to what look like peasants gathered below, looking at one another. "You were given an opportunity to prove yourself, a great honor bestowed upon you, yet the reversal means that many sought you to fail. It is possible, even, that the one who put the test before you was not an advocate for your success. But this, I think, you know, or should at least suspect.

"Again. Another card."

The next card is drawn, revealing a gaunt figure, almost skeletal, swathed in a billowing black robe and hood. It stands upon a small boat upon a river, the shore visible in the distance, navigating by use of a long pole. Corpses float in the water around the boat.

"Your current circumstances. 'Terminus', or Death. A grim card, but also one of transformation. You have faced great loss, and yet you are changed, growing to accommodate this tragedy. The other shore beckons, but you are still in the river."

"A third card, please. This depicts that which stands in your future, either that which you must overcome, or that which you must become."

This final card depicts an old man in regal garments, his beard long and white, sitting upon a golden throne, a crown upon his head. In one hand is a bejeweled ball with a small symbol upon it, the other hand holds a short scepter with a flared head, crossed over his breast.

LADY CARANDA ECAZ

HEAD OF HOUSE ECAZ

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Lady Ecaz is determined to settle the score with the remaining faction responsible for the deaths of her cousins and for the considerable harm done to her. Now House Moritani is broken, her anger is focused on the Harkonnens. As much as she would like to act, she is pragmatic enough to recognize they do not have the resources to commit to a war yet.



Traits: Noble, Vengeful

TALENT:

O Direct: Once per scene, Lady Caranda may command an ally or subordinate to act. This requires no test, but the commanded ally may immediately attempt an action of their own, and Lady Caranda may assist any test they attempt. If done during a conflict, the ally acts on Lady Caranda's turn regardless of if they have already acted, and this does not prevent them acting later during the round.

Assets: Concealable Knife, Personal Shield, Mentat Master of Assassins



From the position of the card, though, it is upside-down. Lady Ecaz's breath hisses through her teeth.

"Imperator. The Emperor. Master of all things. The most formidable opponent one can face, or a grand destiny. But reversed is an interesting position. It implies cunning and deception, perhaps no true path to this state, but also denotes a lack of faith. Perhaps if the Emperor opposes you through proxies, it is part of some greater scheme yet to be revealed. Or perhaps it is the Imperium itself this card stands for."

She sits back, pushing the rest of the cards aside.

"Enough, though. I thirst."

This seems a good enough juncture to bring out the meal, so quickly the servants begin to bring out a small array of food and drink. Despite her claim, she does little more than sip at the cup set before her, after her Mentat discreetly waves a poison snooper over it, and she does not eat anything served to her, merely pushing it across the plate in the semblance of eating.

As the meal progresses, Lady Ecaz cuts right to the matter at hand

"Let's dispense with the small talk and get to why we are here. You need allies to shore up your strength against the Harkonnens on Arrakis. My House wants revenge on the Harkonnens for many past offenses. We need resources to rebuild our military, and are willing to throw in with you in this regard. If you can cut us in a share of spice mining, we may both achieve our goals."

Zetan reminds the player characters that a vote in their favor in the Landsraad would also be a condition for a deal. There is nothing preventing the player characters from offering House Ecaz a share of the profits from the spice trade. If accepted, the Spice Production index is reduced by –1 and the Military Power index is increased by +1. There is no room to maneuver for a better deal, as House Ecaz has nothing more to offer. Lady Ecaz says as much, if asked for more.

The gamemaster can also allow for additional negotiations, perhaps involving whatever specialty House Nagara produces, as determined in **Agents of Dune**. House Ecaz could find use for many of these items, particularly those used for espionage, warfare, or even general support, but obviously without access to Arrakis they have no use for adjuncts to spice harvesting or production.

With the negotiations concluded, Lady Ecaz and her entourage make to depart. As she does so, she clutches the arm of whatever player character is appropriate and whispers into their ear as she goes. If it is a Bene Gesserit-trained player character, she uses a code taught by the Sisterhood.

"You may be contacted by a certain Harkonnen. His name is Alexzander. He appears to be mobilizing more pieces to deploy in some internal powerplay. I do not trust him, or any Harkonnen. However, he may be of use to you, so I would suggest you hear him out. My advice is to stay clear of those rabid mongrels. I promise you, by my House's hands or those of others, they will be put down...all of them."

With that final tidbit of a warning, Lady Ecaz departs.

If her offer is agreed to, a month later the spice production setup on Arrakis is finally modified enough to accommodate House Ecaz's own production facilities and group. As the spice profits begin to fill the coffers of House Ecaz, they formally declare a state of kanly against House Harkonnen for their part in the assassinations of the archduke's daughters.



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Zetan has also been busy contacting other Houses that may prove helpful in the upcoming vote or for potential future favors should the vote go against House Nagara. The negotiations are fairly straightforward and can be done by remote communications, accompanied by delivery of signed and sealed papers by secure courier. These events can be played out in any order and at any time during the adventure, or even skipped if a shorter sequence of events is desired.

HOUSE JAYGER NEEDS FOOD BADLY

For reasons that cannot easily be determined, House Jayger has lost its Guild transport privileges, suspended for reasons neither party will reveal. Perhaps the Guild is punishing them for some transgression, or more likely, they have fallen in arrears of Guild fees.

A Simple (D0) **Understand** test yields the information that due to a recent sustained combination of famine and blight, House Jayger's homeworld does not produce enough food to feed the populace, making them reliant upon external shipments delivered by Guild heighliner. The House fears food riots and even possible rebellion if this crisis is not solved soon. So as not to appear weak in the Imperium, they are looking for a more subtle and

immediate arrangement with another House aiding in this matter. An Average (D1) Communicate skill test allows the logistics to be worked out where shipments of food can be delivered from House Nagara's homeworld to that of House Jayger, avoiding the direct suspension enforced by the Guild. The Guild can certainly refuse to transport materials for House Jayger, but cannot withhold service from House Nagara, especially in the case of humanitarian aid. This assistance yields House Nagara a favor, or one vote from House Jayger in the Landsraad should a vote be held.

ARRANGEMENT WITH HOUSE MORGAN

The lord of House Morgan has been blessed by fecundity with many offspring. A vigorous man in the fullness of health and life, Lord Morgan has multiple wives and dozens of heirs, produced over a long and fruitful span of decades. Due to the number of ambitious sons and daughters, he fears a war of succession amongst them, and thus has been busy marrying off as many problematic children as he can. Naturally, the player characters' House presents an opportunity for such a blessed and convenient union. If this option appeals to them, the noble player characters can gain a spouse under a standard Imperial contract of marriage, in exchange for a favor or one vote of support by House Morgan in the event that House Nagara's competence is put on trial in the Landsraad.

If this is agreeable, the spouse and their belongings are available for transport to Arrakis or wherever the player characters are currently based, by the end of the month. Now this ambitious son or daughter is the responsibility of House Nagara, not House Morgan.

The gamemaster is encouraged to use this adventure seed for an additional session to roleplay the arranged marriage if the player characters agree to it, or to simply let it resolve as a subplot without fanfare. It can be a dramatic means of introducing a new and significant non-player character into the campaign, or handled discreetly as a distant marriage without any actual contact.

HOSTAGE EXCHANGE

House Brovik and House Yons are engaged in a war of kanly. Both have captured important prisoners and desire an exchange to get their people back. Neither trusts the other and are each looking for a neutral party to facilitate the exchange. Passing a Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test makes possible the arrangement for the prisoners to be delivered to the House Nagara's homeworld, or even Arrakis itself, where the exchange can take place under the player characters' scrutiny and security.

If the offer of an exchange is accepted by both parties (only one test is required), both House Brovik and House Yons owe House Nagara favor each, which can be traded in for a vote in their favor.

A SECRET ALLY

On the third day they are on Kaitain (or later, if appropriate), the player characters receive a mysterious invitation to attend a costume party at a pleasure palace on the following evening. The invitation reads:

A friend invites you to attend a benefit party for the underprivileged. Costumes mandatory and discretion advised. With the sincerest hope you can attend.

The invitation has the location and time (late evening) for the event, but is not signed with any identifying marks. The pleasure palace is owned by a local named Cornelius Khalid Hosh. The venue is rumored to be little more than a den of iniquity with an enigmatic business front, and research reveals nothing more of the mysterious invite or intent behind it. Even visiting the venue ahead of time or spying on it shows it to be an operating business closed for a private function for the evening of the invitation.

If the player characters decide to attend, they may hire a livery cab or take ground transport, one of several available as part of the mansion's amenities. The player characters must bring the invitation card to be allowed entrance.

THE PLEASURE PALACE

Arrival at the pleasure palace occurs without incident. The festivities appear to be spilling out into the street with some guests in costumes milling about the entrance. The foyer has a few guards dressed in ornate and slightly farcical livery, checking guests for invitations before allowing them entrance.

Once through the foyer, guests are greeted by the owner, a rather sweaty, red-faced man, his face heavily made up. He scrutinizes the invitation closely with a lazy glance and breaks out into a huge grin and an elaborate bow, motioning the player characters inside. He speaks:

"Welcome, my distinguished guests. Your humble servant Cornelius Khalid Hosh, at your service. My friends call me Khal. Please follow me to your private chamber for this evening's festivity."

With that the man moves further into the building. The decor of the palace is overdone, past the point of being garish. Inside, as the player characters move through the establishment, they see that it is packed with people in colorful costumes, with scores of scantily clad men and women, discreetly or overtly offering themselves available for pleasure. Also present is copious amounts of food, drink, and a veritable banquet of narcotics. After a push through the crowd, the player characters arrive at an elevator that Khal summons and unlocks via

an optical scanner. The player characters are ushered in, the doors close behind them, and the cabin automatically lurches into action, moving upwards to the second floor.

The elevator opens into a large room populated by costumed partygoers. It is dominated by a large settee, drifting aloft upon suspensor fields. Reclining decadently upon it is a middle aged red-headed man, puffing from the stem of a hookah, drifting slightly behind the settee. The smoke smells of the spice melange, and those with keen senses can see the effects of spice addiction in the man's eyes. Despite his casual pose, he gives the impression of thick muscles concealed by his loose silk robes, but the broken blood vessels on his cheeks and the unhealthy pallor to his skin suggest someone who was once in excellent condition, perhaps even a fighter, but has since fallen into decadence and indulgence. At the foot of the settee, a young person of indeterminate gender massages and caresses his feet.

Upon seeing the player characters, the man grows very excited and exclaims loudly to everyone within the room, his voice blaring trumpet-like, perhaps picked up and amplified by hidden speakers:

"Everyone out! Out! Now! My new friends... come in and be comfortable."

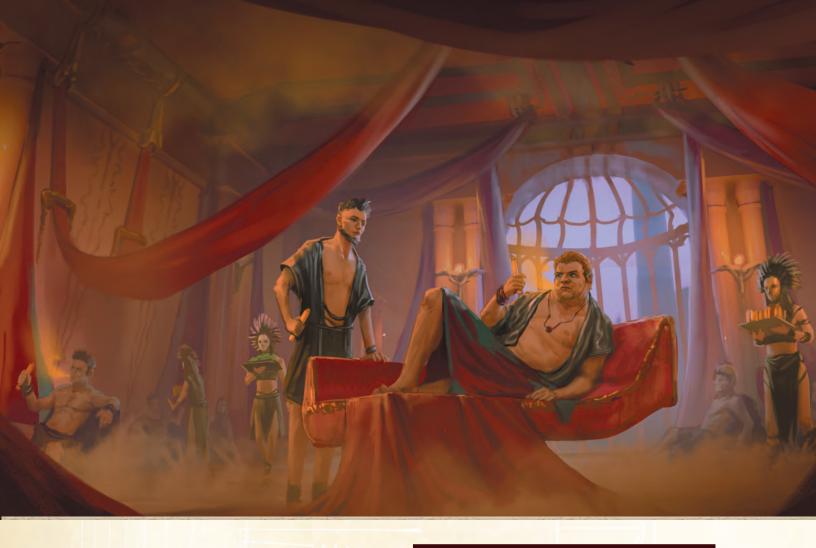
The room quickly empties except for one man dressed in a dark and functional garment, apparently some sort of aide for the man on the settee. Rising from the sofa, the red-haired man continues to greet the player characters:

"We can speak freely, now. No worries. The room is protected by a sound damper. Ixian. The best. Anything said here remains here. My name is Alexzander Harkonnen. Do not be alarmed. I believe that we have before us an opportunity to help one another."

THE PROPOSAL

The player characters may introduce themselves at this point and ask questions. Alexzander begins with what seems like a well-practiced spiel. He explains that he represents a group within the Harkonnen family who would like to see new leadership, ridding the House of the Baron. Not everyone is pleased with the Baron's obsession with Arrakis, and they feel that despite the immense profits, it is hurting them in many other ways, making them nearly a pariah among the Landsraad, with no allies and only fearful enemies. Arrakis and the spice trade made for a very profitable business, but time has





come to move on to other ventures. If the player characters can discredit or humiliate the Baron on Arrakis, then Alexzander may be able to orchestrate a power-play to take control on Giedi Prime. He would never think of killing Vladimir, his dear and respected uncle, of course, but he can find ways to sideline the Baron and make him less of a threat.

"Of course," says Alexzander, "The key to success is whether we can find it in our best interests to trust one another."Once the initial reaction to that statement is over, he continues.

"I understand if you are skeptical. Of course you are. We can proceed by steps, committing to actions that demonstrate good faith. Naturally, given our circumstances, I am the one who must make this first step, extending an olive branch across a river of blood. I can do something for you, with no obligation. If you feel that my intentions are sincere and it is in your best interests to pursue further with this, you can then do something for me. First, I swear that I will intervene in your current crisis with the Landsraad and use my influence in your favor. I have prepared documents to this very purpose, which will be delivered to your mansion the moment you assent to this arrangement. What I need from you is more immediate, however: the removal of the Baron's enforcer against my own branch of the family.

This should be easy if you seek vengeance against my House. I ask you to kill a Harkonnen for me. Is that something that whets your appetite?"

Alexander leads the player characters over to a one-way mirrored window that overlooks the palace floor below and points out a large, red-haired man in dark garments, sipping from a black crystal cup, drinking with a small group of boisterous men and women, all of whom seem to fawn upon him. Tucked into the crook of the man's arm is a small, flat-faced, wide-eyed dog, its tongue lolling out as it looks around. Unlike others at the revel, he wears no mask, and his outfit looks as if it conceals light body armor.

"There is the oaf downstairs in the gladiator outfit, a man named Vassily... my cousin. He is rather fond of dueling and the weapons he carries are no props. The easiest way to bait the oaf is to insult him. Almost certainly my cousin Vassily will challenge you to a duel to the first blood to defend his ridiculous sense of honor. Can we agree on this first step?"

The player characters can accept or decline the deal. If they accept, Alexzander snaps his fingers, and the aide steps forward with an ornate wooden box. As he opens the box, it gives a slight hiss, as if airtight. Alexzander presents the contents to the player characters: a

THE OBSIDIAN LEGION

If the characters are not oriented towards fighting, they can hire a duelist from the Obsidian Legion, a clandestine mercenary group operating in Corrinth City. The company is composed of exiled nobles, those without inheritance, and other former soldiers, all without a House banner to follow. They are often employed in small-scale warfare or actions outlined by the rules of kanly, but more often than not, are available as proxies for duels or in gladiatorial contests.

While not as prestigious as the Swordmasters of Ginaz, the Obsidian Legion has a dedicated school for duelists on their compound elsewhere on Kaitain, and have produced some notable swordmasters. More importantly, they are for hire, and for coin they are ready to champion causes the honor-bound Ginaz graduates may spurn.

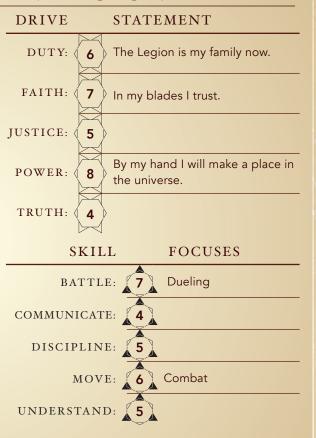
The player characters can reach out to them and have a champion delivered within the hour by fast ornithopter. The details of the favor can be left undetermined, assumed to be worked out in the background by Zetan, or used as a prompt for a future adventure. Should the player characters follow this path, in short order they have Djau Ibe at their service.

DJAU IBE

SWORDMASTER, DUELIST

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Djau is a sixth son from a Minor House with no inheritance and little wealth to rely on, his homeworld being on the fringe of Imperium space and having little more there than a single glorified mining town. With no opportunities there, he joined the Obsidian Legion to make his own path in life.



Traits: Duelist, Confident

TALENT

O- Bold (Battle): Djau may re-roll 1 d20 gained from spending Threat on a Battle skill test.

Assets: Knife, Personal Shield, Dueling Sword (Quality 3)

high-quality dueling dagger, precise, the keen edge of the blade gleaming in the light. Those with keen awareness can see the blade has an unnatural sheen. Poisoned, most likely.

"The mission is simple, one cut with this weapon will end Valeri within the day. The coating on the blade is only viable for a few hours after removing it from this box. The venom will fade and leave no evidence after that, so it's a one time opportunity. I can provide the antidote should you scratch yourself while using it.

"It will not be easy, either as the man is rather good at fighting. Still, his death needs to be a public display so it cannot be traced back to me. And if your House is credited with his death, it will add no more enmity from the Baron than already exists. So, choose your champion well and make sure they are not available for any questions after the duel.

"You do this for me, and I will make sure the vote goes in your favor with what influence I have, even potentially leveraging my House's influence to sway lesser Houses.

"Let this be the first step to a longer and equally prosperous journey. What say you?"

The player characters have the chance to decline the offer and leave in peace. If they proceed, the aide turns the box over to them. At this point, Alexzander yells for the party to resume, and merry-makers begin to file back in, almost as if on cue.

The player characters can enjoy the party with the return of the other guests, or ready themselves for the task at hand by leaving the way they came up by the elevator. The party is expected to go on for days and no doubt Vassily will be in attendance for the debauchery as long as it continues.



OTHER OPTIONS

For player character groups who are not combatinclined, there is the option of hiring a duelist, as described in The Obsidian Legion sidebar. However, for those who are simply unwilling to take the life of an innocent man (inasmuch as any Harkonnen can be said to be innocent), the gamemaster may allow the player characters to do something to help neutralize Vassily Harkonnen without calling him out in a duel. This could involve framing him for conspiracy against the Baron, in which case the Baron will have him slain, or it could be simply finding clandestine information that could be used by Alexzander to blackmail and neutralize him. The gamemaster should be open to these options, as not every bargain needs to be settled in blood, even with the Harkonnens.

THE DUEL

When the player characters leave by way of the elevator they are greeted again by Khal and ushered out onto the palace floor. Vassily can easily be spotted, as the large man stands out in the crowd. As the player characters approach, they hear a crash and a platter of goblets falls to the ground, accompanied by a round of coarse laughter. As they approach, a servant rushes from the group, a red imprint from Vassily's meaty hand still visible upon their face. As noted prior, his garments are functional and belie a fighter. Upon his belt are an offhand knife and the clip for where a sword likely hangs. A partial personal shield of the dueling variety can also be made out on his person, but is inactive at the moment. In one arm is cradled a small pug-faced dog, and despite his wariness, he seems to be having a good time with a few compatriots, apparently at the cost of the servant's dignity.

The moment of decision is at hand. The chosen duelist can arm themselves and approach Vassily for the confrontation. Consult the **Dune Core Rulebook** (page 180) for resolving a one-on-one duel.

The player characters should be free to make up some means of offending Vassily, with options ranging from spilling a drink on him (a classic!) to insulting his 'stupid little dog'. It takes very little to enrage the man, due to that famed Harkonnen lack of self-control, and he throws down an actual gauntlet before the offending player character(s), demanding honor be satisfied.

The room grows quiet, partygoers making a clearing around Harkonnen and the player characters. The proprietor, Khal, interjects suddenly, trying to stave off violence half-heartedly, but it is obvious that he's more than a little pleased at this turn of events.



"There is no need for violence," he says, barely able to contain his glee at this noteworthy escalation to his party. "I am sure it's all just a misunderstanding..."

Valeri responds:

"If this coward apologizes fully and with all humility, I will let the matter be. Otherwise, I demand blood... as is my right as a Harkonnen."

The player characters' chosen duelist can end the confrontation without bloodshed or proceed with the duel. If the duel proceeds, Vassily kisses his dog and hands it off to a companion. He calls for his sword, which is presented to him by an ally. He activates his personal shield and draws his second blade. He beckons to the player character who faces him.

"Step forward and die." If the player characters are from House Nagara and have played through the events in **Agents of Dune**, he smirks and continues: "I'll give you a cleaner death than your mother earned."

If the player characters are successful in winning the duel, the injured or slain Vassily is taken away by his companions, dying later that evening. If they lose the duel, the player characters can withdraw with their injured member back to their mansion to regroup.

Trying to contact Alexzander if the duel is lost is unfruitful. He has no wish to traffic with incompetents who can't carry out a simple murder for him. If the player characters win the duel, Alexzander is quickly in contact by secure communinet transmission:

"Congratulations on your victory. The first step is done, and the game truly begins. I can be reached on this secure channel for future endeavors. But first I need certain assurances that if things go badly, I have a haven from Vladimir's vengeance. A humble abode on your home-world will do nicely. Some secrecy would be preferable, should it come to pass."

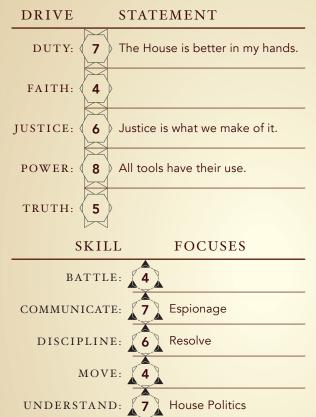
If the player characters agree to this, reduce their Wealth index by –0.5 to secure transport and housing to accommodate Alexzander and his entourage. Alternatively, not doing so is also an option, and the player characters can leave Alexzander to his fate if he is caught as a spy.

The player characters gain an asset in Alexzander within the Harkonnen House. Contacting him requires a successful Dire (D4) **Communication** test. Failure means he is caught and lost as an asset. In this case, Alexzander must be evacuated or left to his fate. Success means the player characters have the upper hand in any military, political, or business contests against the Harkonnens for that scene, an advantage to be determined by the gamemaster, but usually arriving in the form of inside knowledge.

ALEXZANDER HARKONNEN NOBLE, POLITICAL MASTERMIND

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Alexzander has always been in the shadow of his elder cousin, the Baron Harkonnen. He resents Vladimir for getting all the credit for making the House great. For a long time, Alexzander has been planning a coup from within to take over leadership after Vladimir has been removed from power by his hand or other means. Out of a curious sort of pride, Alexzander would like the Harkonnen name to mean more than brutality and fear.



Traits: Noble, Cunning

TALENTS:

- O Binding Promise: When Alexzander succeeds at a Communicate test to persuade someone to agree to a promise or agreement, he may spend one, two, or three points of Threat to make that agreement binding. If that person wishes to break the promise, they must spend Threat equal to twice the Momentum he spent.
- O Hidden Motives: When an opponent fails an Understand or Communicate test against Alexzander, he may immediately create a trait which reflects a mistaken belief that character has about him.
- O- Mask of Power: Once per scene Alexzander may create an asset (at no cost) such as blackmail evidence or an owed favor that allows him to

initiate an Intrigue or Espionage Conflict with a person of the gamemaster's choosing. The asset is a lie, of course; he doesn't have anything, but the target doesn't know that. The asset is removed once the conflict is over, and if Alexzander is defeated, the fact he was bluffing is exposed and he suffers an additional complication.

Assets: Communinet Transceiver, Emergency Transmitter, Ixian Damper,

VASSILY HARKONNEN

NOBLE, DUELIST

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Like most of the Harkonnen nephews that can be made useful, Vassily has been favored by the Baron. Trained as a gladiator, he serves the Baron as an enforcer to keep the family in line when it comes to political ambitions. Ultimately, Vassily is a bully who only cares for two things in the whole of the Imperium: himself and his small dog.

DRIVE	STATEMENT	
DUTY: 4	All glory to House Harkonnen.	
FAITH: 6	<u> </u>	
JUSTICE: 5	>	
POWER: 4	>	
TRUTH: 7	There is always something new to learn.	
SKII	L FOCUSES	
BATTLE: 3		
COMMUNICAT	E: 6	
DISCIPLIN	E: Leadership	
MOV	E A	
	E: 4	

Traits: Noble, Violent

TALENT:

O- Duelist: Once per duel Vassily can re-roll any failed d20.

Assets: Dueling Saber (Quality 3), Kindjal (Quality 2), Personal Dueling Shield (Quality 3).

THE LANDSRAAD MEETS

By now, the player characters may have received assurances from House Alexin that the issue of the no-confidence vote will not be raised and have attempted to gather enough votes to sway a vote in their favor should it come to the floor. Should the gamemaster wish to continue with this process, the Houses Great and Minor assemble at the appointed time at the Landsraad's magnificent assembly hall in Corrinth City.

RESOLUTION

At the end of this chapter the player characters will tally up what was gained at what cost and recount the favors owed that need to be taken care of. There is the potential for indices to shift guite a bit depending on how many plot points are resolved in favor or against the player characters. Keep in mind that a shift of one is substantial and two points is huge. It should balance out, as many opportunities will gain them points and others lose them points. However, the gamemaster may not want to allow too many shifts as it may unbalance the game for future chapters. A simple reduction of the value of the shifts by 50 percent will narrow the gains and penalties. Another explanation for why an index shift did not occur is that the logistics of the event responsible for the shift fell through and it's not feasible at this time.

In summary here are all the possible gains and losses in each section:

THE VOTE

- O Plus or minus one to the Wealth index.
- Plus or minus one to the Landsraad Support index.

ACT I

- O Minus half to one and a half point on the Wealth index.
- O Plus one on the Spice Production index.
- O Plus one on the Military Power index.

ACT II

- O Minus one on the Spice Production index.
- O Plus one on the Military Power index.

ACT III

O Minus half on the Wealth index.

Additionally the player characters will have the potential to gain a political spy asset in House Harkonnen plus possible favors from House Jayger, House Morgan, House Brovik, and House Yons. A favor might be owed to the Obsidian Legion if they make use of Djau Ibe.

After the vote scene is played out, all influence indices should be adjusted for actions taken during the adventure. The player characters can at this point continue on with some of the adventure seeds introduced, such as the arranged marriage, or head back to Arrakis to continue the campaign either in a stronger position or with a vote of no confidence and the loss of their official claim.

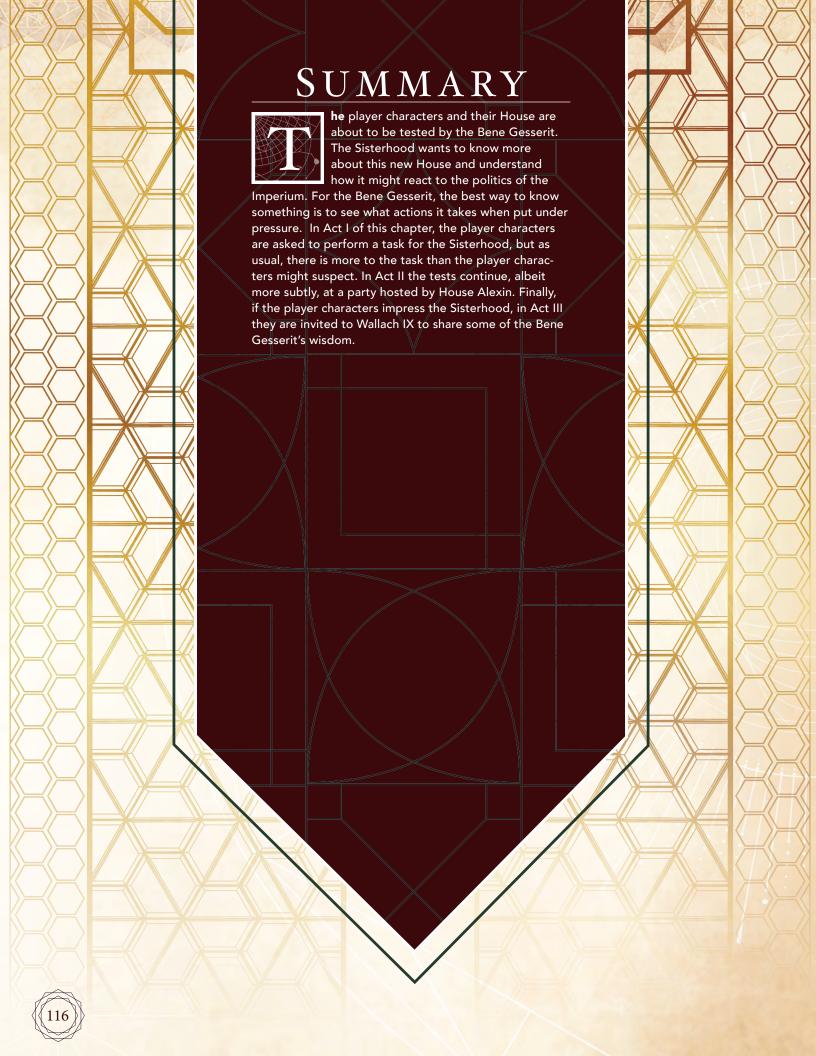




THE BENE GESSERIT

Perceptions rule the universe.

—Bene Gesserit saying



PRELUDE

There are two ways to introduce this scenario. The first is to give the player characters a reason to contact the Bene Gesserit and the second is to have the Bene Gesserit contact the House for reasons of their own. The player characters might decide to seek the Sisterhood's assistance with a problem. If a member of the House is a Sister or acolyte the player characters might earn their sympathy, but as spice is essential to the Sisterhood and House Nagara is in control of the flow of spice, the Bene Gesserit might be inclined to assist solely to keep the spice flowing. The player characters may not want to seek help and the Bene Gesserit are unlikely to be impressed by any such admission of weakness. It should be obvious that the Sisterhood would inevitably seek to exploit any signs of weaknesses they detect in the new stewards of Arrakis.

GETTING THE SISTERHOOD'S ATTENTION

Sending a message to Wallach IX is unlikely to meet with success. It would be necessary to find a courier with access to the planet and the Sisterhood may not even meet with the messenger, as they are not in the habit of answering such pleas, though the gamemaster should judge the relative success based on the proposal and the House's current status.

If one of the player characters is Bene Gesserit herself, whether trained or still a practicing member of the order, she could contact them to ask for help. The Sisterhood is likely to respond to one of their own, providing she doesn't come across as incompetent. The player character Bene Gesserit can do this with or without the knowledge and/or approval of the other player characters.

The player characters could also attempt to reconnect with Reverend Mother Qadira Lariel Narilan (who they met in **Agents of Dune**). If they previously made a good impression on her, she would be inclined to support their cause. In this case, the word of a Reverend Mother carries much weight. Reverend Mother Narilan can take the player characters' request to a higher level.

SISTERHOOD CONTACT

Being dependent upon the current masters of Dune to preserve the flow of spice, the Sisterhood are keen to test the House's mettle. If it shows itself to be competent, the Sisterhood can show favor. If the House reveals itself to be weak or incompetent, the Sisterhood can intervene subtly to strengthen their enemies or their allies, whichever will toughen the House up. The Sisterhood must always appear to be neutral, but they dare not leave to chance anything concerning the flow of spice.

In this case, Reverend Mother Qadira Lariel Narilan receives instructions to contact the player characters to assess their competence and trustworthiness. She and her superiors have devised a series of tests to measure their strengths and weaknesses. The tests are woven into a subtle web of circumstance, and the player characters may not even realize they are being tested — at least not at the outset. The Reverend Mother contacts Arrakis' new wardens via a previously unknown Bene Gesserit representative in their midst, or reaches out to whichever player character she considers most senior.

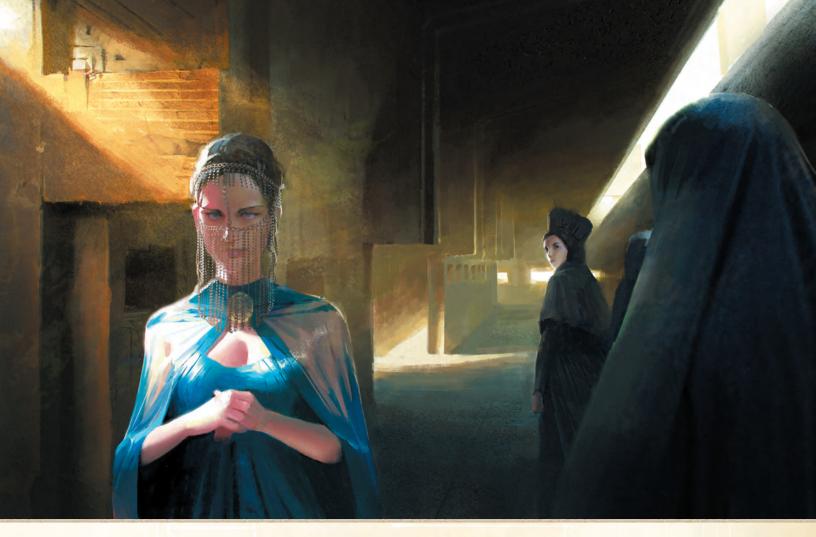
Like many of the sections of this book, the various acts in this adventure can lead directly into each other or be interspersed with other adventures in this book (or from elsewhere).

IF A CHARACTER IS BENE GESSERIT

In this case, the Sisterhood expects one of their own to help convince the player characters to take part in the testing of House Nagara. She may drop hints of the best way to approach the tests but, when it comes to knowing the precise nature of the tests and the criteria for passing or failing, the Sisterhood expects her to use her own understanding, abilities, and initiative. In other words, they are not going to give her special help or access to their plans.

This is as much a test of the Bene Gesserit player character as it is a test of the House to whom she is assigned. Ultimately, she will be judged more harshly than those not of the Sisterhood, who know no better.





THE TEST

The player characters' initial contact on Arrakis is the Reverend Mother Qadira Lariel Narilan. Taking care to appear rather ashamed of herself (which she isn't) she tells them one of the Sisterhood's agents on Arrakis is in trouble and asks them to assist in sorting the matter out.

The Sister in question is Ayeana, a senior housekeeper in the Nagara residence in Arrakeen. Narilan watches the player characters' reactions carefully — how do they respond to the revelation that a trusted member of household staff is an agent for a faction powerful within the Imperium? Narilan does not provide much by way of further explanation. With the player characters' permission, she instructs Ayeana to seek her superiors out and inform them of the issue with which she requires their assistance.

Ayeana is very responsive to the way in which the player characters approach her. If they treat her with respect and dignity, she is forthcoming. If they treat her like a servant, she acts like a servant, giving monosyllabic answers to questions and giving away as little as possible. She tells the player characters she needs help to get some files from a prominent criminal,

Javal Bryce (probably not his real name). Bryce is the leader of a gang who run a protection racket. Most of their 'clients' are smugglers. This file could certainly be useful to the player characters as having information on smugglers would, if handled right, increase nearly all their indices of success. Ruthlessness if they wipe out the smugglers, accompanied by an increase in Spice Production, possibly even kudos with the Emperor.

If the player characters hesitate to lend their aid, Ayeana is quick to point out the advantages of having information on Javal's 'clients', and promises to share the information in the files with them. The player characters might think to ask why Ayeana wants the information. She hesitates, pretending to be uncertain, but then brightens up and (seemingly reluctantly) reveals she is acting on the Reverend Mother's instructions. Which, in a way, she is.

Ayeana provides a map showing the location of Javal's office in the back streets of Carthag. She also provides security codes to get through the doors. She explains that the interior of the building housing the office is unguarded, though it does contain security devices.

QADIRA LARIEL NARILAN

BENE GESSERIT REVEREND MOTHER

MAJOR SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Narilan is utterly devoted to the Bene Gesserit and has little concern for the politics of spice, though she understands that a steady supply of melange is essential to her Order. Her task here is to assess the competence of the new rulers of House Nagara and to advise her superiors on how far to assist and protect them in the ever-shifting game of House politics. The Sisterhood rarely acts directly, but there is much they can do to influence the course of events. If Narilan can get a favorable deal on the Sisterhood's spice supply, it would be an additional benefit.

Narilan rarely acts directly by herself. There are plenty of Sisterhood agents and acolytes already on the planet — some open about what they are, some hidden, disguised as servants, laborers, concubines, etc.

DRIVE STATEMENT DUTY: We protect our own. Your Sisters are always behind FAITH: **IUSTICE:** POWER: TRUTH: Truth is found in small things. SKILL **FOCUSES** BATTLE: COMMUNICATE: Empathy DISCIPLINE: Observe UNDERSTAND:

Traits: Reverend Mother, Reticent, Shrewd, and Incisive

TALENTS:

- O Hyperawareness: Reverend Mother Narilan can spend 1 Threat and receive two pieces of information about a person, environment, or situation that might not be immediately apparent but could be gleaned through observation.
- O Other Memory: As inheritor of the past memories of all Reverend Mothers in her line, Narilan can call upon those memories in situations where such memories would be of use, gaining three automatic successes.
- O- Prana-bindu: Her Bene Gesserit training allows Narilan complete control over her physical body and its processes. She may re-roll a single d20 on any Move or Discipline test relying on this control.
- O Voice: This secret Bene Gesserit mind control technique allows Narilan to spend 1–3 Threat to gain that number of automatic successes for a Communicate test made to influence a chosen target. The more successes, the more overt the use of the Voice becomes. She may also buy automatic successes to resist uses of Voice against her.

Assets: Bene Gesserit Acolytes, Knife

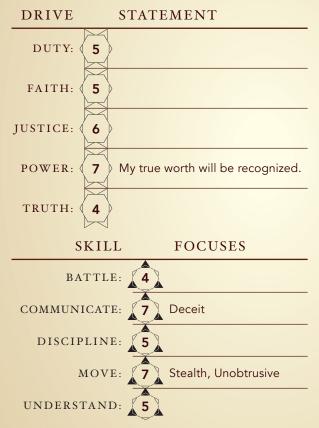
AYEANA

BENE GESSERIT AGENT, MEMBER OF HOUSE NAGARA STAFF

MAJOR SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Ayeana has been working for House Nagara since they arrived in Arrakeen. She has made great efforts to befriend other members of the staff, both newly-appointed Arrakeen natives and those recently arrived from off-world. Ayeana is faithful to the Sisterhood but not above running a couple of sidelines for her own advancement. Her rebellious and forceful nature have slowed her promotion through ranks of the Sisterhood, and this does not sit well with her.

Ayeana does her best to carry out her assignment hoping that if she excels in the tasks set for her, both House Nagara and the Sisterhood will recognize and reward her true worth.



Traits: Bene Gesserit Acolyte, Member of House Nagara Staff

TALENT:

Or Discipline test.

Assets: Bodkin, Palm Lock, Bene Gesserit Coded Dots

JAVAL BRYCE

CRIMINAL GANG BOSS

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Javal runs a successful protection racket, targeting other criminals in Carthag, mostly smugglers. As such, he keeps detailed records of smuggling activities on Arrakis. He also has a considerable amount of information about legitimate activities, or more accurately, the activities of the agents of legitimate authorities. He is in his late twenties, physically fit, good-looking, and sharply dressed. Nobody knows who his father was (his mother either doesn't know or isn't saying) but he has the appearance and manner of a noble. While a criminal, he could be a useful contact for the player characters, if they don't make an enemy of him.

Javal does not like the Harkonnens. When he was a youth and a petty criminal, the Harkonnens caught him pickpocketing and beat him badly, nearly killing him. His friends in the criminal community all have similar stories. Javal also has contacts among the Fremen who work or do trade in Carthag, and he understands how badly the Harkonnens have treated them.

DRIVE	STATEMENT	
DUTY: 5)	
FAITH: 6	Nothing is impossible if I work hard enough	
JUSTICE: 5		
POWER: 7	I take what I want because I have the strength to do so.	
TRUTH: 8	→	
SKII	LL FOCUSES	
BATTLE: 5		
COMMUNICATE: 6		
DISCIPLIN	E: 7 Charm	
MOV	E: 5 Command, Composure	
UNDERSTAN		

Traits: Arrakeen native, Successful, Underworld boss

TALENT

O Driven: After Javal spends 3 Threat as if it was Determination, roll 1d20. If he rolls equal to or under his Discipline (by itself), that Threat is immediately returned to the pool, as if it were not spent.

Assets: Gang Members (following), Maula Pistol

If the player characters think to ask Ayeana how she knows so much detail about the place, she tells them she has done her research and called in favors from a few friends. This is not actually the case. Ayeana's true motivation is to have the player characters cause a distraction at Javal's office while she sneaks into Javal's apartment to rescue his girlfriend. To verify the information Ayeana has given the player characters requires a successful Simple (D0) **Understand** or **Communicate** test. As soon as she knows when the player characters are going to undertake the task set for them, she arranges for a tip-off to reach Javal's ears.

A successful subtle opposed **Communicate** test against Ayeana indicates she is not telling the whole truth. There is something else she wants. She does not freely give this information, though a Daunting (D3) **Communicate** test forces her to confess her true motivation is to rescue Ryssa, a girl who has been kidnapped by Javal.

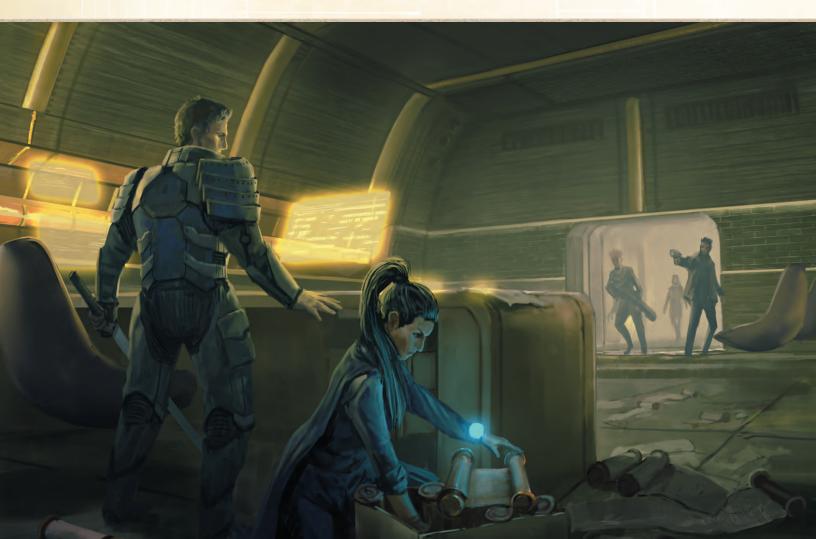
A careful search of Ayeana's quarters (a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test) turns up a written request to rescue someone called Ryssa from Javal, who has kidnapped her. It's in Bene Gesserit coded dots, but if none of the player characters can read these, another extended Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test with a requirement of 4 can work out what Ayeana's scrawled notes alongside the dots mean. There is limited time in

which to work this out, as Ayeana soon returns to her room.

Gamemaster Note: Unless the player characters make a conscious decision to interrogate Ayeana or search her room, they are unaware of her true motivation. Seeing through her deception impresses the Bene Gesserit greatly, so this achievement should not be won easily.

JAVAL'S OFFICE

Getting to Javal's office involves a trip through the backstreets of Carthag. An Average (D1) Move test gets the player characters to the office building safely, reduce the difficulty by one if they are familiar (or have familiarized themselves) with the area. The door codes Ayeana provided work perfectly. An Average (D1) Discipline test enables them to find the security devices mounted in the architraves of the doors in the corridor and behind the glowglobe fittings in Javal's personal office. With a Challenging (D2) Discipline or Understand test the player characters can disable these devices. Javal's office is secured by a physical lock as well as the security code and getting through it requires lockpicking or the use of brute force. This is another Challenging (D2) test, with the skill used depending on how the player characters approach the task.



GANG MEMBERS

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Javal's goons are all simple thugs, but they are loyal as Javal takes care of his people.



TALENT:

O Improvised Weapon: Once per scene the gang member may create a Quality 0 temporary asset (at no cost) that they can use in a personal or skirmish conflict.

Assets: Blades, Maula Pistols (two members have these)

Once inside the office it is a Simple (D0) **Understand** test to locate and purloin the files on the smugglers. There is a single, unsecured filing cabinet with neat and precise labeling. At this point Ayeana's betrayal comes to fruition. A gang of Javal's thugs run into the building. They take no care to be quiet and can be clearly heard coming up the stairs and loudly pointing out the disabled devices and any other evidence of a break-in (ending at Javal's violated door). If the player characters have not managed to deal with Javal's door, the gang meets them on the stairs. Javal himself is in a vehicle outside but enters if his gang signals that it's safe to come upstairs.

Javal's gang waste no time talking to the intruders and go straight on the attack. If the player characters start to get the upper hand in the fighting, the gang seeks to escape, either running down the stairs and into a waiting vehicle (if they are outside the office) or through the window, down an emergency exit, and into the waiting vehicle. A successful Simple (D0) Determination test reveals these routes to the player characters, should they decide discretion is the better part of valor. If the player characters failed to get through Javal's office door, they do not have the files. Otherwise, they should be able to keep whatever files they took from the office.

If the player characters follow the gang and Javal — requiring a successful Challenging (D2) **Move** test to do so without him noticing he is being followed — they observe him drop the thugs off at the Ampoliros, a dingy bar frequented by spice processors and lowlifes.

Javal then proceeds to his home. On entering, he calls out for Ryssa. There is no response.

JAVAL'S RESIDENCE

If the player characters have discovered Ayeana's true motivation, they may decide to proceed to Javal's residence. There are scrawled directions in Ayeana's notes, and a successful Average (D1) Understand test locates a luxury apartment in one of the better districts of Carthag. An opposed Move test against Ayeana determines whether she or the player characters get there first.

The apartment has average security with surveillance in every stairway and corridor and the permanent presence of a security guard who watches the security feed on multiple screens. Ayeana gains entrance by ringing Javal's bell and speaking to Ryssa on the intercom; Ryssa lets her in. The player characters, if they arrive first, may have more of a problem. An Average (D1) Communicate test can convince the guard they have an appointment. They may also be able to gain entrance by persuading Ryssa to admit them. This is an opposed Communicate test versus Ryssa. If Ayeana arrived before them, she admits them if they ring the bell. She's not happy about this but doesn't want to risk losing her job at the Residence.

On gaining entrance to the apartment, it swiftly becomes apparent Ryssa has no desire to be rescued. She claims to be devoted to Javal and has no intention of abandoning her lover. She fights and struggles, but it should not be too difficult for the player characters to overcome or intimidate her, if they choose to pursue that course of action. Ayeana assists with immobilizing Ryssa (Ayeana is either present initially or turns up shortly after the skirmish with Ryssa begins). Her instructions are to turn Ryssa over to Reverend Mother Narilan. She is determined to comply with her instructions and time is of the essence: though Ayeana sent Javal and his thugs off on a wild goose chase to his office, they will surely return soon.

At the conclusion of this act, successfully extracting Ryssa from Javal's household earns the respect of the Sisterhood; doubly so if they managed to penetrate Ayeana's deception. Depending on how things went, they may also be in possession of a potentially useful file about smuggling activity which could help improve the House's Spice Production and Wealth

RYSSA

BENE GESSERIT ACOLYTE, MINOR HEIR OF HOUSE ALEXIN

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Ryssa is a teenager. Her mother is a Bene Gesserit assigned as a consort to Tevnor, a lesser noble of House Alexin, as part of the Bene Gesserit breeding program. Ryssa carries an important bloodline. Her assignment to monitor Javal was one element in her Bene Gesserit training. Unfortunately, as he is handsome, charming, and dapper, she fell in love with him. Ryssa is fully aware Javal is not her final assignment, doubting she will get instructions to produce a child by him. She has not rebelled to the extent she has become pregnant, as she does not feel she is ready for childbearing. In this, if nothing else, she agrees with her Bene Gesserit superiors. Ryssa's greatest fear is being assigned to breed with a Harkonnen. The idea revolts her. Javal has told her tales of Harkonnen mistreatment and shown her the scars they inflicted upon him.

Ryssa is very confused. On the one hand, she loves her family and values her Bene Gesserit training, and on the other she does not feel ready to abandon her beloved Javal. Part of her is aware he was never going to work as a long-term partner, but she just wanted her affair with him to continue for a while longer and maybe come to a natural conclusion. She is amenable to persuasion but resists any force used to remove her from Javal's home.

DRIVE	STATEMENT	
DUTY: 5		
FAITH: 6	Deep down, I trust the Sisterhood.	
JUSTICE: 4		
POWER: 4		
TRUTH: 7	Remain true to myself, my order, and my House.	
SKIL	L FOCUSES	
BATTLE: 4		
COMMUNICAT	E: 6 Persuasion	
DISCIPLINI	E: 5 Observe	
MOVI	E: 5 Grace	
UNDERSTANI	Etiquette, House Politics	

Traits: Bene Gesserit Acolyte, Distant Heir to House Alexin

TALENT:

O- Find Trouble: Once per adventure Ryssa may contact the criminal underworld without needing to attempt any test.

Assets: Concealed Knife, Extensive and Fashionable Wardrobe, Shigawire Coil

indices (gamemaster discretion, but +0.5 to each is not unreasonable).

If things went badly, the Bene Gesserit are likely to consider the new rulers of Arrakis barely competent, at best. The player characters may have learned nothing about the smugglers, and they almost certainly have earned the enmity of a growing criminal gang. Even if the player characters met with success, Javal is unlikely to forgive the loss of his files and/or his girlfriend.

If the player characters refuse to hand Ryssa over to the Bene Gesserit, they lose all the credit they ever had with the Sisterhood and find it difficult to regain this. The Sisterhood does not rest until they have tracked Ryssa down. Furthermore, after a couple of days, Ryssa starts to insist on returning home to her family. She misses contact with her mother.

If the player characters hand over the files (or copies of them) to Ayeana she explains (if they have not already figured it out) that she needed them to create a distraction which enabled her to free a young acolyte from Javal's clutches. The criminal and his gang were of no interest, and the files are an extra benefit, but the true task was recovering Ryssa.

The player characters now have a chance to consider how they feel about the manipulations of the Bene Gesserit which led them to kidnap or aid in the kidnap of an apparently innocent young woman. They may wish to discuss how this affects their future relations with the Sisterhood.

THE PARTY

The player characters receive an invitation to a party thrown by Lord Trevnor of House Alexin and his consort Lady Ottavia. If things went badly for Nagara on Kaitain in Chapter 6 – The Great Houses, the player characters may be reluctant to attend. It is an excellent chance to repair bad feelings, or to plot revenge. Such parties are a normal part of life for heirs to the Major Houses, so it seems guite routine. A good chance to cement or repair relationships with another Major House and maybe even to have some fun. Furthermore, negotiations are underway for the acquisition of some high-grade processing equipment developed by House Alexin scientists in exchange for a minor 'experimental' spice harvesting concession on Arrakis where House Alexin hopes to develop yet better equipment. House Nagara hopes to get an option on this equipment and a 10% share of any profits. Also, the specialty asset House Nagara is famed for — defined in Agents of Dune — may be used as a potential bargaining tool here, giving the player characters' House something to negotiate with other than spice.

Unless the player characters have disgraced themselves in the eyes of the Bene Gesserit, the night before the party Ayeana informs them the party also presents an opportunity to (further) assist the Sisterhood. Should they succeed, the Bene Gesserit will share confidences with them, as well as owe them a favor. Such an obligation from the Sisterhood is not something to dismiss lightly.

If questioned, Ayeana honestly doesn't know what the issue is or what her superiors are expecting. A successful Simple (D0) **Discipline** or **Understand** test indicates this is yet another test of Nagara's competence. What Ayeana does know and happily reveals is that their hostess at the party, Ottavia, Consort of Lord Trevnor, is of the Sisterhood. Ayeana says Ottavia is trustworthy.

As they approach the residence of House Alexin, if they are paying any attention to their surroundings, an Average (D1) **Discipline** test reveals some suspicious individuals lurking in the area. Should they choose to look further, an additional successful Average (D1) test allows them to recognize one or more of these as members of Javal's gang (assuming they have interacted with the gang by this stage). If the player characters decide to confront the gang, this leads to a skirmish which makes them late for the party and possibly gets their fine clothing covered with dust or blood.

Javal's gang is not there to start a fight. A skirmish only occurs if the player characters initiate it. Gang members run away if the skirmish starts to go against them. If pursued, they head towards a vehicle to take them back to Carthag. Should the player characters question them, they are evasive about their reasons for being in

this part of town. An Average (D2) **Communicate** test reveals first that they are there to 'do something for the boss' and that specific 'something' turns out to be rescuing Ryssa from her oppressive family.

On arrival at the party, if the player characters are on time, members of House Alexin are standing in line to greet guests. If they have seen Ryssa before, they recognize her. If they are late and turn up disheveled from a skirmish outside, the House's staff take them aside, clean them up, and make them presentable. They can borrow some fine clothing from the House's wardrobe, although it does not fit well. They miss the first hour of the party but with a successful Simple (D0) **Discipline** test, can locate their hostess and her daughter.

Once the player characters have thanked their hosts for the invitation, they can circulate freely and interact socially with their fellow guests. This is an opportunity for the gamemaster, should they so wish, to bring in supporting characters from other chapters, either those they have already met or those with whom they may interact in future. Everyone who is anyone on Arrakis is potentially represented here.

At an opportune point, Lady Ottavia seeks one or more of the player characters out and confides in them she would very much appreciate their help in persuading her wayward daughter back to the fold. Ryssa, she says, has a great opportunity to continue her Bene Gesserit training and has an invitation to Wallach IX for this very purpose. This is a great honor, not afforded to every young acolyte. It is clear the Sisterhood values Ryssa very highly. A player character with Bene Gesserit training might attempt a Simple (D0) Understand test, with success indicating that Ryssa is likely part of a bloodline the Sisterhood is working to develop. Lady Ottavia does not confirm this, and if anyone suggests this in the presence of non-Bene Gesserit, she immediately grows silent, her training preventing displeasure from showing upon her face.

Ryssa seems restless and keeps looking out of the window. She has no special reason to approach the player characters, so she does not do so. If she knows they were complicit in removing her from Javal, she has reason to mistrust them. She is, however, on her best behavior as a daughter of the host and it is not difficult to strike up a conversation with her, if she is confronted in a friendly fashion. Depending on what happened previously, she may insist on returning to Javal, possibly not permanently, but to properly say goodbye to the man. The offer of a scholarship on Wallach IX is a great honor and, while Ryssa remains fond of Javal, she is no longer convinced remaining with him is the right thing to do. She

LADY OTTAVIA

BENE GESSERIT ACOLYTE, CONSORT OF LORD TEVNOR ALEXIN

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Lady Ottavia is the beloved consort of Lord Tevnor, a senior noble of House Alexin. He also has a wife, but she is currently on their home planet. Ottavia is fanatically faithful to the Sisterhood and was placed with Lord Tevnor to secure a bloodline essential to the Sisterhood's plans. She also advises her Lord on House politics but, as he has limited sway over Prince Kole, she does not always have as much influence over policy as she would like. Lord Tevnor has a legitimate heir, currently residing on the home planet with her mother.

Lady Ottavia produced two daughters and a son at the Sisterhood's bidding, but now the Sisterhood has little active interest in her. Their older daughter is happily married to a noble of another House, and Ottavia's son is receiving military training back home. Ottavia cannot help but worry about him, as Lord Tevnor's wife can be jealous and vindictive. Ottavia hopes her son has the sense to keep out of her way. Ryssa is the youngest of her offspring, and very much her parents' darling. She is also the child in whom the Sisterhood is most interested.

Ottavia is aware of a future plan of the Sisterhood's to have Ryssa breed with a Harkonnen. She knows this is important to their breeding program and she believes Ryssa would do well out of the match, but Ryssa has developed a deep hatred of the Harkonnens and wants no part of such a match.

DRIVE	STATEMENT	
DUTY: 7	My duty is first to the Sisterhood and second to House Alexin.	
FAITH: 5		
JUSTICE: 5		
POWER: 5		
TRUTH: 6		
SKIL	L FOCUSES	
BATTLE: 5		
COMMUNICAT	E: 6 Diplomacy	
DISCIPLINI	E: 5	
MOVI	E: 4	
UNDERSTANI	Physical Empathy	

Traits: Traits: Bene Gesserit Acolyte, Consort of Lord Tevnor of House Alexin

TALENTS:

- O Putting Theory into Practice: Once per scene, when Ottavia Obtains Information, she may create a trait for free, representing an advantage she has identified with the information she received.
- O- Voice: Ottavia can spend 1 Threat to buy an automatic success on a Communicate test (up to a maximum of 3 Threat).

Assets: Friends in High Places, House Staff, Ridulian Crystals

ZAHRA

MINOR SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Zahra is Javal's second-in-command and looks up to him, but has spent years maneuvering herself into taking over should anything happen to him. Thus, she looks after Javal's interests as if they were her own because she hopes they will be her own one day. Zahra runs the Ampoliros efficiently and does not tolerate any trouble on the premises. A possible weakness is her jealousy. Zahra greatly resented the attention Javal paid to Ryssa, fearing he would put Ryssa into a position of authority over her. She is well-disposed to the player characters if she believes they were instrumental in getting Ryssa 'out of the way'.

If necessary, use the writeup of the Criminal or Merchant non-player character from the **Dune Core Rulebook** (pages 275 or 285, respectively). is concerned it might reflect badly on her family and is also worried because she knows Javal and his gang are waiting for her outside, hoping to rescue her from her family.

Ryssa's main concern is that she fears the Sisterhood plans for her to breed with a Harkonnen, which she is violently opposed to. All the Sisterhood and her family members deny it if confronted. If Ryssa feels she can trust the player characters, she confides that she read about this plan in her mother's secret ridulian crystal journal. No one is to say anything about this, as meddling in her mother's things is forbidden. Her hostility to the Harkonnens comes from Javal, who told her things about them: how they mistreat people, including their consorts, and how they have made enemies of the Fremen. Of the latter, Javal says they can be staunch allies, if treated right.

The player characters need to decide whether to encourage Ryssa to continue with her Bene Gesserit training or to help her return to Javal. She really is not sure which she wants for herself at the beginning of this act, so they are able to have considerable influence with her. However, she is disinclined to trust anyone and can be highly manipulative. Ryssa is frustrated that well-meaning people keep trying to rescue her, as this implies she cannot make decisions for herself.

THE PARTY CRASHERS

As the player characters circulate, they become aware of someone flashing a light upon the windows. Ryssa runs to the window to look out. At this point a fierce fight breaks out between House security and the criminal gang lurking outside. House Alexin and its staff discourage the player characters from getting involved.

"You insult us by implying we cannot deal with our own security issues. You are perfectly safe. Eat, drink! Dance! Our guards have the problem in hand."

Despite these encouragements, the fight becomes a focus of attention, as nobles and courtiers sip from their drinks and watch the violence ensue outside. As the fight progresses, the more numerous and better armed House guards get the upper hand. If required, use the description of House guards in the **Dune Core Rulebook**, page 283.

If the player characters have failed to convince Ryssa to take up the offer of further training on Wallach IX, she attempts to leave via a side exit and return to Javal. Even in the prevailing chaos, the player characters are likely to notice this with a Simple (D0) **Discipline** test, unless they are busy with other things and ignoring her, in which case it is a Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test to notice her efforts to escape the clutches of her loving family.

A **Move** test, opposed by Ryssa, allows the player characters to keep her in the room. Otherwise, she escapes

through the window and is fatally shot by Javal himself who had not seen her running towards him, embroiled as he was in the fight with the House guards. Sadly, should the player characters attempt to assist Ryssa in returning to Javal, much the same result occurs. Ryssa dies at her lover's hands.

If the player characters have persuaded Ryssa to return to her old life or prevented her from leaving the House, the fight outside proceeds to its conclusion, with Javal and his gang fleeing, bloodied and beaten by House Alexin's security force. The player characters may take part if they wish, but this offends House Alexin and likely gives a bad impression to the more genteel guests.

Throughout the party and any brawls, Bene Gesserit agents installed within the staff watch House Nagara with great care. The player characters pass the test if they can resolve the situation without violence or threats of violence. They are profoundly impressed if the player characters defuse the situation between the House security and Javal's gang. The Sisterhood is unimpressed if the player characters turn to violence as a solution too easily, and they are profoundly unimpressed if the party ends with Ryssa's death.

As the party is a public event, depending on their actions, the gamemaster may increase or decrease the Ruthlessness or Honor indices by 1 point, based on their actions in the event.

DEALING WITH THE GANG

After the party, depending on how things go, Javal and his gang remain, and the player characters should decide how to deal with them. It is up to them if they think the gang is worth their time, would make good allies or are too dangerous to leave alive. So the following is all entirely optional to help the gamemaster round off loose ends.

Basic investigation or interrogation of captured members of the gang reveals:

- Their main business is 'protection', and they mostly target smugglers, though they have one or two 'clients' who operate illicit spice processing factories.
- They are nowhere near one of the most powerful gangs operating in Carthag, but they are moving up in the criminal hierarchy.
- They rely more on cunning than on violence, although they back up their threats if they can't put fear into those they deal with.

Depending on how previous interactions with the gang have gone, the player characters may know the location of Javal's 'business premises', the location of the Ampoliros, the bar where the gang members hang out, as well as the location of Javal's residence (where they 'rescued' Ryssa). The bar, named for the ancient and mysterious unmanned 'ghost' spaceship said to wander

the galaxy for millennia, is a popular fixture among the Arrakeen underground and some of the rougher and jaded spice workers.

Javal has (or had) a financial interest in the Ampoliros. Its manager is Zahra, Javal's second-in-command. The place is perfectly legal and above board, paying all necessary taxes (but no protection money) and is a good location for meeting with the more successful criminals of Carthag. Javal's gang uses it as their personal hangout and don't tolerate troublemakers. It's a place they go to relax and do deals. A sign just inside requests patrons to leave their weapons in a small garderobe near the door. Should the player characters elect to do so, the attendant secures their weapons efficiently. A weapons detector is installed in the passage to the main bar. If not disabled, an alarm signals the bar staff. Disabling the alarm is an Epic (D5) test as the passageway is in constant use by staff and clients of the bar.

The bar is dimly lit and seemingly clean. The drinks are unadulterated, reasonably priced, and highly intoxicating. The staff is attractive, pleasant, and polite. Zahra is present, and even if she recognizes the player characters from a previous encounter, they can attempt an Average (D1) Communicate test with her to set up a meeting with Javal (Difficulty 1 if she has never met them, 3 if she recognizes them from a previous hostile encounter). He meets them, by appointment, in the bar.

How things go depends very much on what the player characters want from Javal. It would be possible for them to ignore him completely. In this case, he continues his criminal activities, gradually rising further up the ranks of criminal gang bosses. This has no effect on the player characters' future or any of their indices. They could decide to close Javal's operation down.

- If they try and fail, Javal traces his problems back to them. House Nagara has now gained an inconvenient enemy and their Ruthlessness index is modified by -1.
- If they bring Javal to justice, their Ruthlessness index rises in direct proportion to the severity of his punishment and whether they hold him up as an example of what happens to the lawless on Arrakis.
- Closing the smugglers down with information derived from Javal's files increases Spice Production by +1 but makes an enemy of Javal and Zahra.

Another option would be to recruit Javal as an ally. He has some good insights into the ways smugglers operate. He would, however, lose quite a bit of business if he were unable to provide the smugglers with protection. Thus, he would expect compensation for his loss of income. Alternatively, House Nagara could recruit him as an employee, as he has some useful abilities and connections among the criminal classes. This might take some work, as he has many rough edges, and likes to be his own boss.

REWARDS & CONSEQUENCES

If the player characters impress the Bene Gesserit sufficiently, at some point after the party, Reverend Mother Narilan contacts them to pass on an invitation from the Mother Superior to visit her where she resides on the Bene Gesserit world of Wallach IX. She, apparently, is keen to meet the new rulers of Arrakis but is far too busy with Sisterhood matters to find time for a personal visit to Arrakeen. The player characters may refuse the invitation. After all, if the Mother Superior is too busy to visit Arrakis, why does she assume they are not too busy to visit Wallach IX? Does she not realize they have a planet and spice production to run? She knows this, but as the head of the Bene Gesserit she is interested in House Nagara's reaction.

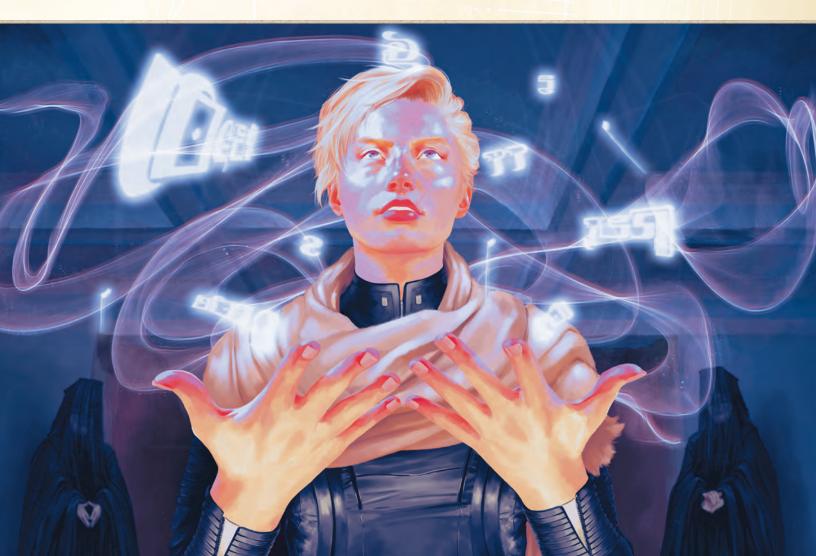
An invitation into the Mother Superior's presence is a great honor, but it's a matter of precedence. How, precisely, does the Sisterhood rank against the Major Houses of the Landsraad? The player characters should consider whether this is about what the Sisterhood can do for them or what House Nagara could do for the Sisterhood.

If the player characters fail to impress the Sisterhood sufficiently (for example, if Ryssa is dead or lost to

them), they still have Javal and his gang to deal with. Some suggestions about this are found on p.XXX. If House Nagara has previously lost their control over Arrakis in the attack, the Bene Gesserit might still be interested in supporting them, if they have proved more reliable and useful than the Harkonnens were.

If House Nagara takes up the invitation, they travel with Ryssa, also going to Wallach IX to complete her Bene Gesserit training. She has overcome her doubts and is now both excited and anxious about what her future holds on Wallach IX. Ryssa is a little wary of the player characters, as they know about the shadier incidents in her past, but if treated sympathetically she acts as their guide. However, in truth she knows little more than they do about life on Wallach IX. If any player character is connected to the Bene Gesserit, she attaches herself to them, seeking an ally there.

Passage is handled via the Spacing Guild, and after a shuttle into orbit, and a refreshingly short heighliner passage, the player characters and Ryssa (if with them) arrive in orbit over Wallach IX. They find no difficulty landing, a clear sign that the Bene Gesserit are in



HARISHKA

BENE GESSERIT MOTHER SUPERIOR

NOTABLE SUPPORTING CHARACTER

he woman called Harishka was raised as Bene Gesserit from birth, her life's work spent ensuring that the Kwisatz Haderach breeding program is brought to its fruition. Of interest to her is the Missionaria Protectiva's effects upon Arrakis, and she is determined to learn what those teachings have wrought, as the last delegation of Bene Gesserit to Arrakis disappeared more than a century ago. She has heard rumors about the Fremen and would very much like to learn more about them, suspecting that their religion has indeed been affected by the Missionaria Protectiva. Should she learn of an equivalent to Reverend Mothers serving the Fremen, she will be fascinated, though she needs more information before deciding what to do.

Everything about the Mother Superior is measured. She cannot act on impulse, she is, in many ways, as trapped in her role as the most junior of acolytes is trapped in hers. Nonetheless, she is always in control and is a formidable figure with significant influence both within the Landsraad and with the Emperor.

In game terms, Harishka might be the most experienced and competent person the player characters have ever encountered. Challenging her on her home ground is not advisable, in any fashion. She does not feel threatened in any circumstance, and even when alone with the player characters she is fully in command of the situation.

DRIVE	STATEMENT
DUTY: 8	My place is to direct our plan.
FAITH: 7	The Sisterhood's place in the Universe is essential.
JUSTICE: 5	
POWER: 7	We do what we must.
TRUTH: 5	

SKILL

FOCUSES

BATTLE:



Unarmed Combat

COMMUNICATE



Diplomacy, Empathy, Persuasion, Secret Language (Bene Gesserit)

DISCIPLINE:



Command, Composure, Observe, Self-control

MOVE:



Grace

UNDERSTAND:



Bene Gesserit Lore, Cultural Studies, House Politics, Physical Empathy, Religion

Traits: Bene Gesserit, Reverend Mother, Mother Superior, Truthsayer

TALENTS:

- O- Cool Under Pressure (Understand): Harishka may spend Determination on this skill to automatically succeed.
- O Hidden Motives: If an opponent fails an Understand or Communicate test against Harishka, the gamemaster may make up a false trait that the opponent believes about her.
- O Hyperawareness: Whenever Harishka spends
 Threat to Obtain Information, she may ask two
 questions for each point of Threat spent. Further,
 the limits of what others would be able to notice do
 not apply to her.
- O- Other Memory: Harishka may remember things from years before she was born through other memory.
- O- Prana-bindu Conditioning: When making a Move or Discipline test involving the use of her body, she may re-roll 1d20, as well as exerting control over other physical processes.
- O- Voice: Harishka can spend up to 3 Threat to buy automatic successes on a Communicate test, at a cost of 1 success per Threat.

Assets: Ultimately Harishka controls the Sisterhood and Wallach IX utterly— she can access any asset existing on the planet, given time. She can call on a small band of effective bodyguards, highly experienced Bene Gesserit who will fight to the death defending her (use the sample Bene Gesserit agent in the Dune Core Rulebook, page 273).

complete control of the visit and the way has been cleared. Very shortly, their transport taxis into a landing on a landing strip near the Chapterhouse Mother School, and they are shuttled into one of many facilities for visiting dignitaries.

Ryssa can provide a bit of description of the place, but again, her descriptions feel more dim memories supplemented with shigawire guidebook text. She is separated from the envoys from House Nagara early, presumably to pursue her continued studies.

The Mother Superior assigns acolytes to give characters a guided tour of any parts of the planet they wish to explore in the days before she finds time to grant them an interview. House Nagara is given comfortable quarters with all necessary amenities, although the décor is minimalist. They are made to feel welcome and given the freedom to explore, to a limited degree. It should be obvious to all that their visit is being watched carefully, their every movement scrutinized by the evervigilant Sisterhood.

Described in additional detail on page 83 of the **Dune** Core Rulebook, Wallach IX is a temperate planet, where agriculture thrives. The climate is pleasant, and it is possible to take long walks in the forest. There is no shortage of wildlife and much of it is edible. The fruit trees in the shaded valleys are prolific and the Sisterhood's pride and joy. The place certainly offers respite from the blazing heat of Arrakis, and the player characters may enjoy a chance to refresh themselves in cooling streams. It's even possible to go hunting in designated areas, for those who enjoy such noble pursuits. The player characters can enjoy their time here so long as they are not disruptive to the training and studies of the fledgling Sisters there. The acolytes in the Mother School lead very ordered lives. Routine and obedience to their seniors in the Sisterhood are paramount.

Eventually, they are allowed to meet the Mother Superior, Harishka.

The Mother Superior does not interview the player characters in her own quarters, but in a nearby seminar room. During the interview, Harishka asks searching questions about how House Nagara are managing spice production on Arrakis. She is well informed and may already have information the player characters believed was secret. She probes deeply into progress to date and what Nagara intends for the planet and the production of spice in future. She asks about the Fremen and whether Nagara has learned anything about their lifestyle and beliefs. A Simple (D0) **Discipline** or **Communicate** test reveals that she is keen to gain intelligence concerning the Fremen and their beliefs and practices. She is happy to answer questions but does not reveal any Bene Gesserit secrets willingly.

If the interview goes well, from Harishka's point of view, she invites the player characters to a small soiree in chambers that seem to be carefully selected to impress with a degree of intimacy, as if they are private to her, but any careful examination reveals that these are not her true quarters. In contrast to most of what the player characters have seen here, this area is richly decorated; some of the furniture is either real wood or an exceptionally fine imitation. The walls are adorned with beautiful woven hangings and fine art, paintings of trees in blossom, productive orchards, verdant landscapes, but no human figures or animals. A table is set with fine linen and Harishka invites the player characters to dine with her. She does not take offense if they use poison snoopers. There is no threat here, and the food is not only wholesome but delicious.

After the meal, Harishka offers a guided meditation along with what she describes as a very special spice drug — one only usually offered to senior acolytes. She is happy to answer questions about it:

- Its purpose is to open the doors of perception, to render oneself open to new ideas.
- O It can be confusing, but it can also grant visions of the future.
- It is mildly addictive (as is anything containing spice) but only if taken regularly and in greater quantities.
- Of the player characters know of such things and think to ask, it does not bring on the spice agony or grant Other Memory.

Whether or not they take the drug, the player characters may stay for the guided meditation if they wish. Any who stay are taken back to the seminar room where eleven dozen acolytes (including Ryssa) are waiting patiently. The Mother Superior takes up a place on the podium while a senior Sister moves round the room, administering the drug to those who wish to partake. All the acolytes take the drug, as does the Mother Superior herself. It tastes of spice, it travels through the body, giving a slightly feverish sensation. Although it does not paralyze, the body and limbs feel heavy and difficult to move. The mind clouds over, then sharpens as the Mother Superior begins to speak.

Under the influence of the drug and Harishka's droning voice, each player character feels themselves return to their earliest childhood. On their faces, they feel the air of their home planet. They hear the voices of their parents and their childhood friends. Time moves forward. They become aware of every decision they have taken and the branches they created in the path of their own lives. Some of those decisions, surely, have been mistakes? If they have taken the drug, the vision journey gives them a chance, not to correct those mistakes immediately, but to get an idea of what they need to do to reverse the consequences of their bad decisions, if possible. It may not always be possible.

Those player characters who have not taken the drug get an overview of the branching points of their lives to date. They may get a feel for their own weaknesses and understand how to recognize branch points in their fates and how to make better decisions. Those who have taken the drug find the whole experience confusing as memories of the past are confounded with brief snatches of visions of decisions they have yet to make, seeing outcomes of choices they never made, paths not taken. The past and potential future are all mixed up together. A Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test gives a brief flash of insight into each player character's future. Each player character may attempt this several times with the Difficulty increasing by +1 for each attempt.

As the meditation progresses, Harishka watches the player characters carefully. She enters an opposed

Communication test with everyone who has taken the drug. If she wins, she learns one thing about that individual they would rather the Bene Gesserit did not know.

After the guided meditation, the player characters are escorted back to their chambers and sleep uninterrupted for 24 hours, whether they took the drug or not. They awaken refreshed and recovered from their experience. If they conducted themselves well during all of this, they gain the favor of the Sisterhood — something which may bring benefits to House Nagara in the future.

The Mother Superior does not speak with them again, but any of the acolytes can answer any basic questions, within reason. Soon though, it is time for the player characters to board the shuttle to take them to the heighliner and go 'home' to Arrakis, where their destiny awaits.

CONCLUSION

At the end of this chapter the player characters may have gained the favor of the Bene Gesserit, one of the most powerful factions in the Imperium. House Nagara can call in this favor at any time, though the Sisterhood refuses to do anything they perceive to be against their own interests. If the player characters were particularly impressive the gamemaster might grant an additional favor from the Bene Gesserit or assistance in some other, subtler fashion.

The player characters also have had a chance to make themselves an ally within the criminal underworld of Arrakis. Or they could have increased their Ruthlessness index by punishing the gang leader and improved their Spice Production index by obtaining Javal's files and closing his smuggling clients down.

House Nagara has strengthened their relationship with House Alexin, either in a positive or negative direction. If they can secure a deal for Alexin's experimental spice harvesting equipment, their Spice Production index increases by +1. If they fail in this, the index is unmodified. If Ryssa dies, House Nagara's Honor decreases by –1; this index increases by the same amount if they convince Lord Trevnor they have rescued her from her criminal lover.

If the player characters have impressed the Bene Gesserit, the Sisterhood uses their influence to support House Nagara's reputation. The players can modify Honor, Ruthlessness, Landsraad Support, or Imperial Support by ±1 point, as desired (pick one).



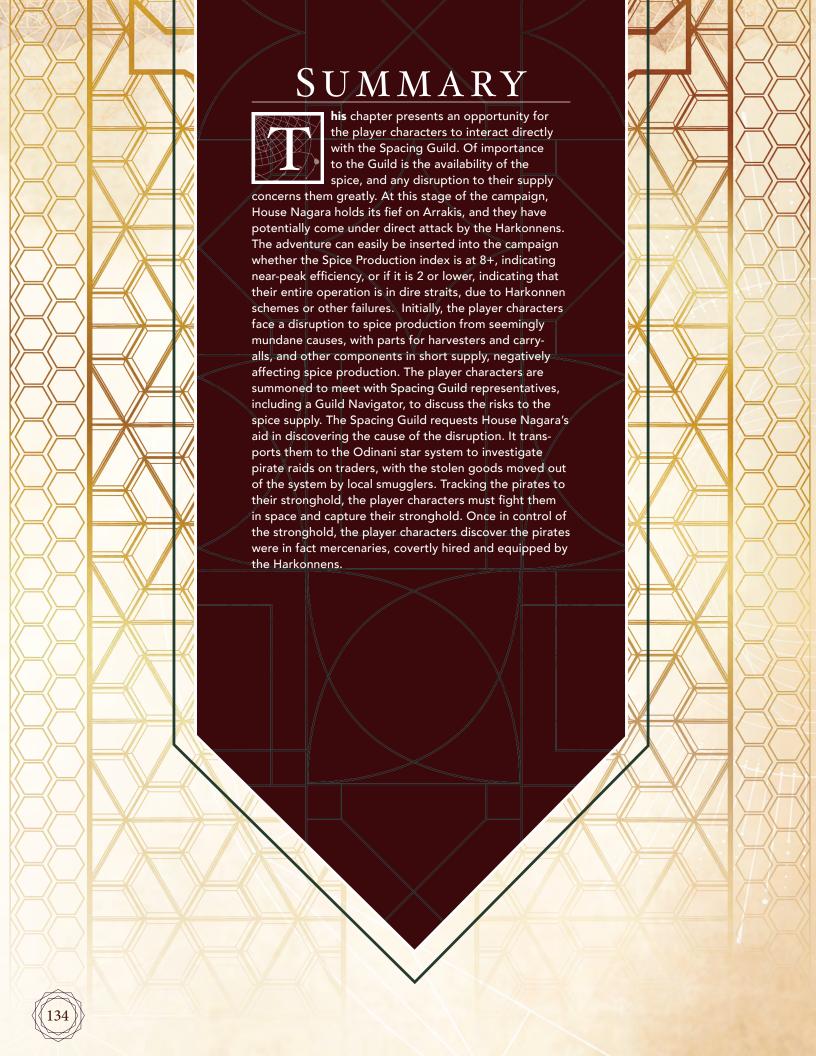
CHAPTER 8:

THE SPACING GUILD

The Spacing Guild has worked for centuries to surround our elite Navigators with mystique. They are revered, from the lowest Pilot to the most talented Steersman. They live in tanks of spice gas, see all paths through space and time, guiding ships to the far reaches of the Imperium. But no one knows the human cost of becoming a Navigator.

We must keep this a secret, for if they really knew the truth, they would pity us.

—Spacing Guild Training Manual Handbook for Steersmen (Classified)



UNEXPECTED ALLIES

The player characters are on Arrakis overseeing their spice operations, and later meeting with the Guild to discuss the current or impending spice shortage. The current Spice Production index is a good indicator for the tone the gamemaster can take in this act, focusing on the possibly untenable situation in which the House finds itself. Even if the index is favorable, the equipment failures and parts shortages quickly put pressure on the House's political situation.

RACE AGAINST TIME

The adventure opens in media res, with the active characters (see the Active Characters sidebar) disoriented on a carryall after a crash landing. While reviewing harvesting operations aboard a carryall outbound from Arrakeen, or other operational base, the carryall suddenly suffers a system failure and crashes en route to pick up a harvester.

The active characters come to after the crash amid shouts and alarms in a downed carryall. The gamemaster should describe the chaos and panic surrounding the active characters as warning alarms blare and emergency lights flash. Shouts of wounded spice workers echo through the corridors as the crew struggle to breathe in the thick smoke. The carryall crashed at an odd angle and movement is difficult due to the steep angle of the decks. The gamemaster should ask the players to place their character markers in the zone they were in when the carryall crashed.

A deep rumbling is felt, reverberating throughout the body carryall, and anyone familiar with the risks of spice harvesting concludes that the crash and engine noise is sure to attract a sandworm. Not long after, this conclusion is confirmed when spotters in ornithopters announce they've sighted wormsign. It's only a matter of minutes, perhaps less, until the carryall is attacked and consumed by a sandworm.

The active characters must organize the disoriented crew to evacuate the carryall. The active characters face an extended test with a requirement of 15. The scene is dangerous, immediately providing the gamemaster with 3 Threat. The active characters have five rounds to evacuate the carryall before a sandworm surfaces to attack. After it surfaces, they have two additional rounds to evacuate the carryall before it is consumed.

The gamemaster should encourage players to describe how the active characters plan to solve various problems, and most tasks should be Challenging (D2). When the sandworm arrives, the Difficulty of tests increases to Daunting (D3). The gamemaster can offer up some specific options for the active characters, such as the following:

ACTIVE CHARACTERS

This scene is written with the players taking on the roles of a spice harvesting carryall, rather than their normal characters, likely the nobles and retainers of the House. The harvester crew profiles in the Dune Core Rulebook on pages 315–316 work well for such quick characters. For reference, these are called "acting characters", to differentiate them from the normal player characters. Players can personalize these acting characters with different focuses or drive statements, and then introduce the characters in media res.

The setup allows everyone to play through this scene, providing dramatic storytelling opportunities without the implausibility of having nobles, Swordmasters, or Mentats onboard a spice carryall on a routine run. Or having the active characters be killed by the environment or sacrifice themselves to save their fellow spice workers. If an active character dies in the scene, players can easily assume the role of a new active character to finish the scene



UNEXPECTED ALLIES

The player characters are on Arrakis overseeing their spice operations, and later meeting with the Guild to discuss the current or impending spice shortage. The current Spice Production index is a good indicator for the tone the gamemaster can take in this act, focusing on the possibly untenable situation in which the House finds itself. Even if the index is favorable, the equipment failures and parts shortages quickly put pressure on the House's political situation.

RACE AGAINST TIME

The adventure opens in media res, with the active characters (see the Active Characters sidebar) disoriented on a carryall after a crash landing. While reviewing harvesting operations aboard a carryall outbound from Arrakeen, or other operational base, the carryall suddenly suffers a system failure and crashes en route to pick up a harvester.

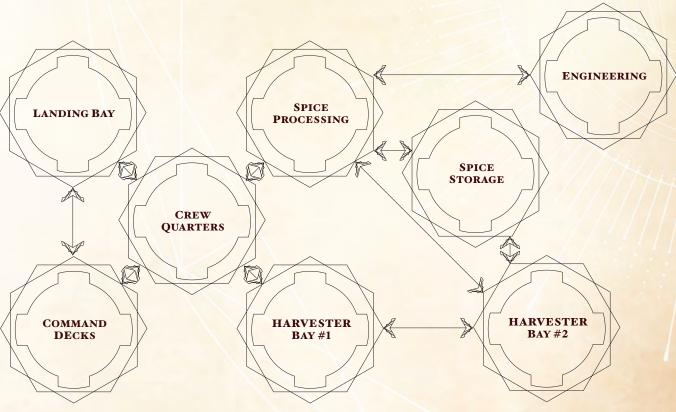
The active characters come to after the crash amid shouts and alarms in a downed carryall. The gamemaster should describe the chaos and panic surrounding the active characters as warning alarms blare and emergency lights flash. Shouts of wounded spice workers echo through the corridors as the crew struggle to breathe in the thick smoke. The carryall crashed at an odd angle and movement is difficult due to the steep

angle of the decks. The gamemaster should ask the players to place their character markers in the zone they were in when the carryall crashed.

A deep rumbling is felt, reverberating throughout the body carryall, and anyone familiar with the risks of spice harvesting concludes that the crash and engine noise is sure to attract a sandworm. Not long after, this conclusion is confirmed when spotters in ornithopters announce they've sighted wormsign. It's only a matter of minutes, perhaps less, until the carryall is attacked and consumed by a sandworm.

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The gamemaster should encourage players to describe how the active characters plan to solve various problems, and most tasks should be Challenging (D2). When the sandworm arrives, the Difficulty of tests increases to Daunting (D3). The gamemaster can offer up some specific options for the active characters, such as the following:





- O Shut Down the Engines: The engines on the carryall are still functioning after the crash and the vibrations are attracting a sandworm. Shutting them down provides two extra rounds before the sandworm arrives. This requires a Challenging (D2) Understand test to succeed.
- C Fire Suppression: Multiple fires throughout the carryall's corridors and compartments must be extinguished to evacuate the crew. An Average (D1) Battle test can extinguish enough flames to clear an evacuation path for crew members.
- O Evacuate the Crew: The carryall's crew is disoriented and panicked. Wounded crew members are scattered throughout the ship, and the ornithopters have sighted worm sign. The crew must evacuate the carryall quickly. There are several ways the active characters can achieve this, and the gamemaster should encourage them to perform heroic actions to save the crew. A few examples include:
 - Organizing the crew with a Challenging (D2)

 Communicate test
 - Treating wounded crew members with a Challenging (D2) Understand test.

Coordinating the evacuation to the ornithopters with a Challenging (D2) Battle or Communicate test.

After getting crew out of the carryall, everyone must make a mad dash to the waiting ornithopters with **Move**. Someone could direct the evacuation with a Challenging (D2) **Communicate** test.

Several unique assets are available in the carryall, and players can add them to the scene with an appropriate skill test (Simple, D0). None of the assets are well maintained or of especially good quality (Quality 0), but as assets they might make a test possible or grant a bonus to the Difficulty.

- O- Fire Suppression Gear: A basic set of protective equipment and extinguishers for fighting fires. These kits include breathing masks.
- O- Medical Kit: A basic medical kit providing all the items needed for performing first aid on wounded crew members and players.
- O Mechanical Kit: A small case containing a variety of tools needed for making emergency repairs or bypassing damaged systems.
- O Reinforced Hatches: Each corridor and compartment can be isolated to prevent the spread of fire, smoke, or poisonous gasses.

THREAT SPENDS & COMPLICATIONS

To communicate the dire situation and emphasize the themes of this scene, listed below are a few options the gamemaster could purchase with Threat or introduce with a complication:

- O Smoke-filled Compartments: The compartments and corridors of the carryall are filled with thick smoke, increasing Difficulty by +1 for 2 Threat.
- O Uncontrolled Fire: For 1 Threat, a fire rages in a compartment of the carryall, preventing movement within or to a new zone. The characters must circumvent or extinguish the fire to proceed. The fire is treated as a minor non-player character with a Power, Battle, and Move of 5. The fire attacks the active character with Battle, or it can spread generating additional fire using Threat generated by a successful Move test.
- O Dangerous Gases: A breach in the carryall's systems causes a dangerous gas or superheated steam to vent into a corridor. The poisonous gas has Power 5, Battle 4, and Move 7 when making tests against a character. The active character can seal a valve and disperse the gas with an Average (D1) Understand or Move test.

The scene ends when the active characters achieve the extended test's requirement or two rounds after the sandworm arrives. If the active characters achieved the requirement, the gamemaster should narrate the ornithopters leaden with crew lifting away from the carryall as the sandworm consumes the craft

The crew celebrates their handling of the situation. Failure to meet the extended test's requirement means a more somber narration is in order, with the demoralized crew lifting off while the sandworm consumes the carryall. It's appropriate to increase the House's Honor or Ruthlessness indices depending on how the acting characters handled the situation, but their Spice Production index is lowered by 1, regardless of their success. If they performed especially poorly, it's reasonable to narrate the loss of the harvester the carryall was en route to pick up when it crashed, lowering their Spice Production index by 2.

At this point play resumes with the players assuming the rules of their normal player characters.

AFTER THE CRASH

Over the next few days, the event becomes widely known, unless the player characters do something to suppress the knowledge. The Harkonnens are likely to use it to their advantage. The gamemaster might consider lowering the House's Landsraad or Imperial Support indices by 1 point each if they handle the aftermath poorly.

The player characters may suspect sabotage, but their investigations uncover regular reports of parts shortages and equipment failures. While their enemies are always spinning their webs of intrigue, the crash of the carryall was merely due to mundane wear and tear rather than sabotage. The crew informs the player characters that they've been making do with substandard and juryrigged parts for months, due to the aggressive spice production schedule, and the Harkonnens before them always had them repeatedly repair any damaged equipment. Any parts that are available are bought at a steep price through free trading suppliers.

Potentially, the gamemaster can foreshadow this problem earlier in the campaign, providing the player characters a chance to be proactive about the equipment shortages and discover the sources of the shortages. Their efforts could mitigate any degradation of the Spice Production index at the end of the scene, but the problem has come to a head with this incident. Regardless of the previous efforts, the House's spice production may continue to struggle. If general spice production sessions have not been going well for the player characters, the gamemaster might not need to add any further problems to make it reasonable for the situation to gain Guild attention!

CLANDESTINE MEETING

After the events in the previous scene, the player characters continue receiving reports throughout their operations, reflecting a potential crisis. The player characters can't secure a steady supply of parts and equipment, and black market prices for equipment are skyrocketing. Depending on how the gamemaster is pacing the campaign, the next scene happens anywhere within a week or months after the previous event.

The characters are contacted by Cenric, a Spacing Guild envoy (see **Agents of Dune**, page 89), through clandestine means rather than formal Guild channels. He hopes this will gain the player characters' trust, and also avoid prying eyes. Any player character with Guild contacts or relations is his preferred means of contact, unless contacting that character is a security risk. The player characters are provided a time and a meeting place on the outskirts of Arrakeen, along with the means to identify their contact.

When the player characters arrive at the designated meeting place, they find a transport guarded by mercenaries. Anyone who evaluates the situation easily determines the situation is safe. When the player characters approach, the captain of the transport tests them with the appropriate pass-phrases to confirm their identity. Once certain, he welcomes them aboard. The transport departs the atmosphere and takes them to a heighliner in orbit near Arrakis.

Cenric collects the player characters in a small shuttle, which he pilots expertly to a small landing bay within the heighliner's vast interior. He apologizes for the secrecy, but states it was necessary for the appearance of neutrality on the Guild's part. He escorts them from the landing bay to a secluded chamber and demands they discuss nothing seen during the meeting. After they agree, he speaks into a transmitter. A short time later, a large door opens at the far end of the room.

A Guild Navigator's transport chamber slides into the room on a suspensor field, accompanied by attendants. Player characters with any prescient abilities (such as the Failed Navigator talent) immediately feels that sense become clouded and unusable, remaining so until they leave the Navigator's presence. The transport chamber opens, revealing the indistinct form of the Navigator engulfed in a cloud of spice melange gas.

The Navigator tells the player characters their recent spice production troubles are of great concern. If production is going well, the Navigator claims that there is far too much potential for an interruption in the supply to the Imperium, and more importantly, to the Guild. A disruption to the spice harvest puts everyone's future at risk. Spacing Guild predictions are uncertain,

and a myriad of possibilities lay before them, none of which they wish to see come to fruition. The destinies of the House and the Guild appear to be intertwined

The Navigator directs their gaze to a wall viewscreen displaying a Guild star-map of the Odinani system. The map zooms in on a gas giant in the system called Ala. The Navigator indicates that this is where the predictions converge. Pirates in the star system raiding transports and facilities are disrupting trade and putting safe Guild travel at risk. The Navigator suspects the pirates are the source of their House's problems, because facilities in the system fabricate parts for vast machines, including that machinery used for spice harvesting.

The Navigator indicates that Cenric is to serve as their Guild liaison for the mission, providing access to Guild facilities in the Odinani system. Alternatively, the gamemaster could have the Navigator designate a player character with Guild membership (or former affiliation) as the official liaison, indicating that success will curry the favor of Guild executives.

With that, the Navigator's transport seals and recedes through the doors from which it entered, and the player characters are left to prepare for the Odinani system.



HUNTING THE PIRATES

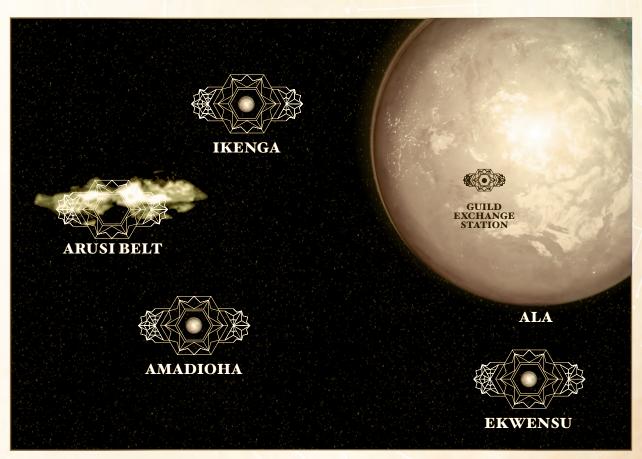
The player characters arrive in the Odinani system within a few days of meeting with the Navigator, and the heighliner begins disgorging ships and taking on new transports soon after their arrival. The player characters must identify and track down the pirates and their base of operations. Several mining and manufacturing facilities are scattered around Ala, merchants and transport ships follow well-established trade routes throughout the system. The environment provides a wide variety of locations where the mercenaries can hide their operations and use the traders as cover for their movements.

THE ODINANI SYSTEM

The star system the player characters are hunting the pirates in has no habitable planets, but possesses extensive mining operations centered on a ringed gas giant called Ala and its collection of moons, little more than large asteroids. A lone trojan belt trails Ala's orbit and is a suspected haven for illicit mining outside CHOAM's jurisdiction. Resources extracted from the asteroids are transported to local facilities for sale, refinement, and use in the fabrication of goods for transport out of the system on Guild heighliners.

Ships are often intercepted by local pirates and forced to hand over a portion of their cargo in exchange for their safety. Local security forces regularly locate pirate hideouts in the many asteroid clusters orbiting the planet. The recent increase in pirate activity greatly concerns the Guild and prompted them to approach House Nagara for assistance.

- ♣ Ala: This massive planet is the center of activity in the Odinani system, an impressive sight with a radius of over 75,000 kilometers. The grand, blue sphere appears nearly cloudless, with barely perceptible bands of clouds and storms. There are no true moons orbiting the planet, but instead dozens of asteroid clusters and moonlets. Most are only a few hundred meters across with a few approaching about a hundred kilometers in radius.
- O Guild Exchange Station: The Guild Exchange
 Station is the center of trade in the system and all
 sanctioned trade goes through the facility. While
 technically a Guild facility, it is largely run by CHOAM
 staff, in partnership with the Guild. The huge facility
 can accommodate hundreds of ships loading and
 offloading cargo, and thousands of people work
 and trade in the station on a daily basis. The heart of



the station is the Trade Floor where merchants and miners negotiate the best prices on raw materials and goods manufactured in the system. The various docking areas of the station are rough-and-tumble areas with bars, inns, and shops providing services to miners and travelers passing through the station.

- O Heighliner Arrival Point: A few hundred kilometers from the exchange station is the location for heighliners to enter the system to unload and receive ships. A heighliner is generally on station for about a week at a time, and a heighliner comes through the system every couple of months to take on vessels and cargo.
- O Ala's Moons: The largest of Ala's moons are named Amadioha, Ikenga, and Ekwensu, with large industrial operations mining the asteroids clustered around the moonlets. The stations can accommodate about a dozen ships at one time which service the local mining ships that offload their cargo for processing. Once processed, the materials are loaded into merchant vessels that ferry raw and refined materials to the exchange station.
- O Ikenga Station (Ikenga): This base has expanded in recent years with facilities fabricating parts used in spice production and harvesting. The noble House granted the fief has seen its wealth expand as the demand for spice extraction equipment kept pace with the Imperium's hunger for spice. They are finishing construction on a harvester production line that will be able to fabricate complete spice harvesters.
- O Arusi Asteroid Belt: This asteroid belt trails Ala's orbit, housing a mix of legitimate mining operations and free trader operations operating outside normal CHOAM channels. The belt's distance from the main operations in the system make it less profitable to exploit. The belt is rather extensive and thus difficult to monitor and patrol, which pirates and free traders use to their advantage.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The player characters need spaceborne assets such as combat ships, scout vessels, and troops to track and engage the mercenaries. As a Major House, Nagara can easily grant the player characters two frigates and three reconnaissance ships. The gamemaster may allow more of each if the House has a positive Military Power indice (or fewer such resources if it is negative). The Guild will transport those assets for the player characters.

If the player characters have no space assets, then the Guild puts them in contact with trusted ship captains in the system to assist them. Players can create assets through skill tests at Average (D1) and Challenging (D2), depending on the asset desired. Such attempts are considered to have the "Guild Backing" trait to assist attempts to create assets.

The player characters don't need to state every asset they have, and the gamemaster should encourage them to create assets as they need them. Most assets such as ships, transports, and stations can be narrative set pieces the players use to create interesting scenes. If players wish for them to have an impact on the mechanics, this is an opportunity for a test to create a full-fledged asset. Avoid getting wrapped up in preplanning, and instead let players create assets as they need them.

SPACEBORNE ASSETS

This adventure relies heavily upon spacecraft and other spaceborne assets operating solely in space. Any warfare assets (**Dune Core Rulebook**, pages 200–205) are easily repurposed for use as space-based assets by replacing any keywords that are thematically inappropriate.

SPACESHIPS

Small spaceships and combat ships are more common than orbital transports and are used by noble families

PLOTS WITHIN PLOTS

The politics and ownership of the Odinani system is purposefully left vague to simplify the adventure. Ala in the Odinani system is a fief, providing a comfortable amount of wealth to several minor and major Houses. Due to the wealth in the system, no single House claims governance as it would make them too powerful, but the lack of a single jurisdiction makes it much easier for pirates to operate. House Novebruns has the largest concern here, but they only protect their own vessels.

To add depth, several rival Houses could be added to the story. A minor House might be granted a fief here by the Emperor, and is focused on using the resources in the system to make spice harvesting equipment. The gamemaster could set up the House as an existing ally of the player characters or a potential new ally if the player characters succeed in dealing with the pirates.

Meanwhile, a rival House wants control of Odinani and is backing the mercenaries at the behest of their ally, House Harkonnen. The Harkonnens wish to disrupt spice operations on Arrakis while distancing themselves from their activities. House Novebruns may also be looking to take complete control of the system for themselves as well. They might be using mercenaries and pirate attacks to force out weaker competition.

Such additions will complicate the plot, adding more politics and intrigue. The gamemaster could even foreshadow these Houses earlier in the campaign, to make their appearance here feel natural.

throughout the Imperium. These ships are designed for practical purposes and generally lack amenities. These ships are intended for specific tasks, whether warfare or cargo transport, and can be transported aboard Guild heighliners.

As an Asset: Cargo ships are designed to move cargo and sometimes people, while warships are intended for security activities and combat engagements.

Warships are often used to patrol major trade routes for free traders and pirates, and house warships regularly perform inspections of suspicious vessels. Most cargo ships are unarmed but may carry minor weapons to dissuade pirates or to destroy dangerous debris. Warships, however, are heavily-armed and armored, and the largest ships carry a complement of troops to perform boarding actions or defend against attempts to take the ship.

KEYWORDS

- O- Shuttle: Cargo, Fast, Passenger Compartment, Spaceship, Trans-atmospheric, Size: Small
- Characteristics Past, Guns, Improved Sensors, Small Crew, Stealthy, Weak Armor, Size: Small
- O- Troop Transport: Point Defense Weapons, Spaceship, Size: Squad
- Cargo Transport: Civilian, Large Cargo Compartment, Spaceship, Size: Medium
- Frigate: Fast, Guns, Shielded, Spaceship, Warship, Size: Medium
- O Cruiser: Armored Warship, Guns, Missiles, Shielded, Spaceship, Size: Medium
- O- Battlecruiser: Guns, Heavily Armored Warship, Missiles, Shielded, Spaceship, Size: Large

Quality: 1–4, the quality can vary depending on size of the ship and its intended purpose.

STATIONS

In addition to spaceships, there are many orbital facilities throughout the Odinani system. These stations are mainly industrial or trade stations, but there are some military stations that monitor the system and assist local defense forces. As with spaceships, assets from the **Dune Core Rulebook** can be easily adapted to fill the role of station assets with a few keyword changes.

As an Asset: Stations have many purposes for the player characters. A trade station might be a base for the player characters to meet and discuss business with a potential ally, while a mining station provides a source of wealth or materials for the House to call upon. Meanwhile, a military station might be a monitoring post with a local communinet or be equipped with an impressive array of weapons filling the role of a fortress for space-based warfare.

KEYWORDS:

- O Market Station: Bustling Market, Neutral Ground, Ship Docks, Size: Large
- O Mining Site: Industrial Facility, Raw Materials, Size: Large
- O Monitoring Outpost: Defensive, Sensor Array, Strategic, Size: Medium
- Space Fortress: Orbital Defense, Shielded, Strategic, Size: Huge
- O Recon Satellite: Orbital, Sensory Array, Stealth, Size:

LOCATING THE PIRATE BASE

The player characters face an Espionage conflict to understand the smuggling operation and locate the mercenaries' secret base located near Ala. They need an understanding of the operation if they want to stop the mercenaries who they think are pirates. The mercenaries are raiding the merchant ships in transit from the facilities to the heighliners. After collecting enough goods, the mercenaries transfer the items to free traders at covert meeting points, who then smuggle the goods out of Odinani for sale on the black market.

IDENTIFY THE FREE TRADERS

Identifying the free traders smuggling goods out of the system is an effective place to start. The player characters may take several approaches to understanding the smuggling network and must succeed at an extended test with a requirement of 8. They have at least five tests to try and meet the requirement, and player characters can assist each other depending on the tests they choose to attempt. If they fail the extended test, they gain the complication "One Step Behind the Smugglers" for the rest of the chapter. They will be on the back foot in any engagements.

A player character might perform an Average (D1)

Understand test to figure out the flight paths of local merchants or analyze the account ledgers. Another character might decide to inspect cargo holds of ships looking for items that are off the books with Average (D1) Battle or Understand tests. Chasing down a fleeing smuggler's ship though dense planetary rings would require a Challenging (D2) Move test. Any of these tests could generate points towards the requirement.

The gamemaster should encourage the players to narrate interesting solutions, and the player characters should be able to create evidence and clues so they don't hit a dead end. At the same time, how the players narrate the clues they discover shows off their characters' strengths. The players can also use these tests to generate assets for later stages of the Espionage or the

coming Warfare conflict. For example, the player characters could create leverage on the smugglers or traders encouraging them to expose their comrades or to gain access to a captured free trader ship for later use.

The mercenaries do not sit by passively while the player characters dismantle their operation, and take active measures against the player characters. The mercenaries oppose the House's activities with the gamemaster spending Threat to trigger the Rival House Action (**Dune Core Rulebook**, page 156). The mercenaries target assets in the system, such as informants that are feeding information to the player characters, or they draw some of the House's ship assets into an ambush while on routine patrols. They might attempt to assassinate key personnel or even take hostages.

Complications should be a response to how the player characters handle the investigation. If player characters get a reputation of getting rough with smugglers, then the smugglers might be more willing to put up a fight or run, stalling them or even spreading the player characters' assets thin. Free traders might take more dangerous routes in efforts to avoid inspections risking the player characters' assets if they pursue them.

Make sure that complications don't stop the player characters cold, but rather present them with dramatic narrative challenges feeding the final act of the adventure.

INSPECTING THE FOXGLOVE

Whatever the result of the extended test, the player characters locate a free trader who seems their best lead to find the mercenaries: Captain Mara Gricia, owner and operator of a space transport called the Foxglove. The scene is flexible enough that it can be triggered for a variety of reasons and take place in any locale. Perhaps the player characters were performing a routine inspection of her ship as it was passing through a station, or maybe they boarded her ship because someone noticed something odd about her flight path. A wide variety of locations are appropriate, including deep space along smuggler routes, after chasing her ship through an asteroid belt, or in port at one of the stations. The gamemaster should introduce the scene in a situation which makes most sense depending how the player characters approach tracking down the free traders.

While inspecting her ship, the player characters discover stolen components used in spice harvesting, which most likely prompts an interrogation of Captain Gricia. She's a grizzled and hard-bitten woman in her late 50's who's fought more than her fair share of firefights. The gamemaster can use the smuggler archetype (**Dune Core Rulebook** page 291) to represent her. She's intensely loyal to her crew and has an additional statement under Duty: "My crew is the only family I've got."

Captain Gricia is evasive when questioned but isn't unreasonable. She's immediately wary of the player

THE CREW OF THE FOXGLOVE

The Foxglove's crew is made up of a dozen crew members and their families, a mix of single adults and couples. There are a few children of the crew on board as well, of whom the crew are extremely protective. The children are sent to hide when the player characters board the ship, and the crew are defiant and aggressive if the children are put at risk or threatened.

The details of the crew are left up to the game-master to allow them to set the scene and make them feel like a close-knit group. Players might take on the roles of some of the crew as supporting characters if all the player characters aren't present in a particular scene. A player could repurpose a pregenerated archetype if necessary (see the **Dune Core Rulebook**, pages 271–295, particularly the Merchant, Smuggler, or Technician archetypes).

NARRATING THE MEET

The player characters have several options in approaching this scene, and a more cautious or aggressive group might come up with different plans. For example, they may decide to gain access to the Cordoba's instruments to get the base coordinates. Sneaking onto the Cordoba's bridge to access the ship's logs or navigation computers is a dangerous choice, requiring the player characters to make an extended test with a requirement of 6. All tests related to sneaking onto the gunship and gaining access to the logs on the ship's bridge are Daunting (D3), whatever skill is used.

The player characters may instead choose to simply board the Cordoba and take it by force. The mercenaries are experienced pirates and aggressively resist, resulting in a Skirmish conflict. The Cordoba's crew tries to undock from the gunship and escape when the fighting starts. There are six well-trained pirates and another ten crew who put up a significant fight. The crew of the Cordoba try to destroy the logs before the player characters can get their hands on them.

The player characters may elect to take a more hands-off approach and forgo being present on the Foxglove. Instead, they might observe the meeting from another ship at a distance, surveilling the meet between the Foxglove and the Cordoba. In that case, the gamemaster should describe the meeting of the two vessels as viewed from afar. One or two Average (D1) **Move** tests to go unnoticed as they observe can create the appropriate tension while they observe the cargo exchange.

characters, and handles the situation with confidence. This isn't the first time she's been shaken down by House or Guild officials, and she's not happy about having authorities poking around her ship. She'll feign umbrage or ignorance at being accused of smuggling until her activities are exposed, and then she'll try barging. She's not opposed to betraying the mercenaries if a better deal comes along, but Gricia will always work towards what's in her best interests and the well-being of the Foxglove's crew. She wants to make sure she and her crew are released, and if she can line everyone's pockets, then all the better.

Captain Gricia has the coordinates for several meeting points with the mercenaries where she's taken on goods from them. She can also provide the means of signaling the mercenaries to arrange exchanges. She's even willing to arrange contact with the mercenaries if the player characters can provide the appropriate incentives. However, she's extremely reluctant to burn her black market contacts to whom she's selling the parts and equipment.

Convincing Gricia to provide information requires a test, but the approach is up to the player characters. They can make Challenging (D2) **Understand** or **Communicate** tests to persuade her to help them locate the mercenaries. They can use **Battle** but she responds poorly to threats or physical violence, even more poorly to violence against her person. Player characters using torture to extract information from her are met with bad intelligence, betrayal, or defiance. Any violence against her has a complication range of 3, while violence against her crew increases the complication range to 5.

If the tests are successful, the player characters gain enough information to contact and track mercenary ships. They'll be able to draw the mercenaries to one of the meeting points where the mercenaries exchange goods with the free traders. Captain Gricia agrees to contact them and arrange a meet.

If the player characters fail the test, Gricia only gives up her information under duress. The player characters cannot count on her help in the following scene, and she is actively hostile to them if they insist that she come with them.

MAKING THE MEET

Mara signals the mercenaries and arranges to meet them in the Foxglove. She suggests the player characters pose as part of her crew, and they can track the ship when it leaves the meeting point. If the player characters were abusive or violent, she lets them use the Foxglove only reluctantly. If they've handled the interaction with Captain Gricia especially poorly, she is unwilling to assist them beyond signaling the mercenaries. She might even covertly warn the mercenaries that something is wrong.

The meeting point is located just outside the major trading lanes of the Odinani system, at one of the many clusters of asteroids that orbits Ala. When the mercenary pirate crew approaches, they send a signal to verify the Foxglove's identity and announce that they're ready to meet. Once the all-clear is given, a light gunship called the Cordoba appears from behind an asteroid and docks with the Foxglove, in preparation to begin moving cargo over to the transport's cargo hold.

When the mercenaries board, they are led by the ship's captain, Ennis Thiago (use the Criminal archetype, **Dune Core Rulebook**, page 275). He's a brutal mercenary pirate who'd sooner kick someone out an airlock than accept any disrespect. Gricia warns the player characters to be careful when speaking to him.

Thiago's demeanor varies depending on how the player characters have handled the investigation so far, and the pirate crew will follow his lead. If the player characters have been successful, then the pirates won't be especially suspicious of the situation. On the other hand, complications suffered previously might mean the mercenaries are suspicious, and possibly hostile if the investigation has gone unusually badly. Complications might include:

- The Foxglove has recently received a transfer of goods from these selfsame mercenaries. This is out of the ordinary, and the mercenaries will wonder why they need new goods.
- Thiago notices the player characters and is suspicious of them. He'll pointedly ask about these new crew members, worried they're local law enforcement.
- Thiago is worried about recent activities by the local authorities and is adamant the exchange be made quickly in case they're being watched. His crew is edgy and responds poorly to any unusual activity by the player characters.
- Remember that Gricia herself may count as a complication if the player characters failed to make an ally of her.

Players observing the mercenaries on the Foxglove may attempt an Average (D1) **Understand** test to notice the mercenaries are well-equipped for pirates, and their equipment appears newer than most mercenaries would carry. Their weapons are a mix of makes and models, but if they spend 1 Momentum to Obtain Information they notice that most of this new equipment is of Harkonnen design. Scanning the mercenaries' gunship reveals similar facts about the weaponry it is equipped with.

The player characters need to track the gunship back to its base, and placing a tracking device on the ship is a good course of action. They may use **Move** to place the device on the mercenary ship unnoticed, **Discipline**

to keep calm when challenged by a mercenary while placing the device, or **Communicate** to distract a mercenary while doing so. Placing the device requires a Challenging (D2) **Communicate**, **Discipline**, or **Move** test to place it unnoticed. Other player characters may offer support with tests using the same skills. Failures or complications mean they are noticed, sparking a confrontation with the mercenaries.

After the device is placed, the player characters only need to wait for the mercenaries to load the cargo onto the Foxglove and pay them for the stolen goods. Once complete, the mercenary gunship undocks from the Foxglove and leaves the area. The player characters should then track the vessel until it returns to its home base.

TRACKING THE MERCENARIES

Now that the player characters have identified and are tracking the mercenaries, the mercenary ship follows a course through local trade traffic to disguise itself. Tracking the gunship requires the player characters to stay close enough to maintain contact with the tracking device. They must avoid detection by the mercenaries, who are regularly checking for any other ships in the area. Tracking the mercenaries requires an extended Espionage conflict with a requirement of 6. There is no limit to the number of tests the player characters can make to achieve this requirement, so they will eventually track the mercenaries back to their base so long as they do not mount up too many complications or run into other trouble. The purpose of the test is to determine how well they do and how many complications they might build up in the process.

Tracking the ship requires patience, stealth, and technical know-how to avoid tipping off the mercenaries that they're being tracked. A Challenging (D2) **Discipline** test can be used to, while following the ship to resist the urge to get too close and in turn reveal themselves. Another player character can make a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test to navigate a course outside the enemy's detection range, or to accurately interpret the signal from the tracking device. The pilot can attempt a Challenging (D2) **Move** test to avoid detection by blending into the local trade ship traffic to use other asteroids to conceal its presence.

Nestled deep in the Asuri belt is an abandoned mining station used by the mercenaries as a staging ground for raids throughout the region immediately around Ala. When the player characters achieve the requirement for the extended test, they have successfully tracked the mercenaries to their base. Depending on how they performed during the tests, the player characters are either ambushed by the mercenaries or they catch them unaware. The gamemaster should evaluate any existing assets and complications to determine how to set up the scene.

THE MERCENARY BASE

The player characters enter the final act having successfully located the mercenary base, but the framing of the scene greatly depends on how they performed during the previous Espionage conflict. The player characters engage in a Warfare conflict with the objective of taking the command center and destroying or dispersing the enemy ships.

If the player characters succeeded in the previous Espionage conflict, they may set the scene more freely, describing how they approach and from where. This provides them with a clear advantage to take the mercenaries by surprise. Failing the Espionage conflict results in the player characters tipping off the captain of the Cordoba, who draws the player characters into an ambush in another part of the asteroid field.

The base is located deep within the Arusi belt, where smaller asteroids cluster around larger asteroids. This area contains a mining station abandoned some time ago after Ala's industries developed and the mines were no longer profitably productive. The station floats amid a cluster of asteroid mining sites from when the station was in full operation.

The pirates have repurposed the station's cargo docks to service their ships, and the landing bay holds a pair of shuttles. Anti-ship armament jury-rigged in the upper levels of the station provides additional defenses. The player characters must disable or destroy the mercenary ships and take control of the station's command center to successfully win the battle.

That battlefield is broken up into several zones surrounding the station, and the station itself is broken up into zones to be used when boarding the station. The zone map is a series of rings radiating out from the station, with each ring divided into zones. To board the station, the player characters must enter a zone adjacent to the station and take the command center zone in the station with borders.

SPACE ZONES

- O Mining Sites: Four mining site zones are scattered around the station. These derelict sites are dense clusters of shattered and intact asteroids. Entering a mining site requires an Average (D1) Move test, and they have the "Scattered Debris" trait. This makes it more difficult to detect and fire upon targets within the debris field.
- Open Space: All other zones are considered open space and any asset in open space gains the "In the Open" trait.

O Mining Station: The station is a zone that blocks line of sight, and assets in those zones cannot be targeted by assets in zones opposite the station. This only applies when both assets occupy zones adjacent to the station.

STATION ZONES

The station is broken up into six different zones and the player characters must reach and take the command center to claim victory in the conflict.

- O Communications: This is a large area filled with communications and detection equipment. Taking this location adds the "Disorganized Mercenaries" trait to the scene.
- O Command Center: The command center is the heart of the battle and the primary objective for the Warfare conflict. The command center has the trait "Heavily Defended".
- O Landing Bay: Allows small ships and shuttles to land. The landing bay is a large open space containing a pair of shuttles.
- Ore Processing: This part of the facility has several docking arms that were once used to offload ore mined from the asteroids for processing in the station's refinery. The ore processing section of the station has fallen into relative disuse. It is a maze of catwalks and disused industrial equipment, giving it the "Confusing Corridors" trait.
- O Reactor Core: A long slender section contains the station's reactor core. Four elevators run the length of the core, moving personnel between ore processing and the engineering section. The elevators are slow, requiring two rounds to move from engineering to ore processing.
- O Engineering: The engineering section contains all the equipment required for providing power to the station, and the zone is filled with dense steam and the sounds of machinery. The zone has the "Too Loud to be Heard" and "Thick Smoke" traits.

MERCENARY ASSETS

The mercenaries have several unique assets available the gamemaster can use to oppose the players. The gamemaster should place any ship assets on a zone map and move them as regular assets. The ships are all captained by experienced ship captains and the gamemaster can use the Criminal archetype (**Dune Core Rulebook**, page 275). As they are well-funded, the ships are quite impressive. Depending on how much firepower the player characters bring to this situation, the gamemaster may choose to adjust the number and classes of these ships.

LIGHT GUNSHIP (3)

Three light gunships patrol the area: the Cordoba, the Wolf, and the Gifford. They stay near the station, keeping watch for intruders into the local space. One is always patrolling the middle ring of zones on the zone map, while the others are typically docked or adjacent to the station zone. If the player characters have been detected, then two of the ships are hiding in the asteroid fields and require a Challenging (D2) **Understand** test to locate each one (roll twice).

Keywords: Fast, Guns, Shielded, Spacecraft

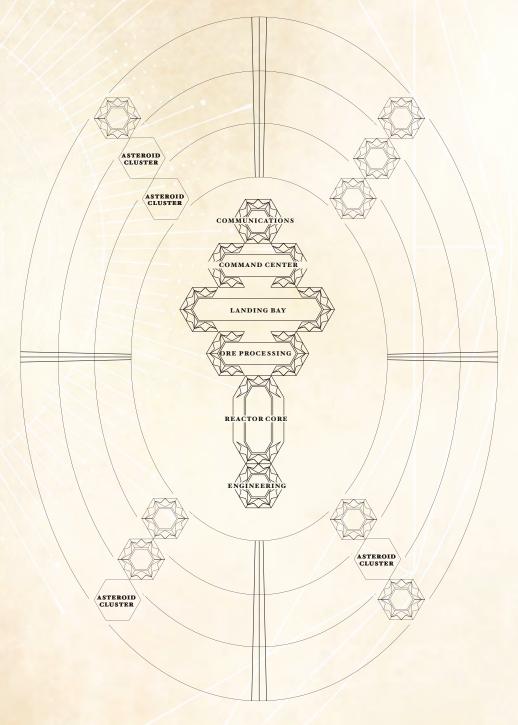
Quality: 1

LIGHT CRUISER (1)

The light cruiser Whirlwind is present in a zone adjacent to the station and is docked if the player characters have approached undetected. The mercenaries can mobilize and undock the ship in two rounds, but it is undocked and adjacent to the station if the player characters are expected.

Keywords: Heavily-armored, Guns, Missiles, Shielded, Spacecraft

Quality: 2



STATION CANNON EMPLACEMENTS (5)

The station is protected by five jury-rigged cannon turrets for use against incoming missiles and light craft.

They are rather short range and not able to engage targets that aren't in zones adjacent to the station.

Keywords: Jury-rigged, Point Defense, Rapid Fire

Quality: 0

DETERMINED DEFENDERS (10)

The station is crewed by determined and experienced mercenaries that will defend the station and attempt to drive the player characters off. They are armed with Harkonnen-supplied equipment and weapons. They will not be dislodged easily.

Keywords: Shielded, Well-armed

Quality: 1

PLAYER ASSETS

The player characters have available to them at least two light frigates and three reconnaissance ships, unless something has happened to them. The frigates are considered somewhere in scale between the light gunships and light cruiser. The reconnaissance craft are by far the smallest vessels. All are Quality 0 unless the player characters have managed to upgrade them.

They can have as many House Nagara soldier units as they like (Quality 1) but can only fit so many in each ship. Two House Soldier unit assets can fit into each reconnaissance craft. Eight can fit easily into each light frigate. This means the player characters have a disadvantage in space but more numbers on the station if they can get all their ships there.

In all cases, ship size makes a difference to any engagement between spacecraft. If a ship is larger than another it reduces the Difficulty of all **Battle** tests by 1 to damage and defeat a smaller ship. But if a ship is smaller than another ship, it reduces the Difficulty of all **Move** tests to evade the larger one by 1.

RUNNING THE BATTLE

In setting up each battle, much will depend on the success or failure of the extended test to track the mercenaries. If the player characters succeeded in the test, the mercenaries are caught off-guard. The gamemaster must place all the mercenary space assets on the zone map first. If the player characters failed the test, they must place their assets on the map first. The mercenary assets can go anywhere on the map, the player characters' assets enter the system from the edge and so all the assets must begin in two adjacent zones on the edge of the map.

Fighting a space battle has a very different feel from any conflicts the player characters have previously

fought. The scale of a space battle is much greater, with zones occupying hundreds of kilometers, and the asteroid field adds a level of complexity to maneuvers and detection. The ships should spend much of the time trying to detect one another and gain locks for firing weapons. When an asset enters a zone with an enemy asset, both ships must test to detect each other (both sides will know a ship is there, but not exactly where). Detecting ships hiding among the asteroids requires Average (D1) Battle or Understand tests, and a zone's traits may make it more difficult to detect them. No ship may fire on another ship in a zone until it has either detected it or been fired upon by it. In this way, a stealthy approach rather than all-out engagement may be a better strategy for the player characters.

The player characters must board and take the station, a dangerous affair. The exterior is well-defended by the station cannon emplacements that engage any ships deploying boarding teams. The player characters must move through the interior of the station to take the command center. The command center is well-defended, and entering directly requires a Dire (D4) Battle or Move test. Boarding in another section is easier, but takes more time, requiring a Challenging (D2) Move test. Cutting through the outer hull with tools or a boarding pod takes a round of combat after succeeding at a Challenging (D2) Move test. Boarding the facility in the landing bay requires a Daunting (D3) Battle test to successfully move into the zone.

Player characters have access to combat ships; either their own assets or those provided by the Guild. The player characters might try to clear the enemy ships before boarding the station, but it can be more exciting and dynamic if the player characters perform a simultaneous assault, engaging the defender's ships and drawing them away from the station, while sending in faster ships to board. If the player characters haven't taken the command center and the battle appears to be turning against the mercenaries, their leaders flee. They board shuttles in the landing bay, taking any incriminating information with them. The player characters may wish to pursue and capture the shuttles, and if unsuccessful, the mercenaries disappear into the asteroid belt, likely into many safeholds and boltholes established for just such an eventuality.

The player characters are victorious when they take control of the command center zone. They can do this by entering the zone and defeating all defenders. Once this happens, the mercenaries scatter, and the player characters can search the station and uncover the desired evidence linking the mercenary pirates to the Harkonnens (see below). If the player characters are forced to retreat from the station or lose all their assets, the mercenaries win the conflict.

AFTER THE BATTLE

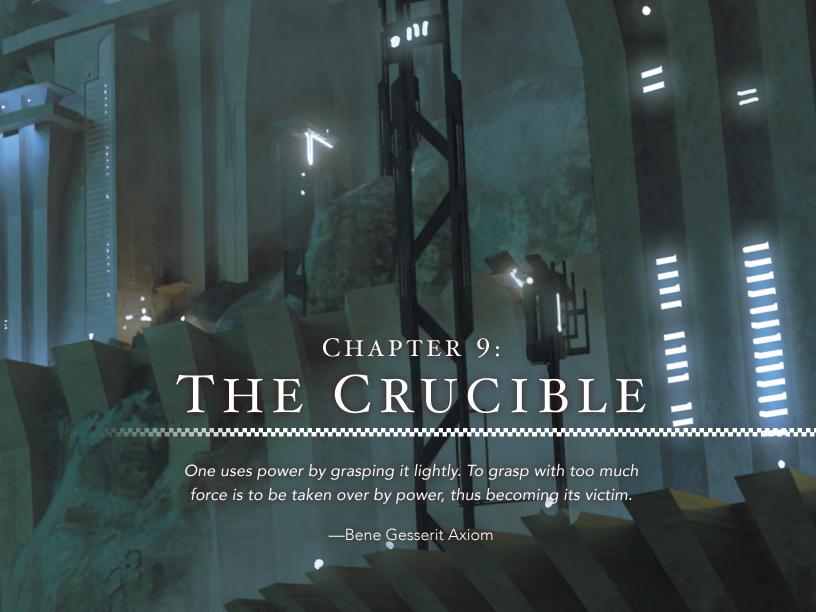
If the player characters are victorious, they can choose to have captured a sizable number of mercenaries and their equipment, which if they haven't already discovered it, is clearly of Harkonnen manufacture. If the Harkonnens are confronted and accused of supplying the weapons, they claim the weapons were part of a shipment that was stolen, along with documentation that provides them deniability. If the player characters execute a covert raid of the station or are unusually successful, they capture the leader of the mercenaries, a man named Rence Bayless, formerly from Kaitain but of no noble House or lineage. Additionally, they recover several coded minimic film cylinders. It is a Daunting (D3) Understand test to decode this information, but when decrypted, the films contains orders and strategy from the Harkonnen Mentat Turo Imshel (encountered in Agents of Dune, page 22 and throughout).

As a result of their victory, the player characters have successfully disrupted the mercenaries stealing harvesting equipment and increased their Spice Production index by +1. The House's Military Power increases by +1 from the captured mercenary equipment, should they choose to use it. Their Ruthlessness is increased by +1 If they were especially brutal in dealing with the mercenaries, or if they were alternatively civilized and forthright, their Honor increases by +1 instead. They've also gained the favor of the Guild and further secured their future.

If the player characters are defeated, then they are forced to flee the system, leaving the mercenaries free to raid until their contract with House Harkonnen expires. The House's Landsraad Support is reduced by –1 as the Harkonnens covertly spread the knowledge of the defeat, and their spice harvesting operations become starved for parts, reducing the Spice Production index by –1.









A TALE OF TWO HOUSES

Agents of Dune asks the question "If you were in the same position as House Atreides in the novel Dune, how would you fare?" Masters of Dune continues with that question, though with a unique path and different challenges. However, the player characters and the Harkonnens are on similar trajectories, towards an inevitable conflict.

This chapter has many similarities with the novel Dune, with the Imperium's major factions watching and intervening in this rivalry between the upstart House Nagara and the seemingly invincible House Harkonnen. Will the outcome be the same as won by Paul 'Muad'Dib' Atreides and his Fremen armies, destroying the Harkonnens entirely and rewriting the entire Imperium, with a new Emperor upon its throne?

Or will a new destiny be forged in the sands and stars?

THE STATUS OF HOUSE NAGARA

This chapter assumes that the player characters have experienced most of the events earlier in this campaign. Due to its structure, they may have bypassed some chapters entirely, for various reasons. An especially agile and canny House may have dominated all challenges thus far, winning allies across all the various factions they have been brought into contact with. Or they may be on the ropes, reeling from constant travails.

This chapter assumes that House Nagara has control over Arrakis, surviving the Harkonnens treachery described in Chapter 4 – Attack. Though their security may be bloodied, their defenses tested, they are still the wardens of Arrakis and spice production. However, if the House has lost Arrakis, driven out by the Harkonnens, they are now in a position of weakness and the gamemaster should assess what set of conditions must be met to enter this final and decisive phase of the campaign. For example, if they have retreated to House Nagara's home world (see Vallabhi, the Nagara Home World, p.158), then the gamemaster should set the initial scenes of this adventure there and adapt further acts accordingly.

Two elements are of the greatest importance now—the House's Influence indices and the many previously encountered non-player characters. The House Influence Indices sidebar (p.153–155) and The Gathering address these. Before beginning play, the gamemaster should review these to determine how these affect the events to come. The indices affect the way other factions regard the player characters' House, perhaps limiting their options or offering interesting new opportunities, and the non-player character roster lists all the potential loose threads that might find themselves resolved at the end of this campaign.

THE GATHERING

Throughout this campaign the player characters have encountered a wide range of non-player characters, whether as enemies or as allies, sometimes both. In many cases the player characters have won others to their side. Now, as the inevitable confrontation between Houses Nagara and Harkonnen looms, many are invested in the outcome. Thus, they may figure into the events of this chapter, either as allies, sources of information, or as enemies and agents provocateurs. These non-player characters are listed below, grouped by faction, with suggestions for how to use them.

Note that this is not an exhaustive list of all non-player characters encountered prior, just those who may be of use now.

HOUSE NAGARA

- O Doctor Erika Ganio (Agents of Dune), the chief scientific officer of House Nagara, and an invaluable resource with technological research and development. If necessary, use the Technician archetype in the Dune Core Rulebook, p.293.
- O Geeta Nagara (p.22), the brash Nagaran noble, potentially brainwashed by the Harkonnens. If so, she might act against her own House, the buried programming finally taking effect.

ARRAKIS

- Antrin (p.84), the naib of Sietch Korba has potentially become an ally of House Nagara due to their handling of themselves while staying within his sietch, and thus might relay intelligence or even convince the Ichwan Bedwine to act on Nagara's behalf.
- O Asham Perro (Agents of Dune, p.76) the Judge of the Change appointed to oversee the transfer of administration and production of Arrakis. Perhaps an ally, or merely a tool of the Emperor.
- O Javal (p.120), a minor criminal boss in Arrakeen. If made an ally, he and his gang could provide valuable intelligence about clandestine Harkonnen activities within the city.
- O Musa (Agents of Dune, p.104), the naib of Sietch Jurf'ahmar is a seasoned warrior and esteemed within the Ichwan Bedwine. If he has been won over to the Nagaran cause, the Fremen surely follow.

BENE GESSERIT

O Reverend Mother Montemagni (p.51), a Bene Gesserit tasked with the tutelage of Josifa Corrino, and loyal to the Sisterhood. She may reach out to House Nagara to aid from within the Imperial Court or use Josifa to that end.

- O Reverend Mother Narilan (p.119), a Bene Gesserit on Arrakis, potentially given the assignment of infiltrating the Imperial Court to covertly assist House Nagara with intelligence or influence.
- O- Ryssa (p.123), a Sister-in-training, "rescued" by House Nagara and reassigned to Wallach IX to complete her training. The Bene Gesserit might redeploy her to assist House Nagara, due to her familiarity with Arrakeen.

CHOAM

O- Ustad Turan (Agents of Dune, p.87), spice auditor and potential ally. He may still favor the Harkonnens or could have been swayed to the Nagaran side.

THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD

O- Princess Josifa Corrino (p.51), one of the Emperor's daughters and an agent for the Bene Gesserit. The Sisterhood may utilize her to assist House Nagara, if favorable to them.

HOUSE HARKONNEN

- Co Esseda Ulako (p.18–19), a Harkonnen representative stationed in Carthag, may be a messenger or delegate.
- O- Piter de Vries (see Dune Core Rulebook p.252), Harkonnen House Mentat and active enemy of House Nagara.
- O Turo Imshel (Agents of Dune, p.22), of House Harkonnen, a teacher and supposed ally of House Nagara, they may accompany the Harkonnen delegation to throw the player characters off.
- O Alexzander Harkonnen (p.112), the ambitious rival to his cousin, the Baron Harkonnen. If appeased in Chapter 6 The Great Houses, he might be a valuable insider or ally to have on the Harkonnen side.

THE LANDSRAAD

O Tamara Pilru (p.32), an envoy of the Ixian House Vernius. While a one time ally of House Harkonnen, this loyalty was put to a test. If not slain by the Harkonnens (p.43) she may be working for them, or alternatively, be willing to aid House Nagara against them.

- O Prince Kole (p.102), the young leader of House Alexin, who might help sway the Landsraad towards favoring House Nagara. He might act through his cousin, Lord Trevnor of House Alexin (p.124), a House representative dwelling on Arrakis, or his wife, Lady Ottavia (p.125).
- Various nobles, including; Lady Caranda Ecaz, head of House Ecaz (p.105); Lady Behati, the Viscountess of House Soot (p.55); Minister Rahm of House Obada (p.55); Ambassador Marion Trau of House Hagal (p.55–56); Master Vercing Koji of House Thorvald (p.56);
- Additionally, based on House Nagara's actions in Chapter 6 – The Great Houses, they may have made allies among Houses Jayger, Morgan, Brovik, and Yons (see p.107).

THE SPACING GUILD

Based on their performance in Chapter 8 – The Spacing Guild, Guild envoy Cenric (see Agents of Dune p.89) may be acting on behalf of the Guild, relaying information relating to the transportationrelated activities of House Nagara's enemies.

HOUSE INFLUENCE INDICES

One of the most important mechanics in **Masters of Dune** is the Influence indices, indicating how the House has behaved and prospered. Awarded for various actions, here these become critical, determining what resources and allies the House can utilize in the final confrontation with the Emperor and House Harkonnen.

As noted on p.8, the indices are used as Difficulty modifiers in pertinent situations, and thus dramatically affect the severity of challenges the House faces. Here, the gamemaster should use the indicated conditions while characterizing scenes between relevant non-player characters or groups, or for devising additional story threads and scenes.

INDEX	Negative (-2+)	Neutral (–1 to 1)	Positive (2+)
Honor	The House is regarded as untrustworthy and any allies are wary of betrayal, even willing to betray the House preemptively.	The House has an average reputation and generally is treated fairly as an opening stance. Offers of aid are expected to be reciprocated.	The House's reputation is impeccable, even to the point where it may be viewed as naïve, but always trustworthy.
Imperial Support*	The Emperor's displeasure is known throughout the Landsraad, emboldening their enemies and making allies reluctant to speak or act on their behalf.	The Emperor shows no favoritism towards the House and his stance is neutral, doing them no favors, while expecting full fealty from them.	The House's actions and attitudes have earned the Emperor's respect, despite his inclination against them, and he has reconsidered supporting any machinations against them.
Landsraad Support	The House has ruined their reputation amidst their peers in the Landsraad, and most expect the House to be demoted to House Minor status or dissolved entirely (depending on how low this rating).	The Landsraad maintains alliance with the House for pragmatic, not sentimental, reasons. They side with the House because if they do not, they may be the next to be singled out and destroyed.	The House enjoys popular support within the Landsraad and Houses Major and Minor go out of their way to offer support for them, potentially even in defiance of the Emperor (depending on how high this rating is).
Military Power	Morale is low and the military has difficulty recruiting and retaining troops. Smugglers and the Fremen act openly against the House on Arrakis. Other Houses view it as ripe for picking.	The House is stable and has a military presence appropriate to its size and importance. It is well-able to handle itself against equivalent Houses and does not invite challenges to its authority.	Compared to other Houses of its size, this House's military prowess is well-respected, whether due to past exploits or its overall quality and size.
Ruthlessness	Others in the Landsraad wonder if this House has what it takes to survive, as it apparently lacks the stomach for making tough decisions. They may either take advantage of the House or try to shelter it from difficult realities.	The House is viewed no better or worse than others in the Landsraad, giving it free reign for ruthlessness or honorable behavior, showing no tendencies in either direction.	The House is feared. Only the worst and most brutal other Houses associate themselves with it, lumping them in with the Harkonnens. Expect ruthlessness in return, even when acting benevolently.
Spice Production	The Emperor, the Landsraad, and the other factions are concerned about the House's ability to supply spice to the Imperium. They eye their own spice reserves and wonder if they must act to secure their own supply should the House fail further.	The House is performing more- or-less adequately, keeping the spice supply relatively stable. The market fluctuates a bit, but no one is concerned too much about any large-scale disruptions.	Spice is flowing in such quantity and without any concern that the market is slightly depressed. Opposed Houses may even consider causing trouble for the House to create some market volatility, which is often good for business.
Wealth	The House is struggling to maintain its standard of living and its fiscal obligations to CHOAM and to its citizens. Every purchase must be weighed carefully, every loss felt dearly, and expansion is impossible.	The flow of spice and income from it keeps the House's books in the black, with little concern that things will take a turn for the worse. Relatively balanced, the House can afford all reasonable expenses and absorb reasonable losses.	Business is good, and the House more-than-prospers from expert handling of its business affairs. Others may even look to the House for financial assistance or grow jealous of its success.
Sietch Korba Trust**	The Fremen distrust the House, seeing little about it that differs from past exploiters of Arrakis. They will not ally themselves with anyone else from the Landsraad or other factions, but depending on how low this rating is, they may be a constant concern, or even a significant threat.	The House is regarded neutrally. Compared to the Harkonnens, this is a dramatic improvement, but is not exactly a show of goodwill. The Fremen must be convinced to help the House, and promises made must be repaid, or else retribution will be exacted tenfold.	Though their contact has been relatively brief, the House has impressed Sietch Korba, and by extension, the rest of the Ichwan Bedwine. Fremen give them no trouble and look to the House as a potential ally, towards a better future on Arrakis for all.

^{*} The Imperial Support index begins secretly at –2, unbeknownst to the players.

^{**} Only available in Chapter 5—Fremen, this serves as a general barometer of how the Fremen view the House.

POOR TIMING

The surviving members of House Nagara, depending on how things have transpired prior to this chapter, are likely building strength after cataclysmic defeat at the hands of the Harkonnens, who either took back Arrakis entirely or fought Nagara to the very edge of what was allowable under the Great Convention. Now, House Nagara is more-than-likely working with the Fremen to bolster their hold over Arrakis, at least as far as the spice production goes. The player characters may, by now, suspect that the true power on Arrakis is in the hands of these enigmatic desert folk, no matter what the Imperium thinks on the matter.

Whether House Nagara is riding high from a decisive victory against the Harkonnens or taking refuge with the Fremen following events in Chapters 4 and 5, they should be aware that they are pitted against the Harkonnens, who will do everything within their power to destroy them.

The player characters receive advance communication through the House's official channels that House Nagara will shortly be visited by an ambassador from the Emperor, none other than Shaddam's right-hand man and confidant, Count Hasimir Fenring, also rumored to be the Imperial assassin. The player characters have one day to prepare for Fenring's visit, and the gamemaster should accommodate any preparations they wish to make. Refusing to see Fenring is simply not an option, given that he is visiting under the Imperial aegis in his position as Imperial Overseer of Arrakis, reporting to the Emperor himself about conditions on the planet.

When the time comes, a well-crafted and subtly armored groundcar arrives at the entry to Residence in Arrakeen (the gamemaster should adapt this to different circumstances) and a servant opens the door to admit Count Fenring. He is a man of rather plain appearance, unassuming and non-threatening in manner and action, belying his incredible status within the Imperium and his deadliness as an assassin. If the player characters have played through Chapter 3 – The Emperor, they may already have encountered Count Fenring (p.9, 52, 54, 58, 156 & 162 of this book and p.259 of the **Dune Core Rulebook**). Even if they have forgotten him, the subtle courtier has not forgotten them.

After pleasantries — Fenring extends his wife's well-wishes and makes an appropriate amount of small talk —the courtier gets to the point of his visit, speaking with his characteristic stammer. The gamemaster should use careful judgment when portraying Fenring's stammer, to avoid inadvertently giving offense to players. Careful observation and a successful Challenging (D2) Understand test reveal it as carefully cultivated and not

a true affliction. If challenged or confronted about this fact, he drops the ruse and speaks without a stammer or tic.

"Well... ahhh... I am-m-m here to relay a m-m-message to, ah, you, the current stewards of, ah-h... Arrakis. The Emperor is mmm-m-m concerned that the, ah, conflict between House Nagara and Harkonnen shows no signs of, ah-h-h, resolution... other than escalating to violence. This m-m-mm-misunderstanding, or series of them-m, m-mmust be dealt with, ah, officially.

"I, ah, am authorized to relay the message that... hmmm...despite any apparent provocations made by the Harkonnens, the Emperor does not countenance open warfare by or upon, ah, either House. It is the Imperial will that... mmm...both Houses agree to a-ah temporary truce and negotiate a treaty of, um, non-interference.

If this were merely a, ah, conflict of two Houses, the Emperor would be m-m-more than content to let the m-m-matter be decided through kanly, or even a War of Assassins. But this concerns the production of spice, and, ah, as such, the concern is that whichever House triumphs, the Imperium suffers in the, ah, interim.

The Harkonnens have agreed to m-m-mm meet House Nagara at a, ah, place of their choosing to negotiate the term-m-ms of a, ah... treaty. The Emperor has taken a special interest in this and, ah, will not accept anything less than complete obedience. Mmm? He wants this settled peaceably and, ah, quickly, as an, ah, example to the Landsraad of his, ah, leadership."

"The mm-m-m meeting is to happen here, on, ah, Arrakis, as soon as you can, ah, expedite it. Within, ah, ten days, no later."

After this, should the player characters ask more questions (as they should). In short, Fenring explains the terms the Emperor has insisted upon:

The Harkonnens are willing to submit to an Imperial inspection, and one by a representative of House Nagara, to demonstrate that they are traveling to Arrakis with no weaponry.

- O The Spacing Guild has agreed that they will not transport any munitions or warships for the Harkonnens. Thus, the Harkonnens will remove any mounted or integral weaponry from their ships and will utilize shuttles provided by the Spacing Guild to travel to the surface of Arrakis.
- The Imperial Overseer Asham Perro, Judge of the Change will be on hand to mediate.





- O House Harkonnen has the right to bring a representative delegation serving as an outside observer to ensure that the formalities are observed, and House Nagara also has this right. These seconds are subject to the same agreements regarding weaponry.
- The Emperor has the rights to send along any further representatives as he sees fit, also subject to the same pledge of peaceful conduct and a screening by House Nagara.
- O Safe passage to and from Arrakis must be guaranteed to all visitors, unless they forsake that right by initializing hostilities.

He tells them to provide the details to Perro as soon as they are arranged. They can easily contact Perro, as he is, after all, the Imperial Observer on Arrakis, with accommodations in Arrakeen and Carthag. Fenring gives a deep bow, a pursed smile, laughs at some private jest, and departs.

At this, the player characters can make their preparations for the visit (which will take place in Act III). They need to determine the where and when of the meeting, and any security precautions they wish to take. The obvious location for the event is the Residence, but they can pick another site if desired, with the gamemaster adjusting future scenes to accommodate any unusual choices.

It is up to the player characters to decide when the meeting will take place, but it should be from 5 to 10 days time. Anything less than 5 days will make it hard to ensure all the delegates are able to prepare and travel to the location. Anything more than 10 makes House Nagara look disorganized or plotting some sort of treachery.

It is up to the player characters — and any other leaders in the House, if present — to determine what the House plans to do in this matter, answering such questions as:

- Where, if not the Residence, is this parley to be had?
- O How are they going to welcome their guests? Will there be a welcoming ceremony? A party? Some sort of entertainment? How formal will any event be? If so, this will all need to be organized. The House will be judged on how welcoming they are but they may wish to insult or upset the delegates as a risky show of power or to keep them off balance.
- O Do we trust the Harkonnens? What precautions against their treachery are we going to take?
- Are we going to hold to the Emperor's wishes for a peaceful meeting, or do we use this opportunity to strike at the Harkonnens as treacherously as they have dealt with us?
- Should we trust the Emperor?
- O Who can we turn to for aid?

VALLABHI, THE NAGARAN HOME WORLD

Though it goes nameless in **Agents of Dune**, Vallabhi is the center of Nagara's ancestral holding and the site of the manufacturing facilities that supplies them — and the rest of the Imperium — with their signature ware (from **Agents of Dune** and **A Specialty of the House**, p.159). The following writeup is provided if the player characters have not defined their House's home world, and should be revised if it contradicts any prior information.

Star System: Beta Tucanae Moons: Aditi, Gayatri, Meera Noble House: House Nagara

Primary Export: Nagara's special ware (see Agents of Dune)

Population: Mid-sized cities and villages distributed across the planet.

Language: Galach

Locations of Interest: Kaler, Rinumian Ridge, Vallasa,

OVERVIEW

Vallabhi is a mid-sized, rocky world of considerable mineral wealth and rugged, largely unspoiled natural beauty. Located in a system with six stars, Vallabhi's central sun is a blue giant, though the planet's orbit is wide enough that the planet remains relatively cool. Most of her cities and settlements are built along mountain ranges, due to extreme tidal fluctuations that make ocean-level habitations difficult to maintain.

HISTORY

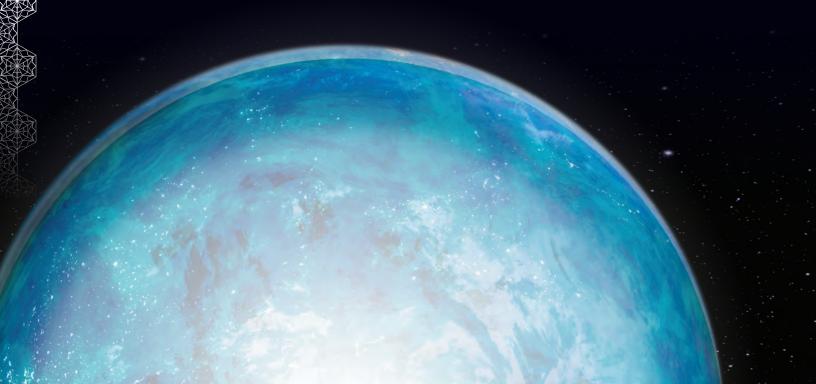
Granted to the family by Emperor Ishaq Corrino XV thousands of years ago, House Nagara grew from humble beginnings with mining as their main concern. Their specialty (defined in **Agents of Dune**) continues to be made and bring them a steady stream of revenue, though with the relocation to Arrakis, it is of secondary concern.

ENVIRONMENT

When it formed, Vallabhi was extremely geologically active, and thus has a wide range of rich mineral deposits across and relatively close to its surface. Temperatures fluctuate dramatically with altitude, and ornithopters must frequently be fitted with auxiliary jets and pressurized for high-altitude travel.

POINTS OF INTEREST

House Nagara's home city is set upon one of the broad mountain terraces that make up the Rinumian Ridge, a chain of mountains that are extensively mined and tunneled throughout. Below these rocky bergs are concealed Nagara's manufacturing bases, secured against the rugged weather and concealed from spying eyes.



The gamemaster should handle any of their other questions or concerns, basing it on **House Influence Indices**, p.6–9. This broad overview of their current situation can be used to suggest appropriate stances and reactions from the various factions the House may approach or contact. The player characters can continue their preparations around the continuing events of Act I and Act II. Act III begins when the meeting is due to begin.

WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND

Over the next few days, as preparations are underway, a coded message arrives for the House Nagara leadership via secured galactic communinet transmission, a service provided by the Spacing Guild to the Houses of the Landsraad, at considerable cost. Once decrypted—no test needed, as it's a Nagaran code, used by the family—it relays a message from Captain Alledan Vence, acting head of Nagara's security forces on Vallabhi, their home world (see Vallahbi, the Nagaran Home World p.158). If the player characters have already determined this role falls to someone else, the gamemaster should replace Vence with that character.

The message, in brief, consists of the following warning, with [X] replaced by the Nagara ware:

"Repeated sabotage attempts at [X] manufacturing facilities have compromised production by 17%. Covert intelligence indicates more severe incursions imminent, halting production entirely. Request guidance or reinforcements."

Faced with a problem back home, the player characters must decide how, or whether, to intervene in the matter. The timing of this is suspicious: even the most junior of Mentats recognizes it as a distraction, but one that nonetheless must be dealt with.

Their most obvious options, and outcomes, are:

- O Ignoring the Problem Entirely: If they signal to Vence and their home forces to solve it themselves, within a few days they receive reports of additional industrial sabotage activities bordering on outright terrorism: machinery crippled, workers killed, low morale, temporary shutdowns, even destruction of facilities. Modify the Landsraad Support and Wealth indices by –1 each and add +1 to Ruthlessness. Production of the asset is stopped entirely and must be renewed at considerable time and cost.
- O Logistic and Intelligence Support: If the player characters assist from afar, they can send further communinet instructions and reallocate funds and forces to assist. This is an extended task with a requirement of 6 and a Challenging (D2) Difficulty. Tactics can involve Battle (aggressively going after saboteurs), Move (bringing in more forces from

A SPECIALITY OF THE HOUSE

As mentioned in the introduction, in **Agents of Dune**, the players picked a particular ware for House Nagara to focus on. The options were a superior maula rifle (Military), a particularly precise type of analysis equipment (Scientific), an agricultural scanner (Farming), a form of oil lens (Espionage), or an especially productive type of generator (Industrial).

As **Agents of Dune** unfolded, this asset was emphasized and proved significant to the plot. Assumedly, production of this asset has continued upon the House's home world, far from Arrakis, an ongoing part of their wealth. However, its importance to the House has paled in comparison to their command of the most valuable and challenging source of profit in the Imperium, the spice melange.

Despite this, House Nagara's ware is still in production. When it is threatened, the player characters may be forced to risk what it costs to defend it. If they fail or make no effort, it is lost to them. If this gamble pays off, they have recovered an old and reliable asset, which may serve them in their current state and circumstances.

If the player characters are of a House other than Nagara, this sabotage will affect the House's primary Domain, whatever it might be.

across the planet), or **Understand** (aggressive espionage and covert actions). Alternatively, the gamemaster can handle this as an espionage conflict, described in the **Dune Core Rulebook** (p.177–180). Success modifies Wealth and Honor by +1 (as word gets out that the House cannot be so easily weakened). Failure reduces Honor, Landsraad Support, and Wealth by –1 each, and grinds production to a halt temporarily.

O Dealing with It In Person: Here, they arrange transport to their home planet immediately and try to resolve the situation on their own. See the Architect... or Agent? sidebar (p.160) for information on how to handle this. If successful, they gain +1 to Honor and Landsraad Support, and if they fail, Honor and Wealth are reduced by -2 each. If this happens, ignore the events of Act II: The Night Flier, as they are off-world when that occurs, and are caught off guard by the Harkonnens.



ARCHITECT... OR AGENT?

While intended as architect-level gameplay, the players may engage this subplot as agents and intervene directly, perhaps as a side adventure and a welcome change from the harsh Arrakeen environment.

The House should handle their passage to Vallabhi, likely requiring them to call in a favor from the Spacing Guild to arrange such rapid and unscheduled transit. If not, they can simply throw solaris at the problem, modifying the House's Wealth indice by –1 for such a huge expense. Once on planet, the gamemaster can describe the curious sensation of returning home, emphasizing the stark contrast between their home world and the sands of Arrakis. Let them become re-established, providing details of their home as they see fit (see Vallabhi, The Nagaran Home World on p.158 for more information), and perhaps even tempting them with how easy it would be to turn their backs on Arrakis and all the misery it inflicts upon them.

If needed, a suggestion is to use modified examples of environments and challenges presented in Agents of Dune, particularly the facility used in Act I, Part 2: Ground Training Exercises (p.23–30) or the Harkonnen factory in Act II, Part 2: Harkonnen Management, customized to suit the Nagara ware.

The outcome is as described in Dealing With It In Person (p.159), in addition to any other assets lost or damaged in the course of the operation.

The gamemaster should handle other approaches as appropriate. This challenge is architect-level gameplay, with the player characters controlling House assets remotely, via the Spacing Guild's secure communinet system or a trusted House messenger sent from Arrakis.

Once resolved, if successful, the player characters learn that outsiders were being smuggled planet-side, covertly entering the manufacturing facilities and performing industrial sabotage. They could not be taken alive, committing suicide once apprehended, but their gear and personal effects identified them as mercenaries, likely with advanced training. Not the level of Sardaukar, but elite and well-equipped enough to indicate that they had considerable funding and support.

An Obtain Information Momentum spend in the extended task reveals that the operatives were almost certainly natives of Giedi Prime, with telltale exposure to pollutants and chemical contaminants in their blood and tissue. Additionally, if the Nagaran ware is either the superior maula rifle or oil lens viewer, roughly twenty of these were stolen, enough to supply a small squad with. This theft, however, occurred far in advance of the sabotage and it was only the investigation that revealed the loss.

THE NIGHT FLIER

In the days that follow, an appropriate member of the House receives a secret message in their personal quarters, a tiny length of shigawire, laid below a hairbrush or tucked into the pocket of an item of clothing. When read, the message contains a time — that evening, just after dusk — and a street address in Arrakeen. A check reveals that it is a stall within one of the various souks, not the largest, but a smaller and technically illegal one. The message also contains two sentences which any resident of the Imperium should recognize as part of a quote from the Orange Catholic Bible.

"Fanatics are often blinded in their thoughts. Leaders are often blinded in their hearts."

Seeking further information about the address requires no test — it's the stall of a waterseller named Marit, rumored to be a dealer in other goods, particularly low-quality spice.

OFF MARKET

A visit to Marit's stall that night, after the market empties, takes the player characters to a simple, squat storefront, set deep into an access tunnel that runs through the ground floor of a larger plascrete residence block, as close to a slum as Arrakeen gets. Several smaller storefronts share space in the tunnel's interior, and Marit's is at a junction in the center, allowing an easy exit in any direction. The player characters can take whatever precautions they like, and any advance scouting reveals nothing out of the ordinary.

Arriving, they find a simple curtained stall with several plastic tureens of water and hung with many woven curtains in Fremen style. A low-hanging cage above the cushioned floor is full of bats, brown-furred and dusty, chittering loudly, their stink obvious. The air is further redolent with the smell of burnt spice and a thick blue smoke stings the eyes. The shop's proprietor, Marit, is an older Fremen woman, but the milky white over the bluewithin-blue of her eyes indicates why she dwells within the city. Use the Water seller (**Dune Core Rulebook**, p.295) and add the "Blind" trait, if necessary.

The old water seller bids the player characters sit on the cushioned floor and tells them that she has something for them. Moving with surprising grace, considering her age, she first offers the player characters small cups of water, carefully ladling them from a tureen set in the center of the room, and then removes a single bat from the cage, putting a small leather lead upon its feet and dangling it, upside down. She asks the player characters if they have something to say.

The player characters should recognize at this point they are expected to repeat the passage from the shigawire,

the quote from the Orange Catholic Bible. If they do not understand, she speaks the first part of the quote for them:

"Blindness can take many forms other than the inability to see."

With this, the bat makes tiny sounds, vibrating its larynx in a way that seems unnatural, but produces noises that sound like words. The player characters should recognize this as distrans, a method of relaying secret messages stored mnemonically within an animal's mind, used throughout the Imperium but especially by Fremen.

"The devil hides within the darkness of Muad'Dib's shadow."

It then relays a string of numbers. Once this is done, the water seller opens the cage full of bats and releases the distrans bat along with them. Together, the colony rustles past the player characters, their leathery wings beating as they catch flight and escape into the darkness of the tunnel and eventually to the end and into the night.

A successful Average (D1) **Understand** test by any player character causes them to remember that Muad'Dib is the name of a type of desert mouse common to Arrakis, but is also the name of one of its two moons. The string of numbers, judging from the sequence, is almost certainly a set of coordinates.

With that, Marit thanks the player characters for their custom and says she needs to close for the day. She says nothing further about the message and does not reveal where it came from.

Should the player characters fail this test or simply not visit the water seller's shop, they have missed a valuable clue about the Harkonnen's preparations.

THE ARMORIES OF THE ENEMY

If they choose to dig further, the player characters can request access to the weather monitoring satellites stationed around Arrakis and get a closer look at the coordinates on the small moon. A successful Challenging **Understand** (D2) test for this surveillance reveals that this is indeed a location on the surface of Muad'Dib, the smaller moon, and irregularities indicate that there is something man-made on the surface, carefully camouflaged to blend in. An Obtain Information spend reveals that satellite imagery has picked up suspicious activity from several days ago,

immediately before Fenring's visit. A small, unregistered transport traveled back and forth this location to an unknown position on Arrakis' surface, landing somewhere in the vastness of the Imperial Basin, hundreds of kilometers across.

Ultimately, the source of the distrans communication is up to the gamemaster to determine, based on prior events and allegiances won. The circuitous means of getting the message specifically to House Nagara was to prevent anyone from tracking it back to the source, and the bats were released in a colony to make it impossible to find the exact one with the message.

How do they act on this information? The gamemaster can handle this with as much detail as desired, either as full encounters or straightforward exchanges of information.

Contacting the Spacing Guild: If the player characters aided the Guild in Chapter 8 – The Spacing Guild, asking for information along this line does not count as "cashing in their favor."

- A successful Average (D1) Communicate test has the envoy Cenric inform them that the Spacing Guild is uninvolved... but the Harkonnens are known to conceal weapons caches on the moons of any planet they hold.
- An Obtain Information spend reveals the Harkonnens use fail-safe detonators, set to destroy any physical evidence of these depots. Unless a coded signal is sent beforehand the base is likely to be vaporized, along with any intruders.

Reaching Out to Smugglers: A successful Challenging (D2) Communicate test gets them in touch with a woman named Estancia Ralls, leader of a small group of smugglers (use the Smuggler on p.291 of the Dune Core Rulebook).

- Or If convinced or bribed to help with another successful Challenging (D2) Communicate test, Ralls says that her crew were hired by intermediaries to ferry munitions and weaponry from a munitions depot on the moon down to somewhere in the Imperial Basin.
- At a cost of -1 to the Wealth index (she does not respond to threats), Ralls gives up the precise location where the weapons are being stored—a deserted cavern in the Imperial Basin — as well as the security code to bypass the failsafe detonator on the lunar base.
- Recovering the material from the unguarded Imperial Basin cavern — an arsenal of hand-to-hand and ranged weapons, personal shields, surface-to-air missile launchers and munitions, explosives, and even two atomic warheads — adds +1 to the House's Military Power index (not solely from the munitions,

but also from depriving the Harkonnens of said firepower). If desired, Sietch Korba (Chapter 5) or Sietch Jurf'ahmar (**Agents of Dune**, p.104) may be of assistance here.

Also amidst the gear are enough Nagaran maula rifles or oil-lens night-vision goggles (if this is a Nagaran ware) to equip a squad. Serial numbers mark them as those stolen on Vallhabi, the Nagaran home world (see p.158).

Going to the Moon: Arranging for a passage is easy enough, as the House has adequate surface-to-space transports and can assemble a suitable force for such a journey. As they approach, a proximity sensor sends them an electronic signal, requesting a counter-signal.

- O If they do not have the coded signal provided to them by the smugglers, electronic countermeasures might be able to deactivate the alarm system, requiring a successful Dire (D4) Battle test related to electronic espionage.
- If unsuccessful, the base's automatic failsafe detonators activate, reducing the entirety of the munitions dump to radioactive slag and depriving the Harkonnens and the Nagarans of the contents.
- Successfully infiltrating the base reveals an atmosphere-less munitions dump, with ample stores of the armaments mentioned above. Capturing this adds +1 to the Military Power index and deprives the Harkonnens of this weaponry. Inventory levels show that at least enough to equip twenty soldiers has been taken.
- O Note that unless the player characters are especially clever, taking a shuttle or frigate up to the moon is likely to be noticed by their allies and enemies as there is little or no traffic there usually.

SERPENTS IN THE FOLD

If they choose not to invest time and energy in looking into the matter, the following sequences of events happen. A squad of twenty Harkonnen sleeper agents hiding in an old Imperial weather survey station (of which there are many) makes their way across the Imperial Basin, aided by Ralls' smugglers.

They are disguised as Nagaran troops, all external indications of their Harkonnen identity removed and replaced with the crest of House Nagara (or the player characters' House equivalent). Use the House soldier/guard template for these troops (**Dune Core Rulebook**, p.283), led by a man named Etwin Kerral. Unbeknownst to the others in his squad, Kerral is a Sardaukar operative (**Dune Core Rulebook**, p.288), working clandestinely with the Harkonnens to ensure Nagara's defeat. Use his skills for any opposed tests at getting his forces into place.

This squad emerges later, in The Ticking Clock (p.163).

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

Finally, the fated day comes. All the preparations must stand as they are. Unceremoniously, the Spacing Guild signals the arrival of their heighliner in Arrakis' orbit. The vessels inside, under conditions of truce, disembark and shuttle down to the surface of the planet, to land in Arrakeen's spaceport, with all the expected pomp and ceremony required given the gravity of the event. Ideally, the player characters should have prepared an appropriate welcome, which the delegates will judge their first impressions on.

Armored groundcars, accompanied by highly disciplined Nagaran (and other) forces, transport them to the site where the deliberations are to take place. The gamemaster can flesh this sequence out as much as desired, or simply cut to the negotiation phase.

The gamemaster should consult the current Influence indices (p.155) to determine what the conditions are for House Nagara, what forces are arrayed against them, and who their allies apparently are. No exact numbers are provided, and the gamemaster should judge the relative value of each relative to others.

The Gathering (p.153) can be of guidance as to who arrives and what their positions are regarding Houses Nagara and Harkonnen.

Depending on whom each House chose as their second, their representatives arrive. The Harkonnens have chosen House Richese as their ally in this event. If Tamara Pilru of Vernius was captured (p.43) she has been 'rehabilitated' and is now working with them once more, hoping to redeem herself. The players should have already chosen their ally and the gamemaster should have them arrive as appropriate.

If the Imperial Support index is relatively high, the Emperor himself arrives, complete with his daughter Josifa (accompanied by Reverend Mother Montemagni), representatives from CHOAM and the Bene Gesserit, likely Ustad Turan (Agents of Dune, p.87) and Reverend Mother Narilan (p.119). The Imperial delegation is protected by a sizable detachment of Sardaukar, bolstered by normal troops (Dune Core Rulebook, p.288 and 283).

Asham Perro, the appointed Imperial Observer and Judge of the Change (p.153), though already stationed on Arrakis, is technically a part of the Imperial delegation but is expected to oversee the treaty being drawn up. If the Emperor is not on hand (neutral or negative Imperial Support), Perro stands in the Emperor's place.

Finally, the Harkonnen representatives arrive. The Baron has little choice but to represent his House in person, though he knows that there will be a bombing

attempt, and thus is cautious. He is almost certainly accompanied by his Mentat, Piter de Vries. Their representative in Carthag, Esseda Ulako (p.18) is also on hand. Turo Imsel (**Agents of Dune**, p.22) is also present, a "friendly" face to lull the player characters into a false sense of fraternity. If the player characters won over his loyalty, Alexzander Harkonnen (p.112) is there, having cozened his way into the delegation in hopes he can use this to his advantage against the Baron.

As soon as the negotiations are to begin, the Emperor (or the Imperial Observer) makes an announcement, speaking with practiced surety.

"House Harkonnen... House Nagara. I have ordered this meeting under the auspice of a negotiation of a treaty between your two Houses, but in the time since, my concerns are that these differences are too great to solve through mere diplomacy."

"As events have transpired, it is clear a stronger and more decisive action is required."

"Thus, this is no mere negotiation of peace, but a trial, where all grievances are to be given their time in the light, and a decision made against the House whose actions have breached the peace and prosperity of the Landsraad."

"My judgment, and it is my own judgment we speak of, is final. The Landsraad and CHOAM will follow suit."

"Speak now, for the survival of your Houses are at stake."

THE TICKING CLOCK

If the Nagarans did nothing to stop them, the squad of Harkonnen loyalists, disguised as Nagaran forces, has infiltrated Arrakeen, making their way to the site of the negotiations — wherever it may be (see Serpents in the Fold p.162). If the player characters have put into place measures against such espionage, the gamemaster should handle this as an opposed test, pitting the skill of Kerral, the leader, against that of the player characters as an espionage conflict (**Dune Core Rulebook**, p.177–180).

Their goal is to strike savagely at the House Nagara in its very Residence, disguised as Nagara soldiers, with uniforms and other obvious clues pointing at this false identity. This is inevitably a suicide attack, one likely to cause the death of Nagarans and Harkonnens alike, but almost certainly makes it look like House Nagara cannot control its own forces, violating the terms of the pact.

Depending on how much detail is desired and whether a split focus is desired, the gamemaster can put the

player characters in the thick of it in agent-level play or have them handle it indirectly as architects. If the imposters are discovered, the fight switches to a warfare or skirmish conflict, depending on when they are discovered. If played through, an appropriate player character (Mentat or Spymaster) is alerted by a subordinate to irregularities in guard movement, a matter to investigate. If they ignore this, the House's security is at the Harkonnen infiltrators' mercy.

If the whole attempt was defused beforehand by player character success in seizing the weaponry, the Harkonnen ruse is foiled, the attempt is aborted, and the player characters now have another bit of evidence to use against them. If they seized or destroyed the weapons cache, their enemies are at a distinct disadvantage. If they did so clandestinely or captured the infiltrators, even more so.

THE TRIAL

The Emperor, or his representative, calls for the negotiation to begin, and calls upon each of the heads of the two Houses — Nagara and Harkonnen — to state before all assembled the offenses that have been given and to relate any charges that may violate the Great Convention (if any). House Harkonnen is called upon to speak first. An opposed **Understand** test against the Baron reveals he is increasingly nervous, his fingers often poised above the button on his shield emitter, his suspensor field harness active so that he drifts slightly above ground level.

The gamemaster should take note of the argument marshaled and announce that the skill test will occur later.

When the Baron Harkonnen is called upon to speak on behalf of his family and relate his own grievances against House Nagara, he pauses expectantly.

- O If the Harkonnen operatives have been able to infiltrate the treaty negotiations and ready their attack, proceed to The Hammer Falls (below).
- O If they were thwarted, go to **Schemes Unraveled** (p.165).

THE HAMMER FALLS

As the Baron begins, initially apologizing for speaking harshly against his onetime allies and protégés in House Nagara, the following occurs:

A muffled thump and jarring sensation from below instantly becomes a roar. A massive explosion tears through the floor of the chamber, shattering it beneath your feet and filling the room with shrapnel!

The force of the blast causes the whole building to shudder, and the floor becomes a gaping maw beneath some of those inside.

Dust and acrid smoke fill the air, alarm klaxons blare dully to blast-deafened ears, fire suppression systems try to subdue the open flames. Nearby, those knocked to the floor moan with pain, and those still afoot stagger, stunned and injured.

A chorus of screams are punctuated with reports of maula rifle fire from the floors below and from elsewhere in the Residency. The hum of activated personal shields cut through the noise, causing curious displacement of the smoke and dust.

For just a fleeting moment, your memory flashes back to a time when you sat at the control of a spaceship in crisis... before you became the masters of Dune.

The gamemaster should call for a Challenging (D2)

Move test to remain upright when this occurs.

Success has them get to safety before the floor collapses, and failure causes them to take the "Dazed" or "Injured" traits. A complication results in the player character falling through into the lower level, likely injured, knocked unconscious, or incapacitated, perhaps even buried in rubble.

The gamemaster should determine any potential casualties and describe the outcome as the House Nagara troops open fire on attackers who are seemingly drawn from their own ranks. Any subsequent conflict here is handled as a skirmish. If House Nagara has earned Sietch Korba Trust and the friendship of the Fremen, the desert nomads arrive at the Residency as the battle begins and aid House Nagara's troops in defeating the infiltrators.

If present, Alexzander Harkonnen is slain in the assault, a sacrifice for the sake of appearances, giving credence to any charges directed at House Nagara's incompetence or duplicity. The same fate awaits Turo Imshel and Tamara Pilru, if present, their deaths tying up loose ends nicely.

The Judge of the Change says he will order an investigation but, in all reality, the negotiations are over. If the Imperial Support index is neutral or negative, the Emperor rules preemptively against House Nagara. The Imperial presence is then rushed from the chamber to the safety of armored groundcars and eventually the spaceport. The Judge of the Change gives House Nagara a month to evacuate Arrakis, returning its stewardship to House Harkonnen, who try not to gloat in triumph as they pretend to mourn their dead.

SCHEMES UNRAVELED

If the player character averted the attack before it began, or as it was to occur, the Harkonnen plot is foiled utterly. The Baron, looking somewhat at a loss, but just for a moment, describes his litany of complaints about House Nagara, with hugely biased and subjective accounts of all the ways the House both failed the Landsraad, the Empire, and — he relates with crocodile tears — proving a disappointment to himself, who offered them so much assistance, returned by this lack of gratitude.

The gamemaster should review the Influence indices and past events in **Agents of Dune** and this campaign to cherry-pick events that can be described in the Baron's favor, or at the very least, to prove the House is incapable of providing the Imperium with its necessary supply of spice. The wily Baron, naturally, is careful not to lie directly, especially if any Bene Gesserit or those with Truthsense are obviously present.

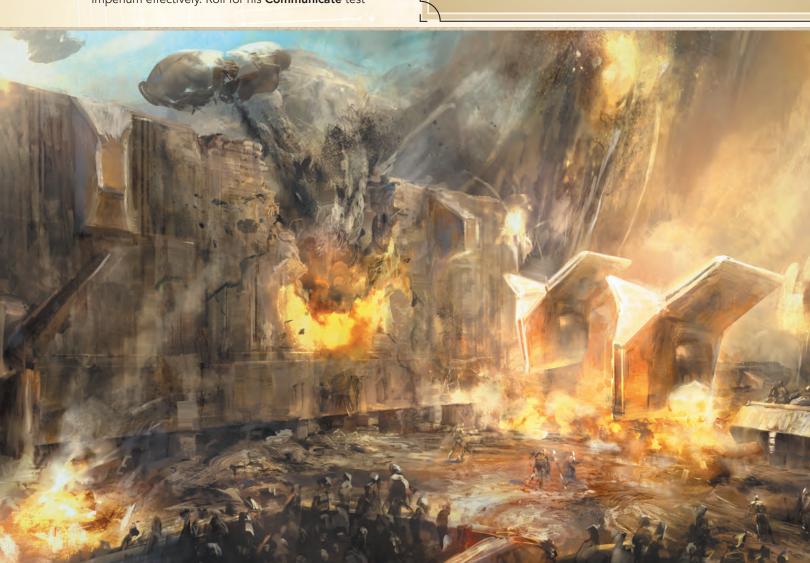
Baron Harkonnen is described in the **Dune Core Rulebook** (p.251), with Power 8, Communicate 6, a
Deceit focus, and the Subtle Words talent. All of these
are utilized to spin a narrative whose sole goal is to
discredit House Nagara and make them seem like
unworthy upstarts, ungrateful and unable to serve the
Imperium effectively. Roll for his **Communicate** test

A PLAY FOR THE THRONE?

If House Nagara is exceptionally popular in the Landsraad and have the backing of the Fremen and the Guild, this might be a ripe time to take control of the Imperium. If the Emperor arrives he and his retinue can be captured and forced to abdicate in favor of House Nagara. But this will not be easy at all.

To have any chance of success House Nagara will have to have high ratings in pretty much all the indices. Without Landsraad support their claim will fall on deaf ears. Their Fremen allies will have to prove the equal or better of the Sarduakar, as they will come in force to rescue their Emperor. Nagara will also have to prove to the Guild they can ensure a supply of spice, and if so they might convince them to not allow any military reprisals on Arrakis. This might be simple as the Guild won't want to endanger the spice, but the Nagara homeworld will be another matter.

In general, the player characters will have to think very carefully as they could easily see their House destroyed at the peak of their power if they miscalculate. If their coup fails, they will all be executed and their House struck from the records.



secretly: it is the Difficulty of the opposed test the player characters must defeat.

Essentially, the Baron insists that House Nagara is unfit to manage a planet as important as Arrakis, and the supply of spice is not safe in their hands. His claims are backed up by any failures in the previous adventures. But the gamemaster may create more charges if they are feeling inventive (or if the player characters have done too well!).

Now it is time for Nagara to answer these charges. The gamemaster should ask the appropriate player character to roleplay this declaration and describe the reaction from the onlookers as appropriate. At each charge leveled at them, the Harkonnens object and offer as much dissent as is allowed. The gamemaster can award Momentum to their effort based on an appraisal of the performance of the player's oration. This can either be granted or used to modify the Difficulty of a **Communicate** test accordingly, which is also modified by the current Imperial Support index. Each charge against the Harkonnens that is provable (with evidence on hand) adds +1d20 to the roll, and any in-person witness allows a re-roll of a failed d20 in this effort.

FURTHER ACCUSATIONS

Continuing a major plot element from **Agents of Dune**, if the new head of House Nagara can prove that the Harkonnens, through their actions, directly conspired to cause the death of Countess Nagara, their House's former head, the Emperor has little choice but to find in their favor. Otherwise he will be seen as siding with the Harkonnens openly, and thus risk the Landsraad allying against them. House Harkonnen will, in response, provide evidence pointing to Turo Imshel as the guilty party, acting alone and without the House's authority. Imshel is then subject to imprisonment upon Kaitain, and later their execution.

If the players need some guidance on how to answer the charges, they should focus on their successes in the previous adventures. This is also the time to reveal any treachery they uncovered on the Harkonnens part.

The gamemaster can introduce any extant plot threads here, such as a Harkonnen loyalist turning against the Baron (Tamara Pilru or Alexander Harkonnen, for example), testimony from the representative from CHOAM (including records and receipts), and, damningly, trotting out evidence from the failed attempt at sabotaging the treaty negotiation itself.

At this point, the Imperial decision is made, as if a foreordained conclusion, which it almost certainly is.

If the player characters are beaten by Baron Harkonnen's lies and dissembling, and the relevant indices are against them (neutral or negative), they lose their case. The Emperor, with great distaste—feigned or actual—announces that they are stripped of the stewardship of Arrakis and must return to their homeworld. Their status as a Great House is reduced to that of a House Minor, and they are to be a vassal to House Harkonnen on a probationary period until such a time as the Harkonnens judge the offense has been compensated for. At this, the Baron's cackling laughter echoes throughout the chamber, signaling many years of torment for House Nagara. Can they survive this grim fate?

If the player characters succeed and best the Baron in this contest, and the relevant indices are in their favor (mostly positive), they have saved House Nagara and ensured its continued stewardship of Arrakis. House Harkonnen has a staggeringly high fine levied upon it, trillions of solaris to be paid to the Imperial court, and receives full censure, a chastisement just short of being stripped of Great House status. They are penalized two percent of their shares in CHOAM, to be awarded to House Nagara, and are warned of any such future provocation. Chagrined, the Harkonnens depart the chamber, and the Emperor clasps hands with the House's head, looking them directly into the eyes.

"Congratulations, Nagara. You have done well. You have survived this test of fire and emerged unscathed. With your fidelity and service, the Imperium prospers."

"Your predecessor, Countess Nagara, held that title by birth. I now ratify that title upon you as her successors, and confer all the rights and honors due that office, with the blessing of the Imperial House Corrino."

"Rest for now... but know that there is much we must accomplish together, with your House loyal and at my side."

With that, the Emperor and his delegation depart.

And thus, **Masters of Dune** comes to a close, hinting at further adventures to come.

THE BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS BEGINS

Your House has claimed the wealth of Arrakis but can they hold on to that power when so many want to take it from them? You have already uncovered a deadly enemy, but plenty more covet what you have worked so hard to control. You are going to need allies, but who can you trust? The mysterious Bene Gesserit, the elusive Spacing Guild, or perhaps even the Emperor himself? But each faction has their own agenda, and a knife in the shadows lies behind every smile.

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- O Discover the wisdom of the secretive Bene Gesserit, if you can pass their deadly tests and prove yourself worthy of the Sisterhood's trust.
- O Politic on Kaitain against the Emperor and the Landsraad council, where you might play one side against another if you have the cunning and skill for such deceit in the ultimate game.
- Or Travel from Arrakis across the Imperium to seek new allies, resources and favors that might tip the balance of power in the universe.

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Dedicated to Frank Herbert, author and creator of the Dune Universe, whose singular vision and imagination have inspired us all.









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