

## Herbert...

Well, I think that a housewife can.

"This would also be an incentive for people to vote. I think they would say, 'If I vote, I may be called on to serve on one of these juries.' I think one of the things that keeps people from voting now is that their vote has very little to do with what's going to happen. So, let's bring the government back where it belongs, into the hands of the governed."

Herbert decided in grade school that he wanted to be a writer, and began his career as a newspaper reporter. Subsequently he worked as speech writer for a U.S. senator, which gave him considerably more real-life experience of politics than most science fiction authors, and was a lasting influence on his outlook. He came to the conclusion that large centers of power inevitably attract people who are, he says, "either corrupt or corruptible. I've yet to see a State capital, when I was an investigative reporter, that wasn't a cesspool, and I think the major cesspool in the United States is Washington, DC. So I think we ought to take power away from these centers, and redistribute it."

"But politicians are only part of the problem. We also have to deal with arrogance in the power structure of bureaucracy. I have heard a very high-level bureaucrat in Washington, DC talk of a United States senator who was causing them some trouble, was a threat to reduce their budget, and so on; and he called the senator a 'transient.' Think about the arrogance of that. 'He'll be gone in a year or so, and I'll still be here.' And there's a lot of that in the bureaucracy, especially the higher up you go."

His dislike of bureaucracy makes him deeply suspicious of all large, well-established institutions. And he includes the scientific establishment in that category.

"You get power structures based on bureaucratic demands, rather than on the demands of the research; and the primary demand of bureaucracy is, 'cover your ass.' This is unfortunate, since we need to take chances—take advantage of the fact that wild cards sometimes are playable. Give the odd idea some research money, and let 'em see if it works. Don't say, out of hand, 'Oh, that's crazy, you must be some kind of a jerk to even think that.'"

"Most of the major breakthroughs in our history have come from indi-

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of a Jeffries Tube which leads into the interior machinery of the warp engines. If the players go to sickbay to check in on Tarrow, they will see some other crew members there, complaining of headaches and nausea, a clear indication that the drug developed to negate the effects of the cloaking device was failing once again. Dr. Sormil will ask the players if they will stay and help as he has his hands full with Tarrow and doesn't have time to administer additional doses of the drug.

Players should decide what to do from this point as events will soon occur at an alarming rate.

## The Shadowfall Operatives

In reality there are TWO enemy agents on board the *Merlin*. One is, as Tarrow thought, Lt. Martin Callin. The other is one that no one expected, Dr. Sormil, the Vulcan in charge of the sickbay.

Their mission is a joint one between the Romulans and the Klingon Empire. Realizing how a cloaking device in the hands of the Federation could pose a threat to their own forces the two governments have agreed to cooperate in sabotaging the Shadowfall experiments.

Lt. Martin Callin is actually a Klingon/Human fusion. He was instrumental in the destruction of the *Sparrowhawk*, ensuring that his Romulan counterpart in that phase of the mission was lost along with the ship. It was hoped that the Federation would discontinue experiments with the cloaking device after that, but this proved to be nothing more than a false story planted by Star Fleet to aid in the security of the next attempt. It was only a stroke of luck that saw to it that Callin was again assigned to the Shadowfall operation.

Lt. Callin's mission is not the simple destruction of the test vessel this time. Callin's goal aboard the *Merlin* is to take control of the bridge while the ship is in a cloaked state. He will kill the bridge personnel, use the automatic computer to fly the ship, and

flood the lower decks with sleep gas from the Security Control System. He is then supposed to revive his comrade Dr. Sormil and pilot the cloaked vessel to a joint fleet of Romulan and Klingon warships outside of Federation space.

Dr. Sormil, while he appears to be a Vulcan, is really a Romulan surgically altered to appear as a full Vulcan. Since he is in charge of handing out the drug to counter the cloaking discomfort, he was also in a position to dilute the drug so the crew would soon become disabled.

Sormil is supposed to aid his Klingon counterpart in the capture of the ship. But knowing the usual treachery of Klingons he has set up his own safeguards to ensure he does not meet the fate of the last Romulan partner of Callin. Commander Tarrow caught Sormil setting up just such a safeguard in the Jeffries Tube near Engineering and had to be incapacitated. Needless to say, Sormil will ensure that the Commander doesn't wake up while under his care in sickbay.

Dr. Sormil will be very busy treating the ill in the sickbay throughout the adventure. If questioned as to why the drug suddenly failed to alleviate the sickness brought on by the Federation cloaking device, he will say that not enough information is available to determine the reason. If the players take the time to scan a sample of the drug with a tricorder or the shipboard analyzer they will be able to determine that it has been tampered with to make it ineffective. This will bring Dr. Sormil into direct suspect. If confronted he will draw a Phaser I from within his uniform and fire on the players, determined not to go down without a fight.

If the players have left the bridge unprotected they will have five minutes to return before Callin leaves Engineering and arrives on the bridge. Once there he will open fire on everyone there without warning. Any player characters present should be given a Saving Roll against their LUCK score to determine if they can take cover or return fire before being hit. If Callin is unopposed by any player characters he will be able to kill the entire bridge crew before any of them have a chance to call for help.



His first action will be to activate the flight controls of the ship's automation computer. He will then move to the security controls and begin to key in the code to flood the lower decks with a sleep gas. The whole procedure from the time Callin leaves the bridge turbolift will take about eight minutes.

As soon as he begins to switch on the automations computer an alert will sound in the security room. If the players act quickly they can override the gas flooding actions from the security room control station. If, however, they are not near enough to hear the alarm from the security room (Gamemaster's discretion) there is little they can do to stop the gas in time.

If the sleep gas is activated it will take two minutes before the crew is left unconscious. If the players are within ten meters of a turboelevator when the gas is released they will have a chance (Saving Roll against DEXTERITY) that there will be enough time to get inside. Only the security team on the ship knows that the gas is not pumped into the turboshifts. After ten minutes the gas becomes inert and the players can walk about freely.

Any player character not able to reach a turboelevator within the two minute period will be rendered unconscious. There is an antidote to the gas in sickbay and, if administered, will take five minutes plus one minute per character STRENGTH point to revive the affected individual. If all player characters are incapacitated they can only look forward to capture and imprisonment in the Klingon Empire.

In the meantime Callin will be discharging a series of message buoys stating that the warp field around the ship is showing signs of weakening due to the cloaking device. In reality it is not but he is hoping that this will force the *Nhat-Le* away from her close escort position.

Callin, true to his Klingon nature, has no intention of heading towards a rendezvous with a combined Klingon/Romulan force. Instead, he is planning on taking the *Merlin* directly into the Klingon Empire. The Klingons can say that he has stolen the vessel and headed into the Triangle with it,

thereby lulling the Romulans into silence. While Callin is supposed to wake up Sormil, he has no intention of doing so.

Sormil, on the other hand, is no fool. His superiors, knowing that the Klingons were not to be totally trusted, added another phase to the plan. A small explosive device has been emplaced in the Jeffries Tube where Commander Tarrow was assaulted. It is set next to the warp field inducer control circuits. If not deactivated by Sormil, it will rupture the warp field and blow up the ship. This situation, while not as appealing as the capture of the ship, still would satisfy the Romulans as the Federation would suspect, once again, that they have not quite gotten all the bugs out of their cloaking unit. The Klingons were to be informed that some safeguards would protect the Romulan operative in the hope that this would keep them from any mischief. The message, unfortunately, arrived too late at Klingon Command Headquarters to inform Callin before the operation started.

Since communications with *Nhat-Le* are impossible, the player's best hope is to retake the bridge from Callin. It will be difficult since Callin will scan the ship after one half hour to discover if anyone is conscious. Since the *Merlin* has altered course toward the location of a Klingon escort which will rendezvous within two hours, the players don't have any time to revive the rest of the crew. It basically boils down to an old fashion gun battle from the turboelevator to regain the bridge. Even if Callin secures the turbolift, the security controls in the Security Monitor room (Deck 2, Room 3) can override his orders.

Unless the players have examined and discovered the device planted by Sormil in Engineering it is still active and will detonate within six hours. If they do not revive and question the Doctor under the influence of truth drugs, he will not tell them about the bomb until it is too late. Naturally, the players have to deduce that it was he who altered the dosage of the drug in the first place. If the players do not remove the device in time (with or without retaking the bridge) it will detonate and collapse the warp field, destroying the ship.

viduals or very small group research-and-development efforts. Whereas, what you get in the bureaucratic system are finance-dominated concepts, where people are more interested in maintaining the life of their system than they are in the original goal, or aim, of the system."

As an individualist and experimenter himself, Herbert feels that scientists should be less constrained by budgetary and bureaucratic controls, even when controversial research is involved. He does not believe we should try to restrict experiments with recombinant DNA, for example—even though one of his novels, *The White Plague*, describes a global catastrophe resulting from such research. His outlook is that legislation to prohibit DNA experiments would simply drive them underground, at which point they would become secret and hence even more dangerous. "Laws to control things invariably strengthen the powers that oppose that control," he points out.

He acquired his views on science and scientists in much the same way as he acquired his political outlook: from personal journalistic experience.

"I found I could approach a very respected person in any particular field and say to him, 'Look, I'm a quick study and a good interviewer, and I'll demonstrate it for you. You must have some papers that you want written; I know a technique for getting them out of you and writing them. In return, I want you to hold individual seminars for me, to give me a quick course in your particular field.'"

"The technique for getting the article would be to sit down with a tape recorder, and say, 'Okay, what is the article about?' Because a lot of the time it's just motivation, and dragging the words out of them. I would start asking more and more questions, pertinent questions, getting the language of it. And in return, they would pay off. Once they saw that it worked, I might do three or four papers for them. They became very enamored of this technique—most of them did, anyway. And most of them swore me to silence!" he chuckles.

And so, as in the aerodynamic research for his windmill design, Herbert simply went out and found what he needed. From his personal contact with professional scientists, he acquired a surprising breadth



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of knowledge, as is evident in the *Dune* books, which are densely packed with detail and are authoritative on topics ranging from ecology to biochemistry.

In addition to the *Dune* series he has written more than a dozen other science fiction novels, frequently featuring a lone individual who molds his own destiny and changes the fate of a world or even a colonized multiplicity of worlds. Balancing this libertarian theme, he also demonstrates the dangers of unrestricted personal power, and the folly of slavishly following leaders. He explains: "In *Dune* itself, I created a charismatic leader, a young prince, so that when I inverted it, you would see the dangers of following charismatic leaders, no matter how good they were."

But the legions of diehard *Dune* fans seem to respond more to the power fantasies than the message of moderation, and Herbert finds himself at the center of a cult, even though, in person and in print, he denounces all forms of cultism.

As a result, he has become careful of his privacy. The woods around his home are a necessary barrier between him and his public. Fans of *Dune*, he says, would drive him crazy if they ever found out where he lived. He maintains two unlisted phone numbers, one of them known only to a very few friends and associates, the other monitored by an answering machine that does not mention his name in its outgoing message.

"In the past," he explains, "I've had calls at all times of the day and night, from people wanting to know about *Dune*, and what it all means. I even received a call at two in the morning from Miami, Florida, a bunch of stoned-out fans telling me the significance of *Dune*."

He seems uncomfortable when asked to talk specifically about the book and his literary influences. He prefers to speak in general terms—for instance, about the novel's relevance to the role of the individual in society. This outlook, he says, owes little to libertarian authors such as Ayn Rand.

"Ayn Rand is good reading, but pretty simplistic. If I had to name my literary influences, they would be much broader, more catholic. Ezra Pound's *Make it New* really hit me between the eyes, for instance. And then there's, oh, Shakespeare,

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### End Game

This adventure is designed with a subtle mystery plot that the players must unravel to survive. There is more than one outcome possible. If the bridge assault fails some negotiations with the Klingon on the bridge might be possible if the players become aware of the Romulan detonator in Engineering. If the device is deactivated but Callin still controls the bridge the players may be captured by the incoming Klingon boarding party and other adventures within the prison system of the Klingon Empire could be played. There is also the outcome that the players succeed in recapturing the ship, deactivating the bomb, and returning the *Merlin* to the test area or that the entire ship is destroyed, the players along with it.

This adventure is certainly not an easy one. But with the proper guidance by the Gamemaster and some quick thinking on the part of the players it should be an enjoyable one. Good Gaming!

The below sample player character has been generated as an example of the type of characters that would probably be found in this adventure situation. Anywhere from 2 to 6 Security Division characters should be generated. As always, players should feel free to change any of this material to fit their own campaigns.

Name: Ontanac Resputin  
Rank/Title: Lieutenant  
Current Assignment: *U.S.S. Merlin*  
Position: Security Officer  
Race: Human  
Age: 26  
Sex: Male  
Attributes:  
STR—65      CHA—60  
END—59      LUC—48  
INT—64      PSI—05  
DEX—54  
Combat Statistics:  
AP—9  
To-Hit Numbers  
Modern—59  
HTH—50

Bare-Hand Damage—1D10+7  
Significant Skills Rating:  
Marksmanship (modern)—65  
Personal Combat (unarmed)—47  
Small Unit Tactics—29  
Starship Security—42  
Streetwise—30  
Zero-G Operations—26  
Distinguishing Physical Characteristics: None  
Brief Personal History: Familiar with all facets of Operation Shadowfall. One of the few survivors of the *U.S.S. Sparrowhawk*  
Birthplace: Selene City, Luna, Sol System  
Personality: Businesslike and with little sense of humor  
Motivations/Desires/Goals: His abiding desire is to discover the real cause of the loss of the *Sparrowhawk* and many of his friends along with it. He feels a lot of guilt that he survived and they didn't and is sure that he should have been able to avoid the disaster somehow.  
Manner: Haunted  
Special Knowledge/Powers: None

### Non-Player Character Data

Name: Ivan Trimski  
Rank/Title: Captain  
Current Assignment: *U.S.S. Merlin*  
Position: Commander  
Race: Human  
Age: 48  
Sex: Male  
Attributes:  
STR—50      CHA—60  
END—48      LUC—40  
INT—76      PSI—23  
DEX—54  
Combat Statistics:  
AP—9  
To-Hit Numbers  
Modern—65  
HTH—61  
Bare-Hand Damage—1D10+4



Significant Skills Rating:

Leadership—70  
Marksmanship (Modern)—76  
Personal Combat (Unarmed)—46  
Distinguishing Physical Characteristics: Balding but in good physical condition.  
Brief Personal History: Aided in design of the *Wizard* Class of experimentation vessels. *Merlin* is his first command.  
Birthplace: Dellaton VI  
Personality:  
Motivations/Desires/Goals: Interested in furthering the frontiers of Federation space sciences.  
Manner: Easy-going, yet capable.  
Special Knowledge/Powers: None

Name: Sormil

Rank/Title: Lt. Commander  
Current Assignment: *U.S.S. Merlin*  
Position: Medical Officer  
Race: Romulan (Altered to pass as a Vulcan)  
Age: 45  
Sex: Male  
Attributes:

STR—78      CHA—59  
END—70      LUC—40  
INT—77      PSI—44  
DEX—66

Combat Statistics:

AP—10  
To-Hit Numbers  
Modern—78  
HTH—73

Bare-Hand Damage—2D10+8

Significant Skills Rating:

Medical Sciences (Romulan/Vulcan)—82  
Medical Sciences (Human)—58  
Marksmanship (Modern)—89  
Personal Combat (Unarmed)—80  
Starship Security Procedures—71  
Warp Drive Technology—52

Distinguishing Physical Characteristics: None

Brief Personal History: Not known  
Birthplace: Romulan space  
Personality:  
Motivations/Desires/Goals: Willing to sacrifice himself to ensure that Romulan interests are protected.  
Manner: Vulcan  
Special Knowledge/Powers: None

Name: Martin Callin

Rank/Title: Lieutenant  
Current Assignment: *U.S.S. Merlin*  
Position: Defense Weapons Specialist  
Race: Klingon/Human fusion (Altered to pass as normal human)  
Age: 36  
Sex: Male  
Attributes:  
STR—67      CHA—61  
END—76      LUC—32  
INT—68      PSI—12  
DEX—78

Combat Statistics:

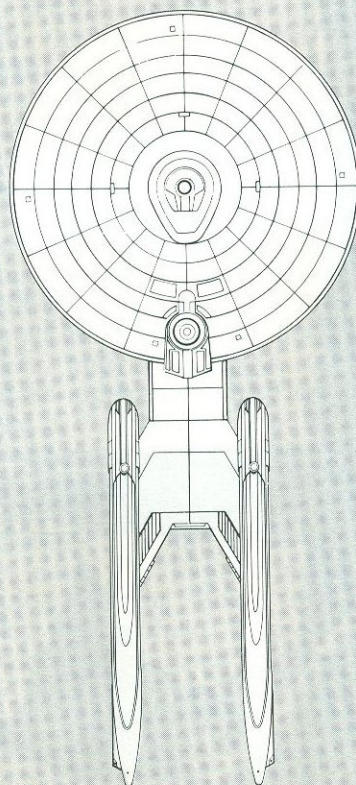
AP—11  
To-Hit Numbers  
Modern—85  
HTH—78

Bare-Hand Damage—1D10+10

Significant Skills Rating:

Marksmanship (Modern)—82  
Personal Combat (Unarmed)—79  
Starship Security Procedures—60  
Distinguishing Physical Characteristics: None

Brief Personal History: Not known  
Birthplace: Klingon space  
Personality:  
Motivations/Desires/Goals: Unknown  
Manner: Businesslike  
Special Knowledge/Powers: None



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Proust, de Maupassant. As regards a system of belief, I'm solidly bedded in Zen."

His current projects include a new science-fiction novel, and possibly a nonfiction project, about which he remains reticent. He has spent considerable time promoting the *Dune* movie, and reports that a sequel is already past the planning stages. Through all of this, however, he has not lost sight of his work as amateur scientist. Indeed, he has considered expanding his role, to become a kind of patron of the sciences, sponsoring his own private laboratory.

"I wanted to start a research institute, in my little community in the Northwest, where you would have think-tank types to dream things up, and you'd also have craftsmen and machine-tool experts in fully equipped machine shops, so you'd be able to see right away if there was any practical application. I wasn't overly ambitious; I thought, maybe, fifty people, eventually, within four or five years, could be working as a basic crew, and maybe I could finance it. I can't start it right now, because of taxes."

In the meantime, despite all his reservations about bureaucracy and the political process, he remains fundamentally optimistic about the American system.

"This country still has an independent spirit, a fix-it-yourself mentality. This is an enormous advantage relative to Japan, for example. We have a lot of screwdriver mechanics around our country. Look at the money that's made by Black and Decker. Who are they supplying—industry? No way, they're supplying basement machine shops, and garages. Now, maybe all that those people want to make is model boats. Fine; but if they were given the confidence to try something else, maybe they'd go do it."

"True, we're not turning out all that many engineers, but engineering is not all that difficult to learn. I believe in never stopping one's education. One of my kids said to me the other day, a thing that really touched me. She said that one of the things I'd taught her was, never to stop learning."

Clearly, this is a motto that has structured a large part of Frank Herbert's life—and accounts for much of his remarkable success. ★