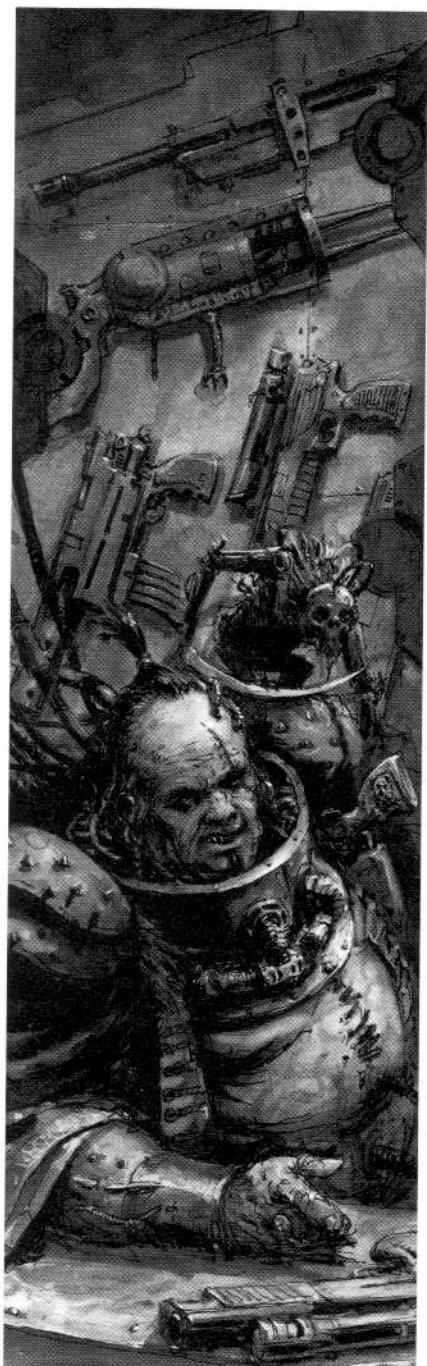


Gav Thorpe continues his look at creating your own campaign settings. This chapter Gav looks at how to go about creating characters for your world by looking at the key personalities that populate the world of Karis Cephalon.

In the last two articles I looked at creating a planet and then adding some scenario locations to it. This month I'll be getting even more detailed, looking at people for your characters to visit, perhaps for aid or equipment, or just for information.



CREATING WORLDS

INQUISITOR CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

WHO ARE THEY?

Planets have populations (well, normally), and by interacting with people on a world, your players will become more involved with your setting than if they simply use it as a battlefield. For the most part, the players will be dealing with characters belonging to other players (most likely shooting at them!) but the odd between-scenario encounter or visit helps provide some context and continuity to your games. These people are called non-player characters (NPCs), because they are characters controlled by you, the GM, rather than a player.

As you might expect, there's no limit to the number and variety of these NPCs, but you should really limit yourself to a few who are likely to crop up again and again, like the supporting actors in a film. The idea of the setting and NPCs is to add a backdrop to your scenarios, and you have to be careful that they don't start to dominate the proceedings, which may happen if you have too many NPCs popping up between every scenario.

Opposite I've detailed a few of the more important NPCs that can crop up on Karis Cephalon, but these are just a small selection of those you might want to include in your own campaigns.

WHERE DO YOU FIND THEM?

This is as much a question of, "how do I tie them in with my players' warrior bands?" There are two basic ways to look at using NPCs between scenarios. Firstly, the characters seek them out. Secondly, they seek out the characters.

In the first instance, the results of a scenario may mean that the characters have to go and see someone. Now, this may be as simple as trying to find more ammo and getting patched up by the local sawbones, or it might be important to the ongoing plot. As far as plot-driven encounters go, the relevance of the NPC depends on who they are and your storyline. Do they have important information? Do they possess a vital artifact or piece of

equipment? Also, is the NPC an enemy, co-operative, open to bribery, etc? It's important that you spend time thinking about the NPCs in this way as much as you would an ordinary character. If you're looking for a 'cardboard cut-out' NPC to fill a role, they're probably not worth including at all – a simple line in the next briefing to cover the meeting will be enough.

FOR A FEW CREDITS MORE...

For buying guns and other equipment, your characters will need a contact. This may be officially, such as local military forces or an Arbiters Courthouse. It may be a slightly more dubious connection, through the black market, rebels or perhaps a Rogue Trader. When attempting to get ammo and equipment, availability is important. As I mention in the 'Wargear in Campaigns' section of Inquisitor (p.176), access to different equipment varies from place to place. It is this variation you need to sort out for your campaign, and will add a particular flavour to your setting.

The most straightforward way of adjusting the availability of equipment is to increase or decrease the percentage chances of particular types of wargear. It may be as simple as saying that the chances of finding Rare equipment at Finnegan's Wares is increased to 60%. On the other hand, wouldn't it be far more characterful to say that there is a 60% chance of finding Rare equipment at Finnegan's Wares, but there is a 10% chance at the start of the next scenario that the wargear is faulty and must be discarded.

You can get more specific than this, isolating particular weapon and equipment types for special treatment. It may be that instead of all Rare weapons being more available at Finnegan's Wares, he specialises in shotguns, so all Rare shotgun ammunition comes in batches of 2D6 rounds, rather than D6 rounds as is normally the case. He doesn't care

much for las weapons though, and any las weapon reload counts as Rare for the purposes of availability.

For bionics, you should have a Techpriest or surgeon NPC with both the equipment and the spare parts. Depending on where the campaign is set, there may be a chance of the implantation going wrong, or a cap on the level of technology available (ie, only crude bionic arms are available, and no advanced bionics of any sort). The same can be said of medical treatment. In last issue's Exterminatus column I detailed some permanent injury rules which you can use to

characterise your medical NPCs, giving them either a better or worse treatment rate or chance than normal.

'THIS ISN'T MY PROBLEM!'

So far I've talked about NPCs off the battlefield, but now and then you might want to drag them into the firing line. The important thing is that you'll need a miniature for them. Scenarios involving NPCs can revolve around rescuing them, protecting them, kidnapping them, assassinating them and doing all sorts of other unpleasantness. Or perhaps, the NPC is just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Maybe they're caught in

the crossfire by a surprise ambush attempt on one of the characters, or they could unwittingly be carrying a vital clue, and they must run the gauntlet to get to safety.

The inclusion of an NPC or two in a scenario can add a flavourful twist to an otherwise pretty straightforward fight. Also, as GM, it's the opportunity to flex your playing muscles and push some miniatures around, which can never be a bad thing!

Anyway, that's me done for now, but remember to check out www.exterminatus.com for more stuff on campaigns and Karis Cephalon.

USEFUL PEOPLE TO KNOW ON KARIS CEPHALON

CHIRURGEON MONQUE

Once physician to the Imperial Governor, Monque mysteriously went into hiding several years ago. The reasons for this remain unclear, and many rumours abound concerning his hurried departure. These theories range from him escaping the Governor's wrath after an unsuccessful operation, to fleeing for his life after trying to blackmail the Governor with information that reveals he is a mutant.

Monque now runs a surgery somewhere in the old royal quarter, and is believed to provide medical assistance to the mutie terrorists known to be operating in the area. He is highly skilled, but has little equipment and so his results can be erratic at times.

Chirurgurgeon Monque has the ability to fit bionic parts supplied to him, but any characters requiring such an operation will need to provide the necessary components as Monque cannot get them himself. Monque also manufactures his own pharmaceuticals, and for the right price can provide medi-paks, all types of combat stims in injector or inhaler form, de-tox doses and his own pain suppressor known as Ease. Ease can be used just like a combat stim and each dose reduces the character's injury total by D6.

CARDINAL KODAZCKA

A major official amongst the Lucid Tendency faction of the Ecclesiarchy, Kodazcka is pretty much joint ruler of Karis Cephalon, although technically he has only spiritual authority over the

populace. The Lucids are a minimalist, puritanical sect, opposed to indulgence of any kind. Karis Cephalon is one of the heartlands of the Lucids, with a stranglehold over religious belief in the surrounding systems that has lasted for hundreds of years. It is a brave Inquisitor who crosses Kodazcka on his home ground without good reason.

The Cardinal Palaces of Kodazcka are part of the much larger Amethyst Palace, protected by his own elite guard. Recently, the purely ornamental arms of this guard have been supplemented by more practical weapons – a sure sign of the growing tension across the capital and beyond. Should he be called upon to provide forces, he will delegate authority of his personal guard, and may even supply one of the four arco-flagellants kept within the palace dungeons. It is rumoured, that he can also call upon a squad of Battle Sisters supposedly hidden somewhere within the Amethyst Palace's meandering corridors and rooms.

LATHESIA, MUTIE FREEDOM FIGHTER

Lathesia is a fiery teenager, who recently took control of the mutant resistance fighters, who until then had been operating in scattered bands. She is wanted by the Imperial authorities for a long list of charges, but has yet to be captured. Her latest hideout, in the old royal quarters, was raided recently and several of her underlings were killed and others captured. Their interrogations describe Lathesia as a pretty young woman, whose only visible mutations are a slight scabbing of the skin around her joints and jet

black eyes. Some claim she is a prophetess and that her strange eyes allow her to see into the souls of others, but many discount this as wild speculation and legend-building.

Lathesia is a potent enemy and a valued ally, depending on whether she sees you as friend or foe. She has connections throughout the mutant community, and has stockpiled many firearms over recent months. She is a little flighty, however, and likely to charge off on some noble crusade without thinking through the consequences properly. Some believe she craves martyrdom.

'RED' IVAN, ARMS MERCHANT

Ivan Constantine, or 'Red' as he is commonly known due to his many burn scars from a explosion several years ago, is one of the few merchants licensed to sell weaponry on Karis Cephalon. He has access to a wide variety of equipment, and is not above risking his license on occasion to provide arms with no questions asked, or to seek out more exotic wargear.

Ivan can be found in Cephalon, the planet's capital, where he has a large warehouse protected by a veritable army of guards. His irregular shipments from offworld arrive at the local spaceport, and would make a perfect target for a heist if planned properly. On the other hand, Ivan bears a grudge like no other, and if you cross him he will do everything in his considerable power to ensure that one morning you don't wake up, whether you're a scabrous mutie rebel or an Inquisitor.