

Jovian Chronicles: EXO's: The Titan Dilemma

A scenario prepared for the Kapcon Scenario Design Competition

By Nick Pitt

Brief History: In the history of man there has always been conflict, this remains the same even after man has reached out for the stars. The main stellar nations consist of Mercury, Venus (home of some of the richest corporations in the system, including the Venusian bank), Earth/ CEGA, Mars, and Jupiter (not the planet, mainly orbital stations and colonies in it's orbit). The primary historic event, which shaped the Solar Systems current alliances, is known as *The Odyssey*. Briefly, it involved a scientist with valuable knowledge about cyberlinkage, defecting from CEGA, and attempting to take refuge in Jovian space. CEGA sent a battle fleet in pursuit, destroying the Martian orbital elevator in the ensuing carnage, and at the same time attempted to destroy the Jovian (Jupiter) capital station, Elysee. The result was one of the largest battles in the history of man, the complete destruction of a CEGA battle fleet, and a confused solar system, attempting to discover what just happened?

As a result the two most powerful stellar nations, the Jovian Confederation and CEGA, are on the brink of war, Mars is divided in its loyalties between the two, Venus appears to be neutral (despite rumours of an alliance with CEGA and Earth), and the Mercurian Merchants finding acceptance anywhere they travel (neutral).

Cyberlinkage: *A system for advanced control of vehicles and machinery.*

Background Information:

EXO's is the newest satellite Vid-screen show. It depicts a somewhat over the top squadron of Exo-Armour pilots as they encounter and deal with various militaristic situations. It is based on the actual experiences of the crewmembers and is a joint funded operation of two stellar production companies, Laguna Films and MorningStar Entertainment (belonging to the Jovian Confederation and Venus respectively). The companies collaborated with JAF (Jovian Armed Forces), and the Venusian HDF (Home Defence Force), to provide state of the art Exo technology, new and production models, as well as customized Exo deployment mass drivers, on the JSS Tri-Star (Valiant-Class Strike Carrier). The Ship is capable of long-range deployment, and mostly operates within the asteroid belt, and on patrol further a field in the Saturn system. Director Devon Malachai has a personal long-range, Venusian Corsair class ship with Tech Specialists on-board, which accompanies the Tri-Star. These Tech specialists have also bugged all the rooms on the Tri-Star except individual crew quarters.

It operates by itself, and is on routine patrol in the Saturn system when the adventure begins...

Behind the Scenes:

Famous Venusian film director, Devon Malachai, is a Venusian operative, who takes order directly from Venusian Bank CEO's. The funding from MorningStar Entertainment is a charade, so Venus appears as a neutral power to observers from other Stellar Nations. This is so as typically Venus was a supporter of Earth. The Venusian Bank provided un-marked CEGA and Martian Federation model Exo's to an established pirate ring, under the command of Captain Marlon Kerribdys. The Venusians who supplied the pirates are working under a puppet corporation who assemble Exo skeletons on a production line, **MECHanics**, located in the Venusian orbit.

Devon Malachi is aware of the pirate takeover, as it was planned. The idea is to take advantage of the larger than life crew of the Tri-Star, to cause large-scale damage to THC's (Titanian Hydrocarbon Corporation) mining stations orbiting Titan, and the Titanian mining operations in general. Not on purpose, but out of consequence of Devon's constant preaching about explosions and guns, which in turn will get ratings.

The Venusian Bank sets up the whole situation, in order to save their chemical plants from becoming Bankrupt, due to the impressive competition of the THC, and it's potential monopolization of the market.

Captain Kerribdys is unaware of the politics, however the Venusian bank has bought out the pirate captain's closest advisor Kenji Matsuo, who influenced him into taking the station, as a profitable business venture.

The pirates have some advanced ECM devices, including a network of signal interception ships, which is why the hostile take-over is virtually unknown about. Again all these devices are thanks to MECHanics, and give the pirates a temporary source of resources (fuels, gases etc.) by holding the station.

About the scenario: Boxed text may be ignored if you so wish, it is marked by *Italics*, and is simply there as an example. Any images contained within are copyright by their respective owners. This scenario was written and developed by Nick Pitt, all character sheets are his original creations and have been made especially to cut down on the amount of rules. (all primary and secondary attributes have been simplified to 5 basic attributes)

Prelude:

You, the crew of the Tri-Star are currently en-route intercept a Chemical freighter that sent out a distress signal no more than 15 minutes ago. They were under attack from a pirate vessel, but were quickly silenced. At the order of Captain Helena Juno, The JSS Tri-Star, Valiant Class Strike Cruiser, fired its plasma drives, and silently sped toward the target.

You quickly caught the freighter, and a hostile vessel firing upon it. The captain demanded the attackers immediate cease fire, and surrender, however the ship simply turned its focus toward you. Pilots, Drake Maddog, Rosie Divine, and Adrian Thorsen race to their Exo-Armours, while Devon Malachai prepares to get every moment of the conflict on his various Vid-recorders.

Scene 1:

The three pilots scramble into your individual Exos. Once inside, and strapped up, you're internal frames whine, as they adjust to the contours of your bodies. Tactical displays begin to appear, and the system goes through final checks. The launch countdown reaches 0, your Exos lurch forward as the magnetic catapults fling you directly into the path of incoming Interceptors. Meanwhile Devon launches his specialised camera drones, from his scout Exo-armor, all the while the Tri-Star bringing its Kinetic Kill turrets to bear on the enemy ship.

Combat rounds occur, beginning with combat sense rolls. Characters also recognise *for a supposed pirate vessel, it's launching a large a number of interceptors*. Everyone may make EW roles to determine that they are Exo's.

Drake recognises the Exos as being *CEGA and Martian Confederation, though they bear no identifying markings, and are in almost new condition, unheard of for pirates.*

7X Pirate Exo Pilots

Skill	No.	Skill	No.	Skill	No.	Skill	No.
C.Sense	4	Exo-Pilot	5	Nav	3	0-Gmove	4
Comms	3	HtH	4	S.Arms	5	0-Gcombat	4
E.Warfare	3	Gunnery[Exo]	5				

1X Commander

Skill	No.	Skill	No.	Skill	No.	Skill	No.
C.Sense	6	Exo-Pilot	6	Nav	5	0-Gmove	5
Comms	4	HtH	6	S.Arms	6	0-Gcombat	5
E.Warfare	5	Gunnery[Exo]	7				

- 4X Meal-02 Explorers
- 4X Cea-05 Wyverns
- Tengu-Class Escort Carrier

Combat will cease once; either all the exo's have been destroyed, the Tengu carrier has been destroyed; the commander, and half the exo's have been

destroyed. Pirates will be taken into custody, however the drive systems on the freighter (SS Camille), have been damaged, meaning it doesn't have enough reaction mass to make it back to Jovian space.

Scene 2:

Drei Kushranada, the captain of the SS Blackthorne (Tengu Class), will know the most, as he is the captain. *The captain is a large, heavysset Black man, who looks to be in his early fifties. He is bald and is wearing a uniform that consists of a long green trench coat, with a high Black collar and shoulder mantle, Black gloves and worn boots.* Drei has a quick temper and hates having jokes made about him.

He knows the following information: However Interrogation techniques will need to be used (Purposes of opposed tests, +1 to WIL roll). Threatening his crew will also make him reveal information.

- The Titanian mining operation has been taken over by a pirate fleet, under the command of Captain Marlon Kerribdy.
- He was sent to capture the SS Camille and further delay information about the take-over getting out to the rest of the stellar nations.
- Captain Kerribdy is located in the Silver Tower, the Executive/energy generation station of the four orbital stations. The Executives are being held hostage as a precaution. Including CEO Bernardo Chandrasekhar.
- The advanced Tech came from lucrative trading deals with an inner-system corporation.
- They have 4 Scout Ships equipped with some new technology, advanced ECCM, that is able to intercept most forms of communication in a localised area, defined by the location of each ship in the relay
- The pirate fleet contains 4 corvettes, and another Tengu Escort Carrier. Along with a large squadron of Exo-Armours (25-35).

Asking a crewmember from the SS. Camille about the situation will reveal:

- There are four Stations orbiting Titan, The Silver Tower, Energy production and Executive block. Station T, the oldest, and holds 40,000 workers. And two mining stations, Demeter and Aesclepius.
- Workers are continuing unharassed so long as they don't cause any disturbances.
- Can provide basic layout of all stations, should they need them.
- The miners will fight back just so long as the CEO and executives are secured.

Note: If PC's believe the only way of approaching the situation is through a full-on offensive, the Captain of the SS-Camille will suggest that the pirates will expect the freighter to be retrieved. This could be used to stage a covert operation for entrance directly into the Silver Tower (By hiding on board etc.).

Scene 3:

The PC's will have to discover a way of getting into the station, and do something to get rid of the Pirates. Possible plans:

- Sneak into the silver tower masquerading as returned pirate crew, and capture Captain Kerribdy.
- All out attack on the station, Malachai would agree with such a course, but massive damage will be suffered on both parts. Malachai would agree with any course of action, which did damage to the operation in anyway. (Skip straight to scene 5 (1)), full pirate forces available)
- Sneak on board returning freighter, and do things in a covert fashion.

Upon approaching Titan: *Against the backdrop of the swirling gas giant Saturn, Titan a mysterious moon enveloped all most totally in red/orange clouds. As you look closer, you are able to see what appears to be a station, presumably the largest, Station T. In comparison, the 3 other stations are mere glints of light, hardly different from a star. As you approach you recognise pirate corvette's patrolling the moons orbit, however mining operations seem to be continuing as normal.*

3.1>>Any friendly incoming ship will be questioned directly by Kerribdy, who will allow the ship to dock with the silver station to give their report, should things check out. And depending on the success of a Theatrics check (or appropriate skill check suggested by PC) the crew will either be greeted with friendliness or suspicion.

3.2>>If the PC's make a believable bluff (Pass the appropriate check), then there will be a relatively little force to contend with. (4 guards, see generic guard template)

If not, then a more suspicious and larger group will meet them. (14 guards, see generic guard template, and add +2 to any check the guards need to make in noticing a disguised or acting PC).

3.3>>If a guard should notice that the PC's are intruders he will attempt to make a call on his radio to sound the alarm, this will usually mean a combat, so combat sense/initiative rolls should be made to see who acts first. (If guards are persuaded or subdued, skip to 3.5)

3.4>>If station is alerted, then it should take 20 rounds (GMs discretion, cut the no. of rounds down to between 5-10, if running overtime) of combat/movement to reach the bridge where Kerribdy is located. 2 more guards will appear in each of rounds 10 and 15. PC's will either be captured or make it to the bridge of the Silver Tower by this stage. (Skip to scene 4)

3.5>>Assuming the PCs asked for the layout of the station, or have a guide, it will take very little time to reach the bridge. (Roll a D6, on a roll of 1, the PCs encounter a guard and must explain/defend themselves) Now move on to Scene 4.

Scene 4:

Characters either meet Kerribdy by being captured, or storm into the bridge of the station. *A man in his mid-40 stands before you, wearing the same green long coat uniform as Drei, the pirate you captured. However he wears a large gold chain around his neck, a long sword at his side, and a large pistol holstered in his belt. He has long flowing black hair, and a styled moustache and goatee. "Oh, it seems that we have finally been discovered...."*

If Kerribdy is captured, then he will try to convince the characters to let him go, but informs the characters that if the Pirate crew think he is compromised, they will mutiny, and no longer listen to him.

Once word gets out to the miners that the executives are safe, then the miners will rebel and easily push out their pirate captives. The pirates will take what they have and flee; however Kenji's ship, the Black cross will launch squadrons of Exo's, and begin firing on the station, even at the protest of Captain Kerribdy.

If the characters are captured then, Kenji will begin the attack. While the fight is happening, Kerribdy will free the PC's and ask them to aid the station and destroy the Black cross, he will help them escape the guards, as he is no longer in charge.

Scene 5:

This is the final scene, and quite likely the final fight. The characters will have only their Exo's to destroy the SS Double-cross, and the attacking Exo-armour's. If they didn't bring them, Kerribdy will lead them to some pirate Exo's.

After they finally defeat the pirate crew, The Double-cross begins to erupt into flame, as the ships re-mass begins to explode. The ship stops accelerating, as the drive section of the ship demolishes itself, and leaves only the empty carcass of the bridge and crew sections drifting in the direction of Saturn.

If the Exo commander has been deactivated then the remaining pirates attempt to flee including the rogue Exo pilots. Any who are surrounded, give themselves up. The PC's are thanked by Bernardo Chandrasekhar, who tells them he will have think carefully about forming alliances with the Jovian people.

Kerribdy will try and escape should in the event of the defeat of the pirate fleet.

As the JSS Tri-star thrusts away from the mostly unscathed Titanian orbital facilities, you can't help but be proud of what you have done. You wouldn't be surprised if this episode of Exo's was made into a feature length film, you can see the title now: EXOs: The Titan Dilemma.

(Player Handout for Devon Malachai)

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As a result the two most powerful stellar nations, the Jovian Confederation and CEGA, are on the brink of war, Mars is divided in its loyalties between the two, Venus appears to be neutral (despite rumours of an alliance with CEGA and Earth), and the Mercurian Merchants finding acceptance anywhere they travel (neutral).

Cyberlinkage: *A system for advanced control of vehicles and machinery.*

People you know (Devon Malachai):

- **Lieutenant Drake Maddog:** This man is the leader of the ship's Exo-squadron, a veteran from the Jovian Armed Forces. He is old, stubborn, and so ignores you a good deal of the time. You feel it is probably an easier task manipulating the younger members of the crew, but if you could perhaps show the human side of this soldier to the public, it may yet add to the shows ratings.
- **Adrian Thorsen:** A young, skilled, but very arrogant hotshot. He is one of the favourite regulars on the show, and so long as you humour his arrogance, he will do anything for he viewers at home. He trusts you because of your apparent friendly nature, and he has a notable soft spot for women, particularly the female crewmembers, not to mention his fans.
- **Rosie Divine:** An extremely talented, and attractive young woman, she is a hit with the male fans, not only for her looks, but her amazing piloting ability. Like Adrian, she is very easily influenced by you, and will attempt daring manoeuvres at your request.
- **Captain Helena Juno:** Captain of the ship, young, quite attractive, but very much a thorn in your side as a director. Because she has complete control of the ship, you may suggest various ways of how any given operation should be attempted, but she has the final say in any matter. Because of your understanding with the Jovian High Command, she tries to accommodate your wishes, but will ignore them if she thinks them to dangerous. You must be very subtle when dealing with her, and occasionally find round about ways of getting what you desire.

(Player Handout for Devon Malachai)

Secret Stuff: You are an operative for the Venusian Bank. Often the show EXOs is used to suit their purposes through subtle manipulation. The most recent endeavour of the Bank is to stage a take over of the Hydrocarbon processing plant/refinery orbiting Saturn's moon, Titan. The company, THC (Titanian Hydrocarbon corporation) has abundant resources and is threatening to put inner-system chemical corporations out of business. As a result the Venusian Bank, through a spacecraft manufacturing plant MECHanics, has provided a pirate crew with a large amount of armament as part of their plan to halt THC's production. By doing this they will provoke a response from the Jovian Confederation, the Tri-Star will be the first to hear about this, and respond.

Your Job is to expel this Pirate crew from the station, and cause as much damage as you can to the station. Be this through manipulation of your arrogant Exo Pilots, or by getting in touch with your contact in the pirate crew (located in the executive station orbiting Titan) Kenji Matsuo. No matter the outcome, it will make the independent Titanians think about an alliance with the Jovians, and thus make them an eligible target for an attack from CEGA forces.

Your small film crew are also professional spies, who have managed to bug most rooms in the Tri-Star, so very little is secret from you. It also means that you can get footage from the interrogation rooms and anywhere else, which you are denied entry

(Player Handout for Adrian Thorsen)

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People you know (Adrian Thorsen):

- **Lieutenant Drake Maddog:** This man is the leader of the ship's Exo squadron. He is constantly trying to keep you in check, but you respect his experience. His knowledge of tactical warfare is admirable, but he lacks your flair, and you of course are the far better pilot!
- **Devon Malachai:** Director of EXOs, you get along very well with him as he is always encouraging you to do your most outrageous and dangerous manoeuvres, of course, for the sake of the viewers around the known system.
- **Rosie Divine:** She is very attractive, a picture of womanly beauty, oh and a capable Exo-pilot. You love to impress her with your excellent piloting skills, as she tends to get bored when you talk.
- **Captain Helena Juno:** Captain of the ship (JSS Tri-star), another attractive woman who you haven't had any success with, yet. She is a little cold, and seemingly uninterested, but if you keep trying you'll get through to her!

(Player Handout for Rosie Divine)

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People you know (Rosie Divine):

- **Lieutenant Drake Maddog:** He is the leader of the Tri-Star's Exo-Squadron; he is almost cold and emotionless. No matter what you do to try and cheer him up, his facial expression remains grim. He is a little hard on you when you're trying to spice things up on a routine operation, but you know he does it because he cares.
- **Adrian Thorsen:** This guy is full of himself, and you (like most people) get bored listening to him. Out in the field, his daring manoeuvres are really impressive, and kinda make up for his personality. He is always hitting on you, and he is good looking; maybe you'd give him a chance if he'd just talk about something other than himself.
- **Captain Helena Juno:** She is the captain of the ship, and you feel she disapproves of you, because of your age (which is frustrating, because for a *captain* she is quite young) and behaviour. She is not much fun, but she generally cares about the crew and their safety, and hasn't led you astray yet.
- **Devon Malachai:** This man is the director of EXOs. He is kind and likes to encourage you to show off your piloting skills (not to mention showing off for your male fan base ☺). He doesn't get along well with Helena, as they have conflicting views about how operations should be run.

(Player Handout for Helena Juno)

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People you know (Captain Helena Juno):

- **Lieutenant Drake Maddog:** This old Veteran, despite his rugged appearance, is the most respectable person on the ship. He has a purely military mind, and has not let fame get in the way of his better judgement. He is also the next highest-ranking member of the crew and is also the commander of the ships Exo-squadron.
- **Devon Malachai:** He is the director of the show, and is responsible for your pilots occasionally going over-board with the drama and stunts. He has had a particular effect on two of your the best pilots, Rosie and Adrian. You occasionally have arguments with him about how any particular operations should be completed, occasionally you listen (you don't want him making a fuss to high command), but the safety of your crew is paramount.
- **Rosie Divine:** You have no idea how she was transferred to your ship; she just turned up one day, with a letter from Colonel Michael Divine (I wonder if there is any relation?). She is fresh out of flight Academy, barely 18, and flies a Pink and Purple Exo- Armour! You would have thought she was purely for the show, but she is one of the best pilots you have ever seen.
- **Adrian Thorsen:** Another young Hotshot, there is no denying his ability though, pulling off trademark barrel rolls with apparent ease. He is always hitting on the female crewmembers, and while good looking, he is way to immature and young for your tastes.

(Player Handout for Drake Maddog)

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People you know (Lieutenant Drake Maddog):

- **Devon Malachai:** The Director from Morningstar Entertainment (Venusian film company). Very enthusiastic, and constantly driven by good ratings, although somewhat annoying from a tactical point of view. Can always be seen in his customized Exo-Armour, filming during any fray. You don't have a problem with him so long as he doesn't get in your way.
- **Captain Helena Juno:** She is the captain of the Tri-Star, an accomplished Exo pilot, and while only young (28), she is definitely the right person to be in charge. Out of all the crew you respect her the most, for her ability to lead and make the right judgement calls. Quite often she has disagreements with Devon, about how an operation should be done, though she is quite definitely in-charge.
- **Adrian Thorsen:** One of your wingmen, an outstanding pilot, but the fame has gone to his head. You now have to keep this 'Hotshot' under control as he pulls some of the most difficult manoeuvres seen in an Exo-armour on a regular basis. He has become, for obvious reasons, one of Devon's favourites. He spends too much time running after the women, and someone has to tell him to shut his trap, way too much ego for his own good.
- **Rosie Divine:** She is your 2nd wingman, and what you consider way to young! Barely 18, fresh out of academy, she is enthusiastic and bubbly. Like Adrian, she loves the attention, and also must have a close eye kept on her. One thing you can't complain about is her marvellous piloting ability, and her fresh outlook on life. Another thing, there is no way you can miss her Exo-Armour, that pink and purple colour scheme is a military nightmare!