

STAR TREK™
ADVENTURES

First Contact – K'si

By Michael Dismuke

INTRODUCTION

"First Contact – K'si" is an adventure for *Star Trek Adventures*. This adventure is meant to be played by a Gamemaster (gamemaster) and 3-6 players, using the pre-generated characters provided in various supplements or homegrown characters.

To run this adventure, the gamemaster needs to be familiar with the adventure itself and the *Star Trek Adventures* core rules.

For this playtest, you will need:

- At least two 20-sided dice (d20) per player, and several d6s to serve as Challenge Dice
- A set of chips or tokens for Determination
- A set of chips or tokens for Threat
- A set of chips or tokens, or some other manner of marker, for group Momentum.
- The pre-generated character sheets, and your selected starship sheet
- The Star Trek Adventures Core rules

Synopsis

*NOTE: This module serves as the **fourth** mission in the Continuing Mission Campaign: Supreme Mandate part of the [SARGON AND BEYOND: CONTINUING MISSION CAMPAIGN](#).*

The crew continues its quest to locate the K'si, the race behind the dark matter technology found in the Cordon Nebula. Finally, long-range sensors detect an incoming vessel. The energy readings correspond to the energy readings detected in the dark matter orbs the crew has been studying the past few weeks.

This initiates first contact with the K'si who travel their sector of space in a huge exploration vessel replete with dark matter-infused technology. Misunderstandings are common in first contact situations and can lead to unintended and tragic results. Sovereign Viceroy Jak D'jak and his crew are suspicious of the Starfleet crew since the K'si have never met another warp-capable species. This meeting a universe-shattering revelation for the K'si.

The Prime Directive comes face-to-face with the Supreme Mandate, the governing doctrine of the K'si, which reads, *"Space: our divine destiny. We the K'si will peacefully observe all worlds under our star-born purview, sustain and support all life and all alien civilizations, respectfully help all species achieve paradise and peace so as to achieve galactic harmony without direct interference or manipulation so that all can find their own way."*

The crew must confront conflicting ideologies, a paranoid race of demigods, and the repercussions of their interactions with other pre-warp species in the Cordon Nebula thus far. Will the K'si become new allies of the Federation or bitter enemies?

The gamemaster begins this adventure with two points of Threat for every player character in the group.

Rules for the Cordon Nebulae

The **Cordon Nebulae**, also called the Cordons, are a vast number of ribbon-like nebulae that separate the Sargon Region from **The Space Beyond** (as locals call it). Although the nebulae gases appear harmless, ships that travel through the Cordon Nebulae are rumored to be plagued with bad luck, and many have gone mysteriously missing. For that reason, very little is known of The Space Beyond.

Effects of the Cordon Nebulae

Class I Nebulae - The Difficulty of all Tasks is increased by 1 while within the nebulae, and the Complication Range increased by 2 for any use of Computers, Engines, or Weapons within the nebulae.

Avoiding the Cordon Nebulae

The Cordon Nebulae is on average two light-years in width, like a maze-like veil separating the two regions of space. To plot a course through the Cordons that avoids all nebulae entirely is an Extended Task. Failing to achieve a Breakthrough on the Task indicates that the ship entered a nebula inadvertently, and is affected by the effects of the Class I Nebula until the next Breakthrough is achieved.

- The basic **Task** is Difficulty 3 **Reason + Conn Extended Task**, assisted by the **Ship's Sensors + Conn**. This assumes an average Warp Factor of 4.
- Adjust the Difficulty down for each Warp Factor below 4, or up for each Warp Factor above,
- **Interval** = 2 days at Warp 4; adjust for other speeds
- **Complication Range** = 3
- **Work Track** = 10
- **Magnitude** = 3
- **Resistance** = 1



If no attempt is made to avoid the Cordon Nebulae, apply the effects of the Class I Nebulae until the end of the Mission where the crossing was accomplished.



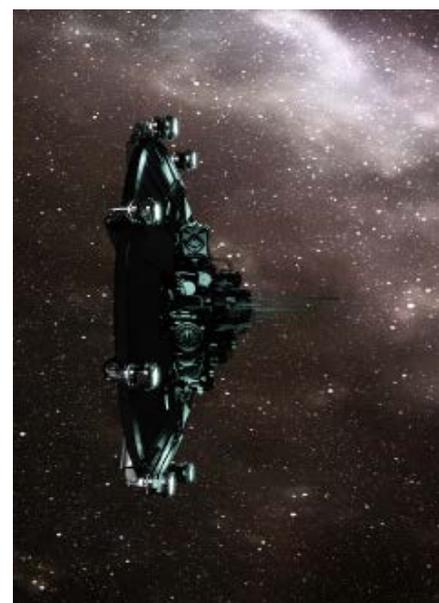
Scene 1: Long Range Sensors

When the players are ready to begin, have one Player read the following:

The ship had been scouring the Cordon Nebulae for any sign of the K'si for nearly two weeks. We have followed dark matter threads to numerous relay stations and worlds with pre-warp civilizations. Our attempts to communicate with the K'si have met with no response, though we have sent several friendship messages through the relay stations. Our xenolinguistic experts are sure that our universal translators are functioning. We are able to understand the K'si language. Perhaps the K'si are extinct. Conversely, maybe they are not interested in establishing first contact with the Federation.

Explain to the players that continual sensor sweeps have been taking place as the crew searches for the K'si. After days of tireless effort, the sensors pick something up. This is a **Reason + Science Task** assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Science** with a Difficulty of 1. Momentum gained from this roll can be used to Obtain Information (Repeatable).

- **1 Point of Momentum:** An incoming vessel has been detected bearing 000-mark-8. They are traveling at warp 2. They are on an intercept course.
- **2 Points of Momentum:** The vessel is 1,000 meters in length (Scale 6). There are at least 500 lifeforms on board. The life forms do not appear in the Federation's database. Markings on the vessel appear similar to the markings on the computers discovered in the temples of Icthyars [[Planet of the Ebon Pearl](#)] and Oreison [[Prayers of Suppression](#)]. This is a new, warp-capable species. This is the K'si.
- **3 Points of Momentum:** Energy readings indicate that all systems—propulsion, shields, and weapons—are powered



K'si Exploration Ship

by dark matter. The Players' ship sensors cannot obtain more precise readings of the ship's full capabilities since they are unfamiliar with this type of energy source. Overall, it seems that the Player vessel outclasses the K'si vessel.

No matter what, at this point the K'si will *not* respond to hails. The captain will need to make decisions based on the fact that the ship is not responding to hails. Its intentions are unknown. Whether they have been receiving transmissions from the Player vessel is unknown. What to expect once they are in weapons range is unknown.

The directives are as follows:

- **Initiate First Contact procedures. First Contact is only initiated by the Federation if a civilization is sufficiently advanced and has developed interstellar travel.**

Allows the Players to discuss their knowledge of First Contact protocol. One of the Players may be a First Contact Specialist. With the Captain's permission, they might take the lead in first contact the proceedings. Likewise, Players with Focuses like *Alien Cultures*, *Etiquette*, *Xenolinguistics*, or *Body Language* might receive bonuses for initiating first contact.

This is an exciting time for any Starfleet crew. A team conference should be called to pull together everything the Players have learned or suspect about the K'si up to this point. The Gamemaster may need to give the Players a refresher on what has been learned so far:

- On the paradisiac planet of Ictharys, the Players learned that the amphibious race of sentient monopedes worship simulacrum of a dark orb that is located in the volcano of one of their largest cities. Via the dark matter orb in the volcano, the population is being monitored. Information like global atmospheric information and communications come in from temples all over the globe. The vocalized prayers of the population are collected and, using an advanced data correlation program, compiled into data packages that are transmitted into space based on a priority algorithm.
- On another paradisiac planet called Oreison, the crew learned that the highly-religious culture forbade the development of advanced technology. A priestly class routinely arrives at temples similar to the ones on Ictharys. At the temples, they pray to their gods, the K'si, to help determine if new technology is heretical or not. If technology is deemed heretical it is immediately destroyed. Proponents for the new technology are asked to renounce development of such technology. Rebellion means a death sentence.
- At Relay Station 20, the crew discovered a sophisticated network hub. The data being collected is from ten different pre-warp cultures on ten different worlds. In the computer, they found a document called the Supreme Mandate.

The Supreme Mandate

"Space: our divine destiny. We the K'si will peacefully observe all worlds under our star-born purview, sustain and support all life and all alien civilizations, respectfully help all species achieve paradise and peace so as to achieve galactic harmony without direct interference or manipulation so that all can find their own way."

Gamemaster's Guidance: *The gamemaster may help out the more aggressive Players (there is usually one) that Starfleet Command Directive 010 states that "Before engaging alien species in battle, any and all attempts to make first contact and achieve non-military resolution must be made."*

Scene 2: First Contact

After the Players have put their plan of action together, have one Player read the following:

A nervous excitement permeates the crew. We have spent hours reviewing first contact procedures and gathering as much information as possible about the alien vessel we have encountered. It seems the K'si are equally curious, if not very cautious. They have scanned us also. I am sure they have figured out that we bear superior technology and weaponry, with the exception of their seeming expertise in dark matter technology. I hope that we have spent enough time studying them in silence—and them, us—so that now they feel comfortable initiating true First Contact...

The first action to occur should be Hailing Frequencies Open (p.223). Once within long range distance, the K'si will respond. Read the following to the Players:

The scene on the video screen switches from that of the K'si vessel to that of an alien man with skin the color and texture of a black oil slick. As impossible as it seems, his two, narrow eyes were an even darker, deeper tone of glazy black. There is no nose, but there is a mouth with full lips that cover over pitch black teeth. The interior of the mouth matches his skin. His ears are much like Human ears. He has no apparent facial hair, and if he was standing motionless, one could think him to be a smooth sculpture of sorts.

He seems hesitant to speak, his ebon eyes nearly piercing the view screen as he apparently looks with wonder on the bridge crew of your vessel.

Any telepaths or empaths on board will note that they *cannot* pick up any thoughts or emotions from the alien. [K'si are impervious to empathy and telepathy.] Allow the Players an opportunity to role-play conversing with this member of the K'si race. The K'si are naturally suspicious. They are totally unaware that there are other warp-capable races in the galaxy since their entire existence has been confined to the Cordon Nebulae. Here are some points you can use to engage in the conversation as gamemaster:

- The person on screen is Sovereign Viceroy Jak D'Jak. He is the top commander of the K'si Fleet Magnificence commissioned to achieve divine destiny, peacefully observing all worlds under the K'si's glorified purview and helping all species achieve paradise and peace so as to achieve galactic harmony.
- He is unwilling to speak about his ship and its capabilities or any more about their civilization than what is listed here. It is clear that their sensor technology is far inferior as they did not know of life beyond the Cordon Nebulae.
- He will have a lot of questions about the origin of the Federation ship admitting that, up until now, "no others have been blessed by cosmic destiny to soar the space ways."
- He is eager to study the Federation, since the very existence of the ship is counter to thousands of years of clerical teachings. Though he is not willing to allow the Federation members onto his vessel, he will be willing to travel to the Player vessel accompanied by his Primary (First Officer) Zed M'Zed and their Chief Technologist Til T'Gish.

After this initial conversation, the gamemaster should allow the Players to discuss a plan of action and their initial observations. In either case, it is likely the Players will invite the K'si delegation aboard their vessel, perhaps for a cultural interchange dinner.

Gamemaster's Guidance: *No need to tell the Players yet, but the K'si do not eat organic food. They feed off of modified dark matter particles. On their home world, these particles rain down like solar energy. Much like plants use photosynthesis for energy, members of the K'si race feed off of dark matter radiation, which has been simulated on their ship by means of modified particle injectors embedded in their common areas and quarters.*

If the Players are hesitant to invite the K'si on board, offer a few Players determination points to evoke their values (even going against them) so that they sway the other Players to make the invite. Keep in mind, the K'si have not exhibited having transporter technology. The Players may not want to expose the K'si to this advanced technology. The K'si have shuttles that they can use to transport to the Player vessel. Or the Players may decide to go pick them up in their own shuttle.

Scene 3: Reception

The Players can decide how much of a tour of the ship they will grant to the K'si delegation. This is a good chance to see how well your Players know their vessel. Plan to ask some good questions to engage the Players in technobabble and diplomacy.

Gamemaster's Guidance: *Feel free to add any questions you feel the K'si will ask. More cultural questions can take place during the welcome reception. To get an idea of how awkward these type of receptions can be, check out the dinner between the crew of the Enterprise and the Klingons in [Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country](#).*

Confound Them With Questions, Part I

Here are some questions the K'si might plow their Players with once the delegation is on board:

- *What is the top speed of your vessel?*
- *What are the offensive and defensive capabilities?*
- *What do tricorders do?*
- *What need for hand-held phasers? (The K'si do not war with others.)*
- *How is life support sustained?*
- *What is the crew complement?*
- *How many different species are aboard?*
- *How is it that you speak our language? (They have a Universal Translator too.)*

During the reception, the subject of the Prime Directive in comparison to the Supreme Mandate should come up. You and your Players might want to freshen up on the scope and details of the [Prime Directive](#). Some key episodes or movies to watch could be [TOS: "Bread and Circuses"](#), ["A Piece of the Action"](#); [TAS: "The Magicks of Megas-Tu"](#), ["Bem"](#); [TNG: "Justice"](#), ["Symbiosis"](#), ["Who Watches The Watchers"](#), ["Homeward"](#); [VOY: "Course: Oblivion"](#); [Star Trek Into Darkness](#).

Confound Them with Questions, Part II

Here are some questions the K'si ask during the reception:

- *Have the Federation brought untold peace and prosperity to the worlds under its governance? If not, why not?*
- *Which race of the Federation is the most advanced?*
- *What is the penalty for violating the Prime Directive?*
- *Who determines when the Prime Directive had been violated?*
- *What would Starfleet do if we did not agree with your Prime Directive?*

Allow the Players to fully engage in this conversation. This is a highly philosophical and intellectual exercise.

Under any circumstance, the K'si will not be swayed that the Supreme Mandate is inferior to the Prime Directive. Their proof is paradisiac peace on the hundreds of worlds they control. The fact that the populations of those worlds view them as gods is not objectionable to them since, in their eyes, they have been blessed with superior technology to "help the inferior species to achieve harmony and delight".

The Players have already seen the results of the Supreme Mandate on two of the worlds they visited, Ictharys and Oreison. Jak D'Jak and his compatriots will be highly disturbed

when and if they learn that the Players have made contact with these worlds under their purview. The K'si manage the worlds from afar, using dark matter orbs to observe and even enforce the Supreme Mandate (like the altar in the temple on Oreison). The idea of interacting with the population is distasteful with the exception of arriving as "gods" to install their technology in the form of temples, performing modifications to worlds to prevent natural disasters, and manipulating populations to eliminate crime, disease, food shortages, and war.

The K'si can argue that the Starfleet vessel is in conflict with their own Prime Directive if they interfere with the Supreme Mandate on the basis that to interfere with the K'si's operations would affect the current development of lesser species. Any attempts to persuade the K'si to be more lenient in their views is a Difficulty 5 task.

Depending on how the dinner goes, the K'si might be persuaded to allow a delegation from the Player vessel to tour their ship (sans tricorders or scanning equipment). If the conversation ends up hostile, the Players will not be invited and the game should skip to Scene 5.

Complication Options

The gamemaster should feel free to spend as much Threat as needed to inflict complications on the Players that prevent any reasonable negotiation on the matter, inflicting problems like *Millenniums of Dogma*, *Ingrained Suspicion*, *Offended by Counter-Culture*, *Irate Over the Supreme Mandate*, *Baffled by Dark Matter Tech* or any similar complications.

Whereas in other campaigns, threat may be spent to alter the effect of land or space-based battles, this game is about encountering a culture steeped in its own godhood and supremacy. This cannot be overturned overnight.

Gamemaster's Guidance: Some bold Players may try to initiate scans of the K'si while they are aboard the Player vessel. If this is done without the K'si's consent (which they would never give), this is a **Daring + Medicine Task** assisted by the ship's **Sensors + Medicine** with a Difficulty of 3. If this occurs in sickbay using specialized equipment, the Difficulty is reduced to 1. If Players roll a Complication they should be penalized with situations like K'si's Ruined Trust or Violating a Person's Privacy.

A successful scan will reveal that the K'si do not eat organic food. Their bodies process dark matter radiation. It will take further study using [The Scientific Method](#) to try and figure out the biological processes of the K'si.

If the Players decide to pursue this course, the R & D track is as follows: **Work Track: 15; Magnitude 5; Difficulty 3**. Due to the new type of physiology that has been discovered, each point of work track is considered to be 4 hours of time. Since the K'si's physiology is botanical in nature the **Right Way** could fall under Botany or Theoretical Physics. Biology would actually be "The Wrong Way" in this case, as future campaigns will explain.

If the Players succeed in this task, the gamemaster may let them know that, much like plants, the K'si use a type of dark matter photosynthesis to create bioenergy. Members of the K'si race must feed off of dark matter radiation. How this is integrated into their ship systems will remain unknown at this point.

Scene 4: The K'si Exploration Ship

If the Players are allowed on the vessel, they are not permitted to bring scanning equipment. This is due to the K'si's paranoid and suspicious nature. The Players can travel to the K'si vessel via shuttlecraft unless they feel comfortable showing off their transporters.

Once on the K'si Exploration Ship, Jak D'Jak restricts their movement to the command center. He tries to play down his lack of hospitality in comparison to how well he and his crew were treated aboard the Player vessel.

He is still highly suspicious and not trusting. He will admit this to the Players, stating that the existence of the Federation has raised many new questions his people never pondered before.

The command center has a central station wherein Jak D'Jak observes all surrounding stations. There are twelve stations, each manned by a member of the K'si. Two of the stations are dedicated to helm operations, one to engineering, three to operations, one to communications, and the last six to science and sensor controls.

Sharp-eyed Starfleet officers will be able to Obtain Information about K'si technology and even come across some disturbing information while touring the command center. Have each officer roll **Reason + Conn/Science Task** with a Difficulty of 3 to understand what they are observing or overhearing on the bridge. (Characters who serve as Flight Controllers, Engineers, or Science officers can make this roll with Difficulty of 2.) In addition, characters with *Linguistics* or *Pattern Recognition* Focuses can receive a double success if they roll under their Discipline number. Momentum gained from this roll can be used to Obtain Information (Repeatable).

- **1 Point of Momentum:** One of the view screens clearly shows a spatial grid with the location of Oreison. Information is being transmitted out via the dark matter thread to the temple located in the city of *Beseaching Glory*.
- **2 Points of Momentum:** Upon watching the energy readings, it is clear a directive has been transmitted to create an implosion vortex in the *Beseaching Glory* temple. Based on calculations, the ensuing vortex would encompass the entire city leaving only a crater in its wake.
- **3 Points of Momentum:** The directive is contained in a small box located in the lower right hand of the monitor. Based on their limited experience with the K'si and observing their language in previous missions, it is clear that the directive was recently given by Sovereign Viceroy Jak D'Jak. The implosion will occur within the next 24 hours.

The gamemaster can choose to make this a Success with Cost. Complications could include *Caught Spying*, *Hostilities Emerge*, or *Subject to K'si Justice*.

Either way, the Players have to figure out how to mitigate this dilemma, including the fact that their previous violation of the Prime Directive will lead to the death of tens of thousands of innocents. They may make a stand on the K'si vessel or return to their own vessel to discuss the situation. The Gamemaster may spend 2 Threat to force the Players back to their vessel, basically a scene change. This is a moral dilemma that only the Players can decide upon. Some of the Players might suggest going back to Oreison to try and stop the implosion. Let the Players know that they can make it back to Oreison in 2 hours only IF they travel at maximum warp. If they decide to do so, invoke the "Rules for the Cordon Nebulae" found in this module.

Allow the Players to devise alternate solutions. Keep in mind the 24 hour time limit. This will really put the pressure on them. For instance, make every 2 minutes of real-time conversation equal to one hour of game time. Gamemasters might want to create a **Timed Challenge or Extended Task** (p. 90) related to solving this issue. No matter what is decided, the Prime Directive should be at the forefront of the matter since the decisions they make could affect Reputation (p.140) in a negative way or even lead to disciplinary action.

Scene 5: Prime Directive versus the Supreme Mandate

The Players will have by now returned to their vessel. They may still be working on possible solutions.

No matter the case, Jak D'Jak hails the Player vessel. This conversation takes place over video screen as the K'si want no more in-person contact with the Federation for the time being.

Jak D'Jak explains that he has convened a conference on board his vessel. The governing council has reviewed this situation and have come to a unified decision. They feel that relations should be temporarily suspended until such time the impact of First Contact can be weighed. Jak D'Jak strongly encourages the crew to *not* interfere with their civilization. Exploration is allowed, but no more meddling. They will be allowed to pass

through their sovereign territory. But they are to have *no other contact* with any other K'si or races under their dominion. Jak D'Jak explains that such contact could create a widespread crisis of faith with unknown and horrible ramifications for which he would hold the Federation accountable.

Gamemaster's Guidance: *The Players may desire to take a more violent approach to this situation. If that is the case, they will see that, although the K'si's ships are inferior to the Federations in many ways, their dark matter weaponry is very potent and destructive. The Gamemaster should spend threat to give the Player vessel a serious pounding if they choose a violent solution, so much so that the Players decide to fight another day or at least take some serious losses for initiating a confrontation by violating the K'si's wishes.*

Resolution

By the end of this adventure, the Players will need to make some tough choices. Will they continue to explore the Sargon Region? Will they leave the Region thus ending their time in the Supreme Mandate campaign? [This could be the time to end this campaign if the Players choose.] Will they play the role of distanced observers or passionate liberators? Will they clandestinely decide to learn more about the K'si and their isolated culture?

Sometimes there is no "right" decision. Living up to the Prime Directive can be a painful and frustrating process and the game master should use every opportunity to remind the Players of such.



About the K'si

K'si are invulnerable to empathy and telepathy. Other facts will be revealed about the K'si in future campaign modules.

Even though much of their technology is less advanced than the Federation, it is a mistake to assume that the K'si are inferior in every way. Their knowledge of dark matter technology is a hundred years beyond that of the Federation.

The K'si have learned to manipulate dark matter for dozens of practical applications and do so with ease. As Gamemaster, you should feel free to create new and wondrous (or devious) uses for dark matter and throw it at your Players.

Since the Federation are not experts on dark matter, the Gamemaster should make Federation defenses more susceptible to disruption when assaulted by dark matter weaponry. Likewise, trying to get past dark matter shielding or understanding dark matter technology should add +1 or +2 to Difficulty.

Jak D'Jak

Traits: K'si, Sovereign Viceroy; Highly Suspicious

Attributes

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
12	8	8	9	10	8

Disciplines

Command	Conn	Engineering	Security	Science	Medicine
5	1	3	4	2	0

Stress: 11 **Resistance:** 0

Focuses: Supreme Mandate Debate; Dark Matter Technology; Cordon Nebulae

Weapons:

Unarmed (Melee, 5CD), Knockdown, Size 1H, Non-Lethal)

TALENTS:

COLD READING: Succeeding at a Task during Social Conflict generates one bonus Momentum which must be used for the Obtain Information Momentum Spend to gain knowledge about an individual on the other side of the interaction. If the Social Conflict involves an Extended Task, the character gains the Scrutinize 1 benefit (see page 91 of the Star Trek Adventures core rulebook) when rolling Challenge Dice.

Zed M'zed

Traits: K'si, Primary (a.k.a. First Officer), Paranoid

Attributes

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
10	10	9	9	8	9

Disciplines

Command	Conn	Engineering	Security	Science	Medicine
4	2	2	3	3	0

Stress: 12 **Resistance:** 0

Focuses: Starship Protocol; Communication Systems; Lead by Example

Weapons:

Unarmed (Melee, 4[CD], Knockdown, Size 1H, Non-Lethal)

Til T'Gish

Traits: K'si, Chief Technologist, Curiously Fascinated

Attributes

Control	Daring	Fitness	Insight	Presence	Reason
8	11	7	9	7	12

Disciplines

Command	Conn	Engineering	Security	Science	Medicine
2	2	5	1	4	0

Stress: 8 Resistance: 0

Focuses: Dark Matter Technology, Starship Propulsion, Theoretical Physics

Weapons:

Unarmed (Melee, 3[CD], Knockdown, Size 1H, Non-Lethal)

K'si Exploration Vessel

Traits: Massive, Mysterious Dark Matter Technology

Attributes

Communications	Computers	Engines	Sensors	Structure	Weapons
7	7	8	8	11	12

Departments

Command	Conn	Engineering	Security	Science	Medicine
2	1	2	4	1	3

Power: 12 Scale: 6 Shields: 15 Resistance: 3

Crew: Proficient (Attribute 9, Discipline 2)

Weapons:

- Dark Matter Beam (Energy, Range Long, 12CD, Area, Dampening, Devastating, High Yield)
- Dark Matter Pulse Guns (Energy, Range Medium, 4CD)