

You Are Now

# LARAN DARKWATCH

Do Not Open  
Until Instructed  
To Do So!

## Character Booklet

**STAR SAGA: ONE™**  
Beyond the Boundary

You Are Now

# LARAN DARKWATCH

This is your secret character booklet. Do not let anyone else read it. You should have already read the "Dear Player" introduction sheet, and chosen Laran Darkwatch as the character you want to play.

The first part of this booklet is your secret character biography. The biography describes your character's background, motivations, and goals — in short, your persona for the duration of the game. Read it carefully. You will find it helpful to re-read your character biography from time to time as you play the game.

Feel free to embellish your character, adding personality and detail. For example, it is up to you to decide whether your character is male or female. If you are playing with other people, you can have a lot of fun play-acting how you think your character might behave in real life.

After the character biography is a rules summary. This summary gives you a general sense of how the game is played. Following the rules summary you will find a section entitled "How to Play Turn 1." This section contains directions for playing the first turn of the game, customized especially for your character.

You may also wish to refer to the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual* for more information. The manual contains directions for setting up the game components, helpful hints, a comprehensive version of the Rules, a guide to the Computer Game Master, and other reference materials.

You are now Laran Darkwatch. Turn the page and begin.

# Laran Darkwatch

You are Disciple Laran Darkwatch, a Revered High Councilor of the Final Church of Man. You are the youngest disciple ever to reach this office, one that commands respect even at the Church's headquarters on the planet Leucothea. Your gifts of persuasion and insight have made you, over the years, one of the most widely-read and successful scholars the Church has had in its 300-year history.

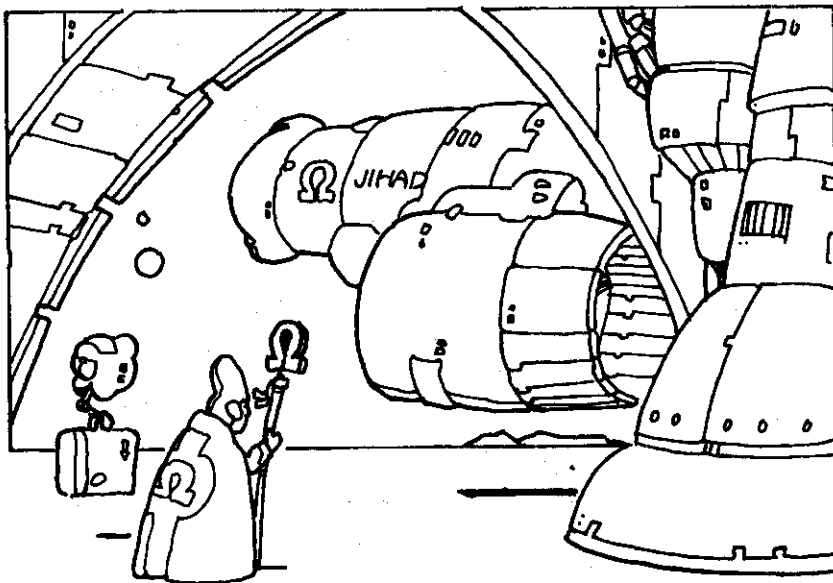
You have devoted your life to studying and interpreting the Holy Text Files, the six books in which the Founders of the Church wrote down the Final Truth. You have always accepted the Final Truth without question. However, at the same time, you have always regarded the Final Truth as incomplete.

The problem that bothers you is simple: the preface to the First Text File is, in the original copy written by the Founders themselves, entitled "Preface to the Seven Text Files of the Final Church of Man." Yet, there are, in fact, only six text files in the set. To your mind, this is not at all Final.

Some claim that the discrepancy is a simple misprint. Others believe that it is symbolic of the gap between the Final Truth and the Perfect Truth. Only a very few claim that the Seventh File really does exist and has been lost or hidden.

Whatever the explanation, you feel that you must find the answer. It is not enough for you that the Final Truth be true; it must be the *total* Truth as the Founders intended. If there really is a Seventh Text File, as the Founders imply, then it is your scholarly and religious duty to find it.

You had looked forward to your latest promotion with a great deal of anticipation, for with it would come the authority to do research into this baffling mystery. This puzzle, along with your faith in the Final Truth, was what had originally drawn you so deeply into the Church. Until now, it had to remain a mystery to you because no one except the highest ranking members could even ask about it. So it wasn't until recently that you had the authority to delve into the mystery of the Missing Holy Text File.



In the few months which have passed since your promotion, and against the advice of your superiors, you have tried to find an answer to the question of the missing Seventh Text File. You have not had much luck. The problem is that every clue you uncover points in the same direction: the planet Cathedral.

The planet Cathedral was the place where the Holy Founders started their journey in space to discover the Final Truth. It is not surprising that Cathedral would be the logical place to start looking for the Missing Text File. Unfortunately, Church rules strictly forbid space exploration of any kind. To leave the Nine Worlds and go to Cathedral would be heresy.

However, unless you commit this sin, you must give up your search for the Missing Text File. If you give up the search, will you be able to live with yourself? Can you remain a great scholar of the Church, knowing all the time that the Final Truth may be incomplete but doing nothing about it?

A few days ago you were called before your superiors and were all but forbidden to continue this line of research. You left the meeting feeling disquieted and unhappy. You returned to your quarters and fell into a deep, exhausted sleep.

\* \* \*

You sleep. You sleep and you dream of the myriad heavens beyond the Boundary. You fly, twisting and twirling, away from the mundane worlds of stagnant, placid humanity and out to the stars. What lies out there? Your dreaming mind seems to have the answer, which it slowly unfolds for you as you swoop and dart and fly out into the void.

You see planets of gas and planets of metal, Earth-like alien civilizations and others so strange you wonder at your own power to imagine them. You see little green men dancing beneath coconut trees on the shores of a big pink lake. You see a planet slowly unfolding itself, stretching and groaning until it becomes a human figure winking and waving as you pass by. You see an alien ship, trapped in a cave on a world where the skies are exploding. On, on, closer to the galactic core you float.

Then you come face to face with the dragon. An old menace, newly awakened, uncurling his green scaly bulk from the caverns of time and once again stretching out his talons to seize the galaxy. You evade him once, twice, and nearly get by, near enough to the galactic core to hear a voice, repeating over and over the question "Do you have the message? Do you have the message?"

Suddenly the dragon is again before you, straining at his golden leash to rend you asunder. He opens his mouth and extends his tongue and begins an eerie howling, a sound almost beyond your hearing that oscillates up and down and up and down. Your own mind swells to the noise, even as your body again evades the dragon's claws, swells until it engulfs the universe and all you can hear is the keening of the dragon and the endlessly repeated "Do you have the message? Do you have the message?" In terror you flee back to the Nine Worlds; past the buried ship of the exploding skies, past the bizarre planets of the alien races, past a dozen worlds inhabited by the ghosts of humans, until you reach the Boundary and the safety of your own sleeping body.

You wake up, but you are never again the same. In the back of your mind, very softly, you can still hear the keening of the dragon and the gently whispered question: Do you have the message?

\* \* \*

You awaken and realize what you have become, a heretic. The coming of the vision left a strong and lasting impression on your thoughts. You don't really understand the images of the alien worlds and the significance of "The Message," but the overall meaning is clear: that your destiny — and the Truth you seek — lie out in space far beyond Leucothea and the Nine

Worlds. You are now certain that the Text Files are incomplete, and that the missing pieces in the Final Truth can be found only where the Founders themselves found them before abandoning space so long ago.

Over the next few days, you quickly and quietly use the power and resources available to one of your rank in the Church and outfit your personal spaceship, the *Jihad*, with equipment needed to break out through the Boundary. Your ship has a cargo-carrying capacity of ten units, and you have managed to acquire one unit each of some of the more tradable commodities: Fuel, Computers, and Tools. You suspect that you'll soon need better equipment, but not much is available inside the Boundary. Perhaps you'll be able to parlay your modest cargo into some improvements.

You intend to follow your vision into space. Your mission is to find the missing Seventh Text File and return it Leucothea. Its revelation would bring the Church and the people it serves one step closer to the Perfect Truth. You do not know where the Founders went, but you know where they started: the planet Cathedral. Perhaps there are memories there that will lead you onward.

You are concerned about your reception when you return, but if you have the lost File, the Church will have to accept the Truth. In turn, they will have to accept you back as well. You know the Final Church of Man is not evil, or trying to hide anything. Your superiors only wish to keep unnecessary adversity from rocking the peaceful little world they have built. They will accept the real truth about the Lost File, but you know that you will never be accepted back if you are wrong — if it doesn't exist. You are willing to take this risk in order to bring the truth to light, so you head out beyond the Boundary.

As you approach the line of space buoys and satellites that surround the Nine Worlds and keep any ship from entering, you have a momentary doubt. The Boundary is said to be impenetrable to any ship trying to enter the protected area of space that makes up the Nine Worlds. Not only are there the mechanical devices to keep unwanted visitors outside, but it is patrolled by a crack unit of ships called the Space Patrol. Ships are allowed to leave, but it is said that no one has ever returned. You are concerned about being able to bring the File back to Leucothea if and when you find it.

You quickly shake off these doubts. If you are clever enough and lucky enough to find the File after all these years, you must assume you will be able to sneak your way back through the Boundary, Space Patrol or not! When you have located the missing Text File and are able to return to the Nine Worlds, plot the following option:

(60PFBI) (7 phases) Bring the missing Text File to Leucothea.

Good luck.

NAME:	Laran Darkwatch
SHIP:	<i>Jihad</i>
CARGO:	1 Unit Fuel 1 Unit Computers 1 Unit Tools
GOAL:	Find the Lost Seventh Holy Text File and return it to Leucothea.

## The Final Church of Man

As a young acolyte, you learned about humanity's Great Expansion into the far reaches of the galaxy following the discovery of the hyperdrive. Some groups seeking to found religious settlements took this golden opportunity to expand their groups and establish colonies to further their particular causes. One planet in particular attracted these groups, a world called Cathedral. Because of its great beauty and distance from Earth, dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of churches and temples established themselves on Cathedral within a few decades.

However, the advantages of space for religious groups were accompanied by drawbacks. Interaction with alien races, although directly responsible for innumerable new sects, was a blow to the tenets of the older, more conservative religions. The fact that some of these aliens possessed powers that could only be described as miraculous caused many to rethink their conception of "divine order."

Faced with these crises, the leaders of religions great and small began to confer among themselves. A series of ecumenical conferences was held on Cathedral, each one larger and wider in scope than the last. At the final conference, over three hundred years ago, a decision as miraculous as any religious event in history was reached. The leaders decided that the time had come for certain key questions about humanity and the universe to be answered. Without such answers, their faiths could not endure. A group of holy men and women, representing the highest levels of the hierarchies of most of the significant religious organizations, volunteered to journey into deep space in search of knowledge.

It was this decision that turned the key religious leaders of the day into the Holy Founders. Quite possibly, the majority of the people involved did not really expect to find answers, but instead considered the quest an impressive show of determination. Nonetheless, the plan went forward, and a ship named *Archangel* was constructed. Five years to the day after that last conference, the *Archangel* and her holy crew took off from Cathedral.

Seventeen years later, *Archangel* returned to Cathedral. Its arrival was anticipated like the coming of a messiah, and humans everywhere waited anxiously for what the leaders of the quest would reveal. The worlds were amazed when the Holy Founders, despite their widely different religious backgrounds, declared themselves in unanimous agreement on what they had learned.

The truth, they said, was not an easy one, but it was the Final Truth and could not be doubted. In the weeks following the Founders' return, millions of copies of the Holy Text Files, in which this Truth was recorded, were distributed to humans everywhere.

To those who held any faith in it, the Final Truth was indeed not an easy one. The Divine Forces, said the Text, had created many intelligent races in the universe; among them, Humanity is both blessed and cursed. All of the other races and species were created with a perfect soul. This perfection is not equivalent to freedom from evil, but is an extension of the mind in an entirely different way. Those who are complete in this manner know their place in the universal order; mankind, with an incomplete soul, does not.

Mankind has the potential to attain this completeness. If humanity does so, it will be uniquely blessed in the universe for having achieved it. But until such a time, humanity is not fit to mingle in the company of other races, nor to extend its influence or colonies to other worlds. According to the Holy Text, the exploration and colonization of space is the greatest sin ever perpetrated by humanity.

The Founders founded the Final Church of Man based on the Holy Text Files. The Church declared that the new challenge to mankind was not exploration outward into space but the inward process of learning to achieve a complete and perfect soul. The Church was slow to gain popularity, but it did grow, endorsed by many past leaders of other faiths and by a surprising number of political leaders as well. When the Plagues struck, the Founders did not go so far as to state that it was a punishment for the sin of going into space. They did not need to. By the time the Plagues were over, the Nine Worlds were theirs.

# Rules Summary

This is a brief summary of the *STAR SAGA: ONE™* rules. For a more comprehensive version of the rules, see the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual*.

## Your Spaceship

Your spaceship will be represented by one of the six colored tokens that come with the game. You can choose any color you wish.

## The Map

The map is divided into colored triangular spaces called trisectors. Trisectors are referred to by both number and color, for example, 115-R (for red) and 65-G (for green). Some trisectors have planets in them, indicated by a large black dot in a trisector with a white center. At the beginning of the game, all planets are labelled by name. Later, however, you will find planets with no name. When you land on such an "undiscovered" planet, the computer will tell you its name and instruct you to write the name on the map.

The location of your spaceship is indicated by the position of your colored token on the map. If your ship is parked on a planet, then your token should be placed on the planet dot. You move through the galaxy by travelling from one trisector to another. You may move only through the sides of the triangles, never through the points. The thick black lines separating some trisectors are known as "Space Walls." You may not move through Space Walls.

## The Computer

The computer is the game's braintrust, or game-master if you will. From now on, we'll refer to the computer as the "CGM," short for Computer Game Master (or Chubby Grey Monitor). The CGM keeps track of all options chosen by the players and determines the effect of these options on the *Star Saga™* universe. As a player, you must visit the CGM at least once per turn. After planning your options for the turn, you go to the CGM and enter them. For each option entered, the CGM will give you a "result." The result can simply confirm movement or it can be something more complicated. Often, the CGM will direct you to read a piece of text. When everyone has gotten all their results for a turn, the CGM advances to the next turn.

If the procedure for using the CGM is still a little unclear, don't worry. We'll be helping you through the first five turns of the game to show you exactly how it works. Also, you can refer to the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual* for a more detailed explanation.

## The Saga Text

The *Star Saga*™ story is broken down into short pieces of text ranging in length from a paragraph up to a few pages. Each piece of text describes the result of some action you can take, and is identified by a number ranging from 1 to 888. The text is compiled in thirteen separate booklets for your convenience. When the CGM directs you to read a given text entry, find it in the appropriate booklet.

## Time

*Star Saga*™ is played in turns. Each turn represents one week of time in the *Star Saga*™ universe. A turn is divided into seven phases, or days. During a turn, each player performs one or more "options" of their choice. Each option takes some number of phases to do. When you plot your options for a turn, you may choose options until you *reach or go over* the seven phases in the turn. If you do go over, the number of excess phases will be deducted from subsequent turns.

## Options

When planning a turn, you choose from the various types of options available. These are:

**Movement.** You can move from one trisector to another any time you are not parked (landed) on a planet. A move is denoted by the first letter of the color of the triangle you wish to move to (blue, green, orange, red, violet, or yellow), and takes one phase.

**Land and Takeoff.** You can land on a planet any time you are in a trisector that has a planet dot in it. You can take off from a planet any time your ship is parked on one. The land and takeoff options are denoted by the letters L and T respectively. The first time you land on a planet it takes 7 phases. Later landings on the same planet take only 1 phase. A takeoff takes 1 phase.

**Action Codes.** Once you are parked on a planet you will have one or more "action codes" particular to that planet to keep you busy. The text you read when you land on the planet will describe these actions to you. Each action is denoted by a six-letter code (for example, "FGJOCQ" might mean "visit the commodities market on the planet Blarr"). The text that gives you the action code also tells you how many phases the action takes. Almost all action codes cause the CGM to give you a piece of text describing what happens. Some actions can be performed more than once, but most are one-time-only. If the piece of text the CGM gives you for an action says "You may select this option again," then you can repeat the action later.

**Meetings.** You can meet with other players any time you are in the same trisector on the same turn. Meetings allow players to trade cargo and items back and forth between themselves. To arrange a meeting, all players involved must go to the same trisector, then plot M (it doesn't matter whether you're on a planet or in space). The meeting takes one phase and ends your turn. Note that it is *not* necessary to have a meeting in order to talk to another player, only to trade cargo and items.



## Acquisitions

As you play the game, you will acquire many "things." These things fall into two categories: cargo and items/abilities. Cargo is the basis for most of the trading you will do during the game. The twelve most common types of cargo, called "commodities," are valued just about anywhere in the galaxy. They are: Computers, Crystals, Culture, Fiber, Fluids, Food, Fuel, Iron, Medicine, Munitions, Radioactives, and Tools. There are also some other types of cargo that are harder to find.

Your spaceship has 10 cargo bays in which to carry the cargo you acquire, and it begins the game with 3 units of cargo already on board. Note that this cargo is for trading purposes only. Your life support supplies are sufficient for several years of space travel, so you need not be concerned about them during the game.

Items and abilities are different from cargo in that they do not take up space in your cargo bays and you can collect as many of them as you want. Items are physical objects that you can carry around, either on your ship or on your person. If an item is useful in combat, it is either a ship-to-ship combat item or a hand-to-hand combat item. Otherwise it is a non-combat item. Abilities are skills that you learn. They can also be ship-to-ship, hand-to-hand, or non-combat. Most items can be traded, while abilities cannot be.

## Combat

Some of the creatures you will run into while exploring the galaxy may be hostile towards you. You can get into a combat either in person (while you are on a planet), or in your ship (while you are in space). In either case, the text will describe the situation and send you back to the CGM. The CGM will then determine the result of the combat. If you are interested in how to improve your chances in combat, you can find an explanation of how the CGM decides a combat in the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual*.

You have now read a summary of all the rules needed to start the game. The summary is not intended to be a full explanation of the rules, so you may wish to consult the complete rules in the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual*. The first five turns of the game have been pre-planned for you, to help you get the hang of playing. Turn the page for directions to play turn one.

# How To Play Turn 1

Before playing turn 1, you should set up the game as described in the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual*. This includes booting up the Computer Game Master Disk and telling the CGM what characters are playing. When you are done with this the CGM screen should read "TURN 1" in the upper right hand corner. You are ready to play turn 1.

## How To Plan Turn 1

You begin the game with your ship token placed on your home world of Leucothea in the green trisector marked "Nine Worlds." You, like most people in the Nine Worlds, know almost nothing about the area of space beyond the Boundary. You do know, however, that there were several colonized planets that either chose not to be included inside the Boundary as it was being constructed, or were callously abandoned by the government because they were just a bit too far away. These "Ghost Worlds," as they are called, are marked on your map. You decide, purely on a hunch, to go first to "Medsun," which is one such planet.

To plan your journey to Medsun, first study the map to see where you want to go. Next, take a sheet of paper and, using the recommended format you see below, fill out the plots for turn 1 as follows:

Plotting Sheet							
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7
TURN							
1	T	O	V	G	B	O	L
2	—	—	—	—	—	—	

The first thing you do is plan the moves you need to make to get you there. Plot "T" for takeoff. Since you can only travel through the three long sides of a trisector and not through the points, you see your best route is O, V, G, B, O. You are now in the trisector containing the planet Medsun so you plot "L" for Land. This will use the rest of your phases for this turn and borrow against 6 of your next turn's phases.

## How To Enter Plots For Turn 1

Once you have planned your turn, go to the computer, type in L to identify yourself as Laran Darkwatch. You have now "logged on" to the computer and are looking at the computer screen where you can enter your moves. This screen is called the "plot editor."

When the screen asks you what you want to do, type T for takeoff, then enter the colors of the trisectors between the Nine Worlds and Medsun in sequential order: O, V, G, B, O. Finally, type L to indicate that you wish to land on Medsun.

Next, you must press either the Return or F (for Finished) key to tell the computer you accept the moves you've typed, or the X key if you see you have made a mistake (you just delete each entry until the error is gone, then retype your moves from there).

When you finally hit the Return or F key to signify you are happy with your plots, you end the input part of your first turn.

## How To Get Results For Turn 1

Now the computer will evaluate your move and let you know at least part of the outcome. In this case, you have successfully managed to fly across part of the galaxy and land on a new planet. You should move your token to its new location in trisector #63. We wouldn't want you to become lost in space!

The computer will send you to two pieces of text — the first, **Text #884**, is for your landing on Medsun, and the second, **Text #800**, is to help you with your next turn. Write these numbers down. Then hit Return or the F so the screen will be ready for the next player.

After you have seen how the computer looks and acts, we think you will be able to appreciate a few of the computer functions you have available to you. Below is a selection of the most common CGM commands, along with a brief explanation of each. If you have any questions after reading this, you should refer to the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual* for a more detailed explanation.

**Finished:** is the command you use when you are done using the current computer screen. Use this command only when you are through with the portion of your turn to which the screen pertains.

**Escape:** allows you to leave the computer without actually finishing your turn. Use it when you need to leave the computer (to reread some text, get your notebook, or whatever) but you aren't ready to commit to any moves, yet. Your friends will like this feature a lot.

**Help:** is just what it looks like. If you don't understand what you are supposed to do during any part of the computer portion of your turn, use this command. The computer will then tell you what you can do, or will at least give you some strong hints.

**Status:** takes you to the computer screen designed specifically for your character. Here you will be able to find any data regarding things like your ship, your cargo, your location in the galaxy, as well as the type of weapons and abilities you have picked up along the way. If you are feeling lost, look at your Status screen, it will help!

**Undo:** is a great command. It allows you to change your mind and cancel that entire screen's plots, moves and trades.

These are the major commands you will be using in the game. If you still have questions about them, or don't understand any other command, just read the "CGM Guide" section of the *Host Guide and Player Reference Manual*.

Now, on with your adventure. Find the text given to you by the computer and "live" what happens next!

## Laran Darkwatch Jihad

### STAR SAGA: ONE™ Reference Card

#### Player-Character Options

Option	Code	Phases
Move Blue	B	1
Move Green	G	1
Move Orange	O	1
Move Red	R	1
Move Violet	V	1
Move Yellow	Y	1
Land	L	1 or 7
Take Off	T	1
Meet Player	M	Ends Turn
Action	A + six-letter code	Varies

#### Computer Game Master (CGM) Commands

ARROW	Highlight the next choice up, down, left or right.
RETURN	Select the currently highlighted choice.
HELP	Display explanations of current choices.
FINISHED	Execute actions and return to previous screen.
ESCAPE	Postpone actions, UNDO, if appropriate, and return.
UNDO	Cancel all actions at the current screen.
STATUS	Display your current game status

#### Combat Categories

Attack	Defense
Contact	Armor
Projectile	Mobility
Special	Special

#### Planetary Commodities

Computers	Fluids	Medicine
Crystals	Food	Munitions
Culture	Fuel	Radioactives
Fiber	Iron	Tools