

SESSION 4

Trouble at the Port

A Beginner-Friendly Traveller Teaching Campaign

REFEREE USE

The first world does not greet the Travellers as heroes. A delayed payment, a tense port, and a frightened contact put the crew under public pressure. This session teaches personal danger, escalation, cover, injury, and the cost of violence before the campaign grows into wider trade and privateering.

Field	Briefing Detail
Campaign	Book One: The Drinax Training Arc
Session Type	Adventure Session
Target Play Time	Three Hours
Audience	New Traveller players and a new Referee
Rules Goal	Teach personal combat, danger, and consequences through a portside conflict
Campaign Goal	Prepare the crew to handle violence, law, and reputation without treating combat as automatic

DESIGN NOTE

This is an original teaching session document for personal table use. It is designed to be compatible with the tone and campaign frame of Traveller and The Pirates of Drinax, but it does not reproduce or replace official rulebooks or published adventures.

2. Session Snapshot

Item	Session 4 Detail
Session Number	4
Session Title	Trouble at the Port
Target Play Time	Three hours
Primary Teaching Focus	Personal combat basics, initiative, cover, range, armor, injury, first aid, surrender, and consequences.
Primary Story Focus	The Travellers face a payment dispute and a tense portside confrontation after completing their first courier delivery.
Main Traveller Mechanics	Initiative, attack checks, range, cover, armor, damage, recovery basics, morale, and nonviolent exits.
Main Drinax Concept	Drinax agents are judged not only by success, but by whether they create scandals, enemies, and port trouble.
Expected Session End-State	The crew survives or defuses a portside conflict, records legal and reputation effects, and understands that combat is costly.
Recommended Prep Time	Sixty to ninety minutes. Prepare NPC motives, a simple port map, and combat quick reference.
Difficulty for New Referee	Moderate. The rules load is higher, but the encounter is intentionally small.

CONTINUITY FROM PRIOR SESSION

Session 3 should have ended with the crew completing its first jump and reaching its first world with a courier packet. Before play, check ship status, fuel use, destination world profile, courier delivery status, port reaction, and any local concern recorded in the ledger. If Session 3 ended with a messy arrival, begin with stricter port attention or a nervous contact.

3. Referee Overview

This session introduces personal combat and danger, but it should not become a fight for its own sake. The Travellers are at a port where money, local authority, and public reputation matter. A delayed payment, an angry local, or a frightened contact pushes the crew into a confrontation that may become violent if handled poorly.

The core lesson is that combat is fast, risky, and consequential. A weapon drawn in a port corridor may solve one immediate problem while creating legal trouble, medical bills, frightened witnesses, and hostile officials. Keep the scene clear, small, and readable. The players should be able to talk, retreat, intimidate, pay, bargain, expose the problem, or fight.

This session builds from Session 3 by showing that arrival creates local pressure. It points toward Session 5, where money, cargo, passengers, and ship operating costs become the next source of choices.

REFEREE NOTE

Do not use this session to punish players for carrying weapons. Use it to teach that where, when, and how a crew uses violence matters as much as who wins.

4. Teaching Goals

Player Learning Goals

- Understand the basic order of a personal combat scene.
- Learn how initiative, cover, range, armor, and damage shape danger.
- See that surrender, retreat, intimidation, and negotiation are real options.
- Understand that medical, legal, and reputation consequences follow violence.
- Practice choosing when not to fight.

Referee Learning Goals

- Run a short combat without overwhelming the table.
- Make terrain and cover easy to understand.
- Use NPC morale so opponents do not fight to the death by default.

- Track injury and aftermath without stalling play.
- Turn a messy outcome into future hooks instead of a dead end.

Campaign Learning Goals

- Show that ports are social and legal spaces, not combat arenas.
- Start tracking local reputation beyond Drinax.
- Foreshadow money pressure and broker relationships.
- Teach that the crew represents itself, its ship, and eventually Drinax.

5. Rules Introduced This Session

Rule or Concept	Why It Matters	How It Appears in Play	Teach Detail	Beginner Mistake to Avoid
Initiative	Players need a clear order when danger starts.	Used if the standoff becomes a chase, brawl, or gunfight.	Teach sequence only.	Do not spend too long optimizing before action begins.
Cover and Position	Survival often depends on where a character stands.	Crates, door frames, kiosks, vehicles, and crowds affect risk.	Teach visible cover and movement.	Do not run combat in an empty room.
Range and Attack Checks	Range shapes difficulty and weapon choice.	The port fight uses short, clear distances.	Use broad, table-friendly ranges.	Do not make every meter a calculation.
Armor and Damage	Combat feels dangerous because hits matter.	Armor reduces harm, but injury can still change the session.	Teach only what is needed for this fight.	Do not treat damage as abstract hit points only.
First Aid and Recovery	The crew must deal with injury after violence.	A wounded PC, NPC, or bystander needs attention.	Use one simple medical scene.	Do not skip aftermath just because the fight ends.
Morale and Surrender	Most people want to live.	Opponents back down, flee, or surrender if pressure turns.	Use morale as story logic.	Do not have minor foes fight to the last breath.

6. Rules Intentionally Avoided

Rules or Subsystem	Why It Is Delayed
Starship Combat	The crew needs personal danger first. Ship combat arrives later after ship roles are more practiced.
Detailed Trade Rules	Session 5 introduces cargo, passengers, and ship economics. This session only foreshadows payment pressure.
Boarding Actions	Boarding combines personal combat, ship tactics, and legal issues. Save it for later.
Advanced Weapon Options	Keep the first combat clear. Avoid heavy weapons, grenades, complex autofire, and gear edge cases unless already central to a PC.
Formal Trial Procedures	Use local authority pressure, fines, bribes, or warnings rather than a full legal drama.
Mass Combat or Large Tactical Maps	The encounter is small by design so the Referee can keep it moving.

7. What the Players Should Learn

Players should learn that Traveller combat is not a sport and not a default solution. A simple portside confrontation can become dangerous quickly, and even a victory can leave injuries, fines, angry witnesses, frightened contacts, and a reputation for trouble.

- Cover matters before the first shot is fired.
- Talking, backing down, or changing the terms of a conflict can be smart play.
- A wounded enemy may become a witness, debtor, or future rival.
- A quiet solution may be more valuable than a dramatic one.
- The crew should think about who is watching and what the official story will be.

8. What the Referee Should Practice

- Describe the scene with obvious cover, exits, bystanders, and authority presence.
- Ask for player intent before weapons are drawn.
- Use initiative only when timing matters.
- Keep the first combat to a small number of opponents.
- Let NPCs retreat, surrender, bargain, or call for help.
- Use damage and injury as consequences that continue after the fight.
- Record local law trouble and reputation effects immediately.

REFEREE NOTE

Keep the fight readable. New players need to know where they are, who threatens them, where cover is, and how to leave.

9. Three-Hour Session Timeline

Time	Segment	Purpose	Referee Notes
0:00 to 0:15	Opening recap	Connect first jump and courier delivery to port pressure.	Review world profile and ledger briefly.
0:15 to 0:45	Portside Payment Problem	Establish the disputed payment, contact delay, or official pressure.	Give players choices before danger starts.
0:45 to 1:30	Pressure Builds	Let the crew investigate, negotiate, spot threats, or prepare.	Use checks and visible clues.
1:30 to 2:15	Standoff or Combat	Run a small fight, chase, intimidation scene, or surrender negotiation.	Keep it fast and consequential.
2:15 to 2:45	Aftermath	Handle injury, witnesses, law, payment, and local reaction.	Update ledger.
2:45 to 3:00	Debrief and Hook	Point toward cargo, passengers, and operating costs.	End with a money choice.

10. Required Materials

Checklist	Checklist
☐ Character sheets	☐ Simple port map or zone sketch
☐ Ship record sheet	☐ Combat quick reference
☐ Campaign ledger	☐ NPC cards for port officials and troublemakers
☐ Sector or subsector map	☐ Injury and first aid notes
☐ World profile notes from Session 3	☐ Tokens or markers for cover and range
☐ Session handout	☐ Scratch paper or index cards
☐ Dice	☐ Optional court or Drinax reputation tracker
☐ Basic task check reference	☐ Optional list of local rumors and witnesses

For this combat session, prepare a very simple combat reference. Include initiative, attack roll structure, common modifiers, cover reminders, damage, armor, first aid, and morale.

11. Opening Situation

READ OR PARAPHRASE

The courier packet has reached the right world, but the port has not settled into safety. The contact who should release payment is late, nervous, or missing. Dock workers keep glancing toward the crew. A port officer wants answers. A local broker insists there are fees that were never mentioned. Somewhere nearby, someone has decided the Travellers look new, armed, and worth testing. The immediate choice is whether the crew treats this as business, investigation, intimidation, or danger.

12. Key NPCs

Name	Role	First Impression	Wants	Knows	Helps	Complicates	Skills
Port Warden Nera Voss	Local Authority	Tired, controlled, and very aware of public order.	No bloodshed and no scandal in her port.	The crew is new and politically unusual.	Can grant permission, delay trouble, or reduce fines.	May detain the crew if they escalate.	Admin, Advocate, Persuade, Streetwise
Ilan Dresk	Courier Contact	Sweaty, anxious, avoiding eye contact.	Survive the handoff and keep a private problem hidden.	The payment is delayed because someone pressured him.	Can release payment or reveal local pressure.	May run, lie, or panic if threatened.	Persuade, Investigate, Recon, Streetwise
Merev Sol	Broker	Smooth, practical, too friendly.	Profit from the crew and learn how desperate they are.	The port has rumors about the ship and its unknown crew.	Can offer cargo leads for next session.	May exaggerate fees or sell information.	Broker, Persuade, Deception, Admin
Tamsin Vale	Dock Gang Lead	Calm voice, hard eyes, not eager to die.	Payment, respect, or proof the crew is not easy prey.	Someone said the Travellers are carrying valuables.	Can back down if given a face-saving exit.	May start a fight if humiliated.	Streetwise, Melee, Gun Combat, Persuade
Rook and Pell	Dock Toughs	Nervous muscle following orders.	Look dangerous without getting killed.	Only partial information about why they are here.	May surrender or talk if separated.	May fire or swing if startled.	Athletics, Melee, Gun Combat
Jalen Mor	Crew Advisor	Gruff and unimpressed.	Keep the crew alive and thinking.	Port trouble can ruin a ship before launch.	Can give practical warnings.	May openly criticize reckless choices.	Pilot, Mechanic, Carouse, Streetwise

13. Key Locations

Location	Description	First Notice	Useful Details	Complications	Relevant Checks	Campaign Connection
Docking Concourse	Public port area between berths, kiosks, and security posts.	Crowds, cargo carts, loud announcements.	Good for negotiation and witnesses.	Too public for clean violence.	Recon, Streetwise, Persuade.	Shows port law and public reputation.
Customs Desk	Official checkpoint with records and port authority staff.	Clear barriers and bored clerks.	Can verify fees and paperwork.	Officials dislike armed drama.	Admin, Advocate, Persuade.	Introduces formal port procedure.
Cargo Service Lane	Narrow work route beside containers and utility vehicles.	Good cover and bad sight lines.	Useful for a chase or ambush.	Bystanders and machinery create danger.	Recon, Athletics, Stealth.	Foreshadows cargo and freight play.
The Low Deck Canteen	Cheap port bar used by crew, brokers, and dock workers.	Heat, noise, grease, and guarded talk.	Useful for rumors and quiet meetings.	Insults spread quickly.	Carouse, Streetwise, Persuade.	Creates local contacts or rivals.
Clinic Kiosk	Small medical station near the port concourse.	Bright light and tired medtechs.	Handles minor wounds and paperwork.	Injury reports may reach authorities.	Medic, Admin, Persuade.	Shows that combat has aftermath.

14. Scene-by-Scene Outline

Scene 1: Payment Delayed

PURPOSE	Establish a practical problem before danger starts.
SETUP	The courier delivery should pay out, but Ilan Dresk is late, nervous, or blocked by local pressure.
WHAT THE PLAYERS CAN DO	Ask questions, check records, talk to port staff, watch the crowd, or search for Ilan.
RELEVANT CHECKS	Admin 8+, Investigate 8+, Recon 8+, Streetwise 8+.
LIKELY OUTCOMES	The crew learns payment is not simple and someone local is applying pressure.
FAILURE COMPLICATIONS	The crew is overcharged, delayed, or publicly marked as easy prey.
REFEREE ADVICE	Let the players choose whether this is business, suspicion, or insult.
TRANSITION	Pressure moves toward the concourse, service lane, or canteen.

Scene 2: The Port Pushes Back

PURPOSE	Show that local authority and local criminals both matter.
SETUP	Nera Voss warns the crew to keep order while Merev Sol offers an expensive solution.
WHAT THE PLAYERS CAN DO	Pay, bargain, verify claims, seek proof, or split up to check rumors.
RELEVANT CHECKS	Persuade 8+, Advocate 8+, Broker 8+, Streetwise 8+.
LIKELY OUTCOMES	The crew identifies who is official, who is opportunistic, and who is dangerous.
FAILURE COMPLICATIONS	They owe a fee, anger an official, or miss signs of the coming confrontation.
REFEREE ADVICE	Give useful information through multiple routes so the session does not stall.
TRANSITION	Tamsin Vale or her people move to confront them.

Scene 3: The Standoff

PURPOSE	Present a dangerous moment before initiative.
SETUP	Tamsin and two toughs confront the crew near cargo lanes, a kiosk, or the canteen.
WHAT THE PLAYERS CAN DO	Talk, intimidate, retreat, call security, take cover, draw weapons, or offer a deal.
RELEVANT CHECKS	Persuade 8+, Leadership 8+, Streetwise 8+, Gun Combat only if violence begins.
LIKELY OUTCOMES	The crew may defuse, delay, or define the terms of the conflict.
FAILURE COMPLICATIONS	A weapon appears, a bystander screams, or someone makes a bad move.
REFEREE ADVICE	Ask each player where they stand and what they are holding.
TRANSITION	If timing matters, roll initiative. If not, resolve as negotiation.

Scene 4: Short Combat, Chase, or Surrender

PURPOSE	Teach personal danger without bogging down.
SETUP	The scene becomes a brief exchange of fire, a close brawl, a chase, or a forced surrender.
WHAT THE PLAYERS CAN DO	Use cover, maneuver, aid an ally, threaten surrender, provide first aid, or escape.
RELEVANT CHECKS	Initiative, Gun Combat, Melee, Athletics, Medic, Recon, Leadership.
LIKELY OUTCOMES	The conflict ends after one side backs down, flees, drops, or negotiates.
FAILURE COMPLICATIONS	Someone is wounded, detained, accused, or left owing a debt.
REFEREE ADVICE	Do not run a deathmatch. Use morale and consequences.
TRANSITION	Move quickly to aftermath before the energy fades.

Scene 5: Aftermath and Local Reaction

PURPOSE	Make consequences visible.
SETUP	Port authority, witnesses, medtechs, brokers, and dock workers react to what happened.
WHAT THE PLAYERS CAN DO	Treat wounds, explain actions, pay fines, collect payment, apologize, threaten, or make a deal.
RELEVANT CHECKS	Medic 8+, Advocate 8+, Persuade 8+, Admin 8+, Broker 8+.
LIKELY OUTCOMES	The crew leaves with payment, trouble, a lead, or a future contact.
FAILURE COMPLICATIONS	Legal trouble, medical cost, unpaid debt, or damaged reputation follows them.
REFEREE ADVICE	End by linking money pressure to Session 5.
TRANSITION	A broker offers cargo or passengers because the ship needs income.

15. Core Checks and Suggested Difficulties

Situation	Skill	Difficulty	Success	Failure
Verify an unexpected fee	Admin or Advocate	8+	Spot whether the fee is real, inflated, or fabricated.	Pay too much or accuse the wrong person.
Read the port mood	Recon or Streetwise	8+	Notice tension, watchers, and possible exits.	Miss signs that the crew is being sized up.
Calm Ilan Dresk	Persuade or Streetwise	8+	He explains why payment is delayed.	He stalls, lies, or runs.
Negotiate with Nera Voss	Persuade or Advocate	8+	Gain time and official tolerance.	She places the crew under stricter scrutiny.
Spot ambush positioning	Recon	8+ or 10+	Notice cover, flanking, or hidden weapons.	The crew starts in a worse position.
Intimidate without escalating	Leadership or Persuade	8+	The opposition hesitates or backs down.	They feel cornered and act first.
Use cover under fire	Athletics or Recon	8+	Reach useful cover or improve position.	End exposed or separated.
Stabilize a wounded person	Medic	8+	Prevent the injury from worsening.	Treatment is delayed or costly.

16. Player-Facing Choices

Choice	Why It Matters	Benefit	Risk	Later Effect
Treat the delay as mistake or threat	Shapes first response.	A calm start keeps options open.	Too much patience may invite pressure.	Defines local reputation.
Go official or go quiet	Controls witnesses and law exposure.	Official route may protect the crew.	Quiet route may expose them to criminals.	Affects Nera Voss and port records.
Draw weapons or keep hands open	Sets escalation level.	Weapons may deter attack.	They may trigger panic or law response.	Affects legal trouble and witnesses.
Injure, capture, or let foes flee	Defines crew mercy and practicality.	Prisoners or survivors may talk.	Dead or humiliated foes create enemies.	Creates contacts, rivals, or warrants.
Pay the fee or challenge it	Money pressure begins.	Payment buys speed.	Challenge may delay launch.	Foreshadows Session 5 economics.

17. Consequences and Branching Outcomes

Clean Success

The crew resolves the delayed payment, defuses the confrontation or wins without public scandal, treats any injuries responsibly, and leaves with a useful broker or port contact. Local Suspicion remains low. Crew Reputation increases as competent and disciplined.

Mixed Success

The crew gets paid and survives, but someone is wounded, a witness reports them, a fine is imposed, or a local rival is offended. The campaign continues with money in hand and trouble behind them.

Complicated Failure

The crew loses money, suffers injury, draws official scrutiny, or leaves a hostile gang, broker, or port official behind. Do not block the campaign. Turn the cost into debt, delay, medical expense, a warning, or a future enemy.

CONSEQUENCE

A combat victory should still cost something: time, attention, injury, money, or reputation. A peaceful solution should also earn something: trust, information, reduced fees, or a better lead.

18. Combat, Conflict, or Crisis Guidance

Combat may occur this session, but it should be short, understandable, and avoidable. Use a simple scene with clear exits, visible cover, a few opponents, and a reason for everyone to stop before bodies pile up.

- Enemy purpose: test, frighten, rob, or pressure the crew, not die for a minor dispute.
- Enemy morale: Tamsin backs down if the crew offers face-saving terms or shows superior position.
- When enemies retreat: after a serious wound, failed intimidation, security arrival, or loss of advantage.
- Terrain or cover: cargo crates, kiosks, door frames, vehicles, support pillars, and crowds.
- Nonviolent exits: payment plan, apology, official mediation, public exposure, surrender, or withdrawal.
- Consequences of injury: medtech fees, port reports, angry witnesses, or moral pressure.
- How to keep fast: act in rounds only while timing matters. End combat when the decision is clear.

19. Ship, Trade, Law, or Faction Notes

Category	Session 4 Use
Ship Operations	Minimal use. The ship is nearby and may be threatened by port restrictions or docking delays.
Trade	Foreshadowed. Payment trouble and broker pressure prepare players for Session 5.
Cargo	Not emphasized yet, but cargo lanes and fees introduce freight spaces.
Passengers	Not used this session. Bystanders and witnesses foreshadow passenger complications.
Fuel	Minimal use. Fuel fees or dock charges may add pressure.
Starport Procedures	Important. Customs, port security, docking rules, and local fees shape the scene.
Law Level	Simplified. Use local enforcement, fines, detention, and warnings rather than detailed procedure.
Local Authority	Nera Voss and port staff represent order and consequences.
Drinax Reputation	Indirect. The crew may avoid naming Drinax, but their behavior will later matter.
Imperial Attention	None unless the crew invokes Imperial law, rank, or identity.
Aslan Attention	Not used this session.
Pirate Reputation	Not used yet. Reckless violence may create a criminal reputation early.
Merchant Reaction	Merev Sol and local brokers judge whether the crew is useful, dangerous, or exploitable.

20. Campaign Ledger Updates

Checklist	Checklist
☐ Credits gained or lost	☐ Medical costs or injuries recorded
☐ Courier payment status recorded	☐ Legal trouble or fines noted
☐ Dock fees, bribes, or false fees noted	☐ Local Suspicion adjusted
☐ NPCs helped or angered	☐ Port Warden Nera Voss reaction recorded
☐ Tamsin Vale status recorded	☐ Merev Sol broker reaction recorded
☐ Witnesses, rumors, or reports noted	☐ Crew Reputation updated
☐ Ship access or docking restriction noted	☐ Open hook to cargo or passengers recorded
☐ Drinax Trust adjusted if relevant	☐ Session 5 money pressure created

21. End-State of the Session

- The Travellers have faced their first serious portside confrontation.
- The players understand basic personal combat order and danger.
- The crew has seen that cover, range, injury, and morale matter.
- The port has reacted to the crew in some recorded way.
- The campaign ledger includes legal, medical, financial, or reputation effects.
- The crew now has a reason to care about income, cargo, passengers, and ship expenses.
- Session 5 can begin with money pressure and job offers.

22. Hooks into the Next Session

Hook Type	Hook
Direct Hook	A broker offers cargo or passenger work because the crew needs money, repairs, or port goodwill after the trouble.

Hook Type	Hook
Optional Player-Driven Hook	A character makes a contact in the canteen, clinic, customs desk, or dock gang who can provide a future cargo lead.
Consequence-Based Hook	If the crew handled the port quietly, they receive better job offers. If they made a mess, they must accept riskier cargo or higher fees.

23. Referee Quick Reference

Item	Reference
Session Goal	Teach personal combat basics and aftermath through a portside confrontation.
New Rules	Initiative, cover, range, attack checks, armor, damage, first aid, morale, surrender.
Important NPCs	Port Warden Nera Voss, Ilan Dresk, Merev Sol, Tamsin Vale, Rook, Pell, Jalen Mor.
Important Locations	Docking Concourse, Customs Desk, Cargo Service Lane, Low Deck Canteen, Clinic Kiosk.
Likely Checks	Admin, Advocate, Recon, Streetwise, Persuade, Leadership, Gun Combat, Melee, Athletics, Medic.
Main Complications	Delayed payment, false fees, dock gang pressure, witness panic, port authority response, injury.
End-State	Conflict resolved and legal, medical, financial, or reputation consequences recorded.
Ledger Updates	Credits, injuries, fines, legal trouble, local suspicion, NPC reactions, open cargo hook.

REFEREE NOTE

If the players avoid combat through good thinking, do not force a fight. Award the same teaching value by showing what trouble they avoided and what trust they gained.

24. Player Handout Page

PLAYER HANDOUT: TROUBLE AT THE PORT

You completed the first jump and reached the destination world, but arrival has not become easy money. A payment is delayed, the port feels tense, and several people seem interested in whether your crew can be pushed around. This session is about choices under pressure: talk, investigate, pay, threaten, retreat, or fight.

Known Situation

- The courier delivery has brought you to your first offworld port.
- The expected payment or confirmation is not moving smoothly.
- Local authority is present and does not want public violence.
- A broker may offer help, but help may come with a price.
- The crew should think before drawing weapons in a public port.

Known NPCs

Name	What You Know
Port Warden Nera Voss	A local authority figure responsible for keeping order.
Ilan Dresk	A courier contact connected to payment or confirmation.
Merev Sol	A broker who seems willing to help for a price.
Tamsin Vale	A local tough or gang lead who may test the crew.
Jalen Mor	An old spacer advisor who favors survival over pride.

Combat Reminder

Question	Why It Matters
Where am I standing?	Position decides cover, escape, and who can be hit.
What am I holding?	A drawn weapon changes the whole scene.
Who is watching?	Witnesses shape law and reputation.
What do we want?	Winning a fight may not solve the real problem.
Can this end without blood?	Surrender, retreat, payment, or public pressure may be better.

25. Appendix: Notes, Tables, and Optional Adjustments

Shorter-Session Adjustment

Start with the delayed payment already established. Move directly to the standoff, then spend the last third of the session on aftermath and ledger updates.

Longer-Session Expansion

Add a canteen scene before the confrontation. Let players gather rumors, meet a broker, and notice the gang before direct pressure begins.

If the Players Choose Violence

Make the stakes clear before initiative. Violence in a port brings witnesses, authority, medical costs, and possible restrictions. Do not erase consequences because the crew wins.

If the Players Avoid Violence

Reward it with a cleaner ledger, a better broker offer, reduced suspicion, or a port contact who respects restraint.

If the Players Ignore the Hook

Have the payment remain unresolved until docking fees, port delay, or a direct demand forces a choice. The scene should still be about pressure, not railroading.

If the Crew Lacks a Key Skill

Use broad options. Admin, Advocate, Persuade, Streetwise, Recon, Broker, Medic, and Leadership can all matter. Missing a combat specialist makes caution more valuable.

If the Referee Wants More Roleplay

Give Ilan a personal reason for fear and Tamsin a reason to avoid needless bloodshed. Let the players separate villains from desperate people.

If the Referee Wants More Action

Use a chase through the cargo service lane instead of a static gunfight. Resolve it with Athletics, Recon, Stealth, and one combat exchange if needed.

Optional Rumors

Rumor	Use
The port charges newcomers twice if they look lost.	Foreshadows false fees and broker pressure.
The courier contact owes money to the wrong people.	Explains delay without revealing details too early.
The port warden hates public weapons more than smugglers.	Warns players about escalation.
A ship with Drinax markings would draw attention here.	Foreshadows reputation risk.
Merev Sol always knows who needs work.	Points toward Session 5.

Optional Complication

OPTIONAL COMPLICATION

A bystander records part of the confrontation. The recording may be incomplete, misleading, or useful depending on how the crew handles the aftermath.

Optional NPC Reaction

Nera respects controlled crews. Merev respects profitable crews. Tamsin respects crews that give her a way to save face. Ilan respects crews that protect frightened people without humiliating them.