

APPENDIX: GORRAM CHINESE

The movement to leave Earth-that-Was stands out as a remarkable event in human history, one in which cross-cultural cooperation helped to achieve what some thought was impossible. In the effort to find a new home for humanity, the primary powers of the era—the United States of America and China—worked together to create the necessary technology, manpower, and logistics for the largest migration of people ever known.

Once the exodus of mankind had begun, the close quarters and difficult survival conditions in space broke down traditional barriers of language and culture. After a full generation had lived and died in the massive convoy of ships slowly trudging from star to star, the average person was at least bi-lingual and had a very multicultural outlook. A person's ethnicity became far less importance than competence and character.

Thus many generations later, the children of Earth-That-Was don't think much back to the days of colonization, but continue the legacy by their almost universal fluency in both English and Chinese. Culture and language have both continued to evolve, with economics becoming a primary dividing line. It is easy to distinguish a person from the central planets from one born and raised out on the Rim. Slang and linguistic shortcuts are used on the frontier, though some have filtered back into the refined speech usually found on worlds of the Core.

ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Folks in the Verse speak English or Chinese, one or the other being the dominant tongues most everywhere. It pays to know at least a little of both if you plan to get very far. Of the central planets, Londinium is primarily English-speaking, while Sihnon stands out as a center of Chinese influence.

MUTT TONGUES

Hundreds of languages made the great leap from Earth-That-Was and most of them survive in pockets and ghettos on most worlds. Only rarely, however, will anyone encounter a community that speaks a non-dominant language exclusively.

CUSSIN'

Human beings have happily fouled the gift of language with whatever inventive, vindictive, and insulting expressions they can imagine. While the traditional English swear words have survived intact,

a few additional crude cuss words have been added to the common man's vocabulary.

The basics include **Gorram** ("Run! It's the gorram law!"), **Ruttin'** ("It's gettin' too ruttin' hot in here."), and **Humped** ("He's got a gun on us. We're humped!"). Cursing in Chinese is considered more imaginative and expressive, and most everyone does it—at least when his mother has left the room.

FIGHTIN' WORDS

Some speech isn't cursing by traditional definition, but it will cause fists and bullets to fly just the same. Religion, politics, social class, and wealth are touchy subjects—as is mention of the Unification War.

Browncoat: Member of the Independent Factions, Independent veteran. Adopted early in the war by the Independent Factions, a brown coat has become indelibly linked to supporters of the Independents' cause. After the war's end, clothiers made good money dying brown coats blue or gray as folks wanted to forget the past and let the past forget them. Those that still "wear the brown" do it on purpose.

FRONTIER SLANG

In English, there are two predominant speech patterns. "Core Speech" is carefully used and grammatically correct. "Frontier Slang" sounds sloppy and quaint to Core speakers, who judge the speaker as poorly educated and low class. Those born outside the Core are more likely to have at least a little of the Frontier in their speech.

BASIC RIM WORLD SPEECH

- Truncate the "g" for "ing" words ("Schoolin'")
- Pepper with slang adjectives.
- Double negatives. ("It don't mean nothin' out here.")
- Using odd words and word forms in phrases.
- Use "don't" instead of "doesn't."
- Ain't.
- Odd Words: druther, yonder, dang, plumb, right smart.
- Prefixing on "-ing" ("a-runnin'").
- No -ly on adverbs. ("She described the plan real simple. That job's awful hard to do.")
- Subject and Verb don't match. ("We was goin' there. He got none of that.")

• Malformed verbs. ("He growed up real good. He come by here last night. I seen it with my own eyes. He done run off again.")

A FEW EXAMPLES

- "Looks like we got us some imminent violence."
- "We got no short of ugly ridin' in on us."
- "I'm just feeling kind of truthsomes right now."
- "We're in some peril here."
- "We just need a small crew, them as feel the need to be free."
- "This here's a recipe for unpleasantness."
- "I'm shocked my own self."
- "We'll be there directly."
- "But she does have an oddness to her."

SLANG: FRONTIER LIFE

- **All-fired** — completely. ("Where'd she go gettin' all-fired jealous 'bout this?")
- **Awful, Dreadful, Mighty, Plumb, Powerful** — adjectives for emphasis. ("Gettin' awful crowded in my sky.")
- **Bang-up** — great. ("They did a bang-up job.")
- **Bughouse** — mental hospital.
- **Git** — go away.
- **Ornery** — Stubborn, not passive.
- **Peck** — a large amount.
- **Preacher** — anyone religious.
- **Shindig** — A party, usually with dancing.
- **Shiny** — good or valuable.
- **Size someone up** — judge how tough they are or what their intentions might be.
- **Tetchy** — sensitive or complaining.
- **Run afoul** — to get into trouble with.

SLANG: SPACEFARING

- **Atmo** — atmosphere, as in to "leave atmo."
- **The black** — space.
- **Clean your housing** — to give a thorough beating (as in a spaceship's engine housing).
- **Feds, Federals** — Members of the Alliance, its military, law enforcement, or functionaries.
- **Go to blackout** — shut down power on the ship to avoid detection.
- **On the drift** — in space without fuel unable to travel.
- **Reavers** — madmen who live on the edges of civilized space, flying dangerous ships and preying on other space vessels.
- **The Rim** — frontier planets, not the core.
- **The Verse** — inhabited space or the universe.
- **Being buzzed** — Sensors from another ship are actively sweeping you.

SLANG: UNDERWORLD

- **Doxy** — prostitute.
- **Drops** — illegal, addictive, narcotic drugs.
- **Second story job** — breaking and entering robbery.
- **Scratch** — valuables.
- **The goods** — loot.
- **Went south** — problems appeared, the plan fell apart.
- **Tonic** — amateur or illegal alcoholic drink.
- **Bushwhack** — ambush.
- **Footpad** — pickpocket thief in a town.
- **Hornswoggle** — to trick someone.
- **On the dodge** — wanted by the police.

SLANG: TECHNICAL

- **Advocate** — a lawyer.
- **Cortex** — wide-spread information network
- **Genseed** — Genetically engineered crop seeds used on freshly terraformed worlds.
- **Skyplex** — orbital city or space station.
- **Wave** — a communication: text, audio, video, or holographic.

CHINESE PHRASES

The Chinese that became one of the two primary tongues of the Verse was originally known as Mandarin—China's official language. Mandarin, or Pekingese, is a dialect once spoken in that country's northern part, primarily around the Beijing city. The other major Chinese dialect was Cantonese, spoken down south in the Canton Province. Way back in the Earth-That-Was days, the Chinese folk actually went through a bruhaha as to which of the two tongues to make official. Though no blood was shed far as we know, it was a verbal civil war. North *vs.* South fought with volleys of dead-waking hollers over the virtues of their respective cant.

Obviously in the end Mandarin won out. So instead of *yat zeu*, people shout *chui se* to tell folks to go to hell.

Chinese is a very different tongue than English, and is difficult to learn for those who don't pick it up in the earliest years. Traditional Chinese has four inflections, five if you count the fifth, "soft" one. You best enunciate each just right or you might have folk scratching their head, wondering why you're so upset about losing a shoe when you're really trying to alarm them of a man overboard.

We said traditional, because in the 26th century we go by New Chinese. Like English where new words constantly replace the old and nobody utters the Earth-That-Was slang, Chinese got a makeover too. The progression of humans into a bilingual community evolved the original language into a

strip-downed version. The main languages, Chinese and English, each have certain subjects and ideas it can express more efficiently. Over time, folks figured out what they are and started replacing different parts of speech with whichever language that related their thoughts the best. A doctor in the 26th century wouldn't hope to explain *chi* flow in English, for instance, any more than a control station would give docking instructions in Chinese.

Words and phrases became further streamlined—curmudgeon sticklers would say “corrupted.” But only those reared in true Old Chinese-speaking households would complain, and the accessibility made it much easier for lower-class folk of English-speaking heritage.

JUNG J'WOHN GUO HUA LIKE A TRUE SPACER

The above would read “Speaking Chinese Like a True Spacer” in English. In humanity's new home, a collective of humans is all able to swear in a 5,000+ year-old language — with a cowboy twang.

The following phrases can be tossed into whatever situation seems most appropriate—or not. These just scratch the surface of Chinese cursing possibilities. While even educated, refined folk swear every now and then, you're more likely to hear most of these phrases out of a free-boosting fringe rat.

A switch to those girls' backsides is just good enough: *Byen Dah Tab Mubn Dug Bay Jo Go Lai.*

Abracadabra-alakazam: *Tian-Ling-Ling, Di-Ling-Ling.*

Accusing someone of lying, a ridiculous notion, or talking out of the posterior: *Fubn Pi*, literally “farting.”

Agitate someone out of hiding: *Da Chow Jing Ser*, literally “beating the grass to startle the snake.”

Alas, not good, what a mess, too bad: *Jao Gao*, literally “spoiled cake.”

Alliance: *Nien Mohn.*

Are we clear?: *Dohn lub mah.*

Attributing an unfortunate longshot occurrence: *Yeh Lu Jwo Duo Lub Jwohn Wbei Jian Guay*, literally “do enough nighttime travels and one will eventually see a ghost”; also a warning of future retribution.

Awesome or extraordinarily clever: *Gao Gubn*, literally “high pole.”

Baboon's ass crack: *Feh Feh Pi Goh.*

Bastard, jerk: *Huen Dahn*, literally “rotten egg.”

Big boss or operator of a business: *Lao Buhn*; *Lao Buhn Ni'un* for female boss or proprietor's wife. Also informal appellation for acquaintances.

Big brother: *Ghub* or *Ghub-Ghub*, the former is more intimate and connotes blood relation.

Big stupid pile of stinking meat: *Yi Dwei Da Buen Chuo Rob.*

Big sister: *Jei* or *Jei-Jei.*

Blindside or conspire against someone secretly: *Fahn Leong Jian*, literally “shoot a cold arrow.”

Bottoms up: *Gon Beh*, literally “dry cup.”

Brilliant: *Jing Chai.*

Browncoat (slang for soldiers of Independent): *Jone Yee.*

Cheap floozy: *Jien Huo.*

Check at once: *Ma Shong Jien Cha.*

Cheering or urging someone on: *Jab Yoh*, literally “add fuel,” equivalent of “go (name)!” in English.

Chinese/Mandarin language: *Jwohn Guo Hua.*

Cool: *Ku.*

Commit blunder of great magnitude: *Bie Woo Lobng.*

Complete disarray or sheer pandemonium: *Tian Fubn Di Fu*, literally “sky tumbles while earth turns over.”

Completely useless: *Tian Di Wu Yohn.*

Congratulations: *Gohn Shi.*

Conniving or scheming person: *Guay Tob Guay Noun*, literally “ghost head and ghost brain.”

Crazy dog in love with its own feces: *Ai Chr Jze Se Dub Fohn Diang Gho.*

Cursing: *Ma Jung Hwa*, literally “chastise with dirty words.”

Cute: *Kub Ai.*

Damn or damn it: *Ta Ma Dub*, literally “his mother's...”

Dangerous person or animal: *Wei Shian Dohn Woo.*

Daydream or wishful thinking: *Bai Lib Mohn.*

Deserving of bad consequence or fate: *Hwo Gai.*

Despicable: *Kub Wu.*

Do something for nothing in return, or wasted endeavor without a payoff: *Yee Yan*, literally “a charity show.”

Done for or imminent doom: *Wong Dahn*, literally “finished (cooked) egg.”

Dumbass: *Chwen*, descriptive, literally “retarded”

Earthshaking: *Jing Tian Dwobn Di*, literally “startle the sky and shake the earth.”

Engage a monkey in feces-hurling contest: *Gen Ho Tze Bi Dio se.*

Enough of this nonsense: *Go Hwong Tong.*

Everything under the sky: *Tian Shia*, can be used to allude to the world or universe.

Excrement: *Mi Tian Gohn*, slang, derives from the fact that when you stack the three characters — “mi” (rice), “tian” (paddy), and “go” (public or mutual) — from top to bottom in that order, they form the ideograph for excrement.

Explosive diarrhea of an elephant: *Da Shiong La Se La Ch'wohn Tian.*

Fear nothing but (fill in the blank): *Tian Bu Pa, Di Bu Pa, Tze Pa. . .*

Fellow: *Ja Hwo*, also slang for weapon.

Female companion or girlfriend: *Ma Tze*, a somewhat derogatory slang; add *Dow* in front for "looking to get a girlfriend."

Filthy fornicators of livestock: *Ung Jeong Jia Ching Jien Soh.*

Fire!: *Kai Huo* (as in shooting), *Fuhn Huo* (as in starting).

Fire at will or terminate with extreme prejudice: *Da Kai Sa Jeh*, meaning "breaking the Buddhist vow against killing."

Flat-chested: *Hur Bao Duhn*, slang, literally "eggs cooked sunny side-up."

Foiled or ruined at the last moment: *Sob Ya Feb Tian*, expression, literally, "a cooked duck flies away."

Fool: *Sab Gwa*, literally "stupid melonhead."

Friend, pal, buddy: *Puhn Yoh.*

Gang, crew, or confederate of diehards: *Se Dubng.*

Gang or faction leader: *Da Gher Da* for male, *Da Jeh Da* for female, slang.

Garbage: *Luh Sub.*

Get bold or audacious: *Fahn Dahn*, literally "release courage."

Get lost: *Kwai Jio Kai.*

Go all out, hold nothing back: *Ping Ming*, literally "fight for one's life."

Go to hell: *Chui Se*, literally "go die."

Good or okay: *How.*

Good journey or bon voyage: *Yi Lu Shwen Fohn.*

Good luck: *Joo How Rin.*

Greetings: *Ni How.*

Handsome: *Shwie.*

Happy development or fortuitous turn of event: *How Shi Sung Chung*, literally "a good show's about to start," can be used sarcastically.

Have desires above one's social/financial position, or beyond one's ability to realize: *Lai Hub Moh Sheong Tze Tian Uh Zob*, literally "for a toad to think of eating a swan."

He or she: *Tab, tab-dub* for his or hers, *tab-muhn* for them, *tab-muhn-dub* for theirs.

Homewrecking tramp: *Hu Li Jing*, literally "fox spirit."

Hump: *Gun.*

Hurry, speed up: *Guhn Kwai.*

I or me: *Wuo, wuo-dub* for mine.

I don't believe my eyes!: *Wo Bu Shin Wo Dab Yan Jing.*

I neither see nor hear you: *Wuo Dwei Nee Boo Ting Boo Jen.*

Idiot, moron: *Buhn Dahn*, literally "stupid egg," or *Chwen Joo*, literally "retarded pig."

Impossible: *Bu Kuh Nuhn.*

Impressive display or visage but no substance: *Da Chung Wu Dahn*, literally "big gun, no bullet."

In someone's doghouse: *Luhn Gohn*, literally "a cold palace," which is where an emperor confines those concubines who have fallen out of favor.

In that case, never mind: *Nah Mei Guan Shee.*

Junk: *Feb Wu.*

Leader of a criminal operation: *Ser Toh*, literally "snakehead," derogatory.

Leave one to his own fate: *Tze Sh'un Tze Mieh.*

Let me repeat myself: *Wuo Jai Jeong Yi Chi.*

Life support failure: *Shuhn Ming Shi T'wohn Gu Jong.*

Like hell: *Jien Ta Dub Guay*, literally "see his ghost."

Little brother: *Di* or *Di-Di.*

Little sister: *Mei* or *Mei-Mei.*

Long time no see: *How Joh Bu Jian.*

Male companion or boyfriend: *Kai Tze*, also a somewhat derogatory slang.

Manipulate, or playing somebody for a fool: *Swa.*

Merciful Buddha protect us: *Rung Tse Fwo Tzoo Bao Yo Wuo Muhn.*

Merciful God, please take me away: *Rung Tse Song Di Ching Dai Wuo Tzo.*

Merciless bastard: *Lurn Shwei Jah Jwohn*, literally "cold-blooded mixed breed"

Merciless hell: *Ai Yab Tien Ab.*

Mind your own business: *Gwon Ni Tze Jee Dub Shr.*

Miss: *Shao Jeh*, literally "little lady." Follows a name when addressing a known person, so River would be addressed as *Tam River shao jeh*, or simply *Tam shao jeh*.

Mister: *Shian Shen*, literally "born before me," also follows a person's name.

Monkey raping: *Cheong Bao Ho Tze.*

Motherless goat of all motherless goats: *Mei Yong Ma Dub Tse Gu Yong.*

Muddled, mixed-up, confused: *Wu Toh Wu Now*, literally "without a head or a brain."

No problem: *Mei Wen Ti.*

Not advised: *Jwohn Gao Bu Yi.*

Not enough: *Bu Goh*, or *Hai Bu Goh* for "not enough yet."

Not keeping a rendezvous: *Fahn Gher Tze*, literally "release a pigeon" but insinuating not picking up the bird at the destination.

Now, immediately: *Ma Shong.*

Nuts: *Shiang Jing Ping* or just *Shiang Jing*; *Fah Shiang Jing* for "going nuts."

Oddball or a goof: *Chai Neow.*

Of course: *Dubn Rubn.*

Oh my God: *Wuo Dub Tian Ab.*

Old: *Lao.*

Old man/husband: *Lao Gohn.*

Old lady/wife: *Lao Puo.*

One must be ruthless to be a great: *Wu Du Bu Juhn Fu*, literally “a person without poison is not a great man.”

Outdo someone or doing one better: *Dao-Gao-Yee-Chi Moh-Gao-Yee-Juhn*, expression, literally “the solution advances a yard, the problem advances a mile.”

Pal: *Lao Sheong* if addressee's older, *Lao Di* if younger; used for men only. *P'n Yoh* for “friend.”

Pathetic wretch: *Bei Bi Shiou Ren*, literally “shameless dirty little person”

Peon, small fry, a nobody: *Wu Ming Shao Jwu*, literally “nameless little foot soldier.”

Prehistoric: *Lao Deow Ya*, literally “so old as to lose all teeth”

Pig's Sty: *Joo Fuen Chse.*

Pile of sun-baked dog poo: *Ri shao gou shi bing.*

Plain, bland, bare: *Yong Chwen Mien*, slang taken from the namesake generic, flavorless noodle dish.

Please be quiet: *Ching Abn Jing Yi Dien.*

Pool of excrement: *F'n Zse*, can be used in an expression for “deep crap.”

Pool of pig droppings: *Joo Fuen Chse.*

Posterior: *Pi Gu.*

Precious, darling, sweetheart: *Bao Bei.*

Real man: *Nubn Tze Huhn.*

Really dangerous: *Wei Shan*, more poetic, *Wo Hu Chung Long*, which is “crouching tiger, hidden dragon,” an expression for something dangerous.

Redundant, unnecessary complicating something: *Wua Ser Tian Jwoo*, literally “draw a snake and add feet to it.”

Retreat, run away: *Jio Web Sung Chihb*, phrase summarizing the last of the Chinese “36 Stratagems,” which extols the virtue of fleeing to fight another day.

Ridiculously stange, illogical or nonsensical: *Mo Min Chi Meow*, literally “not understanding the peculiarity.”

Ruined, finished: *Wan Dubn Lub.*

Ruthless or savage beast of a person: *Ching Soh.*

Screw him/her running: *Gun Ta Jwo Lu.*

Screw you: *Chwee Ni Dub.*

Shameless Hussy: *Meh Lien Dub Jyah Jee*, literally “faceless bastard prostitute.”

Shiny, awesome, fantastic: *Jahn!*

Shut up: *Bi Jweh.*

Shut up and make us wealthy: *Bi Jweh, Lung Wuo Mun fab tsai.*

Sir: *Da Yeh*. When used as a nobility, *Nubn Jwei*, following the name.

So guilty as to deserve a thousand deaths: *Jwei Gai Won Se.*

Son of a bitch: *Wong Ba Dubn*, or *Go Neong Yung Dub* for a more literal and vicious translation.

Speak now and quickly: *Yo Hua Kwai Suo.*

Speaking without a clue: *Shiah Hwa*, literally “blind talk.”

Stop talking: *Joo Koh.*

Stupid son of a drooling whore and monkey: *Lio Coh Jwei Ji Neong Hur Ho Deb Yung Dub Buhn Jah J'wohn.*

Swindle: *Gwai.*

Suicidal idea: *Tze sab ju yi.*

Surrender, give up: *Tob Shung.*

Take care, stay healthy: *Bao Jone*, literally “maintain weight.”

Talk nonsense: *Shia Suo.*

Thanks: *Sheb Sheb.*

There's nothing in this plan that isn't horrific: *Jub Gub Jee Hua Juhn Kub Pab!*

Things never go smooth: *How W'rin Bu Lai, Whai W'rin Bu Jwo*, literally “good luck don't come, bad luck don't leave.”

To throw in a monkeywrench: *Gwai Ma Jeon*, literally “twist a horse's legs (while it's galloping).”

Trouble, problem, complication: *Ma Fuhn.*

Tyrant, iron-fisted ruler: *Ba Wong.*

Ugly or perverted person: *Joo Bab Jeb*, insult taken from the name of the hoggish, lecherous character in the popular Chinese folktale, “Journey to the West.”

Understand: *Dohn, dohn-ma* for “understand?” *dohn-lub-mah* for “are we clear here?”

Very: *Feh Chun.*

Wait/hold on a second: *D'un Yi Shia.*

Warning someone against doing things “the hard way”: *Jin Job Bu Chi Chi Fah Job*, literally “choosing to sip the wine of penalty over that of respect.”

We, us: *Wuo Mun, Wuo Mun Dub* for ours.

We will enjoy your silence now: *Bai Tuo, Uhn Jin Yee Dien.*

What: *Shub Mub?*

What the hell is this crap: *Jub Shi Sub Mo Go Dohng Shee?*

You: *Ni, ni-dub* for yours, *ni-mubn* for plural, *ni-mubn-dub* for plural possessive.

You don't deserve it: *Ni Bu Ying Dub Jur Gub.*

You wanna bullet right in your throat?: *Nee Yow Wuo Kai Chiung?*

You wanna die?: *Nee Tzao Se Mah?*

Young one: *Nyen Ching Dub*, or *Yo Chr*, slang for underaged (literally “infant teeth.”)

Water: *Swei.*