

# Helioside

A Mercenary Breed home world by Christopher J. Banks



Helioside is an Earth-like planet on the fringe of “civilized” space. It is renowned for its near perfect weather and is an ideal vacation spot for most species. The planet has very few raw materials and the soil is only adequate, which has led to very few outsiders having any desire to settle the planet. The main population is a group of displaced Gemini who wished to follow a more rigid sense of self-government. The other species, here long before the Gemini, is an advanced, mysterious race known as Latharians.

**Environment:** Helioside is an odd planet. Almost all the land is located between 45-degrees North and South of the planet poles and separated into three large continents: Brazwall, Malsk, and Typius, each themselves streaked with

wide bodies of water and winding rivers that flow universally from North to South. The rest of the surface is dominated by vast oceans. The weather on the continents averages a comfortable 27-degrees Celsius for 95% of the day. The ground soil is not overly abundant and most of the major governments have enough to feed their populations, but little excess.

**Population:** Two of the major continents on Helioside are dominated by a xenophobic race known as the Latharians. Little is known of the Latharians as they fiercely defend their borders, all thick with genetically modified rainforests, suggesting the race is well-developed scientifically. The Latharians do not participate in space flight or exploration, but have the technology to disable

ships in orbit if necessary. The final continent, Malsk, is home to an offshoot of the Gemini race. These people left their home world several hundred years ago, preferring to live a caste driven life where nobility still rules the people.

**Planetary Science:** With its awkward “wobble”, the planet of Helioside enjoys almost non-stop temperate, sunny days. As such, the planet is the perfect vacation spot and nearly 95% of the 420 days are temperate and sunny, with the occasional sprinkle of rain to cool down sunning vacationers. Helioside is the fifth planet in the Helioside System, with all inner planets being scorched rocks, stripped of atmosphere, and the two external are massive gas giants. A rotational 26-hour day sees roughly 18 hours of sunlight. Below and above the 45-degree mark on the planet, the oceans are a turbulent mess with little ocean travel.

For approximately 20 days in the middle of the year, the planet undergoes what the locals call “Sotherification.” This is a Latharian term intended to describe the violent storms that streak the entire planet. Structures are built to withstand the worst of these storms and any harvest is scheduled around them as well. Five small moons (Lyman, Sefcovic, Briante, Gallosa, and Soltes) orbit laterally around the planet, and one dominant moon, Villetas, orbits along the lines of longitude.

**Atmosphere:** Helioside has a rich oxygen atmosphere and a generally pleasant disposition. The population on Malsk produces pollutants, but there have never been seen as having any type of disruptive effect on the planet’s atmosphere. Many suspect the Latharian have some sort of way to regulate the effect.

**Culture:** Malsk’s population is organized into a three caste system. The lowest tier is full of criminals, debtors, and malcontents. These people are given positions generally as laborers. The second

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tier make up the majority of the planet's population and are known as the middle-class. These people are employed generally in the hospitality, science, and production positions. Finally, the nobility sit atop the cultural landscape on Malsk. The continent has hundreds of minor royal families all in-charge of their local areas or countries. Each is responsible for keeping the peace and providing to the centralized government, currently led by the Hyperion family.

There is little upward mobility in the tiers. Children of lower tier families are encouraged to undergo a "citizenship test" to move into the middle-class. People are generally only born into, or married into, the noble class. The three weeks of Sotherification are considered a holiday for all Heliosides. During this time, the children in the lowest tier are given the opportunity for upward mobility. It is also common for noble houses to adopt a promising student or professional into their house.

Little is known of the Latharian culture. Occasional sightings indicate they are of a reptilian nature, but their thick jungles and border patrolling technology keep prying eyes away. The Gemini that came here long ago requested an audience with the Latharians only to be rebuffed. However, an electronic beacon on Malsk repeated four encoded words, "You may live here." Since that time, hundreds of years ago, there have been only a few rare instances of communication.