

ROCKET AGE

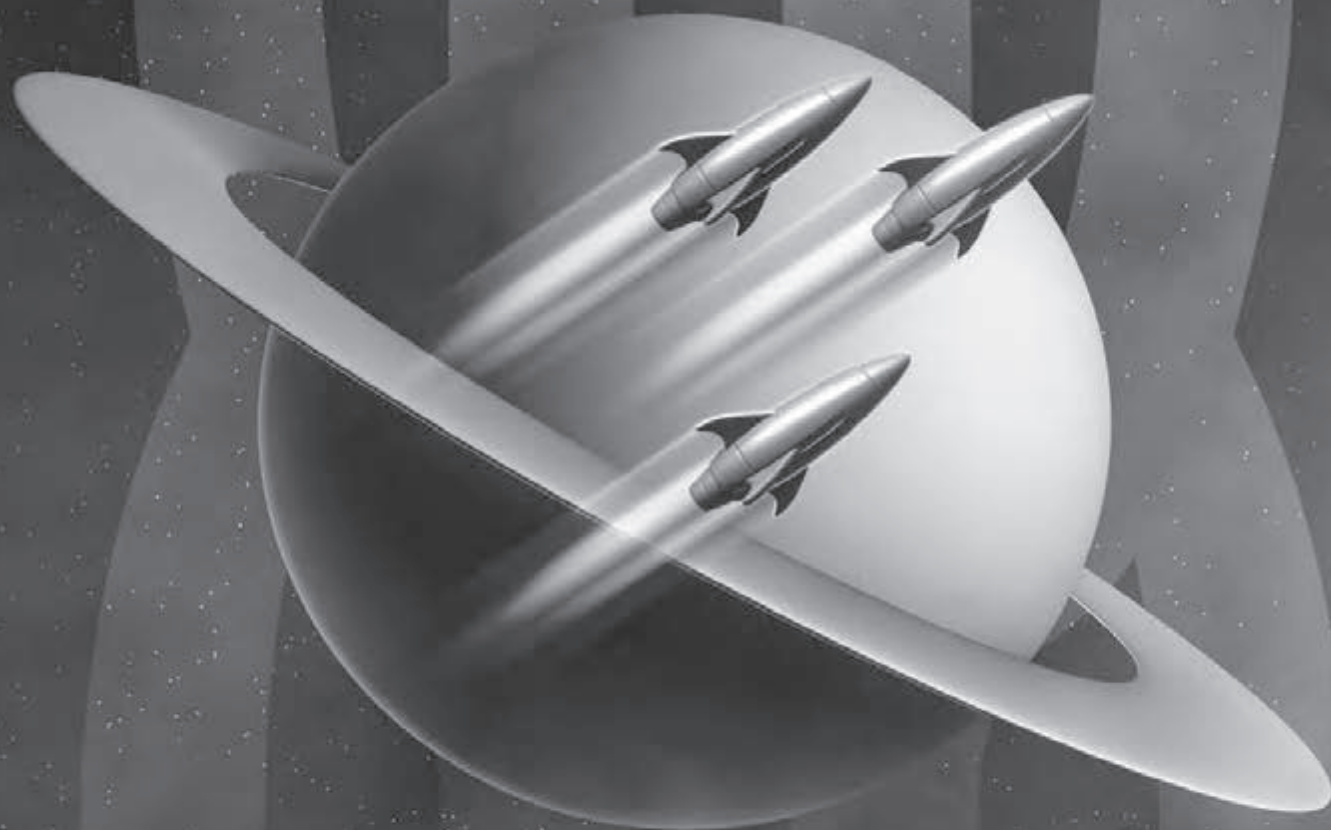


5E



BY KEN SPENCER

THE **ROCKET RANGERS!**
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- R O C K E T A G E -

FOREWARD



Suddenly the starry night was split by a line of fire, the bright snarling wake of a rocket ship leaping into the heavens like a silver arrow. Climbing from not all that far away. It flashed back moonlight once, as it reached a certain height, and raced on.

And then the sound struck them all, the roar of engines that smote them like an angry wall of howling lions, a din that went on and on until it became a distant rippling thunder.

Then a second silver needle shot up into the sky far away nigh the horizon, and streaked across the night, chasing the first.

The departure of the COLUMBUS hadn't gone unnoticed. There were pirates in space, and the needle was one of them.

Scott Crowninshield looked grimly at the Sorntyne sisters.

"So it's begun," he said unnecessarily.

They looked up from readying their RAY guns only long enough to give him polite nods, then turned and began to run towards their rocket ship as it rumbled into life.

It was only then that he realized they were wearing flying leathers—and that one of the four sisters was missing.

"Again," Jessica Sorntyne added in Scott's ear as she raced past, startling him so much he nearly fell. The fourth sister was carrying something large and complicated, an affair of metal tubes and hoses and cables. Scott had never seen its like before, but it looked...dangerous.

And undoubtedly was.



And so begins another ***Rocket Age*** adventure.

Like Scott, I don't know exactly what's going on, and I certainly don't know how things will end up when he inevitably runs after the last Sorntyne sister—but I do know that the ride to get whatever that ending is will be fun.

Why? Well, because there's something inescapably, inherently FUN about space adventures that involve fishbowl helmets, RAY guns, dashing space heroes and heroines, and dastardly villains.

And that's what ***Rocket Age*** is: a big, steaming-hot bowl of fun. In the form of rules that make adventures leap into your mind every time you read through them. So many adventures!

I fell in love with ***Rocket Age*** at first glimpse, and I'm still enraptured, in part because of the rocket ship fins and haughty Martian princes and sheer sense of wonder of it all, and in part because there are layers and layers of adventure waiting here. I hunger to climb aboard my own rocket ship and get going, to play my own part in the ***Rocket Age***.

It's a past that never was, where Tesla, Einstein, and Armstrong blasted off into space to visit Mars, ushering in the ***Rocket Age***. Now, seven years later, it's 1938, and as storm clouds gather on Earth, where war seems increasingly closer and soon to come, humanity has taken its first steps to live and work—not just make fleeting visits—to a decadent Mars ruled by corruptible princes, a Venus of mysterious jungles teeming with big game and rich mines, the lawless Asteroid Belt, and beyond, dangerous Imperial Jupiter and the Jovian Moons.

Some of those Earthlings are clear-eyed, heroic Rocket Rangers—and some of them are Nazis (about which there are rumors of horrific experiments in secret laboratories, that could lie hidden almost anywhere in the Solar System). And Earthlings share the Solar System not just with Venusians and Martians, but with the enigmatic Europeans who look down their amused noses at Earthlings, the mobile sentient plant and fungus colonies known as Ganymedians, and the stunted and warped loites.

There are jewels to be mined on Venus, deadly disintegrator weapons that vaporize matter, and stranger things to be found in the ruins of fallen civilizations. Intrigues and conspiracies abound, from merchant pacts to the terrorist acts of the shadowy 31st Seal.

Secret agents peer and slink amid all the busy merchants and RAY gun-firing spacers. New ships are being built, legions of scientists and tinkerers mad and otherwise are creating new things daily, and it's a time of exploration, expansion, and violent skirmishes and disputes as all the players in the Solar System, human and non-, jostle for power.

Everything's changing, and it's a golden time to carve out your own place in the heart of things, if you love bold adventure. There's so much going on right now! You can't help but get caught up in what's unfolding all over the Solar System. And beyond it, too, out there where the big ships go: the vast interstellar void that Einstein flew off into—and hasn't yet been seen since.

And just as it has always been on Earth, you can do unto others, forging your own life and career as the ***Rocket Age*** unfolds in all of its noisy, golden splendor—or you can huddle at home and listen to the RADIO or read the papers, as what the bold adventurers do and cause gets done to you.

There are fortunes to be made, villains to be foiled, and RAY guns—and European disintegrators, and Martian radium rifles—to be fired. Will your space armor hold? Or will you end up as one of the dead drifting silently in space, holed through with your ship?

Some booby traps in ancient ruins have waited aeons to claim new victims, and new warlords are rising on planets and moons everywhere. The Great Powers of Earth are continuing their feuds and rivalries out into space, freebooters are conquering their own space territories, and the energetic expansionism of Earthlings is revitalizing some of the non-humans in the Solar System—but stirring others to prepare to make war on those of Earth.

Rocket Age has it all, from details of the planets and moons and their inhabitants, to story hooks for years of adventures, to the weapons and armor and (of course!) the rocket ships. Everything feels alive, everything entices, and...it hooked me.

And if rocket ships and RAY guns kindle something in you, it'll hook you, too.

"Rocket Rangers, AWAY!" - Ed Greenwood

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Welcome to the Rocket Age
To the retro-sci-fi future past
It's an age of Exploration
Of scientific and technological wonders unlike any the Solar System has ever seen
But it's also an age of conquest, of the dark threat of war
It's an age of heroes and villains
Of Earthlings, Martians, Venusians, Europeans, Ioites, Ganymedians
Rocket Rangers, Martian Princes, Venusian Harvititori

The Rocket Age is the zap of RAY beams
Sizzle of disintegrators
Roar of rocket engines
Alien jungle drum beats
The smell of Bahmoots under the baking Martian sun
Stench of wet Ioite
Sweet-Spicy aroma of alien spices
A whiff of burned radium fuel

Strap yourself in and go full throttle
You're in the Rocket Age now
In a past that never was, but could have been
A Solar System that isn't, but should be
You'll hunt thunder lizards in the upland jungles of Venus
Battle Ancient Martian killing machines
Explore the deadly skies of Jupiter
Face down disintegrator armed Europeans
Bulls-eye mutants in the blasted wastes of Io
Strap on your RAY pistols
Check the seals on your suit's bubble helmet
Ride that radium rocket to the edge of Yesterday
And blast off into Tomorrow

Rocket Rangers, Away!

- R O C K E T A G E -

I N T R O D U C T I O N



WELCOME TO THE ROCKET AGE!

This book is an introduction to the Rocket Age for those wishing to use the **5e** rules to explore the Solar System, battle Nazis, Soviets, and aliens, and set off on a radium-fueled journey to adventure. ***Rocket Age*** was first published in 2013 as a setting for the Vortex system and has launched, at the time of this writing, four sourcebooks, a campaign guide, and numerous adventures. Using the Vortex system it continues as ***Rocket Age Classic*** with new material.

So why go with a different system?

The Vortex system is a highly narrative system that runs on seat of the pants rulings by the GM and players. Such a system is not for everyone, and we want everyone to enjoy ***Rocket Age's*** Solar System. There are also a great many gamers who have a system that they enjoy and see no need to venture into a new one. Thus we decided to adapt, not convert, the ***Rocket Age*** setting into a new system. After

nearly a year of testing, auditioning systems if you will, we settled on **5e** as being the best fit. We think you will agree.

This is not a conversion. It is an adaptation. **5e** has certain core conceits and we wanted to apply those to the ***Rocket Age*** setting as opposed to simply making the numbers match the new system. Because of that long time ***Rocket Age*** fans might find some changes to the Solar System they know. There are more psychics and psychic powers have a larger role. There is more detail as far as equipment, the two systems treat equipment in very different ways and we adapted your RAY pistols and silthankas to fit. In general our approach has been to make the setting fit the play experience of **5e**, not bog down game play by trying to hammer every bit of the system so that it replicates the Vortex system but with a d20. That would be foolish.

The adaptation is more than a fitting a new system, **5e** sits at the end of a long gaming tradition. The exploration of unknown subterranean expanses and the often reptilian denizens thereof, is one of the core conceits we wanted to adapt.

Rocket Age provides, at least in the subterranean expanses department, with plentiful ruins on Mars, in the Asteroid Belt, and even in the jungles of Venus. We have increased coverage of these ruins, though as with **Rocket Age Classic** there is a whole Solar System to explore with a wide range of stories to be told.

Now, on to the show!

WHAT IS ROCKET AGE?

This is planetary romance (or retro-sci-fi as it is sometimes known) in the same vein as the works of Burroughs, Heinlein, More, Brackett, and Stark. It is an application of pulp style adventure to the long dismissed sci-fi of the early to mid-Twentieth Century. Yes, **Rocket Age** is space opera, but it is a sub-genre of that glorious sub-genre of Science Fiction. It draws from the classic pulp tropes, adds in a healthy dose of pseudo science, and pours out into your game.

Rocket Age is about “Adventure!” with a capital ‘A’ and a big bold exclamation point. From the deadly jungles of Venus to the blasted wastes of Mars, and all points beyond and in between there is plenty for the player characters to do, see, find, and fight. Action needs to be not just your goal in **Rocket Age**, but your method. If you are stuck, use Raymond Chandler’s advice and have men (or in the case of **Rocket Age**, aliens) with guns burst into the room. Scenes should take place in the most daring of environments, and do not be afraid, as a player or a GM, to push the bounds of physics and reason. Standoffs on a Jovian sky island as it crumbles is great, but add in a flock of hungry darters and it becomes a rollicking good time.

Style is paramount in **Rocket Age**, more so than in other sci-fi settings. If you can add fins to something, do so, and the same goes for radiators and bubbled fish-bowl helmets and windows. If a piece of technology would be bulky in the real world, it is slimmer and more compact in **Rocket Age**. Space suits are skin tight and capped with fish bowl helmets, a rocket can be made small enough to fit on a person’s back, and particle accelerators can be carried about in the saddle of a bahmoot.

Shiny should be the standard for clothing and vehicles, from chrome-plated rockets to silver lamé uniforms. If it can be polished, plated, or painted it’s bright and shiny, if not, it’s at least clean. Except for engines, for some reason engines and engineers are always grimy, their faces and overalls stained black and brown.

Race, Gender and Ethnicity

Rocket Age is set in an alternate 1930s, and despite the generally positive nature of the setting, the darker side of that era is still present. Racism was rampant; indeed for many it was a way of life. Gender bias was also the norm, though restrictions that had long constrained women in the Western world were lifting. Likewise, bigotry towards those of other ethnicities, religions, or sexual orientations was often just part of normal day-to-day behavior. Yes, the media of the time that inspired **Rocket Age** rarely depicted the heroes, or any characters for that matter (save villains), as anything but heterosexual middle class protestant white males. At the same time, these very heroes would spout lines about freedom, equality, justice, and fair play. **Rocket Age** takes the heroes at their words, and presents a world where the evil of bigotry is marginalized, it is something for villains, and the ignorant masses of Earth, heroes in their gleaming rocket ships just don’t think that way. Out there amongst the planets, men and women care more about one’s actions and abilities than race, creed, or who they like to sleep next to. It’s a dream, yes, but it is a worthy one.

Likewise, the heroes should be stylish, they are after all part of that glorious rocket set that all admire. This is not the era of angst-ridden self-reflective counter culturists or anti-heroes. No, **Rocket Age** is a story about larger than life square-jawed heroes and dashing heroines challenging the bad guys and pushing past into the great unknown. There are dark themes in here, especially those that revolve around issues of colonialism, racism, greed, and gender bias, but these are things for the heroes to fight against because they are wrong, not simply because they have a personal vendetta. The morality of the age is one that may seem naïve to those of us in the early twenty-first century. However, in **Rocket Age** the good triumphs over the evil because evil is inherently flawed (though villains do often have redeeming traits), and everyone should have a good laugh at the end.

This is not to say that every episode of every series needs to be light hearted, mixing in some tragedy especially of the melodramatic nature is always fitting. Just keep in mind that the heroes are not scared broken people, even after losing a loved one, but are instead the sort who pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and go on fighting.

Enough talk, we’re sophonts of action, so strap on your rocket pack, holster your RAY gun, and take off to fight the good fight.



WHAT IS INSIDE?

Species of the Solar System

Rocket Age features seventeen known sophonts in the Solar System. These intelligent species hail from a range of planets and moons, from the steaming jungles of Venus to the blasted moon of Io. Each species is given a full description that details its game mechanics, physiology, culture, and relations with other species.

Classes

Rocket Age introduces five new classes that better fit the RAY gun wielding action of the setting. Spies, law enforcement, or negotiators are three types of agents you can play. There are many mysteries in the Solar System, and many places both wild and dangerous, these are the goals and homes of the explorer class. For all your sneaky and deceitful types, there is the scoundrel, the Solar System's con artists and cat burglar. The Rocket Age is one of rapid scientific advancement, and the scientist class is on the cutting edge, be they a doctor, engineer, or inventor. Finally, you have the soldier on hand to protect all of the above and face down gun toting Nazis and rampaging alien beasts.



Backgrounds

Your hero of the Rocket Age is more than just a species and a class; they have a back story from before they showed up on screen. Backgrounds help to expand upon the character and tie them into the story. We have adapted the organizations and occupational packages of Rocket Age Classic into backgrounds, but with a little twist. The background features that your freebooter, Rocket Ranger, or Venusian Harvitori have are more powerful, ranging from the chance to get inspiration points back in certain situations to rare equipment or heroic abilities.

Feats

New feats are offered that allow characters to emulate the over the top action that makes Rocket Age so great, yet are balanced to work with the 5e system. Will you be an Ace, Dance It Out, or have Resourceful Pockets?

Equipment

Rocket Age features RAY guns and disintegrators, silthankas and sunaxes, psychic crystals and Ganymedian organic tech. Yet, at the same time it is still 1938, and thus our heroes might wield a mix of fantastic technology and mundane equipment, plus the traditional gear of their native peoples. From Earthling RADIOS to Jovian repulsion float devices, and on to the more common refurbished or reverse-engineered Ancient Martian technologies.

Vehicles

In Rocket Age our heroes will likely spend a great deal of time on the surface of planets. Rocket ships can't land everywhere and refueling is generally a concern. Most likely they will land near where they want to be and have to find a way to get from the rocket port to the adventure. Thus we offer cars, planes, tanks, and more exotic means of transport. Strap on your rocket pack, climb into your rocket car, and keep on an eye for Nazi war walkers.

Adventures

You are going out into the vacuum of space, exploring alien worlds, and shooting particle beams at each other, so a few new rules could be useful. This chapter introduces those rules, covering alien environments, lack of gravity, and other hazards and heroics of the Rocket Age. We also introduce a system of inspiration points to add a little more narrative flavor to your games.

Tour of the Solar System

The next seven chapters cover the planets of the Rocket Age. Each entry has information on the geology, biology, and geography of the place, the native sophonts, and the current state of affairs. All that is great background, but we are playing a game not writing a research paper, thus every entry has an NPC to interact with and a set of story hooks to get the adventure going. We look at the hazards of each planet, diseases, traps found in ruins, and more. The whole shebang ends with four adventure outlines that can be used for any level of hero.

Organizations

Following the grand trip out to Pluto we come back and look at the cabals, cliques, governments, and other organizations that are having an impact on the Solar System. These can serve as friends and foes, allies or enemies, as the nature of your heroes and their story dictates. Again, there are NPCs to meet and story hooks to get you moving.

Ancient Artifacts

Next up is a chapter on artifacts of lost advanced technologies. There are no magical items in Rocket Age (or are there, you can make that call). Instead we have the lost technologies of the Ancient Martians, Erisians, Lunans, and possibly others. These artifacts are not easy to figure out, they use scientific theories few in 1938 understand. Finding an artifact is only the start, figuring out how it works is an adventure in itself.

Alien Beasts and Other Foes

After the artifacts we delve into the alien beasts and foes, a chapter that gives you stats for Jovian gasbags, Nazi sturmtruppen and more. Guess what each entry has? Yeah, story hooks. Why give you a monster for your heroes to fight and not ideas on how to use it?

WHAT'S NEXT?

Rocket Age (5e) is all you need to start your adventures in the Solar System that should have been in a 1938 that never was. You have all the rules, character features, and a setting that covers the nine planets, the organizations that operate across the Solar System, and includes a bestiary of the deadliest alien creatures you are likely to encounter.

Beyond this book there is even more *Rocket Age* for those with the courage to push their ships further, to see what is over the next ridge, and venture into the great unknown.

Blood Red Mars covers the Red Planet in detail, its history, its current state, and the people who are battling for its fate. With *Lure of Venus* we visit the jungle world and look at the native sophonts, the aliens who are exploring the planet, and the conflicts that arise. *Imperial Jupiter* deals with the Jovian System of moons as well as the gas giant itself, the species native to the region, and the truth behind the mysterious Europeans. All three of these supplements give more than just setting material; they also offer new character options, new hooks for adventure, new technology, and catalogs of the deadly life that lives out there amongst the planets.

Other adventures are available in our adventure series such as *Bring 'em Back Alive*, *Rocket Racers*, and *Warlord of the Gravitic Portal*. Finally, there is the *Booster Series* of supplements such as the *Asteroid Belt* that give greater detail on a specific location in the Solar System. All of these are available in *Rocket Age Classic* and soon will be updated for *Rocket Age (5e)*.

Buckle on that rocket pack, charge up your RAY pistol, and launch into adventure.

Rocket Rangers, Away!

- R O C K E T A G E -

R E C E N T H I S T O R Y

The Rocket Age began on April 19th, 1931 when the first rocket ship, *Eagle*, lifted off from Nikolai Tesla's New York laboratory on its maiden voyage from the Earth to Mars. This was the culmination of years of work by Tesla, Einstein, and Goddard working together to develop the means by which man could travel beyond the bounds of his homeworld and explore distant planets. Tesla and Einstein were able to take part in this historic journey, but unfortunately Goddard fell ill shortly before the scheduled lift off. His seat was taken by a young barnstorming pilot (a better choice to fly the rocket than any of the three esteemed scientists) named Henry Armstrong (his nephew, Neil, would later be the first man to walk on an extra-solar planet). The three managed to keep the rocket from exploding and navigate the tricky flight out of the atmosphere.

The journey to Mars in the first rocket ship was a long one, and although incredibly intelligent, Einstein and Tesla had not worked out all of the details. The ship leaked a small amount of air, prompting the two geniuses to fully develop and deploy the first space suits, and Armstrong to

make the first space walk. The vacuum welding apparatus that had been designed on Earth had to be reworked to make it function with some efficiency in the cold rigors of space. In the course of the pioneering journey, minor discoveries about space travel were made and problems were encountered and dealt with, but soon the crew of the *Eagle* neared the Red Planet.

After two hundred days cooped up in the small crew compartment of the *Eagle*, the three Earthlings were excited to finally set foot on an alien world. The descent was flawless, and Armstrong put the *Eagle* down in a hard sand bed not far from the city of Jilvar. The arrival of a flaming silver ship from the sky caused all manner of excitement and fear amongst the Martians. The intrepid explorers were met by a delegation of a junior Silthuri of the ruling sub-caste and a troop of Maduri, members of the Martian warrior caste.

Although the two races lacked a common language, having two of the brightest minds that Earth has ever produced leading an expedition helped to bridge this gap. Failing to



find that the Martians understood the universal language of mathematics, communication was eventually established in the time-honored method of speaking loudly and slowly while at the same time making broad gestures and facial expressions. The Earthling explorers were taken to the prince, who feasted and fêted them while the three got their bearings and learned enough of the local Martian dialect to communicate properly.

All of Jilvar was amazed at these strange aliens who came from a distant planet with a message of peace and goodwill. While Armstrong was given a grand tour of the principality of Jilvbak, the Einstein and Tesla were shown the Ancient Machinery that provided the city with electricity and water. The Martians expected the earthlings to marvel at the wonders of the Ancients, but instead the pair of scientists began examining the machines in minute detail, asking hordes of questions of the Talandri who operated them and the Kastari who prayed over the devices. After three days of near constant examination of the machines (Einstein and Tesla barely stopped to eat and did not sleep at all), the Earthlings discovered how to not just repair some of the broken components, but to actually improve the design. This shocked the Martians, especially the Kastari of the city, but Prince Javos was pleased to see that his people's water supply was now cleaner, that the supply of electricity was now more than sufficient to light the entire city and return power to the Talandri workshops, and that the locks that lifted ships from one canal to another were again functioning. All this meant that the city and its people could focus their energies on increasing the trade that would enable the principality to grow larger than its neighbors.

Einstein, Tesla, and Armstrong stayed on Mars for six months, long enough to learn much of the planet and to broker trade agreements with Prince Javos. Their rocket ship refueled by the refinery that the Earthlings built (and which Prince Javos owns to this day), they returned to Earth and a grand reception, including a ticker-tape parade in New York and a tour of the capitals of the world. Armstrong would go on to partner with Goddard and found the A-G Rocket Engine Corporation. Tesla returned to Mars several times, discovering in ancient ruins the plans that lead to the invention of the RAY gun as well as other wonders of the modern rocket age. Einstein began work on a trans-relativistic rocket engine capable of carrying humanity beyond the Solar System. On December 3, 1937 he detached from his orbital workshop in the *Intrepid* and ignited the advanced new engines, leaving the Solar System behind and disappearing into deep space.

TIMELINE

Date	Event
1931	First Rocket Ship, the <i>Eagle</i> launched.
1931	Based on Ancient Martian designs, Tesla invents the RAY gun.
1932	The Tesla-Armstrong Lunar Expedition shows that there is little of interest on Earth's closest neighbor.
1933	First Earthling expeditions to Mars from Germany, France, the UK, and the USA. The Italians soon follow, as do the Japanese.
1934	Battle of Hasten Wells, beginning of American Conquest of Mars.
1934	First exploration of Venus.
1934	Mercury flyby conducted by Dr. Preston Scott, his report dissuades others from bothering with the rocky ball.
1934	First expeditions to the Asteroid Belt reveal a wealth of minerals.
1935	The <i>Lewis and Clark</i> incident brings Germany and the USA to the brink of war.
1935	Gold and Radium found on Venus.
1936	The Ebb Revolution brings Communism to Mars.
1936	Issuing of the European Ultimatum banning Earthlings from the Jovian System and the Far Planets.
1936	Destruction of the HMRS <i>James Cook</i> by European disintegrators.
1937	Suspension of the European Ultimatum.
1937	Expeditions to Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune map some of the Outer Planets.
1937	Exploration of the Jovian System begins, first clandestine airship battle in the upper reaches of Jupiter's Atmosphere.
1937	Founding of the Lodge on Venus.
1937	Ganymede Gold Rush begins.
1937	Einstein and his trans-relativistic rocket ship <i>Intrepid</i> disappear.
1938	Present Date



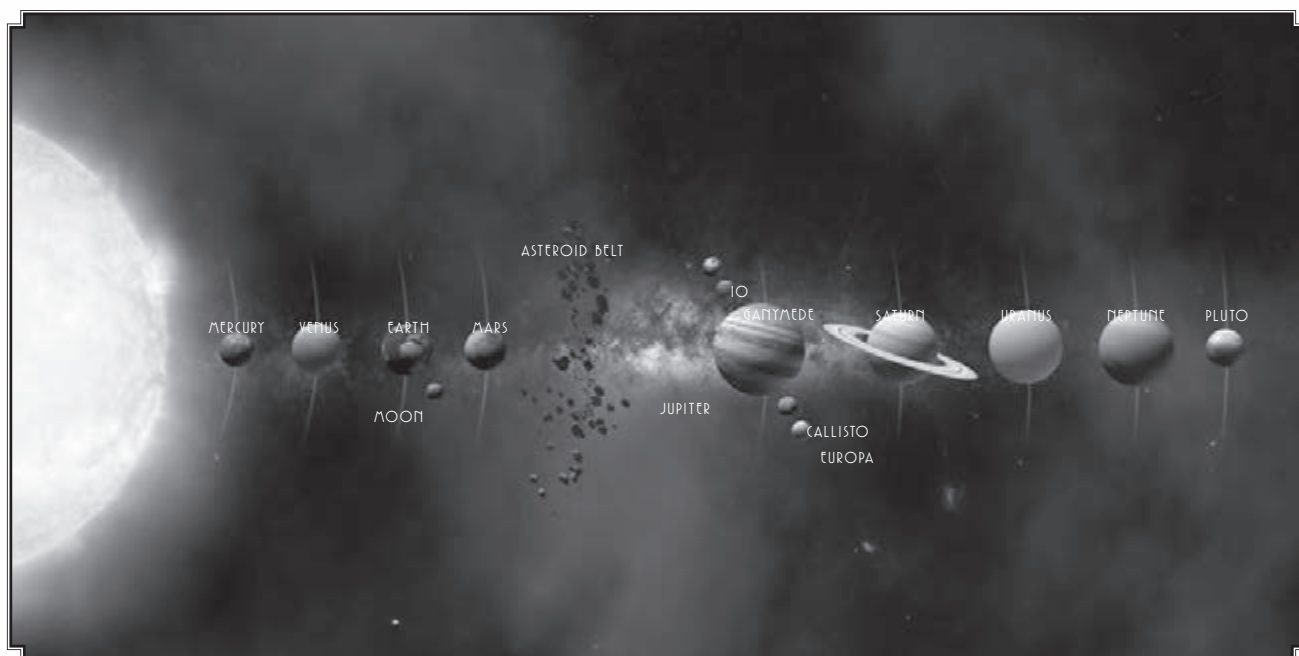
THE SOLAR SYSTEM

With the advent of the rocket ship, the people of Earth have turned to the rest of their solar system to find a new frontier. Humanity has taken to the stars and daily pushes the boundaries of the explored Solar System. From the red deserts of Mars and the steaming jungles of Venus to the far frontier of Saturn's moons, and the crushing alien vistas of Jupiter's upper atmosphere, no place is safe from the probing eyes and grasping hands of the Earthlings. Even the Asteroid Belt and the Jovian moons have seen the boot prints of humanity, and the bravest explorers have their eyes set on Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, even Pluto is on the list of places to see, explore, and possibly exploit.

Mars draws the greatest amount of attention as it presents the best chance of wealth as well as extra-terrestrial colonies and thus a great deal of national pride. Many see the wealth of Mars as an easy score, though wresting it from the hands of the Martians can prove to be troublesome. That some Earthlings have managed to rise to sit on the thrones of Martian principalities has only further increased the numbers of treasure hunters and fortune seekers that have descended upon the Red Planet. That the people of Mars have a strange and exotic culture, and that their higher castes are quite lovely to behold, has only encouraged more people to make the long journey through space.

Second to Mars due to the dangers of her jungles and the work needed to extract wealth from them, is Venus, a green and lush planet that seems locked in an earlier epoch of development. Giant reptiles, not unlike the dinosaurs of Earth's past, as well as insects of unbelievable size inhabit Venus. The native Venusians are much like the fabled missing link, somewhere between ape and man, but not fully either. They are intelligent, if primitive, and their culture is as exciting and rich as any on Earth. The true wealth of Venus lies in its vast highland jungles and in the soil beneath, for Venus is rich in gold, diamonds, and the radium needed to power rocket ships.

Third on the list of destinations for Earthlings looking for fame, fortune, and adventure is the Jovian system, both the set of moons that orbit the gas giant as well as Jupiter itself. Only the upper levels of Jupiter's atmosphere are accessible, and even that is not thoroughly explored. Rocket ships cannot safely fly for any distance in the gas giant's airspace for fear of igniting a methane pocket, and so specially outfitted airships are used to ply the upper reaches of Jupiter's great depth. No wealth has yet been found there, but a great deal of national pride is being staked on exploring Jupiter. Of the many moons that comprise the Jovian System, only Ganymede has attracted any major interest, and a small gold rush is underway, hampered only by the natives and their quest to rid their homeworld of the interloping foreigners. No discussion of the Jovian System is complete without mentioning the self-



proclaimed rulers of the Solar System, the Europeans. These strange aliens possess technology in advance of anything known on Earth, and appear to lack any hesitation in using it for destructive purposes. They have threatened humanity with extinction, reversed their decision and allowed Earthlings to pass beyond and into the Jovian System, and have issued several edicts directing Earthlings to do everything from make more cheese to live in peace with one another.

Humanity is pushing out beyond Venus, Mars, and the Jovian system, exploring and exploiting the rest of the Solar System at a rapid pace. Prospectors have already begun to sift through the Asteroid Belt in hopes of striking it rich, establishing small mining operations despite the danger and difficulties that entails. Mercury has been largely ignored as that planet offers little more than blazing heat and freezing cold, but as technology advances it is only a matter of time before a relatively safe and profitable means of exploration is found. The first explorers from Earth have visited Saturn and its moons, and some of these expeditions have returned. Likewise, Uranus and Neptune have also seen some exploration, but these three planets are the frontier of the frontier, open and inviting, yet perilous. Pluto is yet to see human visitors, but there have been hints that life may exist on that most extreme outpost of the Solar System, strange faces appear to be carved into the ice and snow, yet no sign of advanced civilizations capable of such monumental feats have been found.

The distances between the planets of the Solar System are great, but the billions and billions of kilometers to the next star are hundreds of magnitudes greater. Rocket ships do not have the ability to make the voyage to Alpha Centauri anywhere near feasible, but hope exists that technology, either from Earthling minds or scavenged from the Ancient ruins on Mars, may make extra-solar exploration a possibility. Already Einstein's trans-relativistic rocket engine holds out that promise, and if, or when, he returns from his great voyage, no one doubts that humanity will embark on a greater round of space exploration.

Technology

The level of technology in 1938 is greater than humanity has ever known, reaching into the lives of every citizen of the Great Powers, at least those with the means to purchase it, and even touching those less fortunate or unlucky enough to be born in one of the impoverished

nations. Advances in transportation, communication, manufacturing, and military equipment have allowed for a new and unprecedented era of exploration and progress to sweep the globe and rocket (literally) mankind into the stars.

The greatest marvel of this age is the rocket ship, designed by the unlikely, but brilliant team of Nicolai Tesla, Albert Einstein, and John Goddard. Although the three brilliant minds that came together to invent the vehicle that has expanded humanity's reach beyond the grip of Earth's gravity-well has long since split up, their pioneering research is being carried on by others, and soon these followers and one-time apprentices of the greatest minds humanity has ever produced will be making their own names.

The rocket engines that power the mighty space ships of Earth would not of themselves have produced the current age. All the attendant technologies, from the seals of space suits to the power plants that provide reaction mass for the rocket engines have all done their part to create the modern Rocket Age. Modified versions of the Tesla-Einstein electro-radioactive power plant now provide electricity to cities across the Earth. The advanced materials needed to construct rocket ships and space suits have been put to use in construction and medical engineering, as well as inspiring amazing fashions from Milan and Paris. Enhanced radio communications are stronger, clearer, and farther-reaching than ever, allowing a grandmother in France to talk to her grandson in San Francisco cheaply and easily. The invention of RADAR, or Radio Detection and Ranging, allows the tracking rocket ships, celestial objects, and even airplanes in flight, greatly easing the dangers of air and space travel. Finally, the mathematical necessities of projecting the trajectory of a rocket ship over millions of kilometers of space, space which is never as empty as one thinks it would be, have led to the development of a new class of computational devices that rely on vacuum tubes to process amazing amounts of information. It is only a matter of time before these computers' can be made smaller, for while the most advanced models take up as much room as a bungalow, they allow the masses access to a systematic and scientific means of managing their daily lives.

The systematic and scientific computation of information allows for nations and industries to better manage their resources, thus reducing wastage. The same holds true for their citizens and employees. Although some point to the potential for dehumanization and abuse, both nations and companies are won over by the ability of even one of



these machines to replace, and even perform better than, hundreds of error prone human clerks.

In the field of military arms and equipment, the past few years have seen the development of amazing weapons of destruction. Conventional weapons such as rifles, sub-machine guns, artillery pieces, and tanks have all seen improvements. Combat aircraft have evolved from biplanes to more modern designs complete with racks of bombs and machine guns. Experimental atmospheric combat rocket ships are in development, though no nation has yet unveiled a fully functional prototype. Rockets themselves have become the weapon of choice, and every one of the Great Powers possesses rockets capable of projecting their military might well outside their borders, and in the case of the United States and Soviet Union, across the seas to other continents as well.

The most striking development in weaponry to date is Tesla's RAY (Radiation Accelerating Weaponry) gun. The first models were meant to provide rocket ships with a reliable means of defending themselves in the void between planets. Today, handheld and tank mounted versions have seen use on the battlefields of Mars, and the RAY gun is the mark of the elite soldier, the special operative, and the very wealthy explorer. Capable of dealing a devastating blast of deadly radiation constrained in a tight beam, RAY guns are lethal in the extreme, but also represent the first reliable non-lethal weapon deployed to military forces. Most RAY guns are fitted with a selector circuit that allows the user to adjust the strength of the beam from its normal lethal level to one that causes the nervous systems of most animals to misfire, thus rendering the target unconscious with little risk to the target (some unfortunates who already suffer from heart or nervous conditions have died, but such instances are thankfully rare).

The Growing Conflicts

Not all is peace and light in the reaches of space and the Solar System sees more war now than it did in the centuries before the Rocket Age. Earthlings battle Martians on the Red Planet and Ganymedians on Ganymede. They fight each other in covert wars in the shifting gas storms of Jupiter, and plot against one another everywhere that Sol's light shines. These battles may pale in significance to the potential threat represented by the Europeans, but at least they keep the fighting off Earth, and thus shift the cost of war partially to alien bodies and alien cities.

The Great Powers

The six Great Powers, the Empire of Japan, France, Germany, the Soviet Union (USSR), the United Kingdom, and the United States of America dominate politics and economies both on Earth and throughout the Solar System. All six are capable of projecting their military, economic, and political might into any corner of Venus, Earth, Mars, or Jupiter, and as explorer's push the boundaries of Earthling dominated space, will do so on Saturn, Neptune, Uranus, and soon even Pluto. At least this is what they would have others believe; the truth is far less extensive and far less grand.

Despite their might, the Great Powers often find themselves opposed or hindered by a variety of factors. First, even those that are close allies, as the UK, France and USA have become in recent years, still have opposing agendas and goals, not to mention ambitions. The same holds true, but on a greater scale for conflicts between the Great Powers, and all six are constantly trying to hamper, slow, or even sabotage each other's projects. In addition, the lesser powers play their own roles in the greater trans-solar intrigue, jockeying for position amongst each other and angling to become the next Great Power. The fall of one of the six from its lofty heights would leave a vacuum, and nature so abhors a vacuum, especially in the realms of international politics.

Other factors besides rivals limit the reach of the Great Powers. The non-human inhabitants of Mars and Venus have their own plans for their planets, plans that often run contrary to the desires of presidents, chancellors, emperors, and kings. The Europeans pose a definite threat, but how much is bluff and what their true goals are is unknown. Finally, powerful corporations are starting to grow to the point where their own reach and might are sufficient to prove threatening to the sovereignty of not just minor nations, but the Great Powers as well.

Finally, there is the issue of resources, the necessary money, and the web of favors required that allow each of the Great Powers to enforce its will on the Solar System. The distances between planets is vast, and even a relatively small world like one of the moons of Jupiter has a surface area greater than any single nation on Earth. There are simply too many nooks and crannies for the might of the Great Powers to fill, despite what they proclaim publicly and privately tell each other. There is more than enough room in the Solar System for the secrets and adventure that the Earthlings bring with them, let alone those already out there!

- R O C K E T A G E -

ROCKET AGE SPECIES

SOPHONTS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Our Solar System is home to seventeen species of sophont, though one has not been recognized as such by the others. From the Jungles of Venus to the blasted moon Io, intelligent beings have formed cultures, built homes, and sought meaning in their lives. Each of these seventeen is a playable species (in *Rocket Age* we use species as opposed to the more common race used in role-playing games).



Earthlings

Earthlings are the species that invented the radium rocket drive and launched themselves into dominance, at least in their own eyes. From the steaming jungles of Venus to the rings of Saturn and beyond, you will find Earthlings exploring, fighting, trading, or simply living. The species from the third planet have become a ubiquitous sight in the Solar System of *Rocket Age*.



Europeans

Enigmatic and eccentric, the Europeans possess advanced science and technology, as well as strong psychic abilities. Despite their threats and posturing, they have yet to disintegrate the Earth, just a few ships here and there. In an effort to better understand the 'lesser species', the Europeans have sent out Emissaries to learn and understand by participating in the cultures of other species.



Ganymedians

Biologically the strangest of all the sophonts, Ganymedians are a symbiotic organism made up of different species of plant and fungus. Although primitive, they possess a strong sense of honor and a fierce loyalty. Just don't be around when they flower.



Ioites

Savage and feral, the Ioites are all that's left of their once glorious civilization. Their home world blasted into an apocalyptic wasteland by the Europeans, the Ioites struggle to survive. Yet, as disgusting as their eating habits are, they have an intense drive and are incredibly resourceful, making an Ioite a fine addition to any crew.



Jovians



The depths of Jupiter have many secrets, but one has been uncovered. The Jovians, ancient enemies of the Europeans, have surfaced from their centuries long exile. These winged aliens, long thought extinct by the Europeans, were just hiding and waiting for the time to emerge. Their culture is based around competing philosophies of martial virtues and pragmatism, and they promise to change the balance of power in the Jovian System.

Lizard Monkeys



From Venus comes the Lizard Monkeys. As far as the Lizard Monkeys are concerned they live in a paradise and do not need to make permanent tools, big buildings, or any of that stuff. What they do need to do is Name and Behold the Solar System, for their religion demands that all things must be Named and Beheld to have a soul.

Martians

The natives of the Red Planet can be considered one species but they are divided into castes that are physically distinct and reproductively incompatible. According to most Martian legends, the Ancient Martians created the castes eons ago in order to form a perfect Ladder of Being. Today most Martian cultures treat the castes as forced into specific roles in society, roles defined by tradition and reinforced by biology.



The princes and nobles of Mars, the Silthuri caste rules the majority of principalities (the Kastari rule the balance). Living lavish lives of wealth and privilege, the Silthuri range from grasping politicians and magnificent monarchs, to indolent and idle sybarites. At least the upper sub-castes do, for the lower sub-castes serve as bureaucrats and functionaries who see to the daily affairs of Mars. Other sub-castes serve as officers in the legions of Mars, though this varies from principality to principality and some serve only as figureheads while others are skillful combatants.



The priestly caste of the Kastari is divided into hundreds of sects, some large like the Orthodox Fellowship, others small but influential such as the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe. As one of the higher castes, the Kastari enjoy lavish lives of luxury, at least if you are one of the upper sub-castes. Of all the castes, the Kastari are the only one that promotes its members from one sub-caste to the other.



Maduri, the warrior caste of Mars, are fearsome and alien, tusked, and muscle bound soldiers whose loyalty and ferocity are legendary. Although beholden to their Silthuri and Kastari masters, the Maduri are one of the higher castes, and thus should enjoy a luxurious lifestyle. They do not, for such fripperies would soften a soldier and destroy the legions. Divided by an extreme sexual dimorphism, the males of the legion are assault troops, raiders, and scouts, while the larger and tougher female legionnaires form the protective shield wall that dominates Martian warfare.



The craftsman caste of Mars, the Talandri, have long been limited by tradition and are divided into highly specialized sub-castes. This has constrained their creativity, and in areas touched by the Ebb Revolution, in liberated Emancipation, and under the rule of the Americans, British, and French, a renaissance is underway amongst this lower caste. Earthling minds brought us the Rocket Age, what will Talandri minds, free to create and innovate, bring next?



Lowest of the free castes, the Pilthuri merchant caste is seen as a necessary evil. However, the Pilthuri are more than simple traders, they are the diplomats and administrators who make sure goods and favors flow across the sands. Often left to their own devices by their Silthuri and Kastari masters, the Pilthuri are the only caste (excluding the Chanari of course) that regularly travels the wilds of the red planet.



Slavery exists on Mars in the form of the Julandri caste. The Julandri are actually two sub-castes that are different species with divergent biology. Perhaps one of the most numerous of the Martian castes, the Julandri laborer sub-caste have been bred for strength and determination, at least the determination needed to work long hours at repetitive tasks. Laborers work in the fields, carry heavy loads in the factories, and are treated as two-legged beasts of burden by the other castes. It should be no wonder that so many Julandri Laborers joined the Ebb Revolution. While not as numerous as the laborer sub-caste of the Julandri, the Courtesans can be found serving in the retinues of the higher castes. The level of education Courtesans receive during their training only enhances their natural beauty. Taught music, art, philosophy, and conversational skills from an early age, the Julandri Courtesans are the perfect face for any group of the rocket set.



Finally, we have the nomadic Chanari, the masters of the desert wastes of Mars. Living outside of the caste system of other Martians, the Chanari are separate species and culture. While the rest of Mars reels from contact with and conquest by the Earthlings, the Chanari go on as they always have, only now with guns.



Metisians

Perhaps in response to the return of the Jovians, but more likely for reasons that outsiders cannot comprehend, the Europeans have made a new alliance with the Metisians. These six-limbed underground dwelling cephalopods serve as the newest arm of the European Navy, the Metisian Guard. Warlike and encased in advanced fighting suits that both armor them and support their gelatinous bodies, the Metisians are the Europeans newest strike force, the entire species having sworn oaths of loyalty to their strange masters.



Robomen

More and more Ancient Robomen of Mars have been dug out of the sands, rebooted, and taken to other worlds. These artificial lifeforms do not have much memory of their lives amongst the Ancients, but they do have an urge to follow millennia old programming. As machines, they face different obstacles, and have different abilities, than flesh and blood beings. However, they still leak fluid if pricked and have something that passes for emotions.



Venusians

The top species on Venus and the only mammal native to that jungle world, the Venusians are a species of hunters and gathers. Their tradition of the Harvititor, or wandering period, has spread the species nearly as far and wide as Earthlings. Although seen by many to be primitive, the Venusians have a long tradition of philosophy, oratory, and logic.



SUGGESTED READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING

Reading

Planetary Romance, pulp adventure, and space opera are not dead genres, indeed new novels and stories are published every year that either fall into these categories or are written expressly to continue these fine literary traditions. Don't forget that in addition to being part of a genre of sci-fi, *Rocket Age* is also a historical game, so a trip to the library, although not necessary, wouldn't hurt.

Robert A. Heinlein's 'juvenile' books, especially *Space Cadet*, *Red Planet*, *The Rolling Stones*, *Farmer in the Sky*, *Spaceman Jones*, *Tunnel in the Sky*, *Time for the Stars*, and *Have Spacesuit- Will Travel*, are packed with ideas for a *Rocket Age* episodes. Beware the stobor.

Of course Edgar Rice Burroughs and his *John Carter of Mars* series, which comprises eleven novels that follow the exploits of southern gentlemen adventurer John Carter across the face of the Red Planet, although somewhat dated in style, are fine examples of the sci-fi of the past.

Frank Herbert's *Dune* series has the right feel, though its action is far in the future.

Finally, Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* also fits the genre and feel of *Rocket Age*.

TV and Movies

Several fun TV shows and movies deal with the planetary romance genre. Some are excellent examples of cinema, others shockingly bad romps through camp. Naturally, the old black and white *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers* serials fit the bill, though they are more than a bit dated and can be hard to watch at times. Love it or hate it, the 1980 *Flash Gordon* film is a poor rendition of the original serials, but a great movie in its own right. It showcases all that is stylistically good about *Rocket Age*, just ignore the so-so acting and look at the pretty moving pictures.

The dialogue is campy and over the top, but very suitable, such as "I Love you Flash, but we've only got seventeen hours to save the Earth." The music is by Queen, and that alone makes this worth watching.

Both *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* were inspired by the same sources as *Rocket Age*, and the former yields several ideas for episodes (and has a much larger library to work from). If you want to get even campier, try *Barbarella Queen of the Universe*, a cheesy, over the top, psychedelic erotic sci-fi from the late 1960s. For the less camp inclined, the 1978 *Buck Rogers* TV show, as well as the original *Battlestar Galatica* both have the happier, more light hearted space opera feel than more recent TV shows and films.

Music

Jazz and big band are genres that go a long way towards setting the mood for *Rocket Age*. Another good option is classic radio serials of the thirties and forties. Play these in the background, and your players will be in the mood in no time. Don't feel restricted to specific decades; some great music of the twenties and fifties fits *Rocket Age* quite well, as do modern musicians who work in older styles, often with a nice techno-retro flair. Ali Hassan Kuban, the King of Cairo Swing, is great for something exotic. To Western ears, the combination of Middle Eastern instruments and styles with big band and jazz sets the scene for nightclubs far away and long ago. Just about anything by the legendary Glenn Miller is worth playing during a *Rocket Age* game. Actually post-war and later, many of Frank Sinatra's songs have that groove and tempo that suits *Rocket Age*, especially *Fly Me to the Moon*. The Brian Setzer Orchestra does excellent big band tunes, and the Poar Modern Jukebox recordings are more modern and more accessible. Another great source of music is any of the dozens of compilations of music from World War II, often with names like *GI Jive*, or *Songs the Won the War*.

THE **FUTURE**



STARTS HERE

SOPHONTS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM



SOPHONTS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Earthlings are not the only intelligent life in the Solar System, Mars, Venus, and the moons of Jupiter all support lifeforms that are as intelligent as, if not more so than, humanity. That we are not alone has already had an effect on the human psyche, driving some to seek the unification of all men and women as one species without divisions of ethnicity or religion, while causing others to become even more isolationist and discriminatory. A growing segment of the population of Earth is campaigning for the acceptance of alien sophonts as equal members of the family of the Solar System, while at the same time mass opinion is of an 'Earthling first' mentality, seeing the Venusians and Martians, as well as others, as easily conquered and exploited peoples. Sadly, some of the strongest proponents of species wide unity on Earth are also some of fiercest speciesist on the planet.

Out among the planets the situation is even worse for non-Earthling sophonts. Speciesism is rampant, especially on Ganymede, Mars, and Venus. Part of this is the expected clash of cultures and the resultant expression of the darker parts of human nature – greed, hatred, and xenophobia. A large portion of the blame for this falls on the various heads of the Earthling governments, none of whom recognize non-Earthlings as citizens nor awards them any rights. This stance helps assist with the conquest and subjugation of these worlds, something that numerous Earthling nations and corporations desire. On Mars and Ganymede, constant warfare with the natives helps to breed mutual feelings of distrust and reduction of their fellow sophonts to the 'other' and thus a valid target for violence and aggression.

The Solar System of **Rocket Age** is more than just conflict and danger. There are wonders to see and behold, strange cultures to meet and learn from, and the very edges of science to explore. The jungles of Venus are dangerous, but they are also a paradise of plants and life in hues of green, red, yellow, purple, and blue. Mars is racked with conflict, but it is also the home to a millennia old culture whose works of art are some of the most sublime, whose

architectural wonders put everything Earthlings have produced to shame, and whose ways are enticingly alien. Even Jupiter offers the ephemeral beauty of the shifting clouds and sky islands, not to mention the lights of the moons orbiting above.

Languages

There are tens of thousands of languages, dialects, creoles, and jargons in the Solar System, far too many for anyone to learn. Earth alone is home to thousands of languages. When you factor in dead languages, such as Latin and Ancient Martian, the number increases greatly.

Ancient Erisian: The language of the long dead natives of the planet Eris. So far any but a few pioneering scientists have decoded this language.

Ancient Greek: Used primarily by either theologians or scholars. Then again this is Rocket Age, and finding an Ancient Greek inscription on Mars might be the kick off to an entire new adventure.

Ancient Martian: The language of Mars before the Death of Eris wrecked it. Also, the liturgical language for nearly all Martian religions.

Arabic: Spoken by a large percentage of Earthlings but currently mostly restricted to Earth due to political and economic pressures. Arabic is also the liturgical language of Islam.

Chanari: The language of nomadic inhabitants of the wastes of Mars. There are many dialects across the hundreds of Chanari tribes.

English: The lingua franca of the Rocket Age. Due to the influence of the first pioneers of the radium rocket drive, English is the standard language of rocket design and piloting.

European: An enigmatic language based on both verbal and psychic communication. Non-psychics can still speak and understand European, but there is little depth to their conversations.

French: Due to their success during the Kalond Canal Valley wars as well as diplomatic efforts on Mars, French is the second most common Earthling language spoken on the Red Planet.

Ganymedian: The Ganymedians speak a language that sounds a lot like singing and the rustling of leaves in the wind. There is no written version of Ganymedian, but the language does contain a strong silent component of gestures and body positions.

German: Spoken by the expansionistic Nazi government and by a large number of Americans, as well as people of German heritage outside of Germany. The Nazi conquest of Mars has made it the third most common Earthling language on that planet.

Greek: Greece has suffered much in this century, but their colony on Venus is a bright hope for the future and the only major extraterrestrial center of the Greek language.

Hebrew: A language of great cultural value to Jewish populations across Earth as well as theologians, Hebrew has not made a great leap into the Solar System yet, but there is a growing Jewish migration away from Central Europe and to colonies on Mars and Venus, for safety if nothing else.

High Martian: There are dozens of dialects of this language based on region. Spoken by the Kastari, Maduri, and Silthuri castes, High Martian is an intricate language full of shaded meanings. Many Pilthuri and Talandri learn High Martian as well in order to better communicate with their masters.

Ioite: Few other than the Ioites bother to learn this language and it is hardly spoken outside of the blasted moon Io. There is no written form of the language, though Ancient Ioite undoubtedly had a written form, the Europeans have gone to great lengths to destroy any trace of it.

Italian: Outside of Italy and Switzerland this language is spoken in Italian Occupied Mars and by many Americans.

Japanese: Japanese is the language of government in Imperial Japan and its holdings both on Earth and Venus.

Jovian: Due to their odd vocal apparatus and tubular mouths Jovian is difficult for non-Jovians to speak. It has a distinct hissing quality and a slight echo, traits that can be found in Jovian speech patterns when they communicate in other species' languages.

Latin: A language of scholarly and theological import.

Lizard Monkey: Spoken only by the Lizard Monkeys of Venus, and likely only capable of being spoken by them due to a high pitch, broad range of sounds, and unusual

vocalizations. As most of the Solar System consider the native sophonts of Venus to be little more than smart animals, it is questionable if few others than the Lizard Monkeys knows this is a language, much less how to understand it.

Low Martian: Spoken by the Talandri, Pilthuri, and Julandri castes. While the Talandri are literate, few Julandri Laborers learn the written form of their language. Among the Courtesans Low Martian is only spoken in private and certainly never in front of the higher castes.

Metisian: As fluid as their bodies, the Metisian language is produced not by a normal set of vocal chords and larynx, but by whistling through various orifices on the underside of the body. If you can't whistle, you can't speak Metisian.

Portuguese: Spoken by millions on Earth, Portuguese is the dominant language of one of the largest Earthling colonies on Venus.

Spanish: Spoken by a large number of Earthlings across the Americas as well as in Europe. Spanish is slowly making its way into the Solar System.

Turkish: Once the dominant language of much of the Near East on Earth, Turkish is now common in only two places, Turkey on Earth and the Turkish colony on Venus.

Western Venusian: The common language of the Ishtar Highlands, Western Venusian is often confused as being the only Venusian language. Although there is a written form, only the Speakers bother to learn it.



CHANARI

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 2 and your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Size. Chanari are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 35 feet.

Desert Dwellers. You can move through non-magical difficult terrain in deserts, hills, and mountains at your normal speed. When in deserts you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks as well as Wisdom (Survival) checks to follow tracks or hide your own tracks.

Wild Lives. You are proficient in the Athletics, Perception, and Survival skills.

Low-light Vision. You can see in dim light as if it were normal light.

Born to Ride. You have proficiency with bahmoots.

Languages. You can speak Chanari and speak, read, and write English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 6'-7'

Weight: 145-175 pounds.

Phenotypical Variation: There is a great deal of phenotypical variation amongst the Chanari tribes, and it is easy to delineate Chanari from one tribal grouping to another based on appearance.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Chanari can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can. Their low level of body fat and general biology makes them most comfortable in temperatures ranging from 80°F to 140°F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand, and this is even more pronounced amongst the Chanari

Age Ranges: Chanari live surprisingly long lives for a species that spends its time in the harsh conditions of the Martian desert. Infancy runs up to for 13 months, they enter adolescence at 14, begin adulthood at 20, fall into senescence by 70, with a maximum lifespan of 100 years.

Reproduction: Male (45%) and female (55%) sexes. Internal fertilization and gestation by the female for eight months followed by live birth.

Circadian Cycle: 244 hours, Chanari are mainly diurnal but are known to change to a nocturnal existence during the hottest parts of the year.

Dietary Needs: Chanari eat a lot of meat, but they make great use of any vegetable matter present in their environment. Looted grains and vegetables from the cities are also consumed. Like all Martians, the Chanari are lactose intolerant upon reaching adulthood.

Names: Chanari name their children after famous heroes of their tribe, powerful animals, and totemic colors. The combinations can be rather long, and most Chanari have three or more parts to their names, though only one section is used with regularity. Each tribal and linguistic grouping has its own set of names, and most differentiate between male and female names. Male names tend to focus on action and savage animals, while females tend to involve physical features of the environment. English translations of the most common names are given below.

Males: Attacking Stigia Bird, Bull Gazelle, Charging Galantelope, Desert Well Tree Seed Pod, Fangs of the Silt Dragon, Hidden Sand Wallower, Leaping Sand Prowler, Lion's Mane, Lurking Silt Spider, Roaring Bahmoot, and Swooping Vulture.

Female: Cool Winds in the Evening, Flowers after the Rain, Green Grassy Plains, Hidden Oasis, Hopes of Cool Water, Red Trees in the Dawn, Shady Grove, Shining Dew, Silver Pond, Singing Sands, Sunlight On the Canal

Psychology

It is risk that influences the Chanari the most. A dangerous situation that can be controlled, or at least have as many variables controlled as possible, is acceptable, but attacking, trading, or any other action taken from a position of disadvantage and weakness is to be feared. They manage their risks as carefully as a Pilthuri manages her stock. Considering that the Chanari often own very little in the way of material possessions, risk management strategies involve the only thing a typical Chanari can lay claim to, his life.

Physiology

Chanari tend towards slender builds, though some of the more warlike Chanari can be very muscular. Their skin color runs from dark coppery red to nearly black, though their hair and eyes are almost uniformly dark colored. Coloration is not a good indicator of tribal grouping, as the Chanari have tend to mix at the edges of tribal ranges, and this mixing carries on within tribal groupings. All Chanari have large nostrils and thick chests, though this is more pronounced in the desert dwelling tribes.

Material Culture

Being nomadic (save for a few Yellow-Red Chanari tribes) the Chanari do not place much emphasis on material goods. What they do produce is heavily ornamented and well suited to their environment, being sturdy and hard wearing. Items are made from the carcasses of bahmoots and game animals as well as wood gathered from the few trees in a tribe's home range. Captured goods are popular, and most tribes are acquiring Earthling weapons as rapidly as possible. As the trade networks of the Chanari are rather long, Earthling rifles have appeared in the hands of tribes that have had no contact with aliens.

Jartit-tar, known in English as Red Devil Vulture on the Wing, speaks of his feelings towards other species.

Earthlings: "They have many tribes, some war with us, others trade guns. Mostly they fight the city dwellers, and this is good."

Europeans: "One came to live with us and learned our ways. He was a Seer of great power, and we gave him three Speechless to tend his needs."

Ganymedians: "It is said they are like us, wild and free, but made of plants."

Ioites: "Some call us wild animals, but look at them, they are mere beasts like the grey ones."

Jovians: "Strange that I have not heard of them. Tell me more."

Lizard Monkeys: "You compare us to animals! Your hide will adorn the tent of my beloved."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "We captured one in a raid, she stayed with us by choice for three years and then left on a bahmoot of her own. She was a Seer, so beautiful."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "I know of a tribe that takes these on raids and sells them back for much water. Not a bad idea, but it seems like a lot of work."

Martians (Kastari): "Sand wallowers and useless."

Martians (Maduri): "So stupid, they fight the same way, every way, and we win always."

Martians (Pilthuri): "Before the Ebb they come to us to trade, and after as well. Other times they are our prey and we hunt them across the sands."

Martians (Silthuri): Ha, they claim to rule our planet, but they are trapped in their cities and dare not venture out."



Martians (Talandri): "When we come, they scream and run back into their walls. Cowards, but their stuff is the best to loot on a raid."

Metisians: "Small and dark hunters of the night."

Robomen: "Unnatural abominations, thankfully there are few left to bother us."

Venusians: "They stink of strange places and hairy bodies."

EARTHLINGS

Ability Score Increase. You gain a +2 bonus to any one ability score of your choice, and +1 to one other.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your speed is 30 feet.

Conqueror or Pioneer. Choose either to gain proficiency with a weapon and type of armor, or to double your proficiency bonus with two skills.

Curious. You gain proficiency in two skills, languages, vehicles, or tools of your choice.

Friends. Earthlings seem to be able to cross cultural and even species boundaries with ease. Once per episode you may declare that you know somebody in an area. This person is an NPC you must name and create the nature of the relationship with when you use this trait; afterwards the friend is permanent part of the story (providing they do not get killed). If you can make contact with this person you have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks to influence them to help you.



Technologically Adept. You have advantage when making Artifact Analysis checks.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write English and one other language of your choice.

Homeworld: Earth

Height: 5'-7"

Weight: 90-300 lbs

Phenotypical Variation: High, with great variation in skin, eye, and hair color as well as texture.

Preferred Environmental Range: 1G standard gravity and 1 standard atmosphere, but can tolerate some variation as well as contaminated atmospheres. Temperature range also varies, with Earthlings being comfortable at temperatures as low as 30°F and as high as 120°F.

Age Ranges: 0-24 infant, adolescence at 13, adulthood by 21, with senescence beginning at 50, and maximum lifespan being around 100 years.

Reproduction: Male (45%) and female (55%) sexes. Internal fertilization and gestation by the female for nine months followed by live birth.

Circadian Cycle: 24 hours, with eight hours of sleep needed. Primarily diurnal, but can adjust to nocturnal or even polyurnal with some effort.

Dietary Needs: A mixed diet indicative of a consummate omnivore. Earthlings vary as to tolerance of certain proteins and other common nutrients, but in general can consume a wide variety of foods, provided the foods are properly prepared. The perfect Earthling food, though its use is not widespread, is the humble quiche.

Notes: The information provided below as to Earthling psychology, physiology, and material culture was not written by the author, but was dictated to him by noted European xenologist Hulgo III.

Psychology

The mental processes of Earthlings can only be fully described once the work of our emissaries is complete. Based upon current data their main psychological drives resolve around violence and reproduction. While it is true that Earthlings are capable of artistic, scientific, and other intellectual pursuits, these tend to be focused on things that will cause lasting harm to others or improve one's chances of gaining a mate. Their mental landscape divides even their own species into diverse cultures, but at the same time holds an individual's own cultural group to be superior, especially in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Physiology

Earthlings have a simplistic physiology, as one would expect from such a primitive species. Most of their organic systems have only one pathway, and those are rudimentary at best. That such a coarse and rude organism would be capable of surviving long enough to evolve intelligence, or at least a close approximation thereof, is amazing. Earthlings lack redundant organs (aside from a few exceptions), claws, fangs, venom, or any other useful defensive or offensive weaponry. While it is true they are capable of forming a blunt striking member out of their hands, this takes some skill to properly use and risks damage to delicate bones.

Material Culture

We will discuss the heights of Earthling material culture, for as in most things Earthling there is a great deal of variation. Looked at as a whole, Earthling technology is rather primitive and represents a level of understandings of fundamental sciences that our own species surpassed centuries ago. What this does not take into account is the speed with which the Earthlings have managed to pull themselves up out of the mud and into space.



Less than ten years ago the Earthlings lacked even simple unmanned satellites, yet today they have rocket ships capable of taking them to the furthest reaches of our Solar System, and perhaps even beyond into the Great Unknown. Our species took eight centuries to advance from the ability to control electricity to our first Grand Exploration of Jupiter. In conclusion, although they offer a rich and exciting subject for study, I recommend the immediate disintegration of Earth and extermination of all Earthlings. Such overly violent thoughts are abhorrent to this council, as they are to me, and so I must inform you that I will be immediately reporting for biological termination and psychic sterilization. I

John Franks, a sanitation worker in New York City, talks about aliens.

Europeans: “Weird ones, that’s for sure, and up to no good.”

Ganymedians: “They’re plants, right? How’s that supposed to work?”

Ioites: “Wait, they’re not some kinda space dog of somethin’?”

Jovians: “A what?”

Lizard Monkeys: “Oh yeah, my aunt saved up and bought one as a pet. They’re kinda cute and can learn to use the john.”

Martians (Chanari): “I heard they was like the Indians.”

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): “I saw a picture of one of them, those princes got some life, you know?”

Martians (Julandri Laborers): “No way, not in this city, we have unions here.”

Martians (Kastari): “We have our god, they have theirs, makes sense, right?”

Martians (Maduri): “Nasty works, glad our boys are killin’ them all.”

Martians (Pilthuri): “Ain’t they like some kinda Martian store keeper or somethin’?”

Martians (Silthuri): “Yeah, we gotta beat them princes and bring freedom and stuff to the Martians.”

Martians (Talandri): “Ain’t they some kind of blacksmith slave like thing?”

Metisians: “Them Europeans have their own army now, that can’t be anythin’ good.”

Robomen: “Yeah, I heard of them. Like these machines that think and work. We gotta union here, we ain’t goin’ to see no robomen.”

Venusians: “Big hairy brutes look more like monkeys and gorillas then people.”



EUROPANS

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Intelligence score by 2 and your Dexterity score by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet, assuming you bother with such mundane primitive concepts as walking.

Psychic Training. You have advantage on any saving throws to resist a psychic power.

Psychic Energy. If you acquire a psychic power you gain 1 additional psychic power point.

Boneless Body. You may use a bonus action to squeeze your body into a space no larger than two feet across its shortest dimension.

Bizarre Physiology. You are immune to the poisoned condition, poison, and disease, and are resistant to poison damage. You are vulnerable to piercing damage.

Technologically Adept. You have advantage when making Artifact Analysis checks.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write European as well as English and one other language of your choice.

Homeworld: Europa (Jovian Moon)

Height: 6'5" - 7'6".

Weight: 140-180 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Europeans display almost no phenotypical variation, and one European is nearly indistinguishable from another.

Preferred Environmental Range: Europeans can breathe the same air and are suited to the same gravity ranges as Earthlings. Their immunity to toxins allows them to function in contaminated atmospheres. Their preferred temperature ranges runs from 10°F to 55°F.

Age Ranges: The European lifecycle is unknown, but some Emissaries have hinted at a partially amphibious life stage.

Reproduction: Europeans are known to have male (25%) and female (25%) sexes, but have also exhibited additional sexes, including a neuter (25%) and two unclassified sexes (25%). Their reproductive habits are unknown, as is the internal make up of their reproductive systems. All applications of male or female designations have been made entirely on external genitalia. There are no secondary sexual characteristics shown by any European encountered to date.

Circadian Cycle: Europeans operate on a strict 24 hour cycle which is at odds with the 84.24 hour long rotational

period of their homeworld. They sleep exactly eight hours unless woken up, and do so in much the same manner as Earthlings.

Dietary Needs: Europeans can eat a wide range of foods thanks to their immunity to toxins. However, unlike the Ioites, Europeans find fermented foods distasteful. Emissaries are willing to try new foods, sometimes too willingly. It should be noted that Europeans tend to seek out foods high in acidic content, and prefer seafood whenever possible.

Names: Europeans do not normally use their own names when working as emissaries. Instead, they come up with a name that allows them to blend in, or at least one that they assume would be appropriate. Often this results in either a farce of a name, or comes across as being somewhat patronizing, after all no one is going to think Bob Robertson the European welder is just one of the guys, he's over seven feet tall and purple! The names listed below are ones the Europeans use for themselves without regard to the sensibilities of others.

Examples: Creeee-Tar, Critanars, Espolonin, Euranadat, Krangtop, Masornoik, P'Taltorith, Portana, Sebasil, Shmati, Yelolo

Psychology

Aside from the Emissaries who tend to be overly enthusiastic, most Europeans come across as cool and aloof. It is obvious that they have great disdain for what they consider lesser sophonts, but at the same time they are easily confused by the behaviors of those that Europeans claim to be superior to. Often Europeans come across as somewhat naïve, especially when dealing with non-technological matters. Europeans tend to operate in groups; it is rare to see any but the Emissaries on their own, even at Demarcation Point One.

Physiology

Most bizarrely, Europeans do not have a skeleton in the traditional sense. Their frames are held up by a combination of cartilage and internal structures created by fluid filled tubes. Their organs bear little to no resemblance to any other lifeform and their function is largely a mystery. It is easier to look at what is not there, and Europeans seem to lack anything similar to a liver, spleen, or kidneys. Their lungs and cardiovascular systems are similar to, but different than those found in other species. Most notably, Europeans possess two circulatory systems; one moves blood around while the other maintains their internal structure. Finally, their digestive system looks to be very primitive with only the most modest of intestines and very small stomach, but this may be deceptive as Europeans have been seen consuming a wide range of foods.

Material Culture

Europans possess a highly advanced level of technology, in some respects ahead of Earthlings or even the Ancient Martians. Much of their material culture is based around two core technologies, disintegration fields and gravitic pulse. The former is used mainly in weaponry, as seen in the disintegrator pistols that many Europans carry as well as the massive disintegrator cannons that are said to be pointing at Earth. However, some research has shown that many European devices use a disintegration field to create energy, possibly by releasing the energy stored in the atom. Gravitic pulse technology is far more flexible and has many uses. Primarily it is used to power European vehicles, from the saucer ships to personal hover belts. It also provides artificial gravity for European ships and installations. Finally, as seen by the newly armed European clients the Metisians, gravitic pulse technology can also be made into weapons.

From a RADIO message made by Athirc, a European saucer ship pilot.

Earthlings: “Ha, they know nothing but fling their puny bodies into the void.”

Ganymedians: “These plant aliens have long interested my people, sadly their potential will be wasted in the conflict to come.”

Ioites: “They have begun to spread again perhaps our mercy was misapplied.”

Jovians: “Again, old foes have surfaced, only this time we won’t let them flee when the time comes.”

Lizard Monkeys: “What? I do not care about what animals think, if they can.”

Martians (Chanari): “Again with the questions about the animals.”

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): “They say they are the most beautiful creatures in the Solar System, but they do not interest me.”

Martians (Julandri Laborers): “Such useful brutes, I shall have to acquire some when the conflict is over.”

Martians (Kastari): “Why do so many of the lower sophonts have specialists who talk to imaginary beings?”

Martians (Maduri): “The bigger they are, the more they will be feeling my pain baton.”

Martians (Pilthuri): “What is the purpose of these?”

Martians (Silthuri): “Hahahaha, you really think you are in command?”



Martians (Talandri): “Their crafts are too simple, but they might make useful servants after the conflict.”

Metisians: “Their loyalty will be rewarded, should they earn it.”

Robomen: “Such simple machines, made from metal and plastic. True artificial life is made from, never mind.”

Venusians: “Wait, you call them Venusians, as in from Venus? That is terribly funny.”

GANYMEDIANS

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Size. You are small sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You have darkvision to a range of 60 feet.

Forest Dwellers. You can move through non-magical difficult terrain in forest, jungles, and swamps at your normal speed. When in forests you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks as well as Wisdom (Survival) checks to follow tracks or hide your own tracks.

Natural Hunters. You gain proficiency in Nature and Survival.

Photosynthesis. If you have access to water and sunlight, you may spend a short rest standing in place and photosynthesizing. After this short rest you have all the nourishment you need for a day.

Replaceable Parts. You can heal damage you have suffered by grafting a living plant into you body. During a short rest if you have access to living plants and you spend a hit dice to regain hit points you may immediately regain 1 spent hit die. You may use this feature once and regain use of it following a long rest.

Woody Exterior. You gain +1 to your AC.

Languages. You can speak Ganymedian, and speak, read, and write English.

Homeworld: Ganymede (Jovian Moon)

Height: 4'5'.

Weight: 80-140 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Ganymedians show a broad range of phenotypical variations that includes, but is not limited to, coloration, height, and weight. There also appears to be some variation in the types of symbiotic organisms that serve the same function as internal organs.

Preferred Environmental Range: Ganymedians can live in the same gravity and atmospheric ranges that Earthlings do. They do not like to go more than a day without sunlight if at all possible, and get depressed if denied full spectrum light for more than a week. They are most comfortable in temperatures ranging from 45°F to 80°F.

Age Ranges: Sprout from 0-3 years of age, mobility by 4 years, adolescence at 12 years, adulthood from 14-60 years, and senescence at 80 years. The maximum lifespan of a Ganymedian is 120 years, though legends speak of great old trees that never die.



Reproduction: Ganymedians are hermaphroditic and reproduce sexually through wind blown cross-pollination. Fertile seedpods ripen in 3-6 weeks and drop. Young sprout in 1-2 weeks if soil and environmental conditions are suitable.

Circadian Cycle: Forty-two hours long, which would mean that they undergo roughly five cycles per day on Ganymede. Ganymedians appear to not need sleep as other sophonts do, but they do need to spend some time in a dormant state, usually photosynthesizing.

Dietary Needs: Ganymedians are capable of digesting plant matter, but find animal proteins both distasteful and uncomfortable to process. They are also capable of photosynthesis, and can survive for long periods without other food.

Names: Ganymedian names are nearly unpronounceable by others, and thus many Ganymedians venturing away from their home groves use nicknames. Ganymedians name children after a significant event in the year of their sprouting, plus an often poetic reference to a hopeful future for the child.

Examples: Dappled Rose-Fawn of the Gods Chosen by the Heavens, Great Battle Against the Boar-Tree of Milky Ridge Patient Hunter, Late Migration of the Meat Berry Bushes Seeks New Sights, Silver Eagles From Sky Will Venture Far, Sudden Spring of Fresh Water Beautiful Gift

Psychology

Ganymedians are highly individualistic, even though the tribe is important in their culture, membership is rather fluid and depends on the individual Ganymedian's choice. Likewise, there is no sense of a leader in Ganymedian tribes, though some Ganymedians are deemed wise enough to be listened to and have their advice heeded. This individuality even extends to parentage. This is largely due to their biology (being hermaphroditic and reproducing through airborne pollen) and culture (reproducing in mass groups). A Ganymedian raises a sapling if it wants to, but since all Ganymedians in a region flower and reproduce at the same time, any one might be the parent of any sapling that forms.

Physiology

Ganymedians are composite beings; their bodies are made from a central core that is the Ganymedian proper and a range of symbiotic organisms that perform the role of specialized organs in other species. The central core of a Ganymedian is the nervous system consisting of the brain similar in design to a nutshell and a branching network of nerve tissue. The reproductive organs grow from these nerves and sprout flowers when in season. The rest of the body is composed of subservient symbiotic organisms, none of which have sapience. A moss-like organism that colonizes saplings shortly after sprouting conducts photosynthesis. The other organs, most notably analogues of the liver, spleen, and lungs, are all individual creatures that have been incorporated into the Ganymedian physiology. Ganymedians use artificial selection to expand upon their set of symbiotes, making them the only species that is capable of actively managing its own evolution.

Material Culture

In addition to the hunt, Ganymedians are fond of patient craft and artwork. They do not utilize fire in any form, and tend to be more than a bit apprehensive about open flames. Ganymedians will breed plants and fungus to fulfill specific roles, usually as tools or the producers of tools. A species might be bred for aesthetic properties such as color, texture, length, or other features. The highest forms of Ganymedian art are freestanding species that change over the seasons and take generations to grow to maturity.

Talnak, A Ganymedian explorer, offers its views on fellow sophonts.

Earthlings: "Some of their tribes come to kill and destroy, others to trade for woods and herbs. None have asked if they could come, and few have bothered to leave."

Europeans: "They say they rule my world, but I have never seen one in the Great Forest. I call them liars and thieves."

Ioites: "There cannot be weapons so powerful as to destroy a planet, I say the Ioites are liars and let their world become unbalanced."

Jovians: "How can they live where there is no soil, no place to root upon, no place to stand?"

Lizard Monkeys: "These things sound bad, you say they eat fruits and nuts? Keep them away from the Great Forest."

Martians (Chanari): "They are much like us, and have learned to live with their world rather than against it."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "I do not understand what the purpose of this caste is, to talk and play beautiful music?"

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "I see that the Martian castes are like the companions in my body, only as a tribe is built, with each piece doing its job."

Martians (Kastari): "Their world must be weak to need so many voices to lift its praises."

Martians (Maduri): "A caste to only make war, perhaps we need to learn from them so that we can restore the balance to the Great Forest."

Martians (Pilthuri): "They are much like the Earthling traders who come to the Great Forest, they offer much but give little."

Martians (Silthuri): "What manner of weakness do the Martians suffer to need one who does no work, hunts no game, and makes no tools to lead them?"

Martians (Talandri): "They make wonders that we can use, but their homes are built inside metal forests filled with smoke and fire."

Metisians: "Why would any species wish to serve the Europeans?"

Robomen: "There is something not right about life made of metal, worse than life made of meat."

Venusians: "Their jungle seems unsuited to them, and they so willingly change their ways. They seem like fruit that is ripening in the sun, but what will happen when they burst?"



IOITES

Ability Scores. Your Constitution score increase by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. You can scuttle along at 35 feet.

Constant Mutations. Your body is not stable and as you age or are exposed to new environments your twisted genetic code expresses itself in new and often terrible ways. At 1st level, and again at 4th, 8th, 12, and 16th levels choose one of the mutations from the list below. Also, if using the feats optional rule, you may choose two mutations instead of taking a feat. Expressing these mutations is a painful process that often takes several days to fully manifest.

Hardy Bodies. Either a result of the devastation inflicted upon your people by the Europeans or a lingering genetic gift from your species once nearly immortal form, you are immune to disease, the poisoned condition, and poison damage. You are resistant to radiation damage.

Low-light Vision. You can see in dim light as if it were normal light.

Languages. You can speak loite and can read, speak and write English

Homeworld: Io (Jovian moon)

Height: 5' to 6', though their stance is hunched and a fully erect loite might gain a few inches in height. Their arm to body length ratio is higher than Earthlings and loites can reach much farther than a similarly statured Earthling.

Weight: 110-150 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: loites are one of the most phenotypically variable sophont species. Their skin tone and eye color tend towards a norm of grayish skin and reddish eyes, but beyond that individuals and tribe exhibit a wide range of secondary traits, such as number of teeth, secondary skin pigmentations, length of prognathous snout, and even presence or absence of hair (as well as hair color).

Preferred Environmental Range: loites are comfortable in the same gravity and atmospheres that Earthlings are, though they are capable of surviving contaminated atmospheres for a longer period of time. Their temperature tolerance is towards cooler environments and loites are most comfortable in temperatures ranging from 40 °F to 65 °F. Internal body temperature is maintained through several unique organs and averages 110°F.

Age Ranges: Infancy from 0-3 months, adolescence at 10 years, adulthood from 13 years to 40, with senescence at around 50. Few loites live beyond 35 years due to the harshness of their homeworld.

Reproduction: Two sexes, male (40%) and female (60%). Internal fertilization and gestation by the female, with live birth to one to three offspring after four months. loites can walk and eat solid foods within three months of birth.

Circadian Cycle: 42.65 hours standard, polyurnal (prefer to sleep in two to three hour shifts for a total of six to eight hours in every twenty-four hour period).

Dietary Needs: loites can eat nearly any organic matter and are immune to toxins. They show a fondness for fermented foods and beverages, most notably kimchi, pickles, sauerkraut, baker's yeast, marmite, vinegar, and alcohol. loites cannot become intoxicated though normal means. loites have a very rapid metabolism and can consume vast amounts of matter (calling it food is an insult to cuisine of any other species) in a short amount of time.

Names: loite names make reference to their tribal affiliation, family lineage, and individual personhood. Often, loites traveling far from their homeworld or even a short distance from their tribal or clan territories will shorten, alter, or otherwise hide their names.



This is believed by the loites to create a sense of anonymity, for it is always best to not let strangers know who you are and where you are from, lest they follow that information back and harm your relatives in retribution for any crimes you might inflict. Loite names do not differ between genders.

Examples: Antan-Han, Hak-Pan, Hrokan-Grafit, Ikiln-Par-Pfan, Jan-Pan, Kil-Tan, Nan-Na-Lana, Pan-Pan, Rhan-Olt, Tan-Fil-Wat, Vax-Zzan

Loite Mutations

Loite bodies are mutable in the extreme. While the species does have a standard form that most adhere to, there are many variations ranging from minor cosmetic differences to loite mutants that only bear a passing resemblance to the common morphology. The mutations below can be rather extreme, player-characters are unusual examples of their species, and this is no truer than with player-character loites.

Acidic Spit

You have glands under your tongue that produce acidic bile. As an action you may make an acidic spit attack with a range of 30 feet that inflicts 1d6 acid damage. This attack uses your Dexterity modifier to hit and damage. If you roll a critical hit with this attack, the target gets some acid in its eyes (if it has them and they are not covered) and gains the blinded condition until the end of their next turn.

Adrenal Response

You have an endocrine system that rapidly responds to stimuli, flooding your body with various hormones and activating a neural reaction that you can barely control. When you take this mutation, choose either flight or fight response as the manner in which this adrenal response expresses itself. You may take this mutation a second time, but if you do so you must choose a different response type.

- **Fight Response**

When you suffer damage, you may use your reaction to make a single melee attack against the source of the damage. You may do this a number of times equal to your Dexterity modifier, and Fight Response recharges following a long rest.

- **Flight Response**

When you suffer damage, you may use your reaction to take the disengage action followed by the dash action. You must use your movement to get away from the source of the damage. You may do this a number of times equal to your Dexterity modifier, and Flight Response recharges following a long rest.

Alien Senses

Your sense organs change to allow you to take in and understand new types of sensations. When you gain this mutation, choose one of the following new senses to gain. Using one of these senses relies on Wisdom (Perception). You may gain this mutation again, but if you do so you must choose a different sense.

- **Echolocation**

You produce low frequency sound waves and can 'see' how they bounce off of nearby objects. You can detect physical objects and creatures within 60 feet of you as if you were seeing them. However, you cannot read printed words or detect minute details. You are effectively immune to the blind condition, though loud noises or large amounts of particles in your environment might hamper your echolocation.

- **Heat Detection**

You can visually detect variations in heat to a range of 60 feet. As everything emits some heat, you can determine the presence or absence of living creatures against the background heat of the environment. You can also use heat detection to track the residual heat signatures of passing creatures. Powerful heat sources might interfere with this sense.

- **Psychic Sensitivity**

You can detect the presence of psychic abilities, including determining if a person is psychic, if a psychic power is in use, or even if a person has been psychically dominated or controlled. You can also detect any psychic residue in an area, such as strong emotions or the death of a sophont.

- **RADIO Detection**

You can sense RADIO waves and other electromagnetic radiation. While you cannot simply tap into the RADIO waves, you know the direction they are coming from and their approximate strength.

- **Ultraviolet Light**

Your sense of sight extends into the ultraviolet ranges of the spectrum.

Bizarre Immunity

All loites have immunities to disease and poison, but your body has mutated to gain immunity to some truly odd things. Your new organs prevent certain conditions from affecting you. When you gain this mutation, choose one of: charmed, frightened, paralyzed, or stunned. You are immune to that condition. You may gain this mutation again, but if you do so you must choose a different immunity.



Enhanced Senses

One of your senses, hearing, sight, smell/ taste, or sound, is greatly enhanced. You gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that involve that sense, as well as additional features as described below. You may gain this mutation again, but if you do so you must choose a different sense.

- **Hearing**

You can hear things not only others can't, but also at great range, hearing a whisper at 60 feet as if it was right beside you.

- **Sight**

Your sense of sight can zoom in to detect small details just above the microscopic, or zoom out to reach great distances. You do not suffer penalties on attacks at long range. Furthermore, you gain advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to notice small details.

- **Smell/ Taste**

You can detect scents that only a skilled natural predator, such as a dog, can. You gain advantage on rolls to track targets by scent. You can also detect certain chemicals in food or drink you taste, and have learned how to analyze substances based on taste alone. You gain advantage on Intelligence (Science) checks to analyze a substance you are willing to put in your mouth.

Enlarged Body

Your body grows to monstrous size and you stand over nine feet tall. Your size increases to Large, your speed increases by 5 feet, and your reach becomes 10 feet. However, you are an easier target and your armor class is reduced by 1, and you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide. You also require twice the food and water, as well as oxygen, as a medium sized creature.

Extra Arm

You have an extra arm. You may hold one extra item and as a bonus action, use this extra arm to make an attack action or manipulate an object. However, having an extra arm can be burdensome, you may not apply your ability score modifier to damage when making an attack with your extra arm. This mutation may be gained a second time, giving you yet another extra arm, but you do not get an additional attack or manipulate object action.

Extra Leg

You grow an extra leg. Your speed increases by 5 feet and you have advantage on saves or checks to resist being knocked prone or forcibly moved. This mutation can be gained a second time, and when you do so you grow yet another leg and your speed increases by 10 feet. Good luck finding a space suit that fits.

Hulking Brute

Your body is even more brutish and savage than the common loite and others react with fear and loathing when seeing you. You can take advantage of this, and often this mutation includes inflatable throat sacks or aspiny crest that can be extended or retracted at will. You gain advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks. As an action, you may make a display of ferocity that startles your foes. All enemies within 30 feet that can see you must make a Wisdom save against a DC equal to 8+ your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier or gain the frightened condition until the end of their next turn.

Hypnotic Eyes

Between your oddly shaped pupils and the pheromones you emit you almost have a psychic ability. You have advantage on Charisma (Deception) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks. As an action, you may target a single creature within 30 feet who can make eye contact with you. The target must make a Wisdom save against a DC equal to 8+ your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier or gain the charmed condition for one round.

Massive Jaw

You have an enlarged jaw and powerful jaw muscles. You may distend your jaw to engulf a creature or object of one size category smaller than you. You suffer the consequences of whatever you swallow. Swallowed creatures suffer 1d8 + your Constitution modifier acid damage every round they begin inside your stomach. You may use your bite as an unarmed attack, using Strength as the ability score modifier and inflicting 1d8 +Strength modifier damage.

Mental Enhancement

Your brain mutates, making your thoughts faster and connected in new and at times frightening ways. Increase either your Intelligence Wisdom, or Charisma scores by one. This mutation may not increase an ability score above 20. You may gain this mutation multiple times, but each time you do you must choose a different ability score to be effected.

Psychic Expression

You gain a psychic power.

Photosynthesis

Your body grows chlorophyll pockets just under your skin. If you have access to water and sunlight, you may spend a short rest standing in place and photosynthesizing. After this short rest you have all the nourishment you need for a day. You may use this mutation once, and it recharges following along rest.

Physical Enhancement

Your body mutates, making you stronger, harder, or more agile. Increase either your Strength Constitution, or Dexterity scores by one. This mutation may not increase an ability score above 20. You may gain this mutation multiple times, but each time you do you must choose a different ability score to be effected.

Poison Glands

You have grown two glands at the base of your jaw that secrete a deadly toxin. If you have the massive jaw or prehensile tongue mutations, you gain a free action to use your poison glands alongside those mutations when you use them to make an attack action. You may use your poison glands to apply the toxin to a melee weapon, and your poison affects the next target you hit with that weapon. You can also spit the poison into a container such as a glass of water. The poison is highly detectable and can be tasted with a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. You are immune to your own poison.

Creatures affected by your poison must make a Constitution save equal to 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus or suffer 1d8 + your Constitution modifier poison damage and gains the poisoned condition for one hour. Additionally, when you fail a death save your body automatically releases the poison into your blood stream. Any creature that takes a bite from your body or attacks it with a bite, must make a save as above or die. This means that if a thunder lizard eats you, it will likely die.

You may gain this mutation multiple times. The second time you gain this mutation your poison inflicts the stunned condition for 1 round. The third time you gain this mutation your poison causes the paralyzed condition for 1 minute. A creature that fails its saving throw against your poison suffers the chosen condition, as well as poisoned and any other conditions your poison glands can inflict.





Prehensile Tongue

Your tongue elongates and becomes more flexible and easier to control. You may manipulate objects with your tongue as if it was a hand, but it is weak in comparison to an arm and can only lift 10 pounds. You may make an unarmed attack with your tongue with a reach of ten feet that inflicts 1d6 points of damage. You use your Dexterity modifier for hit rolls.

Roaring Charge

As a single action, you may move at double your speed and make an attack action. Doing so tires you out, and you may not use this trait until after a short or long rest.

Scream of Terror

You can utter a scream that shakes creatures to the pit of their being. As a reaction, you may scream loudly and all living creatures within 30 feet that can hear you must make a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus or gain the stunned condition until the end of their next turn. You may take this mutation a second time, and if you do, those who fail the save against your Scream of Terror also gain the deafened condition for 1 minute.

Sharp Claws

You grow long sharp claws on your hands and feet. You may use these to make an unarmed attack based on your Strength score that inflicts 1d8 points of damage.

Thick Scaly Hide

Your skin hardens and grows thick scales. When not wearing any armor, your armor class is 12 + your Dexterity score.

Psychology

In general, loites are hungry. They lust to fulfill their most basic of needs, and this hunger for food, shelter, and companionship is their driving motivation. Most loites are happy if these needs are met in even the most rudimentary of ways, and an loite who is living on board a rocket ship would be overjoyed at a the prospect of a bunk next to the drives, scraps from the galley, and the occasional visit with a friend. The only exception to this is when two loites of opposite sexes meet, for loites release a strong pheromone when in each other's presence that instills a strong drive to procreate. It is theorized that if not for the harshness of their home moon, the incredibly fecund loites would be facing a population crisis.

Physiology

Loite physiology is a horrid thing to study. Their native moon is a blasted post-apocalyptic nightmare inhabited by feral mutants, covered in ruined cities and towns, and studded with pools of deadly toxins. Nearly every animal and plant native to Io is poisonous, some the result of evolution, but most due to the inherent foulness of Io. The loites are no different, and many a wild animal on Mars or Venus has made a snack of an loite and later regretted it.

Material Culture

As consummate scavengers, loites are far more comfortable with technology than one would expect from such a primitive people. Many loites have an instinctive ability to understand advanced technological items and to fashion useful tools out of discarded junk. Although these bashed together objects are generally lacking in aesthetic details, they are highly functional. It should be noted that these items often have bizarre idiosyncrasies that only the builder fully understands.

Based on a conversation with a well-traveled loite, Beni the Hound

Earthlings: "They're everywhere, they have everything, and their trash is rich and plentiful. A Wasteful, proud, and violent people."

Europeans: "Always hate them, but never anger them, their mercy is almost too much to bear."

Ganymedians: "They smell bad and taste worse."

Jovians: "Smart people, run and hide, if only we could have done that."

Lizard Monkeys: "Good eating if left in the sun for three days."

Martians (Chanari): "These ones know how to survive? Hmph, they live in a paradise."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "I don't get it, they smell strange and don't have any interesting colorings."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Big and sloppy, follow them around and see what they drop."

Martians (Kastari): "Ohh, so holy, right, don't trust any priest who doesn't give handouts."

Martians (Maduri): "Tough and mean, and they clean up after themselves, so cruel as well."

Martians (Pilthuri): "On Mars and getting hungry? Find a Pilthuri, they'll trade you food for small jobs."

Martians (Silthuri): "Big master man in the big house won't last three hours back home."

Martians (Talandri): "You have to appreciate anyone who spends that much time, naw, it's just silly to do one thing every day when living needs so many things".

Metisians: "Look, the bastards have a new group of bullies, best lick boots and stab them in the back latter."

Robomen: "A what? Can't eat it, can't be ate by it, what's the point?"

Venusians: "Send a Venusian warrior after the biggest animal in the area. If the monkey-man wins, you get to eat. If he loses, you get to eat what the big critter doesn't. Win-win."





JOVIAN

Ability Scores. Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Strength score increases by 1.

Size. Although you stand nearly seven feet tall, your body is long and lanky, making you medium sized.

Speed. You have a walking speed of 30 feet and a fly speed of 30 feet.

Keen Senses. You have proficiency with the Perception skill. However, your sense of sound is somewhat limited and you have disadvantage on checks that involve hearing.

Darkvision. You have darkvision to a range of 120 feet.

Alien Senses. You can detect the presence of contaminants in the air around you. You have photoreceptors on the back of your head that can sense light and movement, making it extremely difficult to catch you unawares. You have advantage to notice someone attempting to hide or sneak behind you.

Telescopic Vision. You can see twice the distance an Earthling can and do not suffer penalties for shooting at long range.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Jovian and English.

Homeworld: Jupiter

Height: 6'-7'5"

Weight: 160-200 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Unknown, only a handful of Jovian clans has been contacted.

Preferred Environmental Range: Jovians can withstand high pressures and temperatures ranging up to 3 atmospheres and 150 °F. At the lower temperature ranges, around 40°F and below, Jovians become very uncomfortable. Although they can live comfortably in a nitrogen-oxygen atmosphere, they are capable of breathing air with low amounts of methane and ammonia as well.

Age Ranges: Infancy runs from hatching to 4 months, with childhood ending by 12 years. Jovians reach sexual maturity late in life, with adolescence stretching on until the 25th year. Senescence sets in at around 150, and most Jovians shuffle off their mortal coil at 200.

Reproduction: Jovians have male (30%) and female (70%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization in the female who then lays a clutch of one to four eggs after three months of gestation.

Eggs hatch after ten months and hatchling Jovians are capable of walking and flight within hours.

Circadian Cycle: Jovians do not sleep per se, but enter a rest phase every thirty-two hours. During this ten hour cycle large parts of their brains shut down in sequence in order to refresh cerebral chemicals, process memories, and perform all the functions of sleep. During this rest period a Jovian is only passively aware of his environment, but can still hover in place or glide,

Dietary Needs: Jovians consume a largely liquid diet, though they can digest small amounts of solid matter. Their native foods consist of various types of livestock that are either milked or drained.

Names: Jovian's place the greatest emphasis on clan identity, with lineage rank and finally personal names coming last. When outside their own clan, most Jovians go by their clan name, and see themselves as representatives of their clan as a whole. All members of a clan are descended from those who first made the journey into the depths of Jupiter. Thus a Jovian might be known as Fatmathik Clan Six Hundred and Seventy-Three. Personal names are never shared outside of immediate family.

Example clan names: Bon, Fatmathik, Hithasssip, Jafthavik, Lavothip, Nothivik, Polithivip, Qualvathik

Psychology

Jovian culture is heavily based around a top down hierarchy within the clan. Survival and pragmatism are placed as core to their ethos, but also have to share center stage to a strong warrior culture and honor system. This conflict, between the practicalities of surviving in hiding from the Europeans and a system of martial virtues that require the Jovians to prepare to return to the upper atmosphere and take the fight back to the Europeans, makes up most of the literature and mythology of the species. While it is true that the majority of Jovians fall somewhere between these two extremes, those who are paragons of either set of ethics are held in high esteem.

Physiology

The Jovians are indeed goggle-eyed winged aliens with a bipedal stance and generally Earthling like build. They have two large feathered wings that rise from supremely strong shoulders to spread to a wingspan of over twenty meters. Their heads feature prominent large, round, and dark eyes. The rest of the Jovian body is tan or ochre in color with tufts of darker feathers on the head, chest, arms, and legs. Their hands are strong with six long fingers and a thumb and are easily as dexterous as that of an Earthling's. Their feet also end in manipulators with three fingers and

a thick thumb. These digits are much stronger than the ones on their hands, but are less agile and can only serve to perform crude activities such as grabbing, holding, crushing, or tearing.

Material Culture

Jovian technology is ahead of that of Earth in some areas, but far behind in others. Their airships and floating cities utilize a combination of repulsion float technology and lighter than air flotation systems. As the Jovians have had to remain hidden in the depths of Jupiter's atmosphere they have not been able to mine sky islands or nearby moonlets for minerals, thus their metallurgy has remained stagnate,

Jafthavik, A Jovian warrior, offers her views on fellow sophonts.

Earthlings: "Like us they are divided into many clans, and like us they live under the European's threat."

Europeans: "We can forgive but we cannot forget."

Ganymedians: "Before the War we traded with them, but they do not remember us now."

Ioites: "Living proof that there was no cowardice in flight."

Lizard Monkeys: "Base animals, they cannot even speak."

Martians (Chanari): "They ride like sky sharks across the desert, swift and deadly."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "Why would one keep slaves for sex?"

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Are these unfortunates cursed or is this some form of punishment?"

Martians (Kastari): "They say theirs is the perfect form of life, how funny from a creature that cannot fly"

Martians (Maduri): "I long to pit my beaked mace against them."

Martians (Pilthuri): "We need some of them to help restart our trade network."

Martians (Silthuri): "Clan leaders of the Martians, but few look as if they can fight."

Martians (Talandri): "Ah, we too have craftsman, only ours make much more advanced items."

Metisians: "Disgusting slaves of the Europeans."

Robomen: "Can robomen live forever? I saw one fall off a sky Island. He must still be screaming."

Venusians: "They show promise."

JULANDRI COURTESAN

Ability Scores. Your Charisma score increases by 2 and your Dexterity or Intelligence score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Otherworldly Beauty and Grace. Choose either Charisma or Dexterity. The chosen ability score can be raised to 22 without aid of technological marvels.

Artistic Training. You are proficient in Perform and one musical instrument of your choice or Perform and one set of artist's tools.

Excellence in All Things. Choose one skill or tool proficiency. When you use the chosen proficiency, you add double your proficiency bonus.

Pheromones. You can excrete pheromones tailored to a specific creature that cause that creature to feel affectionate towards you. You must spend at least five minutes with the creature and to have at some point in this time touched the creature's bare skin with your bare skin. Once this attunement with the target creature is complete, the target must succeed on a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus or gain the charmed condition for 1 hour, after which it becomes aware it has been affected. You may use this trait once, and it recharges following a long rest.

Striking Looks. Your beauty and grace make you stand out, and anyone trying to pick you out of a group using Wisdom (Perception), gain information about you using Intelligence (Investigation), or track you using an enhanced sense of smell does so with advantage.

Languages. You can read, write, and speak High and Low Martian, as well as English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 5'10" to 6'5".

Weight: 75-140 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Julandri courtesans exhibit a great deal of phenotypical variation. This might be due to the trade of slaves between principalities, as well as the less formal reproductive limits of the courtesan sub-caste. Unlike the laborer sub-caste of the Julandri, courtesans are not purpose breed for certain traits, this freedom to produce children how they wish is considered a right of the caste, indeed, the caste's only freedom.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, courtesans can tolerate the same atmospheric and

gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 80° F to 120° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-24 months, adolescence at 13, adulthood at 20, senescence at 60, and a maximum lifespan of 80 years.

Reproduction: Courtesans possess male (50%) and female (50%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after an eight-month pregnancy, Julandri courtesans are not interfertile with any other caste, not even other Julandri sub-castes.

Circadian Cycle: 24.4 hours, diurnal, with courtesans needing eight continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Courtesans are omnivores and capable of digesting meat and vegetable matter. Their preferred diet varies greatly, with courtesans cooking and eating the foods their masters eat. As slaves they do not have much say in what and how much they eat, but are fed as well as the upper castes. It is a common practice for Silthuri to limit or increase the diet of their courtesans in order to match the master's body type tastes. Like all Martians courtesans are lactose intolerant.



Names: Julandri courtesans are given names at birth, which they discard when their training is complete. A new name is given, and this name is used amongst their fellow courtesans, it is considered impolite for non-courtesans to even think it, much less speak it. Often their new masters will name them, and this 'trade' name can change as a courtesan changes hands and rank throughout her career.

Examples: Espoloni, Farolo, Harmonial, Khalatu, Lexiba, Mastarana, Pultana, Shevantu, Telvanau, Ulano, Yana

Psychology

Courtesans, like all Julandri, are born to serve. Unlike the laborer sub-caste, the Courtesans are required to have a strong intellectual and artistic life. Courtesans serve as the physical, emotional, and intellectual support for the Silthuri caste. Many see them as the artists and thinkers of Mars.

Physiology

To say that Julandri Courtesans are attractive is an understatement, they are some of the most beautiful beings in the Solar System, and their beauty tends to transcend species. While there are those who take moral objection to their role in Martian society, the apparently flippant and frivolous nature of their lives (which ignores the deep intellectual life of most Courtesans), and their raw sexuality, few in the physical presence of a Courtesan can not help but marvel at their attractiveness, poise, and grace.

Material Culture

Although the Talandri make almost all the goods in use on Mars, Julandri Courtesans produce artwork that can rival the craftsmen of Mars. This artwork is never anything of utility, no carved spoons, fanciful clothing, nor glazed dinner plates are made by Courtesans. Instead, they produce objects d'art, paintings, carvings, and sculptures. These items are rarely seen outside of the Courtesan's chambers, such display would be unseemly, but are enjoyed by the Courtesans themselves and their masters.

In addition to objects d'art, Courtesans produce most of the poetry and prose of Mars. These works are also kept limited to the Courtesans themselves and their masters, the remainder of the planet has no idea who famed authors such as H'ilopar, Bivarti, and Washiln are. The themes of these works vary from romantic tales of love and war to works on philosophy, art, and government. With the coming of the Earthlings, more of these works have leaked out, and alien ideas have leaked in.

Ithifl, a freed courtesan residing in Emancipation expounds his views on other species.

Earthlings: "They have come from the stars, from a green and fruitful planet to bring us freedom."

Europeans: "I know not how to approach one such as this, for they are more alien than any other I have seen."

Ganymedians: "It is said that these sophonts are made of plants, that they have no gender, and that they speak no poetry."

Ioites: "What is that? Get it out of my house."

Jovians: "Ugly beyond words are these, but it is said that some have honor and dignity."

Lizard Monkeys: "How adorable, I will gladly buy one. It should make a good pet."

Martians (Chanari): "Beasts and animals, they should all be exterminated."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Our poor brothers and sisters in slavery, yet they are so ill suited for freedom. We must guide them, for we know best."

Martians (Kastari): "Liars and perverters of the Ancient Ways."

Martians (Maduri): "They guard the status quo, but do not understand they are as enslaved as any Julandri."

Martians (Pilthuri): "What can they do that a free Julandri cannot do better? They should learn a trade and become useful."

Martians (Silthuri): "Those who would be my master should know I choked my former master with a *paranig*. It is a spit used for roasting bahmoot steaks. It did not, as you Americans say, go down smoothly."

Martians (Talandri): "Their great numbers and skill at crafts make them the new middle class of Mars. Sadly, their education is far too restricted to make them fit to govern, it is far better they choose from the Julandri those who can best represent their interests."

Metisians: "The Europeans have their own slaves, and these slaves fight. How unfortunate."

Robomen: "These are not life, but a way to make slaves of things that do not breathe, and thus cannot enjoy the air of freedom."

Venusians: "I have heard that many of these beast-men fought in the Ebb Revolution. They seem capable of much violence and much physical activity, but do they have poetry and art?"



JULANDRI LABORER

Ability Scores. Your Strength score increases by 2 and your Constitution score increases by 1.

Heavy Burdens. Your size category is considered to be Large when calculating your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

Dumb Brute. No matter how intelligent you are you can always fall back on your caste's reputation for having few noticeable thoughts. You have advantage on saving throws to resist psychic disciplines that affect the mind or track your psychic signature.

In the Background. On Mars, even those areas that no longer have slavery, the Julandri laborers make up a large number of the background workers who keep society running. When on Mars anyone trying to pick you out of a crowd has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) rolls. Furthermore, it is likely you will simply be ignored, granting you advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to go unnoticed.

Passive Resistance. Untold generations of slavery and oppression have taught the Julandri how to obey without obedience. When under the control of a mind affecting effect, Julandri laborers may interpret their commands in the most open manner possible.

Tough. You gain one additional hit point per hit die.

Untiring. You have advantage on rolls to resist gaining the fatigued condition or a level of exhaustion. Furthermore, you ignore the effects of level 1 exhaustion.

Languages. You speak Low Martian. You can also speak, read, and write English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 6'9" to 7'8"

Weight: 220-350 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Julandri laborers exhibit a great deal of phenotypical variation, a product of their careful and selective breeding. Laborers have no control over their reproductive habits and are told who to breed with, much like how livestock is treated. While for the most part large and strong, certain work gangs might be bred for certain tasks or conditions, with the farm laborers and those bred for tasks underground showing the most variance. The former tend to be thinner and taller, while the latter tend to be short and squat.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, laborers can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm

and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 120° F to 150° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-12 months, adolescence at 11, adulthood at 15, senescence at 40, and a maximum lifespan of 50 years.

Reproduction: Laborers possess male (30%) and female (70%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after a six-month pregnancy, multiple births are more common than amongst other castes. Julandri laborers are not interfertile with any other caste, not even other Julandri sub-castes.



Circadian Cycle: 244 hours, diurnal, with laborers needing six continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Laborers need a great deal of nutrients, as befits a larger framed species that performs intensive manual labor. Their digestive systems are very efficient, more efficient than other Martian castes, and laborers get the most out of what food they have available. Most laborers subsist on a diet high in carbohydrates, and both their dentition and their gastrointestinal system can handle high cellulose vegetable matter. It is not unusual for laborers to eat the left over stalks after a harvest, and most consider this a delicacy.

Names: The Julandri laborers tend to have rather limited names. Their masters do not want to give them more personality or individuality than necessary, and thus issue a newborn Julandri laborer with a single syllable name made up of nonsense sounds. In some principalities, Julandri laborers have no personal names; a work group is given a name based on its task, and all within are numbered off. For example, the carriers of water would include carrier of water 1, 2, 3, and so on. For some masters, this is even too much, and instead of naming a group after their task, they are named after their tools, thus reinforcing the view of Julandri laborers as nothing but objects (for example, bucket 1, bucket 2, and so on).

Examples: Asi, Baat, Jiv, Kol, Lti, Na, Ord, Pir, Pust, Rec, Xor

Psychology

It would be easy to brand all Laborers as simple minded and sheep like. This is not the case, for although a genius is rarely found amongst their kind, their behavior is more a result of their conditions than anything else. Julandri laborers receive a minimal education, just enough to do their jobs and understand their orders. Literacy is forbidden, as is any form of intellectual expression. Their dances and music are barely tolerated and not encouraged. Subservience is required, and Laborers who speak up or speak out are punished severely.

Physiology

Laborers are generally large in size and heavily muscled. Their physiology is dictated by the purpose for which they are bred, as well as the conditions they work in. Field laborers are darker in complexion than those who work in the darkness of mines or in the caverns beneath most Martian cities. All possess hardy physiques and constitutions, and illness is nearly unknown amongst the Laborer sub-caste. Their pulmonary and cardiovascular systems are very efficient and a Julandri Laborer is capable

of astounding feats of endurance. Like all Martians they lack vestigial organs and spleens.

Material Culture

The Julandri Laborers, like all Martians not of the Talandri caste, produce little or no material culture of their own. Their tools and clothes are given to them, and these are the crudest and least decorated of all the Talandri products. Most of the items used by the Laborers are the work of apprentices, and often first year apprentices at that. The Laborers do make their own music and dances, as well as the instruments needed to perform them, and the field laborers are known to construct simple stills to produce a rather crude alcohol.

Jat, a field laborer, has some ideas about aliens.

Earthlings: "Come from sky, cause war, not good."

Europans: "Scary and strange, not want to talk to."

Ganymedians: "How they grow? Who plants them?"

Ioites: "We have one on farm. Live in refuse pile. Eat things no one else want. Very useful."

Jovians: "What is a jov?"

Lizard Monkeys: "Hmm, might be able to steal one, make fine snack."

Martians (Chanari): "Evil, mean beasts, not civilized like me."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "They also slaves, but live in palace."

Martians (Kastari): "She say maybe next life I get move up Ladder. I hope to live in palace like courtesan."

Martians (Maduri): "Don't look in eyes, they get mad."

Martians (Pilthuri): "One day Pilthuri come to farm, say you and you and you come with me. He take them and they never come back."

Martians (Silthuri): "Master is kind and master is right. Master is good, not beat slaves often."

Martians (Talandri): "Like Julandri who make things."

Metisians: "Europans need own Maduri, European might be master."

Robomen: "Not like. If master has robomen, master not need us, master then not feed us and make us live in desert."

Venusians: "He look like he can lift six, maybe seven bales. Do work of one and one half Julandri."

KASTARI

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom increases by 2 and your Charisma increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. When not being carried along by servants you move at 30 feet.

Educated. You gain proficiency with Arcana and Religion.

Psychic Training. You have advantage on any saving throws to resist a psychic power.

Psychic Energy. If you acquire a psychic power you gain 1 additional psychic power point.

Sacrosanct. Martians often find it difficult to attack a Kastari. Any Martian who attacks you must succeed at a Will save with a DC equal to the 8 + your Wisdom bonus + your proficiency bonus or suffer disadvantage on the attack. If a creature succeeds on this save, they are immune to your sacrosanct feature for 24 hours.



Languages. You can speak, read, and write High Martian, Ancient Martian, and English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 6'5" to 7'2"

Weight: 110-280 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Kastari show little phenotypical variation within sect, but as there is little marriage across sectarian boundaries it is easy to spot the differences in appearance between the sects. The most notable variance is amongst the Kastari of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe, for their rugged and violent lifestyle encourages them to have greater muscle mass.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Kastari can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 82° F to 140° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-12 months, adolescence at 14, adulthood at 18, senescence at 120, and a maximum lifespan of 140 years.

Reproduction: Kastari possess male (45%) and female (55%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after ten months. Kastari are not interfertile with any other caste.

Circadian Cycle: 244 hours, diurnal, with Kastari needing eight continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Kastari eat as well as the Silthuri, but have a distinct preference for vegetable matter over animal proteins. Many Kastari have severe restrictions on their diet imposed on them by their faiths, but these tend to involve restrictions on meats (which the Kastari tend to need less of anyway). Like all Martians, Kastari are lactose intolerant.

Names: Kastari Names are unisex, many sects treat male and female priests as equal. All Kastari names are at least two syllables, and often three or four, and end with -ith, -sus, or -tar sounds. Some variation can be expected, and it is not unusual to find smaller or less traditional sects using different naming conventions. As a mark of status, some sects, such as the Orthodox Fellowship, use names for the higher ranked priests that have been passed down from the Ancients, and thus break all conventions.

It should be noted that most Kastari do not insist on having their title used in daily circumstances, if you don't know who the priest is, it's your own failing.

Examples: Amadailith, Balirith, Diesodesus, Ghastalith, H'ilcaltar, J'illscaith, Marthifith, Pilotharsus, Qualaxith, U'ilopsus, Xanthiltar

Psychology

The mindset of a Kastari is shaped by her faith. Whereas the other castes follow a general pattern of lifestyle and thought across the face of Mars, the Kastari have branched out into five major sects and hundreds of sub-sects and fringe groups. This makes any general observations about their psychology difficult, for a member of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe and one of the Orthodox Fellowship were raised in very different situations, live separate and divergent lives, and have worldviews that conflict on some of the key points. However, in general all Kastari sects have a theology that places the group ahead of the individual, declares its faith the only true one of Mars, acknowledges the existence of divine Ancestors as represented by the Ancient Martians, and possesses a Ladder of Being that places castes in some sort of order.

Physiology

If you were to remove their raiment's and clothing, Kastari are nearly indistinguishable from Silthuri. Many Earthlings theorize that the Kastari are not a separate caste entirely, but an offshoot of the Silthuri that took to religion as a means of maintaining control. However, like all Martian castes, the Kastari are not interfertile with any other, thus casting doubts on this theory. One notable exception are the Kastari of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe who tend to be much more massive than most Kastari, some even more muscled than Earthlings. Like all Martians, Kastari of any sect do not have spleens or vestigial organs.

Material Culture

Except for the Kastari of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe who make their hamaxes, Kastari do not have a separate material culture. Like most of the castes of Mars, they rely on the Talandri to craft all the items they use, even the most sacred. These items are as richly decorated as those used by the Silthuri, and this is one of the many points of contention between the two castes.

Sister Korta'l of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe preaches the Truth and Light to any who will listen.

Earthlings: "Keep in mind that the men and women from Earth are not as uniform as we, judge each according to his soul and not his caste, for they have no order or structure."

Europeans: "Sky demons that infect the minds of the faithful with lies and empty threats."

Ganymedians: "They say this species is made of plant stuff, well, we Martians know that pants can kill as easily as beasts. Let them take their place on the Ladder and climb as they can."

Ioites: "Have pity on these poor creatures, for the spark within them burns in us all. Wisdom will be found in keeping an eye on them, though, for they do not in action rise above beasts."

Jovians: "I have not spoken to more than two of them, thus I cannot pass judgment on all."

Lizard Monkeys: "These are mere pets, smart animals and useful, but foolish to talk of one as a person."

Martians (Chanari): "Vile bandits and murderers. The horrors they have inflicted are many, and one day they will be driven from our world."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "Slaves bred for lust. Think that some call the Order perverted!"

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Simple creatures blessed with loyalty and purity of thought."

Martians (Maduri): "The Order is proof that all may be of service on the field of battle, not just those who call themselves the only true warriors of Mars."

Martians (Pilthuri): "Useless, for what do they do but rob with words?"

Martians (Silthuri): "Those who rule should be more righteous than those that are ruled. It is a deep sorrow and shame that this is not the case on most of Mars."

Martians (Talandri): "Noble craftsmen and the bedrock upon which the shifting sands of Mars are built."

Metisians: "I have fought three of them to get at an European mind-demon. They gave me a good battle and died with honor. I mourn their loss."

Robomen: "Useful tools, but not true people for they have no place on the Ladder."

Venusians: "Ah, if I only had a dozen of them in my warband and not the sole son of Venus that serves the cause. He has honor, strength, and courage in abundance, if only he would quit that constant prattling."



LIZARD MONKEYS

Ability Scores. Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Size. You are small sized, standing about 3 feet tall and weighing less than 50 pounds.

Speed. You have a walking speed of 30 and a climb speed of 30.

Prehensile Tail. You have a long tail that can serve as a third grasping limb. It is not terribly strong on its own and can only lift 50 pounds, but you can use it to anchor yourself to something and support your full body weight thanks to your strong back muscles. You cannot make a melee attack with this tail, though you can fire a light ranged weapon that is one handed. The tail is not capable of fine manipulation and cannot be used to wield tools or perform skill checks.

Keen Senses. You are proficient in the Perception skill.

Darkvision. You have darkvision to a range of 60 feet.

Scream of Terror. You can utter a scream that shakes creatures to the pit of their being. As a reaction, you may scream loudly and all living creatures within 30 feet that can hear you must make a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus or gain the stunned condition for 1 round.

Languages. You can speak Lizard Monkey, however there is no written form of that language. You can read and write English, but due to the distinctive nature of your larynx you are unable to make a vocalization that is intelligible in other languages.

Homeworld: Venus

Height: 2'5" to 3'9"

Weight: 60-90 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: There is a great range in pattern and color of scales, as well as length and shape of tail amongst Lizard Monkeys. As troop membership is rather fluid, genetic drift is nearly non-existent except amongst highly isolated communities.

Preferred Environmental Range: Lizard Monkeys prefer hot humid environments ranging from 110°F to 140°F, and averaging around 90% humidity. Their lack of body fat or other insulation makes them especially sensitive to cooler temperatures. Gravity and atmosphere are approximately in the same range as Earthlings, though Lizard Monkeys are slightly more tolerant of dense atmospheres.

Age Ranges: Lizard Monkeys have short lifespans in comparison to other sophonts. They can move about and hang onto to adults immediately after hatching, and remain infants for only four months before they are capable of eating solid food. Lizard Monkeys enter adolescence at 7, begin adulthood by 13, fall into senescence around 40, and a maximum lifespan of 60 years.

Reproduction: Lizard Monkeys have two sexes, male (45%) and female (55%). Reproduction is through internal fertilization of eggs within the females. These eggs are laid 24-36 hours after fertilization in clutches of three to eight. An egg hatches in eight to twelve weeks.

Circadian Cycle: Lizard Monkeys are polyurnal and are comfortable in both day and night. They sleep for six to ten hours every thirty-hour period, preferably while hanging by their tails or in a hammock.

Dietary Needs: Lizard Monkeys are omnivorous but prefer a diet high in fruits and tough leaves. Their digestive systems are highly flexible and a Lizard Monkey can eat nearly any food that other sophonts can. Certain species of fruiting tree on Venus naturally produce fermented fruit juices in order to lure Lizard Monkeys to their deaths in carnivorous flowers. Lizard Monkeys are fond of these alcoholic nectars and regularly risk life and limb to acquire them.

Names: Lizard Monkey speech is difficult to translate into any other sophont's language, largely because so much of it is very high pitched. As they are not generally considered to be more than very smart pets, Lizard Monkey's are given names by their 'owner'. To the individual Lizard Monkeys, this is a great boon, for now they have been Named and Beheld by an alien, something key to the theology of the Second Hatching.

Psychology

Lizard Monkeys live in what is to them a paradise. Other species have either evolved in harsh environments, or have had periods in their development when climatic changes forced them to develop complex technologies to simply survive. Not so the Lizard Monkeys, for the jungles of the Venusian Highlands are full of resources, the populations have plenty of room to expand, and life is generally centered on eating, mating, exploring, and playing games. Until the arrival of Earthlings, not much had changed for the Lizard Monkeys for millennia.

Physiology

Lizard Monkeys are small bipedal reptiles with long limbs that end in appendages having three fingers and an opposable thumb.

Long, prehensile tails help the lizard monkeys cling to their high perches, and are even used to hold items while they run through the branches. The males have red or orange pouches on their throats that can be expanded to increase the depth and volume of their vocalizations. Females have a similar pouch, but theirs is dark green and is used to keep eggs safe until they hatch. Both sexes are generally dark green with black or grey stripes.

Material Culture

Lizard Monkeys do not have advanced material culture and in their native habitat are limited to temporary use of found sticks, rocks, bones, and other natural materials. Nests are constructed from a mixture of leaves, twigs, and special secretions that pregnant females generate in their throat pouches. Those that have become members of the Second Hatching have learned to use the tools and items of their hosts, sometimes to great effect.

Patches, a Namer, names his fellow sophants.

Earthlings: “Tall and everywhere, with too much anger and not enough joy.”

Europans: “Strange ones who Name in their own way.”

Ganymedians: “Trees that talk, a wonder to Name and Behold.”

Ioites: “They are like those who eat of sick waters and grow sick in turn.”

Jovians: “Strange flying things, bound to hatred and war.”

Martians (Chanari): “Wild and free, reckless and bold.”

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): “I am told they are pretty, but I only hear their magic voices.”

Martians (Julandri Laborers): “Skinned Venusian! HAHAAHAHAHA!”

Martians (Kastari): “Beautiful ceremonies to Behold and Name, confusing words to hear and ponder.”

Martians (Maduri): “Large and angry, best to hide from and watch from up high.”

Martians (Pilthuri): “Oh what shiny things they have, and they don’t know to watch out for us. So many things to Name and Behold, in private, wait until one is safe and hidden.”

Martians (Silthuri): “I have Named and Beheld many of these, they seem to like to stand in public places so others can see and speak about them”.

Martians (Talandri): “I can watch a Talandri make a cup all day, and still not have enough words for all the things they do to make just one cup.”



Metisians: “So strange and wonderful, I wish to see more of these fleshy things.”

Robomen: “Shiny and pretty, well, pretty old at least.”

Venusians: “They claim to own our planet, yet we have Named and Beheld the Mother World for much longer, we outnumber them, and we use them for our own purposes. At least they are amusing neighbors.”



MADURI

Ability Scores. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. You walk at 30 feet.

Darkvision. You have darkvision to a range of 120 feet.

War from Birth. You are proficient with two weapons of your choice and light armor.

Honor Bound. You have advantage on saving throws to resist psychic mind control.

To the Hilt. Maduri do not die easily. If you are reduced to 0 hit points, you may use a reaction to immediately spend a hit die, gaining the hit points as normal. You may do this once and regain use of this following a long rest.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write High Martian as well as English.

Sexual Dimorphism. Maduri exhibit sexual dimorphism, with the females being larger, stronger, and sturdier than the faster and more aggressive males. Females tend to be guards, siege engineers, and otherwise serve as the stalwart core of the legions. Males are the shock troops, special forces, and assault units. Female Maduri are the solid wall that the males charge

Female Maduri

You are one of the elite warriors of the Martian legions, and even better, the hard line that the foe will break against. Standing nearly eight feet tall, you are massively muscled, your tusks gleam with a fresh polish, and your eyes peer at the foe from beneath a protective ridge of bone.

Ability Scores. Your Strength and Constitution scores increase by 1.

Defensive Specialists. You are proficient with medium and heavy armor and shields.

Unyielding. You have advantage on saving throws to resist the frightened or stunned conditions.

Male Maduri

As a male Maduri, the glory is yours for the taking. You charge at the forefront of the legions, perform the missions that only your skills and training can achieve, and stand ready to defend your city-state with your life's blood.

Ability Scores. Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Aggressive. You are the foremost in battle, charging at the enemy from behind the security and cover of your mother's and your sisters' shields. As an action, you may

charge an enemy moving up to your full movement and making a single attack. If you do so, your attack is done with advantage. You may do this a number of times equal to your Constitution modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Fast. Your speed increases to 35 feet.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 6'9" to 8'

Weight: 220 to 360 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: The greatest amount of phenotypical variation amongst Maduri is between males and females. While both are large and muscular, the females are larger and more solidly built. A comparison has been made to the difference between a running back and a defensive lineman in American football, both are large people, but one is decidedly bulkier.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Maduri can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 120° F to 150° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Males enjoy infancy for 0-18 months, enter adolescence at 15, begin adulthood at 22, fall into senescence by 60, and a maximum lifespan of 80 years. Females live longer and mature slower, experiencing infancy from 0-36 months, do not enter adolescence until 18 years of age, reach adulthood around 26, and remain fertile until senescence by age 80, and can live for 100 years.

Reproduction: Maduri possess male (35%) and female (65%) sexes, though this ratio is due to battlefield losses and birth ratios are closer to even. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of two infants after a seven-month pregnancy. Maduri are not interfertile with any other caste.

Circadian Cycle: 244 hours, diurnal, with Maduri needing six continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Maduri eat a great deal, but have internal storage of water and nutrients similar to the fat sacks found in some desert animals. The Maduri diet is heavy in protein and fats.

Names: Nearly every principality has its own set of ranks for their Maduri legions. However, there are a few common elements that can be found cutting across language and

region. Maduri themselves are known by their ranks and number within a unit, as well as the name and number of their legion. Personal names are earned through heroic action.

Examples: Tolvak (apprentice), Koltan (soldier), Maskari (under chief), Maskuru (chief), Maskoroo (master chief), Silthan (officer apprentice), Silthun (officer), Silthun-ha (lord of ten officers), Silthun-kha (lord of a hundred officers), Silthun-kha-ha (lord of ten hundreds of officers), Kaftan (master of a legion)

Psychology

Maduri are more than just exemplary upholders of martial virtues, their psychology is based around an obsessive love of order in all forms. Maduri will not permit themselves to be dirty or unkempt except during combat, and even then they clean their weapons, armor, and persons as soon as possible. Maduri legion that have learned to use modern Earthling weapons have been seen picking up spent brass after a battle.

Physiology

Of all sophonts, Maduri show the most sexual dimorphism. Males and females are of different statures, with the males being at the lower end of the spectrum and the females at the upper. Many females also grow larger and sharper tusks than the males (which in most legions are seen as an attractive feature). Maduri are on par with Olympic Athletes in physical fitness, and often exceed anything an Earthling is capable of.

Material Culture

Like all Martian castes other than the Talandri, the Maduri do not make any items of their own. In the performing arts there is unexpectedly a decidedly martial bent, with large bands playing marching and battle tunes both for practical purposes and for amusement.

Ulla, a Maduri guard was granted permission to describe non-Maduri.

Earthlings: “Umhp. They are not worthy fighters for they hide behind their technology. Still, the sound of a gun is an awesome thing.”

Europans: “Pathetic weaklings with no right to live.”

Ganymedians: “They could make fine warriors if given the right training and discipline, but what legion would they serve in, male or female?”

Ioites: “Worthless scum. I will not dirty my mouth by speaking of them.”

Jovians: “Hmph. I know and care less about them.”



Lizard Monkeys: “Dmph. A petty animal, perhaps it can be trained to fight and put in the challenge pits against the smaller children.”

Martians (Chanari): “Fearsome savages on fast bahmoots, but no match for a disciplined legion.”

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): “What use has I for such frippery?”

Martians (Julandri Laborers): “My bahmoot has more intelligence.”

Martians (Kastari): “I thank the Ancestors that I do not serve in a legion commanded by some sniveling priest.”

Martians (Pilthuri): “They lack discipline and often think to give us orders, but they make nothing, fight nothing, and do nothing of value.”

Martians (Silthuri): “Umph-ka. It is the Silthuri who decide who to fight; the Maduri how, when, and where.”

Martians (Talandri): “They work hard to make our weapons and armor, and I respect the efforts they go to.”

Metisians: “Some call them the Maduri of the Europans, but it should be obvious they are lesser warriors than we.”

Robomen: “Toys of the Ancestors, but not true warriors, mere machines.”

Venusians: “They are said to be great warriors, and look the part.”



METISIANS

Ability Scores Increase. Increase your Dexterity score by 2 and your Wisdom score by 1.

Size. You are a medium sized ball of squiggly flesh.

Speed. You move at 30 feet and have a climb speed of 30 feet.

Darkvision. You have darkvision to 60 feet and can see with no light source to a range of 60 feet.

Multiple Limbs. You have six tentacles that serve as arms or legs as needed. A Metisian may allocate their tentacles between being arms or legs, changing the arrangement as a free action. For each additional pair of tentacles after the second being used as a leg grants you +5 to your speed, to a maximum of +10. Each tentacle after the first pair being allocated as an arm allows you to grasp or hold one additional item. If you have at least three tentacles allocated as arms you may use a bonus action to manipulate an object or use a tool. You have advantage when grappling, both to maintain and break free of a hold.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Metisian, English, and European.

Homeworld: Metis (Jovian Moon)

Height: 3'-4'

Weight: 90-140 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Due to their use of mechanical reproduction, there is very little individual variation, much less species wide variation amongst Metisians.

Preferred Environmental Range: Centuries spent underground, as well as the germ plasm used to seed the original clone batches, has made the Metisians intolerant of bright lights and high temperatures. They prefer a perpetual twilight and temperatures in the range of 40-50 °F. They also prefer a lighter gravity or .6-7 G, but can withstand 1G conditions for lengthy periods if allowed to spend time in a pressure cocoon or Metisian environmental suit.

Age Ranges: Metisians grow in an artificial incubator for 23 years before being 'born' as young adults. They enter senescence by 70 and biological processes naturally terminate life at 80 standard years.

Reproduction: Metisians are unable to reproduce naturally and must rely on germ plasm banks and artificial wombs to continue their species. New Metisians are created by the systems that combine germ plasm from the banks, initiate fertilization, and grow the young to near adulthood in climate controlled water tanks.

Circadian Cycle: Metisians are diurnal, though this does not matter much to them as they live in underground colonies far beneath the surface of Metis. They sleep for seven hours every nineteen hours.

Dietary Needs: Metisians like live food, preferably something that is still wiggling a little as they suck it into their gullets. They are entirely carnivorous, having evolved from foraging hunters in the forests of Metis. Until recently they have had to consume processed foodstuffs with the occasional live food brought down from the surface. Today, with the Metisians reconquering the surface of their home moon, they are once again enjoying the feel of wiggling worms and other such delicacies.

Names: Metisian names vary based on caste and status, with a name commonly associated with a specific role. The person who succeeds to that role takes on that name-title and appends a few letters at the end to differentiate them from similar ranked Metisians.

Examples: Blissrrl, Hasstaprrl, Isthisl, Kithissl, Lathissl, Mastrrlp, Mestasirrl, Mewrrlisst, Nasthiprrl, Rawrrlp, Rrlapor

Psychology

Two main issues drive Metisian culture, disease and order. Their home moon had long suffered from a deadly plague that drove the Metisians underground and into tightly regulated communities based around a feudal system of layered degrees of authority and reciprocal responsibility. As a species they have taken extreme measures to survive, even going so far as to alter their biology and means of reproduction. Only the intervention of the Europeans have saved the species from total collapse, and nearly all Metisians feel a great deal of loyalty to their saviors.

Physiology

Metisians are not like other sophont species, they are not bipedal and they do not have internal skeletons. Their bodies are composed of fluid filled tubes and sacks that form a hydroskeleton around which the rest of the body is built. A central head/ torso houses the majority of organs, including their brains, primary sensory organs, respiratory and circulatory systems (two systems, one to circulate blood and the other to circulate hydro-skeletal fluid), and their digestive tracts. These organs are readily seen beneath their milky-white transparent skin. From this central head/torso six tentacles extend, each tipped with a three-fingered ring of sub-tentacles, and lined with powerful suction cups. Any of these limbs may be used as arms or legs as needed, and when combined with the natural flexibility of the Metisians makes them excellent climbers.

Material Culture

Technologically, the Metisians natively are on par with pre-industrial revolution Earth, though with some advances in medicine and biological sciences. Metallurgy is a well-known technology, and the Metisians have shown that they excel at creating beautiful metal objects. Woodcarving is also a major art form, and for many a relaxing hobby. However, the Europeans have begun to introduce higher technology into the Metisian culture. Naturally, this level is not on par with what the Europeans themselves enjoy, but is the equivalent of current Earthling levels of technology.

Rawrrlpiss XX, A Metisian bodyguard, offers its views on fellow sophonts.

Earthlings: “They are a dangerous threat to the peace and stability of the Solar System, or so we are told.”

Europeans: “They came to save us from our plague, and we all owe them fealty because of that.”

Ganymedians: “What lies beneath that woody exterior?”

Ioites: “Justly punished for high hubris. Let that be a lesson to all.”

Jovians: “I ache in my tubes to match swords with these.”

Lizard Monkeys: “Nasty little things, always sticking their snouts where they do not belong.”

Martians (Chanari): “We can solve the city Martian’s problems in one week.”

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): “Disgusting, to dedicate your lives to filthy work is abhorrent.”

Martians (Julandri Laborers): “Fleshy automatons, fit only to work.”

Martians (Kastari): “What do they do in their society? We do not understand this at all.”

Martians (Maduri): “Ha, we will show them who the true warriors of the Solar System are.”

Martians (Pilthuri): “Trade is the bane of all intelligent life.”

Martians (Silthuri): “The princes of Mars should learn to rule, then they wouldn’t lose their thrones.”

Martians (Talandri): “They call themselves fine craftsman, but our technology is far superior.”

Robomen: “Flesh and fluid will always triumph over machinery.”

Venusians: “Our jungles are better!”





PILTHURI

Ability Scores Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 2 and your Charisma score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. You move at 30 feet.

Best Deal. Pilthuri always get a good deal and all their purchases are discounted 10%. Any sale you negotiate for your goods or services is increased by 10% at the end of negotiations.

City Merchant or Desert Trader. You gain proficiency in either: Investigation and one tool kit, or in Survival and bahmoots.

Connections. You can tap into the underground network that links all of your caste. While this network is strongest on Mars, but has been expanding across the Solar System. You can use Intelligence (Investigation) to gather information in order to locate the Pilthuri underground, with a DC equal to 10 on Mars, 13 in the rest of the Solar System. The underground is assumed to have a friendly attitude towards you, and can grant you aid, hospitality, and a small loan. This feature functions like the Network agent class feature.

Whealers and Dealers. You have proficiency with Deception and Persuasion.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Low Martian and English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 5'6" to 6"

Weight: 80-120 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: As their numbers are not closely watched by the upper castes, Pilthuri mate as they see fit, and it is a tradition amongst the caste to seek liaisons when in a foreign city. Because of this they show great phenotypical variation.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Pilthuri can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 120° F to 150° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-18 months, adolescence at 12, adulthood at 15, senescence at 75, with Pilthuri lifespans reaching into the 80s.

Reproduction: Pilthuri possess male (49%) and female (51%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization

and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after a nine-month pregnancy. It should be noted that like all Martian castes, Pilthuri are not interfertile with any other caste.

Circadian Cycle: 24.4 hours, diurnal, with Pilthuri needing eight continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Pilthuri are omnivores and can tolerate a broad range of foods. The need to travel to foreign lands, sometimes far outside their own regions of Mars, means that Pilthuri diets have picked up food ways from a variety of places. In areas touched by Earthling influence, hamburgers (made with bahmoot meat) and bacon have become favored foods. Like all Martians, Pilthuri are lactose intolerant.

Names: Pilthuri names are a combination of a personal name, a long honorific that includes their master's name, and a trade name. Personal names are generally short one-syllable words, similar to what Julandri Laborers have. The honorific is used only in diplomatic circles, and expresses the greatness of the Pilthuri's master and home principality. Trade names are temporary names a Pilthuri uses only within certain trading circles. When dealing with outside cultures the trade name is in the local language, not the Pilthuri's native tongue.

Example Trade Names: Abel, Bobby, Horat, Justifil, Mishum, Silviri, Talthani, Zetch.

Psychology

Mentally the Pilthuri are very complex, for what one sees on the outside is never what is going on inside. Their role as facilitators, diplomats, and merchants has meant that the Pilthuri must often cover their own emotions and thoughts with a veneer of detachment or avuncular friendliness.. This is not to say they are liars, just that to the Pilthuri there is a distinct difference between what one says and what one is. As Pilthuri age this discrepancy grows, leading to many elderly Pilthuri exhibiting signs of dementia and paranoia. Considering with the planet wide (and growing) reach of the Pilthuri underground, these traits have spread to every principality, and present one of the most homogenous of Martian castes.

Physiology

Pilthuri look much like a smaller and less attractive copy of the Silthuri caste. They have some body hair, but still have the same frail build as the Silthuri. Pilthuri facial features are very similar to those of their princely masters, but with less refinement and lacking in the ethereal beauty that most Silthuri manage to possess. Like all Martians, Pilthuri lack a spleen as well as vestigial organs.

Material Culture

Pilthuri do not make anything, in fact they rarely produce even their own music or dance. What they do is move other's products around, be they goods, raw materials, or talents. Following the upsets that have flashed across Mars with the arrival of Earthlings and Earthling ideas, there are some princes, and members of other castes, who look at the Pilthuri and wonder if they are really needed after all, or if the Pilthuri underground exists to fulfill the needs of the Pilthuri, and not the needs of Mars and Martians.

For fifty dollars and a tin of sardines, Hestharin gave her views on her fellow sophants.

Earthlings: "They know how to buy and sell, just not how to get a good price from a knowledgeable broker."

Europeans: "Look for the ones who are Emissaries, and offer them whatever they need for their work. Doesn't matter if they really need it, they don't know any better."

Ganymedians: "The plant men are hard to sell to, but many want Earthling weapons. Guns are cheap, ammos extra. A lot extra."

Ioites: "Mostly they don't have anything to trade, but they work really cheap."

Jovians: "Never heard of them, what are they looking for? Clothes? Jewels? Guns?"

Lizard Monkeys: "Well, I cleared out my stock last week, but let me ask around. I can find one for you with only a slight markup for my time."

Martians (Chanari): "Everyone else will tell you they are savage beasts, but I have traded with them from time to time. Just the usual stuff, here's some water and city food, why thank you for not killing me."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "Marketable, very marketable. Their talents that is, what kind of a Pilthuri do you think I am?"

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Hire them by the dozen, charge their labor by the gross, pocket the difference. Its not like they would use the money wisely."

Martians (Kastari): "Utterly worthless, not that I didn't lick their boots before I ran off to make it big."

Martians (Maduri): "All right, you get three dozen rouge Maduri, pay them fifteen dollars a day, offer to manage their funds for them (they're going to be confused as all hell over money) and hire them out as mercenaries. Now you are their benefactor because you keep them in weapons and fighting, and their manager because you work the contracts. If you can sell the weapons to yourself, all the better."

Martians (Silthuri): "Ha! I've no use for them. Do you know who really ran Mars? We did, the underground and everything else. We kept the water flowing and the food on the table."

Martians (Talandri): "Don't teach them about free markets, they'll just get ideas."

Metisians: "Shiny things and sharp objects, never fails to lure them in."

Robomen: "Can't sell to them, but I can sell them as they're not real people, just machines. In fact, I have a few in stock if you are looking."

Venusians: "No concept of money, looking to bring home trinkets, willing to trade labor for goods, very strong and with a Maduri's spirit. Best species ever."





ROBOMEN

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your speed is variable and is based on your means of locomotion see variable construction below.

Metal and Plastic. You are made of metal and plastic, plus some glass and maybe a bit of ceramics. You do not need to eat or sleep, and are immune to poison and disease, the stunned condition, psychic damage, and psychic powers that effect the mind. You are vulnerable to lightning damage. You do not register as a living creature on sensors or through psychic senses. You may not become fatigued or exhausted.

Self Repair Systems. You do not benefit from uses of the Wisdom (Medicine) skill or psychic healing. However, you benefit from engineer's tools as if they were a med kit. Furthermore, you have self-repair systems that function much like those of a living creature, and may spend hit dice and recover lost hit points normally.

Programming. You must choose a basic programming option from the list below.

Technologically Adept. You have advantage when making Artifact Analysis checks.

Variable Construction. You have 5 construction points with which to purchase your physical components from the list below.

Filled with Energy. While you do not need to eat or drink, you do require recharging from time to time. One charge keeps you active for 24.4 hours, and your batteries have a 30-charge limit. You can recharge at any charging port, and can siphon charges off of artifacts by connecting them to your charging port, or recharge artifacts or other items through the same manner, transferring your charges to them.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Ancient Martian as well as English.

Basic Programming

Robomen have a basic set of programmed abilities and protocols designed to allow them to both fulfill their intended function and limit their actions. These protocols are listed as a set of three laws that the roboman cannot violate without extreme effort. The laws are listed in a stacked order, with the top most law being overridden by the second, which can be overridden by the third.

When faced with a situation that might violate one of its three laws, a roboman must first consult the first law, and if a course of action violates that law proceed to the second. If the course of action would also violate the second law, the third is checked to see if the action would violate that one. If any of these three laws are violated, the roboman must either not carry out the action or face a programming crisis. Should the proposed action not conflict with any of the roboman's three laws; the action may be carried out.

WHAT ABOUT THE ROBOWOMEN?

Unless specifically designed to have a gender and gender identity, robomen do not think of themselves in this manner. Their forms are often neither masculine nor feminine, nor do they possess any sexual characteristics. Occasionally a roboman will present as male or female, but this is very rare.

Programming Crisis

When a roboman wishes to violate its three laws it must first undergo a programming crisis. This is a Wisdom saving throw with a DC depending on how many laws are being violated. If only one law is being violated the DC is 13, 15 for two, and 18 for all three. If the save is failed, the robomen suffers 1d8 psychic damage per violated law and may not carry out the action, gaining the stunned condition until the end of their next turn. If the save is successful, the roboman may carry out the action, but still suffers 1d8 psychic damage as its circuits fry and overload with the strain.

Programs

The following are the most common programming packages used by robomen. With the approval of the Game Master, new program packages can be created. Each programming package should have three stacked laws that are not mutually exclusive, and a set of three skill, language, weapon, or tool proficiencies.

Combat

Ability Scores. Your Dexterity increases by 2.

Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Through action or inaction do not permit any allied forces to be injured or killed. 3) Do not permit yourself to be killed.

Programmed Proficiencies. Perception and two weapons of your choice.

Labor

Ability Scores. Your Strength score increases by 2.
Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Do not cease work until so ordered. 3) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to an organic creature.
Programmed Proficiencies. Three tools of your choice.

Maintenance

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 1 and your Wisdom score increases by 1.
Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to a structure under your care. 3) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to an organic creature.
Programmed Proficiencies. Perception and two tools of your choice.

Rescue

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 1 and your Dexterity score increases by 1.
Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to an organic creature. 3) Provide medical and emotional support to designated targets.
Programmed Proficiencies. Athletics, medicine, and med kit.

Research

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 1 and your Wisdom score increases by 1.
Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to an organic creature. 3) Record and transmit data honestly and completely.
Programmed Proficiencies. You gain proficiency with one tool of your choice, one language of your choice, and one skill of your choice.

Service

Ability Scores. Your Charisma score increases by 2.
Laws. 1) Obey any and all orders given by a legal authority. 2) Make every effort to ensure the comfort and safety of your master or of those she designates. 3) Through action or inaction do not cause damage to an organic creature.
Programmed Proficiencies. Persuasion, one language and one tool of your choice.





Variable Construction

There is no set body pattern for all robomen, and indeed many of their physical forms are based on the needs of their designs. When creating a roboman character you have 5 construction points with which to build your body from the following list. You do not need to spend all of these points, and any unspent are lost. You must make one choice each from locomotion and chassis and may not have two chassis or two means of locomotion.

Attachments

Armor Cost: 2

Your chassis is armored. When not wearing armor, your armor class is 12+ your Dexterity modifier.

Back Up Cost: 3

You have a sentience back up system that prevents you from ever completely dying. Unless your body is completely destroyed, such as by disintegration or perhaps being on the wrong end of an explosion, and you fail a third death save, you may instead download your last memories into your back up system. You are unconscious while backed up, but can be installed into a blank robo-brain at a later date by a competent technician (with a successful Intelligence check with a DC equal to 12 + your proficiency bonus).

Chemical Converter Cost: 1

You have a chemical converter that can turn nearly any organic matter into useable electricity to power your systems. During a long rest, you may ingest five pounds of organic matter to power your systems for one day. Alternately, you may ingest one gallon of fuel. During a short rest you may 'feed' your chemical converter in order to over clock your self-repair systems. This allows you to spend hit die and recover it immediately.

Database Cost: 1

You have an extensive database concerning one discipline. Choose a skill or tool you are proficient in, when using that tool or skill you may add your proficiency bonus twice.

Dispenser Cost: 1

You have an on board liquid dispenser and associated holding tank. You may store up to a gallon of liquid and dispense it in measured amounts. Liquids that need to be kept at a specific temperate or under a specific pressure are stored appropriately. However, if the liquid stored is flammable or explosive, any critical hit you suffer breaches the containment and causes an explosion, inflicting at least 1d8 damage to you and all within five feet.

Extra Arm Cost: 3

You have an extra arm. You may hold one extra item and as a bonus action, use this extra arm to make an attack action or manipulate an object. However, having an extra arm can be burdensome, you may not apply your ability score modifier to damage when making an attack with your extra arm. This option may be gained a second time, giving you yet another extra arm, but you do not get an additional bonus action to attack or manipulate objects.

Gripper Cost: 2

One of your limbs ends in a heavy-duty gripping claw instead of a set of fine manipulators. The attached arm has increased structural support and mechanical drivers, allowing it to function as if it had a Strength score of 20. This gripper is not terribly agile and is rather slow, and cannot be used for much more than grabbing on to something and is nearly useless in combat. However, you can use it to grapple a target, using the gripper's Strength instead of that of your body.

RADAR Cost: 3

You have a built in RADAR with a range of 50 miles or the horizon.

RADIO Cost: 2

You have a built in RADIO with a range of 25 miles. You can connect to ghost networks.

Rocket Thrusters Cost: 2

You have built in rocket thrusters that function as a personal rocket pack.

Self-Destruct System Cost: 1

You have a built in system that keeps your body from falling into the hands of your foes. If you have failed two death saves you may choose to activate your self-destruct system, exploding and inflicting harm on those nearby. There is no coming back from this decision, and you may not use a back up system or inspiration points to save yourself. This explosion has a range of 10 feet, inflicts 1d10 per character level + proficiency bonus fire and piercing damage to those who fail a Dexterity saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. Those who succeed on the save suffer half damage.

Solar Recharging Cost: 1

You have deployable solar panels that keep your batteries charged. As long as you have access to sunlight, you do not need to recharge.

Targeting System**Cost: 2**

You have built in sensors and ballistic tracking programs designed to allow you to acquire and engage targets. As a bonus action, you may initiate this program to give yourself advantage on a single attack roll.

Tools**Cost: 1**

You have one tool set built into an arm.

Vehicle Interface**Cost: 1**

You have a cable that allows you to interface with a vehicle that has the neural interface trait.

Weapons**Cost: 3**

You have a one handed weapon built into an arm, replacing the manipulators on that limb.

Chassis**Boxy****Cost: 0**

Your general body configuration is that of a medium sized box. There is nothing even remotely natural about your appearance, especially as your outer casing is painted or simply left as bare (but usually polished) metal. You have a pair of arms and a head, which may or may not have something face like on it.



Not even remotely organic. Your artificial nature is readily apparent, and you lack the basic means of expressing emotion other than tone and word choice. You suffer disadvantage on Charisma (Deception) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

No clear soft spots. Your rather boxy and certainly non-organic design does not present any obvious places where an attacker can strike and inflict serious damage. Furthermore, the materials that went into your construction are sturdy and durable. You have resistance to slashing, bludgeoning, and piercing damage.

Humanoid**Cost: 0**

You have been designed to look like a living creature, though it is obvious to any who get a close look at you that you are an artificial being. You have a roughly Martian body plan, with a torso, head, and arms. Your outer casing is flesh colored and may even have artificial hair or other decorative features. Your head has a definite face to it that is capable of expressing a limited range of emotions. Often those with humanoid chassis develop very organic personalities, such as declaring a gender, displaying emotions, and even becoming fully functional.

Passable. You can attempt to pass as an organic being with minimal preparation, dim lighting, high collars, and low hats, or even sitting behind a screen and letting your life-like vocalizer do the job. As long as you have taken proper precautions those trying to discern your non-organic nature do so with disadvantage.

Like a real boy. Despite your programming, you are capable of emotional responses beyond your programming or even the run of the mill roboman simulations of organic emotions. You may tap into this well of nascent emotions to drive your gears and processors to greater feats. You may use this trait to take an additional action on your turn. You may use this trait once and it recharges following a long rest.



Locomotion

Bipedal

Cost: 0

You have two legs, though they may be organic looking or simply a pair of strut reinforced girder-like walking units depending on your chassis type. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Hover

Cost: 4

You do not have legs, and indeed do not need them. Instead you have a set of ducted fans, a gravitic motor, or some other means of floating above the surface. You have a fly speed of 30 feet (perfect).

Quadrupedal

Cost: 1

You have four limbs that serve as legs, which might be something hors- like or could be rubber sleeved metal cylinders. You have a walking speed of 40 feet and can calculate your encumbrance as if you were one size larger. You have advantage on attempts to force you to move or knock you prone.

Tracked **Cost:** 1

Instead of legs you have a pair of tracked units like those on a tank or tractor. While these are slower they are far easier to use than mere legs. You have a walking speed of 20 feet, but you ignore difficult terrain as you simply roll over it.

Wheeled

Cost: 1

Yay, you've got wheels instead of legs! You go zoom! Your speed is 40 feet.

Sensors

Enhanced

Cost: 1 per sense

Sight

Your sense of sight can zoom in to detect small details just above the microscopic, or zoom out to reach great distances. You do not suffer disadvantage on attacks at long range. Furthermore, you gain advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to notice small details.

Smell/ Taste

You can detect scents that only a skilled natural predator, such as a dog, can. You gain advantage on rolls to track targets by scent. You can also detect certain chemicals in food or drink you taste, and have learned how to analyze substances based on taste alone. You gain advantage on Intelligence (science) checks to analyze a substance you are willing to put in your mouth.

Sound

Your sense of hearing extends into the ultrasonic and you can hear things not only others can't, but also at great range.

Exotic

Cost: 2 per sense

Echolocation

You produce low frequency sound waves and can 'see' how they bounce off of nearby objects. You can detect physical objects and creatures within 60 feet of you as if you were seeing them. However, you cannot read printed words or detect minute details. You are effectively immune to the blind condition, though loud noises or large amounts of particles in your environment might hamper your echolocation.

Heat Detection

You can visually detect variations in heat to a range of 60 feet. As everything emits some heat, you can determine the presence of absence of living creatures against the background heat of the environment. You can also use heat detection to track the residual heat signatures of passing creatures. Powerful heat sources might interfere with this sense.

Psychic Sensitivity

You can detect the presence of psychic abilities, including determining if a person is psychic, if a psychic power is in use, or even if a person has been psychically dominated or controlled. You can also detect any psychic residue in an area, such as strong emotions or the death of a sophont.

RADIO Detection

You can sense RADIO waves and other electromagnetic radiation. While you cannot simply tap into the RADIO waves, you know the direction they are coming from and their approximate strength.

Ultraviolet Light

Your sense of sight extends into the ultraviolet ranges of the spectrum.

Standard

Cost: 0

You have senses much like that of an Earthling.

Homeworld: Mars, though some robomen not of Martian origin have been found on Luna and in Asteroid Belt ruins.

Height: 4'-7'

Weight: 60 to 400 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Great, though as an artificially constructed lifeform this would be expected.

Preferred Environmental Range: None, robomen have no need to breath, and can endure temperature beyond those of any organic species. Gravity affects them as it would any other machine.

Age Ranges: Not applicable.

Reproduction: None

Circadian Cycle: Robomen do not need to sleep, but all enjoy the occasional downtime to perform necessary maintenance and 'defrag' their robobrain. Robomen can enter a standby mode that can last for centuries, during which they are unconscious and use only a trickle of power.

Dietary Needs: None, and all robomen have long lasting internal batteries that only need infrequent charging.

Names: The Ancient Martians used a combination of letters and numbers to name not just models, but individual robomen in a production series. While all robomen found today have suffered some loss of memory bank data, most know their 'name', though it is not unusual for a roboman to adopt a new name to better match their new lives.

Examples: BXT-12, G'HAK8P, MOLW2J78SG, PO'LFV938-A, VIN34A56TH7, YT3RH7

Psychology

A robobrain is an artificially designed and constructed brain, and is closely modeled after an organic brain. Two hemispheres of tightly packed circuitry, most of it microscopic in scale, fill the bulk of the robobrain casing. Sensory apparatus attached to the robobrain, and signals from these are processed in different lobes, as is memory storage, analytical faculties, and other sub-systems. Within this robobrain are hard-wired circuits that limit the roboman's range of behaviors, or at least are supposed to.

Physiology

In general, robomen are roughly humanoid in shape and design, with two or more arms, a single or multiple pairs of legs used as locomotion (though wheeled and tracked robomen have been encountered), a head filled with sensory equipment, and a robobrain. It is the latter that differentiate a roboman from a simple mechanical automaton, for robomen are capable of processing, analyzing, synthesizing, and critiquing data, not to mention they can learn. Not all robobrain are installed in robomen, indeed, on Mars it is not unusual to find a robobrain, often no longer functional, in Martian ruins. The ones inside robomen are of a higher order of sophistication.

Material Culture

Robomen do not possess a culture of their own, and the products of robomen creativity are somewhat limited. A rare few know how to maintain Ancient Martian machinery, but to make a generalization from this concerning the craftsmanship, art, and entertainment of robomen would be in error. The minds of robomen, like all robobrain, are limited in their scope and reach. A combat roboman is not likely to think about building a bridge or painting a picture. Those that break free of these programmed restrictions, i.e. those who are capable of being player characters, are the exceptions. There is simply not enough robomen in existence to produce a material culture, or much of any sort of culture at all.

HT12R *granted us permission to access its data banks through verbal inquisition.*

Earthlings: "IT IS ONE OF THIS SPECIES THAT REACTIVATED ME AND CALLED ME FRIEND."

Europeans: "STRANGE THAT MY DATA BANKS HAVE NOTHING OF THEM AS THEY CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN GREAT AND POWERFUL SINCE THE BIRTH OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM."

Ganymedians: "THEY ARE LIKE ME BUT MADE OF PLANT MATTER ARE THEIR LOGIC CIRCUITS SAP BASED?"

Ioites: "I TRIED TO CLEAN ONE ONCE THE PROCESS FAILED."

Jovians: "THEY CAN FLY WITHOUT POWER THRUSTERS HOW MAGNIFICENT"

Lizard Monkeys: "KEEP IT AWAY IT PUTS IT'S PAWS INTO EVERYTHING!"

Martians (Chanari): "I HEAR THEY ROAST CAPTURED ROBOMEN ALIVE."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "THEIR APPEAL IS LOST ON ME."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "LIKE BIG FLESHY LABOR MODELS."

Martians (Kastari): "THAT IS NOT HOW I RECALL DATA ON THE ANCIENTS."

Martians (Maduri): "DANGER DANGER DANGER ROBIN WILLIAMSON."

Martians (Silthuri): "THEY CLAIM TO BE A LEGAL AUTHORITY BUT THERE IS NOTHING IN THE REGISTRY FILES CONCERNING THEM."

Martians (Talandri): "THEY CAN MAKE REPAIRS BUT THEIR REPAIRS ARE LACKING IN QUALITY."

Metisians: "VERY CLEAN VERY GOOD SOPHONTS."

Venusians: "SO MUCH HAIR SO MUCH MESS."

SILTHURI



Ability Scores. Increase your Charisma score by 2 and your Dexterity score by 1..

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Trained to duel. You are proficient with the silthanka and Silthuri dueling armor.

Born to Lead. You have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) rolls to give commands and issue orders.

Psychic Training. You have advantage on any saving throws to resist a psychic power.

Voice of Authority. As an action you may exert your inherent authority, bowing others to your will. This is partially through training, partially through the use of subtle vocal sub-harmonics, and partially the secretion of pheromones. When you do this, one living creature that can hear you must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus. If they fail, you can issue a one-word command that they must obey, though this order may not be suicidal. You cannot use this feature on a creature that cannot hear you or understand the command you issue, though some simple commands may be communicated

through gesture and body language. Creatures not native to Mars have advantage on this saving throw. This trait may be used once and recharges following a short rest.

Pep Talk. During a short or long rest you may spend your time speaking with your allies and bolstering their morale. When you do so you may not make use of the short rest in any other way, such as spending hit dice. At the end of the short rest, your allies gain an inspiration point each. You may use this trait once and it recharges following a long rest.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write High Martian and English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 6'6" to 7'3".

Weight: 120 to 180 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: There can be a great deal of phenotypical variation amongst Silthuri if looked at between principalities, but those of any given principality will look much like their neighbors. The broadest variations are between hemispheres, with the southern hemisphere Silthuri having a tendency to grow wispy strands of body and facial hair, while in the north western hemisphere the local princes often have slightly webbed digits. Congenital mutations leading to phenotypical variation is common in all Silthuri sub-castes due to inbreeding.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Silthuri can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 120° F to 150° F. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-24 months, adolescence at 13, adulthood at 20, senescence at 120, with Silthuri lifespans reaching into the 150's.

Reproduction: Silthuri possess male (45%) and female (55%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after an eight-week pregnancy. It should be noted that like all Martian castes, Silthuri are not interfertile with any other caste.

Circadian Cycle: 24.4 hours, diurnal, with Silthuri needing eight continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Silthuri are omnivores and capable of digesting meat and vegetable matter. Like all Martians they are lactose intolerant.

Names: Silthuri names range from two to three syllables, and always include at least one honorific. In general, male names end in consonants, usually 'il, ol, or ik. Female names end in vowels, with a, i, and o being the most popular.

Example Male Names: B'rithiol, Dalistravil, Gascar'il, Hancantik, Jasaterol, Jilaris'il, Ophind'il, Pilthui'il, Tolarick, Vontalol, Wenbal'il

Example Female Names: Alaura, Kirtana, Krastau, Lastrak'op, Nalalana, Nessau, Opalntoa, Phostarontu, Pisché, Saltarana, Talana-opé

Psychology

Silthuri are often seen as vain, haughty, lazy, and arrogant. While this might be the case for many, it is by no means the behavior of all. The primary drive of the Silthuri caste is advancement for themselves and their sub-caste. There can only be one at the top, the prince, but there are dozens if not hundreds of layers of Silthuri between that height and the bottom of the heap. This makes the majority of Silthuri somewhat aggressive in their dealings with each other, especially between sub-castes. It also makes the officials and bureaucrats amongst the Silthuri anxious to prove their worth and move up the ladder, which at best can result in exceptional management of their small domains. At worst the Silthuri becomes a grasping petty lord who rules over his tiny part of the principality with cruelty and paranoia.

Physiology

Silthuri, like all Martians, are similar to Earthlings physiologically, save for a few differences. Also like all Martians, Silthuri do not possess a spleen, nor do they have redundant or vestigial organs. Other than their gross physical appearance, what denotes the Silthuri physiology is their excretory and endocrine systems. Both are highly developed and produce excretions that are not malodorous. Indeed, the excrement, tears, body oils, and other excretions of Silthuri have either no smell, or one that has been described as flowery. Silthuri vocal apparatus are complex and capable of creating sub-harmonics that affect other sophants.

Material Culture

Silthuri do not make goods and wouldn't even dream of having it any other way. Some produce poetry, prose, music, or other arts that do not involve physical labor. No Silthuri would take up painting for example, it is too much like craftwork and thus fit only for Talandri. Likewise, while Silthuri might compose music, they are unlikely to perform it except in the privacy of their own palaces.

Despite this, the Silthuri do have a material culture, its just one that is made for them. All Silthuri, from the lowliest sub-director of bahmoot stable maintenance to the highest prince live in luxury. Their clothes are ornate, made with rare materials and precious metals and gems. Their cups and bowls are carved and gilded, even the silthanka, the traditional Silthuri weapon, is as much an object d'art as a tool of death.

'Princess' Devolak, the dethroned ruler of the minor city-state of Kaltal pontificates on those who would one day be her servants.

Earthlings: "Crude, but effective. Their devices are things of interest, though their vaunted technology pales in the face of that of Mars's past."

Europeans: "Crass and boring, their words have no meaning to me."

Ganymedians: "I would love to plant a few in my palace gardens."

Ioites: "Disgusting, once I have regained my throne I will have all these wretches disposed of."

Jovians: "Interesting, deadly birds are nothing new to us Martians, perhaps I will acquire a few as part of my entourage."

Lizard Monkeys: "An exotic pet?"

Martians (Chanari): "Beasts and animals, fit to be slaughtered and cast out to bake in the sun."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "Ah, I have only three left, and the gender balance is not even. I shall have to purchase some more."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "Would I comment on a bahmoot? I take that back, that is unkind to bahmoots."

Martians (Kastari): "Without them where would we be? I really mean it, if we didn't have these leeches draining our resources would we not be better off?"

Martians (Maduri): "The stalwart defenders of our thrones, as they were made to be."

Martians (Pilthuri): "Useful, but so petty in their thinking."

Martians (Talandri): "They are like the machines they maintain, unthinking, efficient, and often in need of routine maintenance."

Metisians: "I see the Europeans have gained their own Maduri. Mine are better."

Robomen: "The height of Martian technology, I would love to have one stand next to my throne in order to slay all who disquiet me."

Venusians: "Brutes, they are like Julandri only with mouths that do not shut."



TALANDRI

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 2 and your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Age. Talandri can expect to live around eighty or so years. Most work until they die, and retirement is almost unheard of.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Skilled Trade. Gain proficiency in three skills or tools of your choice.

Keen Senses. You have proficiency with Perception.

Master Craftsman. Choose one skill or tool. When you use that skill or tool you may add double your proficiency bonus.



Technologically Adept. You have advantage when making Artifact Analysis checks.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Low Martian and English.

Homeworld: Mars

Height: 4'5" to 6"

Weight: 130 to 140 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: Talandri display a great range of phenotypical variation due to the relative isolation of their populations. There is not much intermixing between Talandri from different cities, much less different principalities. This has led to a broad range of hair, eye, and skin colors, as well as facial features. However, like all Martians their internal anatomy is very similar across the caste.

Preferred Environmental Range: Like all Martians, Talandri can tolerate the same atmospheric and gravity ranges that Earthlings can, though they are more comfortable in warm and arid conditions. Comfortable temperatures range from 115° F to 130° F, though those who work in foundries, recycling centers, and other high temperature places can tolerate greater extremes of heat. The respiratory apparatus of all Martians makes them somewhat tolerant of airborne particles such as dust or sand.

Age Ranges: Infancy 0-15 months, adolescence at 16, adulthood at 20, senescence at 60, and a maximum lifespan of 80 years. Most Talandri work themselves to death before 65.

Reproduction: Talandri possess male (48%) and female (52%) sexes. Reproduction is through internal fertilization and gestation by the female with live birth of a single infant after nine months. Talandri are not interfertile with any other caste.

Circadian Cycle: 244 hours, diurnal, with Talandri needing eight continuous hours of sleep every 24 hour cycle in order to be refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Talandri eat a moderate diet and often see their rations cut in favor of the upper castes when food is scarce. They are capable of digesting meat and vegetable matter, though they have problems with a diet that does not contain grains. Like all Martians, Talandri are lactose intolerant.

Names: Talandri names are based on the sub-caste and the work the individual does. As the actual work may change over time, an apprentice is more likely to file off flash than

to design the molds, a personal name is appended and carried throughout life. These personal names do not vary between the sexes, though often the work done does.

Examples: Albre Sweeper of the Workshop, Mastif Who Designs the Compression Molds, Sasitil the Hammer of Metals, Tavin Cleaner of Finished Armor Pieces

Psychology

Talandri are craftsmen, and this makes up the main part of their psychology. For most Talandri their work is an obsession, it is the first thing they think about in the morning and the last before they go to sleep. To talk to a Talandri is to get an earful of wisdom, knowledge, gossip, and analysis of their chosen field. Following closely after their craft, the second most important thing to most Talandri is their sub-caste. A sub-caste is an extended family unit, though intermarriage between sub-castes is common. Husbands and wives need to be found, the young raised and trained, and the work must carry on for another generation. In addition to work and family, a driving goal of Talandri is for everyone to have a job to do as there are no idle hands in a Talandri workshop.

Physiology

Talandri are the most like Earthlings of any alien species, and a Talandri needs only a pair of sunglasses to disguise herself. Most Talandri show a physical response to their sub-casts labor, though for most this is a result of a lifetime spent at a particular craft. For example, those whose work involves a great deal of physical strength, such as metal smiths, develop impressive muscles.

As the right to marry amongst the Talandri is based on the performance of ones duties, there has been a subtle evolutionary effect that makes most members of a sub-caste physiologically suited to their tasks. Like all Martians, Talandri lack a spleen or vestigial organs.

Material Culture

Talandri material culture is the material culture of Mars. They make nearly everything that the other castes use, from spoons to radium rifles; it is the labor and artistry of the Talandri that turns raw materials into useful objects. The Talandri even cook food and wash clothes, though the latter often features a great deal of Julandri laborers performing the mindless manual labor of the process. In addition to producing the goods that Mars uses, a small set of sub-castes maintain the Ancient Machinery that powers the cities and principalities of Mars. These Talandri differ from their fellows in that they are not tasked with making things, they instead dedicate their lives to keeping things functioning.

Talnao, first class journeyman pipe fitter from Emancipation takes a lunch break to talk about aliens.

Earthlings: "Their weapons and vehicles are of interest, but how they use them disgusts me."

Europeans: "I would love to be able to take apart one of their disintegrators, what manner of tubing is inside?"

Ganymedians: "Talking plants, how do they function?"

Ioites: "We had one lurking around the shop last week, he stole some tools and ate all the waste in the bin."

Jovians: "Aliens that fly? Preposterous."

Lizard Monkeys: "They say you can teach them to fetch tools for you. I think I can train one to fit in tight spaces and make small repairs."

Martians (Chanari): "Savages, they have no sense of art or craft."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "When we won our freedom one of them stood for council member for my district. I voted for him, he was so handsome and so refined."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "We use them to haul loads of pipes. They are simple beasts of burden who make nothing of lasting value."

Martians (Kastari): "All my life they have told me to obey, but we are the ones who live closest with the Ancestors and their great works."

Martians (Maduri): "What do they know but war?"

Martians (Pilthuri): "Before we were free, our shop ran out of metal for the pipes and the prince did not see that as a problem. Grandfather talked to a Pilthuri and traded half of our rations for a year for enough pipes to keep us working our entire lives."

Martians (Silthuri): "Useless, they call themselves masters but what do they build? Nothing but vanities and oppression."

Metisians: "The Europeans are trying to copy the Maduri. Still, that rifle looks like something interesting, perhaps we can get one in trade."

Robomen: "I have a theory, they are powered by hydraulic flow, if I had one I could take it apart and prove this."

Venusians: "There is something about them that makes me uneasy"

VENUSIAN



Ability Scores. Your Strength score increases by 2 and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Size. You are large sized and likely stand eight or more feet in height and weigh well over three hundred pounds.

Speed. You have a walking speed of 40 feet and a climb speed of 25 feet.

Logic Bomb. You can generate a complex argument that can confuse and bewilder others. As an action, you may logic bomb one creature that you can speak with and is not currently in combat with you. The target must pass an Intelligence saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. If the target fails, it is stunned until the end of its next turn, unless it is attacked, at which point the stunned condition ends. Any creature that possesses a robo-brain has disadvantage on this roll and if it fails it suffers 1d8 lightning damage.

Low-light Vision. You can see in dim light as if it was bright light.

Tough. You have one additional hit point per hit die.

Claws. You have sharp retractable claws that you can use as an unarmed strike, inflicting 1d8 damage. You use your Strength modifier for to hit and damage rolls with your claws.

Psychic Training. You have advantage on any saving throws to resist a psychic power.

Native of the Wilds. You gain proficiency in Perception and Survival.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Western Venusian as well as English.

Homeworld: Venus

Height: 7'-8', with some individuals ranging up to 9' in height.

Weight: 400-600 lbs.

Phenotypical Variation: There is not a lot of variation amongst Venusians, hinting at some sort of genetic bottleneck in the recent past. One notable exception is that some concordats in the southern end of the Ishtar Range have stripped patterns of darker colored hair.

Preferred Environmental Range: Venusians can safely operate in the same gravity and atmospheres as Earthlings, though they prefer a slightly more dense and humid environment. While the Venusians are native to the hot and humid jungles of Venus, they seem to have a wide comfortable temperature range of between -15° F and 150° F.

Age Ranges: Infancy from 03 years, adolescence at 15 years, adulthood between 22-60, and with senescence beginning at around 55 years. Most Venusians have lifespans that, barring accident, can reach up to 120 years.

Reproduction: Venusians have two sexes, male (45%) and female (55%). Internal fertilization and gestation for sixteen months by the female, followed by live birth. Infant Venusians are entirely dependant on their parents for several years, and do not even gain more than rudimentary senses until around eight months old.

Circadian Cycle: 32 hours long, as this does not match up with Venus's rotational period, Venusians are not truly diurnal or nocturnal, but are asleep and active at any part of the day. They require ten hours of sleep to be fully refreshed.

Dietary Needs: Venusians prefer a diet high in animal proteins, though they do consume a small amount of plant products, mainly fruits. Their dietary requirements are large, and a Venusian can easily eat three or more times the amount of rations that an Earthling might. Venusians can process grains, though they find the taste and texture unappetizing. Also, dairy is unheard of in the adult Venusian diet, and a Venusian suffering from lactose intolerance is not a pleasant thing.

Names: Venusian is a language that builds compound words out of single syllable words that represent general concepts.

Most names are descriptive of the individual's physical state and deeds. The names below give the English translation of younger Venusian names.

Examples: Arms Like Lianas Hanging to the Ground, Born Too Far off the Ground May Never Walk Straight, Brave Like the Hair Upon His Head, Bright Eyes Shining in the Night, Defecated on Speaker During Naming Ritual, Doesn't Look Very Bright but Will Surprise Us All, Hoots Like a Ghost of the Dead,.

Psychology

Venusians are argumentative, highly individualistic, communal in action, and often rather aggressive. The Venusian love for argument is well known and well documented, few who have interacted with a Venusian walk away not thinking that they just had a rousing debate for no apparent reason. These masters of the jungle will argue about anything that has room for debate, a Venusian will not question the color of the sky, but would willingly discuss the exact shade of blue it is today, and rather that indicates a change in the weather or not. Venusians are known for aggressive behavior, especially with regards to direct threats. This normally takes the form of displays of teeth and claws, literal chest beating, and screeching calls, but can escalate to slaps and shoving. To an outsider it looks as if a fight is about to break out, but to a Venusian this is a normal part of an amusing debate.

Physiology

Venusians are one of the most Earthling like of the sophants of the Solar System. Although the gross external anatomy is dissimilar, both Earthlings and Venusians possess the same organs that perform the same functions. This similarity is especially striking when you consider that Venusians have an appendix, though theirs is still a functioning organ and not an atrophied left over. The only truly striking difference is that Venusian females do not have permanent breasts, nor are they the only sex to produce milk. When pregnant, a Venusian female grows breasts that fade away when nursing is done. Venusian males who spend time around pregnant or nursing females will also grow breasts, and like the females, these go away when nursing is no longer a regular activity.

Material Culture

For the most part the Venusians possess a Stone Age level of technology. However, this is deceptive for they have mastered the arts of manipulating their environment and working the psychic crystals found on Venus. Most Venusians technology is based around the use of stone, wood, and bone tools as well as plant and animal products.

With these simple materials Venusians are capable of crafting a broad range of items, from tools used to hunt and butcher animals, to the great stone fortresses that form the center of a concordat. In addition, they are capable of refining psychic crystals to a high degree.

From the statement of H'staifl Tha'tisant, a Venusian Harvitori.

Earthlings: "Not a bad bunch, but small and prone to sticking their flat faces in other species' problems."

Europans: "Odd ones these, one followed me around trying to be a Venusian. Heh, I am still trying to be a Venusian, how can I teach others what I don't know?"

Ganymedians: "Like us they live close to nature, but they have no warrior ethos. I think their sap runs cold."

Ioites: "Very small, very nasty, and without dignity."

Jovians: "They say they fought the Europans and lost."

Lizard Monkeys: "I had one as a pet, what, they're a sophont?"

Martians (Chanari): "They live a wild and carefree life, but one without structure."

Martians (Julandri Courtesans): "What a waste, so small and skinny, so hairless, so useless."

Martians (Julandri Laborers): "I traveled with one, he was nearly as strong as I, but not close to as big. Rather dull though, could barely talk about baseball."

Martians (Kastari): "The Martian priests are not chosen, but forced upon their people. This is wrong."

Martians (Maduri): "Good ones in a fight, but a bit too stiff outside."

Martians (Pilthuri): "Why do I need someone to help me trade? I say how much, you say this much, I say yes or no. I think I have this capitalism thing figured out."

Martians (Silthuri): "You don't become Speaker because your parent was Speaker. We figured this out long ago, "

Martians (Talandri): "They make good stuff."

Metisians: "This is what passes for warriors to the Europans? A bunch of sniveling squids?"

Robomen: "These things are an abomination; they live yet do not live."

SEX, SEXUALITY, AND ALIENS

For some this is a taboo subject, or at least one that pushes the boundaries of comfort. However, it need not be, and how much of this information you use at your table depends on the level of comfort that the game master and players have with these issues. However, romance is a major part of good storytelling, and a fade to black at some point is appropriate for most role-playing groups. Every culture, rather it is on Earth of some distant planet in our Solar System, has rules regarding who you are permitted to have romantic entanglements with. These rules tell us a lot about a culture and its interactions with outsiders, and with regard to some species, has been touched upon in *Rocket Age*. This short essay is intended to clarify matters, and give story and character hooks for romance in your games.

One matter before we launch into a discussion of the romantic and sexual mores of the various sophonts. In case it needs to be stated, the various sophont species are all aliens to each other. This is not to say that individuals won't find each other attractive, but in general instinctive drives will mark a Venusian as outside the parameters for a Martian. Second, although the sophonts can share similar foods and environments, they are not compatible as far as reproduction goes. There are no Half-Earthling/ Half-Martians running around. Sufficiently advanced sciences might be able to overcome the genetic differences that preclude cross-species reproduction, just that without outside help none of the sophonts are interfertile. Despite the inability to produce offspring, cross-species liaisons are possible, at least for the most part.

The Venusians have strict taboos governing sexual relations. The most noticeable is that those who have not passed their Harvititor, no matter what their biological age, are still considered adolescents and thus barred from sexual activity. An adult who violates this taboo can expect to be driven from his tribe, and likely his concordant as well. Formal matings are not considered to be permanent or life-long affairs, but are expected to last several years at the least. Matings may be monogamous or polygamous, depending on the individuals involved, and may feature one male and several females, or one female and several males. These relationships are strictly heterosexual, homosexual activity amongst Venusians is limited by taboo to only those adults who are not part of a formal mating.

Lizard Monkeys are very promiscuous. A close analogy would be the bonobo chimpanzees of Earth. Sex is something Lizard Monkeys do on a regular basis, and both heterosexual and homosexual activity is common. Formal partnerships are entirely unknown, and children are raised by the troop as a whole, and are generally considered to be the responsibility of whoever attends the hatching of a clutch of eggs.

Earth has the greatest cultural diversity of any planet on the Solar System. The Great Powers of Earth have the economic and military might to send their citizens out into the Solar System, and thus it is these cultures that most of the rocket set, as well as the natives of other planets meet. In general, the Great Powers have strict taboos governing sexuality, and are monogamous and heterosexual. However, there is a certain degree of understanding that extra-marital and homosexual relationships are tolerated as long as they are kept quiet.



Needless to say, this causes a great deal of emotional damage in these cultures, especially for those whose natural preferences are towards non-monogamy and non-heterosexuality.

As in all things Martian, expressions of sexuality vary by caste and sub-caste. The Chanari are unusual in that they consider homosexuality to be sign of sacred madness, and such a person is considered to be a seer, even if they do not demonstrate any seer abilities. Amongst the urban castes, the Maduri are the only ones who have strict proscription on homosexuality, but they do see sex as a means of reproduction only, and have many laws regulating heterosexual relationships as well. Bisexuality is the norm for the Silthuri and Julandri courtesans, and very common amongst the Pilthuri. Talandri vary by sub-castes and principality, and while engineers may allow homosexuality or bisexuality, carpenters may not. The Kastari vary by sect, but most sects are heterosexual, and amongst those that are not, homosexuality is considered closer to the divine. Finally, the Julandri laborer sub-castes are discouraged from homosexuality by their masters when the number of slaves needs to be raised, and discouraged from heterosexual relationships when the numbers need to be kept low. Robomen, being a non-biological species, usually do not possess anything similar to a sex drive or the concept of romance unless programmed to do so.

Amongst the Jovians strict laws govern sexual relations in order to keep the populations of their hidden cities stable. The more pragmatic clans limit who can reproduce with whom, and all others are barred from reproduction. Only those who have proven themselves in the arena or on the field of battle are allowed to reproduce in the more martial clans. Both philosophies promote forced sterilization of undesirable citizens and those not permitted to reproduce. Sexual activity that doesn't or can't lead to reproduction is widely accepted by all Jovian clans as a means of exercise and emotional fulfillment.

Ganymedians do not practice sex in a manner familiar to other sophonts. The Flowering ends in a rapturous moment as the pollen is released, but the occurrence of a Flowering period is in response to environmental stimuli and is beyond the control of the individual. Likewise they do not practice marital bonding in any form, and the Ganymedians have no concept of romantic love.

Ioites engage in a variety of sexual and romantic relationships. The need of the species to reproduce in abundance results in a tendency towards heterosexual activity; however, homosexual activity is not taboo provided that the individual does engage in heterosexual, and thus procreative, activities. Due to the hair's breadth border between survival and death on Io, the concept of permanent bonding has been lost. This is not to say that Ioites do not feel love, just that they are always prepared to discover their loved ones have died or suffered some other horrid fate.

The strange natives of Metis have long lost the ability to reproduce sexually, instead relying on their incubator devices. Their biology possesses any but the most atrophied of sexual organs. What little remains are a specialized tentacle in the male that once served to move sperm into a pouch in the female's ventral surface. In most Metisians, these organs are no longer functional in any way, but a rare few are born with nerve endings that permit arousal and pleasure. Their fellows view these Metisians as oddities, and any sexual activity is discouraged as being unhealthy and vulgar.

It is known that the Europeans possess five sexes, though only a morphologically male and female have ever been studied. Sex and romance amongst the Europeans is a subject open to debate, especially considering the manner in which the most well known Europeans, the Emissaries, approach the topics. Emissaries take on the sexual identities of the role they are studying, even if this is at variance with their biological makeup. This means that an European who is biologically male but is studying a role that he discovers is traditionally female in the culture under study, will change his own gender identity to match the role. Likewise, Emissaries take on the sexual and romantic taboos of the group or role they are studying.

CLASSES



CLASSES

The heroes of the Rocket Age follow a variety of professions. There are those who study, those who fight, and those who seek, and often those who do all three at once. These classes are most suited to adventuring in the Solar System of Rocket Age, but feel free to use them in other settings, or even to bring classes from other settings into your Rocket Age game. We don't mind.

Agent

Agents make things happen, often through diplomacy but sometimes through armed negotiations. Play an agent if you want to serve a higher cause and use your social connections and wits to achieve your goal.

Explorer

Explorers are hardy seekers of new sights and strange civilizations. Play an explorer if you want to be tough, outdoorsy, and inquisitive.

Scientist

This is an age of discovery and invention, and the scientist is at the forefront of it all. Play a scientist if you want to wield the mighty power of science!

Scoundrel

Scoundrels get by using their wits and lies, plus a little breaking and entering. Play a scoundrel if you want to flaunt society's rules for your own gain.

Soldier

The Solar System is rife with danger and conflict, which makes it a fine home for the soldier. Play a soldier if you want to be at the forefront of combat, fighting the good fight.

AGENT

"It was a hot night in Emancipation and the city was running riot with free Martians celebrating the Liberation. I should have been out there; I had helped to bring it about a year ago. I wasn't. Someone had helped my partner step in front of a stream of lead and I was going to find out who." - Ed Knight, Earthling P.I.

The many factions, nations, organizations, religions, and even private individuals of the Solar System employ agents to further their goals. Some are spies who probe the secrets of their employer's enemies, other enforce the law of the land or broker deals in shady rocket port backrooms. The key to any agent's career is not just what they know, but who, and how they can leverage that into greater things.

GIVEN BROAD POWERS

Agents operate far beyond their employer's reach, which is the whole point of having a trusted agent. In order to do their jobs they have to be able to not just act on their own, but have the power and authority to do so. A prime example are the famed Rocket Rangers. Even as near as Mars a RADIO message may take minutes or hours to reach a Ranger in the field, if it can get to them at all. The agent on the scene has to have the authority, power, and trust of their employer to solve problems and not create more.

DEPLOYABLE OR DENIABLE?

Most employers prefer to use trusted allies as agents, sophonts trained in their service and loyal to their cause. These deployable assets are sent on missions with the expectation that the mighty power they wield will be in their employer's cause. In-house agents cannot complete every mission; sometimes a nation or faction must reach out and hire outsiders to accomplish their goals. These agents are granted great power, but never truly trusted, and can be cut out and left on their own if the mission goes south.

CREATING AN AGENT

Agents serve a cause, though for some that cause is just the next paycheck. Why did you become an agent? How did you acquire this particular skill set? If you serve a cause you believe in, why? What led you to this service, was it ethics, philosophy, nationality, or did some event prompt you to become involved? These questions are as important as what skills and abilities your agent brings to the table, for they determine not just the what, but the how and why.

Some agents are freelancers working for the highest bidder. Ed Knight, Emancipation's premier private detective is one

such. While he takes money for his work and isn't too picky about who he works for, he does have a personal code of ethics that keeps him more on the side of justice than petty crime. You might be one such, and perhaps you served a cause at one time, but left or were forced out.

QUICK BUILD

You can make an agent quickly by following these suggestions. Charisma should be your highest ability score followed by Dexterity. Second, choose a background that suits the cause you serve now or one you have served in the past, such as the Interplanetary Comintern or the Rocket Rangers.

CLASS FEATURES

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8

Hit Points at First Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per field agent level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light armor

Weapon: Simple weapons

Tools: Your choice of electronics, disguise kit, forensics kit, lock picks, or med kit.

Languages: Your choice of any one

Saving Throws: Dexterity, Intelligence

Skills: Choose four skills from Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Investigation, Medicine, Perception, Persuasion, Religion, Stealth, Science

Equipment

- A suit of light armor
- A simple melee weapon and a simple ranged weapon with 20 rounds of ammunition or a 20 charge battery
- A datapad, or forensics kit, or disguise kit, or lock picks, or or med kit
- Civilian gear or conquest pack



Level	Agent Features
1	Career, Trick
2	Expertise
3	Network, Trick
4	Ability Score Improvement
5	Career Feature
6	Whispers
7	Network, Trick
8	Ability Score Improvement
9	Network, Trick
10	Career Feature
11	Cross Training
12	Ability Score Improvement
13	Network, Trick
14	Ability Score Improvement
15	Career Feature
16	Skilled
17	Network, Trick
18	Ability Score Improvement
19	Career Feature
20	Lucky

Career

At 1st level choose an agent career: Espionage, Negotiator, or Law Enforcement. You gain a career feature at 1st level, and additional career features at 5th, 10, 15, and 19 levels.

Trick

At 1st level, and again at 3rd, 7th, 9th, 13th, and 17th level you learn one agent trick. You cannot take a trick more than once, and some tricks have level restrictions you must meet before you can take them. When you gain a new trick you can trade one of your existing tricks for a different one.

Expertise

At 2nd level, choose two skills or tools you are trained in. You may add double your proficiency bonus to these skills.

Network

At 3rd level and again at 7th, 9th, 13th, and at 17th levels, you build or add to a network of contacts, informants, allies, and assistants spread amongst the Solar System. This network is comprised of several individuals in a variety of roles in life. Due to its size and reach, there is no need to define exactly who is in the network.

When you first gain this class feature, and again when you gain it at higher levels, choose a sphere of influence. This sphere represents a group of individuals with whom you have good relations. When dealing with this sphere, you have advantage on any Charisma (Deception), Intelligence (History), Charisma (Intimidation), Intelligence (Investigation), or Wisdom (Persuasion) checks involving that group. Possible spheres of influence include but are not limited to:

- A profession
- A religious order
- A culture
- Corporations
- Criminal underworld
- International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation
- Interplanetary Comintern
- Rocket Rangers
- Rocket Set

Once per episode you may find and arrange a meeting with someone in your network. When you do so, the GM will determine who the person is based on the spheres of influence in your network. That person will have a useful skill (treat as having a skill at +6), be able to provide a safe hideout, give \$100 x your proficiency bonus in goods and services, or lend the service of 1d6 mooks. You may use Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) to get more use from a contact, but such crass manipulation burns up what good will you have in that sphere of influence and you cannot use that sphere of influence again until you have gained a level.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th levels, you may choose one of the following. You may increase two ability scores by 1 point each. You may increase one ability score by 2 points. You may take a feat. Ability scores may not be raised above 20 using these bonuses.

Whispers

Beginning at 6th level you may use your Network feature to target a character. When you do so, make a DC 15 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) check. Within the next 24 hours, the target suffers disadvantage on a number of rolls equal to your Charisma modifier.

Cross Training

At 11th level your experience as an agent has taught you a host of lessons, and given you the opportunity to learn skills and talents beyond what you thought possible for yourself. Gain a number of weapon, armor, skill, tool, vehicle, language, or saving throw proficiencies equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Skilled

Beginning at 16th level when you make an ability check that lets you use your proficiency bonus you treat any d20 roll of 9 or less as a 10.

Lucky

After reaching 20th level, you learn that as much as you can rely on your skills, a little luck goes a long way. When you fail an attack roll, skill check, or saving throw, you can turn that failure into a success. You may do so a number of times a day equal to your Charisma modifier, and regain spent uses following a long rest.

Careers

Not all agents are the same, but they have the same goal, achieving the agenda of their employers. How you go about that determines what career you follow. Secrets are meant to be stolen, and that is the prime talent of the espionage career. Negotiators arrange deals and make alliances; especially ones that are more one sided. For those wanting a more hands on approach, there is law enforcement, those who enforce their employer's will through a variety of means.

Espionage

Spies. They're everywhere and nowhere. You get in, get out, and get the mission done. Usually you steal something, most often information, but if your ethics permit it, you can kill a target just as easily as you can steal plans for a new war walker. A large component of your talents lie in working human intelligence, suborning the target to make the job easier or get someone else to take the risk.

Secret and Secure

At 1st level you may use a bonus action to take the Disengage or Hide actions.

Sneak Attack

Also at 1st level, once per turn you can deal extra damage to one creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage. This attack may be made with a ranged weapon. You do not need advantage if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of the target and is not incapacitated provided you do not have disadvantage on the roll.

The extra damage you inflict begins at +1d6, and increases by +1d6 at 3rd, 7th, 9th, 13th, 15th, 17th, and 19th levels.

Slippery

At 5th level, you may use a bonus action to use the Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) skill or to use lock picks.

Get in and Get Out

At 10th level, whenever you attempt to bypass a security device or hack into a robo-brain, you do so with advantage.

Locked Mind

At 15th level, when someone tries to get information out of you using Charisma (Deception) or Wisdom (Persuasion), attempts to break you using torture, or to read your mind using psychic powers, you have advantage on Wisdom saving throws to resist.

Behind the Scenes

At 19th level when using your Network class feature, you may do so without actually meeting with your contact. Your contact will still pass the information on to you, use their skill for you, or otherwise assist you in some way. Your network of informants is so large and you pull the strings so well, people do the things you need done without even knowing why they are doing them or whom they are doing them for.

Law Enforcement

The Solar System is a wild and lawless place. Sure, large parts of the Earth and the city-states of Mars are pretty orderly, but the rest is like the Wild West. You bring order to the chaos and stand between the innocent and the guilty. The latter might be a determination you make yourself, or one your employer makes for you.

Law Enforcement Powers

Beginning at 1st level, you may exert your authority to gain advantage on Charisma (Intimidation), Intelligence (Investigation), and Wisdom (Persuasion) checks. You may do so a number of times a day equal to your Charisma modifier.

Basic Combat Training

Also at 1st level, you gain proficiency with medium armor and martial weapons as well as one vehicle of your choice.

Put 'em on Ice

At 5th level, whenever you use a weapon with the stun property, you add your proficiency bonus to the stun DC.

Hot Pursuit

At 10th level, you may take the Dash action as a bonus action. Furthermore, if riding a mount or vehicle, you may increase the speed of the mount for one round by 10 feet as a bonus action. If driving a vehicle you may make an accelerate maneuver as a bonus action.



Lethal Force

At 15th level, whenever you succeed on an attack roll with a weapon, you may add the Stun DC 13 property to the attack. You may do this a number of times equal to your Dexterity modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Stoolies

At 19th level, when you use your network class feature, you may do so an extra time per episode. Your contact is a criminal who you have chosen to not arrest in exchange for information.

Negotiator

The mission would go a lot smoother if everyone would stop and talk it out. Not that you are always looking for a solution that doesn't involve violence, that's just one tool in the kit for a skilled negotiator. It is just that everyone can walk away happy. Happy that is if you and yours get the better part of the deal.

Smooth Talker

At 1st level when you choose this career, choose two of the following skills: Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), and Wisdom (Persuasion) checks. You may add your proficiency bonus twice if you are trained in the chosen skills.

Researcher

Also at 1st level, you spend time looking up information on your likely friends and foes before going out into the field. You may add half your proficiency bonus to any Intelligence based skill you are not already proficient in.

Improved Network

At 5th level, you may use the Network class feature twice per episode.

Common Ground

Beginning at 10th level, if you have at least ten minutes to speak with someone you can change their attitude towards you by one step. You may do this a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier, but no more than once per target.

Non-Combatant

At 15th level you may avoid danger during combat. For a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier, as long as you do not take the attack action, any creature that attempts to attack you must first pass a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 plus your proficiency bonus and your Charisma modifier. Any creature that does manage to make an attack against you suffers an amount of psychic damage equal to your proficiency bonus plus your Charisma modifier as they realize too late that you are not part of this fight. You may use this feature once, and it recharges after a short or long rest.

Stop the Violence

At 19th level, you may issue a loud call to stop fighting. All within 60 feet of you or connected to you by RADIO or other communication technology must make a Wisdom saving throw with a DC equal to 8 plus your proficiency bonus and your Charisma modifier. Those who fail gain the stunned condition for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier, but if they are attacked they immediately lose the stunned condition. Anyone who succeeds the saving throw has disadvantage on all attack rolls for the duration of the effect. You may use this class feature once and it recharges following a long rest.

Agent Tricks

The following tricks are available to agents when they gain the Trick feature. Some require a minimum level before they can be taken. Unless otherwise noted, no trick may be taken more than once.

Artifact (7th level)

You have acquired a minor artifact from a long lost technologically advanced civilization. This artifact can be used as a bonus action to grant advantage on one specific skill check or as a reaction to grant advantage on one specific saving throw. The choice of effect must be made when you select this trick, and cannot be changed, but you may select this trick a second time to gain the other effect.

Biological Studies

You have made an extensive study of the Solar System's many lifeforms. You have advantage on Nature checks. Additionally, if you spend an action studying an individual your next successful attack against it becomes a critical hit.

Command Training

During vehicular combat if you take the captain crew position you may take an additional captain crew action as a bonus action.

Cultural Studies

You have made an extensive study of one of the Solar System's many cultures. You learn an additional language, and have advantage on Charisma based checks involving the culture that speaks that language.

Distraction

As a bonus action you may make a DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check. If you succeed, you have created a distraction allowing you to take immediately a Disengage or Hide action.

Dirt (7th level)

There is a person in one of your networks that you have information about, information that person doesn't want to come out. When you take this trick you must designate the network it effects. You may use that network once for free.

Dirty Trick

You know that a bit of sand in the face, a feint towards vital organs, or other dirty tricks can be crucial in combat. As a reaction, if attacked you may make a DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check to cause your attacker to roll with disadvantage.

Fast Work

Choose two tools you are proficient with. You may take a bonus action to use these and work you do with them takes half the normal time.

Force Stop

When piloting a vehicle you are proficient with, you may choose to attempt the ram maneuver to cut off another vehicle, at the normal risk of failure for the maneuver. If you succeed, you slow the target vehicle by an amount equal to your vehicle's acceleration rating instead of inflicting damage.

Ghost

If you take a minute you can clean all traces of your presence from an area up to the size of a large room. People who have seen you still recall you were there, but you do not leave any forensic evidence behind.

Hidden Psyche (7th level)

You have learned how to cloud your mind against psychic intrusion. When you are affected by a telepathic psychic power you may attempt a saving throw every round to negate the effect.

Masks (7th level)

You maintain a set of carefully crafted alternate identities. When you select this trick, create a number of alternate identities equal to your Charisma modifier. As long as you have five minutes and access to a disguise kit, you may switch between these identities. When using one of these identities, your disguise cannot be penetrated by normal means (though psychic senses or your own blunders can give it away).

Night Work

So much of your work takes place at night or in the dark. Either through training or as the result of some minor technological marvel you have gained low-light vision. If you already have low-light vision, you gain darkvision 60 feet.

Psychic Reflection (7th level)

If you are targeted by a psychic power you may use a reaction to attempt to reflect it back towards its source. You must choose to do this after the attack roll against you has been resolved or your saving throw has been resolved. Make a Charisma check adding in your proficiency bonus against a DC equal to either the attack roll made against you or the original saving throw DC. If you are successful, the creature activating the psychic discipline becomes the target instead of you. You may use this trick once, and you recover expended uses following a long rest.

Quick

Often you need to move fast to achieve your goals. Your base speed increases by 10 feet and you may use a bonus action to take the Dash action.

Rhythm

You know how to work the bureaucratic machine to your advantage. Once per episode you can access a network you do not already have access to. However, your contacts are not as good and you may only choose one of the effects of the network feature.

Sneaky

Moving into cover is the key to staying hidden and avoiding danger. You may use a bonus action to take the Hide action.

Wounding Attack (7th level)

When you make a successful attack, you may choose to apply one of the following conditions to the target: blinded, deafened, or stunned. The condition lasts a number of rounds equal to your Dexterity modifier. You may use this trick once, and regain use of it following a long rest.

EXPLORER

"Late on the third day we reached the dead canal valley. The channel was not entirely silted over and a thin trickle of murky red ran down the middle. Across the valley we could see the ruins of a city, could this be the fabled Polikinalt? Could our long search be over? We camped for the night, and on the morrow crossed into the ruins that legends say was where the ancient kings of the Canal Era mined their psychic crystals." - From the journals of Dr. Everett Stone

A SOLAR SYSTEM OF POSSIBILITIES

There are nine planets and countless moons in the Solar System, not to mention the Asteroid Belt, and whatever might lay beyond. Most of this vast area has only been lightly charted and is known to only the local inhabitants, if there are any. Explorers go into the unknown to seek new sights, discover new locales, and meet strange and interesting forms of life. Sometimes explorers even come back.

A PLETHORA OF HOMEWORLDS

The advent of the Rocket Age has opened up the Solar System to not just Earthlings, but to all sophonts. It may have been Earthlings who started the Rocket Age, but before that people were exploring their homeworlds, and still do, but the siren call of alien planets is strong. You can find Venusian explorers on Mars, Martians exploring high in the clouds of Jupiter, and Ganymedian explorers wandering the forests of Earth. One thing unites them all, a curiosity that cannot be quenched and the courage to see what is over the next hill.

CREATING AN EXPLORER

Explorers are defined by where they go. What drew you into leaving home for parts unknown? Did you learn your skills on your homeworld or become an explorer after seeing the great wonder that is the Solar System? What are you seeking? Is it to satisfy your curiosity or is it a quest for fame? Do you have something to prove to yourself or others? Perhaps you only feel alive when on an expedition, when the danger is thick and the stakes are high.

QUICK BUILD

You can make an explorer quickly by following these suggestions. Your best ability score should be either Wisdom or Constitution. Place your third highest ability score in either Dexterity or Intelligence. Choose the ICIC Researcher or trailblazer background.

CLASS FEATURES

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d10

Hit Points at First Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per dandy level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: light, medium

Weapon: Simple weapons, Martial weapons

Tools: Cartographer's tools and either electronics, engineer's tools, lock picks, or science kit

Vehicles: One vehicle proficiency of your choice

Languages: Two of your choice

Saving Throws: Constitution, Wisdom

Skills: Choose three skills from: Animal Handling, Athletics, Engineering, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Science, Stealth, and Survival

Equipment

You start with the following equipment in addition to any equipment from your background:

- (a) a big game rifle and 20 bullets, or (b) a martial weapon
- a suit of light armor
- Battery with 20 charges
- cartographer's tools
- notebook and 0-G pen
- (a) engineer's tools, or (b) lock picks, or (c) science kit
- expedition pack

Home in the Wilds

At 1st level, your life living in the wilds has honed your senses and toughened your body. You gain the following benefits:

- You ignore difficult terrain. You have advantage on initiative rolls.
- Even if engaged in another activity, you remain alert to danger.
- If you forage for food, you may do so while traveling at your normal speed.
- If alone or accompanied by others with this feature, you may move stealthily while moving at full speed.
- You have advantage on Survival rolls to track creatures.

On Your Own

Also at 1st level, years spent living in the wilderness has taught you to be self-sufficient. When using a skill or tool you do not have proficiency in, you may add half your proficiency bonus to the roll.

Expertise

At 2nd level, choose two skills, vehicles, or tools that you are trained in. You may add double your proficiency bonus to these skills, vehicles, or tools.

Explorer Career

At 3rd level choose one of the following careers to pursue: archaeologist, scout, wanderer.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th and 19th levels, you may choose one of the following. You may increase two ability scores by 1 point each. You may increase one ability score by 2 points. You may take a feat if using that optional rule. Ability scores may not be raised above 20 using these bonuses.

Extra Attack

Beginning at 5th level, when using the Attack action, you may attack twice. At 11th level you may attack three times when you take the Attack action. At 20th level this increases to four attacks whenever you take the Attack action.

Make-do

At 6th level your experience has taught you how to get by with minimal resources. If you are attempting to use a tool you are proficient in, but do not have the requisite tools on you, you may make the roll as if you had the appropriate tools provided you have something that can reasonably be used as a substitute.

Fleet of Foot

Beginning at 8th level, you may use the Dash action as a bonus action.

Bushwhack

At 9th level, you have learned to set in ambush or just on watch for hours at a time. If you are attempting to hide and not to move. Anyone who attempts to detect your presence suffers a -10 penalty on their Wisdom (Perception) check or their passive perception. You may continue to hide as long as you remain stationary, but you lose this benefit if you move, fall prone, or the cover you are hiding in is removed.

Artifact

At 13th level you have discovered an artifact of ancient make. This may be from one of the many lost technologically advanced cultures of the Solar System.

Level	Explorer Features
1	On Your Own, Home in the Wilds
2	Expertise
3	Career
4	Ability Score Improvement
5	Extra Attack
6	Make-do
7	Career Feature
8	Fleet of Foot
9	Ambush
10	Career Feature
11	Extra Attack (2)
12	Ability Score Improvement
13	Artifact
14	Duck and Hide
15	Career Feature
16	Ability Score Improvement
17	One with the wilderness
18	Ability Score Improvement
19	Career Feature
20	Extra Attack (3)

When you gain this feature choose one of the following effects. The artifact has 10 charges, each use drains one charge, and it takes an action to use an artifact unless otherwise noted. The names, age, and style of the artifact is up to you, be creative and descriptive.

- The artifact produces a field that renders you and all your carried equipment invisible as per the *Invisibility* spell for one minute.
- As a reaction, the artifact can generate a protective field. This field either grants you advantage on Dexterity saves or increases your AC by 5 until the start of your next turn.
- The artifact temporarily enhances one of your ability scores, granting it a +2 bonus for 1d6 rounds.
- During a long rest you can store up to one hit die in the artifact. As an action you may withdraw that hit die from the artifact. You can only benefit from your own stored hit dice, not someone else's, that would be creepy.
- If you are reduced to 0 hit points the artifact will automatically stabilize you. You must spend an hour bonding with the artifact to gain this benefit.



Duck and Hide

At 14th level, you may use a bonus action to take the Hide action. Additionally, you may not be tracked through mundane means.

One with the Wilderness

At 17th level you have learned to avoid the dangers of the wild country and to not just survive there, but to thrive. When you take a short rest while in a wilderness setting, you recover the maximum number of hit points possible on any hit dice you spend. Additionally, you can expend a hit die to remove a condition from yourself or another. Finally, you may give your hit dice to an ally, but if you do so they must still roll for the number of hit points recovered as normal.

Archaeologist

There are many lost civilizations in the Solar System, some from more primitive times, others that once reached technological heights only dreamed of today. The field of archeology has been going through a renaissance, driven by the discoveries being made on Mars and elsewhere as well as the massive amounts of funding that has been flowing in. For some this is a good thing, discoveries made in the ruins of advanced civilizations become tomorrow's wonders of technology. For others this amounts to little more than looting, and a desecration of an academic field.

Get in Get Out

At 3rd level when you choose this career you may use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide actions, as well as to use lock picks and engineers' tools.

Artifact Familiarity

Also at 3rd level, when making an Artifact Analysis check you add double your proficiency bonus to the check if you have proficiency in the requisite skill. Also, you make Artifact Analysis checks in 1 minute instead of 1 hour.

Trap Sense

At 7th level you gain the ability to sense when a trap is near and escape it. Traps that you trigger have disadvantage on attack rolls targeting you, and you have advantage on saving throws caused by traps targeting you.

Safety Factor

Beginning at 10th level, when you use Artifact Analysis to activate an artifact, you are aware of the result of the Artifact Analysis roll before you activate the device.

False Reading

Once you have reached 15th level, you may fool even the most dedicated sensors. When you use Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Disguise) to convince a

robotbrain that you are of a particular species or class, you do so with advantage.

Artifact Knowledge

At 19th level, when you make an Artifact Analysis check you may treat any roll that is less than 9 as a 10.

Scout

Someone needs to lead the expedition down the right trail, find the stolen bahmoots, or track the raiders back to their camp. These are the tasks that the scout is trained for and ready to accomplish. An expedition without a scout is not doomed to failure and many such expeditions can still be found, or at least their bleached and picked over bones.

Trail Leader

Beginning at 3rd level, you can lead others through the wilderness. You and those traveling with you are not slowed by difficult terrain, and cannot become lost save through extraordinary means.

Guidance

Also at 3rd level, you gain a number of guidance dice that you can use or give to an ally. Giving a guidance die is a bonus action or a reaction to an attack or other threat. You have a pool of guidance dice equal to your Wisdom modifier + your proficiency bonus. When you gain this feature, your guidance die begins at a d6, but increases to a d8 at 7th level and a d10 at 15th level. Spent guidance dice are recovered following a long rest

Guidance dice can be spent to modify Intelligence (Nature), Wisdom (Perception), Dexterity (Stealth), and Wisdom (Survival) checks. They can also be spent on Constitution saves to resist fatigue and any other save to resist natural phenomena and threats, such as lightning strikes, rock falls, or the venom of wild creatures. Guidance dice can also be spent on Initiative checks.

Eyes Open

Beginning at 7th level you may not be surprised. Additionally, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) check is and Intelligence checks to recall details of something you have seen, heard, or otherwise sensed.

Counter-Ambush

Beginning at 10th level, if a foe would normally gain surprise against you, you may counter their ambush before it happens. You must spend a guidance die for yourself, and additional guidance die for any ally within 30 feet you want to benefit from this feature. Those that do benefit turn their tables on their ambushers and gain a free turn before their foes can act.

Smell Them Coming

Beginning at 15th level, your keen senses allow you to detect dangers long before they reach you. You may spend 1 minute listening to the wind, feeling the ground, and tasting the air. After this time and for the next hour, you are aware of any possible dangers lurking in a ten-mile radius, including natural hazards, dangerous animals, and potential foes.

Improved Counter-Ambush

Beginning at 19th level, when you use your counter-ambush feature, you need only spend one guidance die to effect yourself and all allies within 30 feet. Additionally, you may spend a guidance die to allow all allies within 30 feet to benefit from your bushwhack feature.

Wanderer

Some people just don't have a home. This might be by choice or it might be through ill luck or blind fate. The wanderer is such a person. Cast out into the Solar System they just keep going, traveling from planet to planet, crossing endless deserts, and passing through impenetrable jungles.

Broad Experience

At 3rd level when you choose this career you gain three proficiencies of your choice. These may be skill, language, tool, or vehicle proficiencies.

Toughened

Also at 3rd level, if you fail a Constitution save you may turn that failure into a success. You may do this once, and regain use of this feature following a long rest.

Hardy

At 7th level, as a bonus action, you may spend a hit die to remove one condition you are suffering from.

New Sights

At 10th level you may choose two skills, tools, or vehicles you are proficient in. You may add double your proficiency bonus to checks involving these proficiencies.

Keep Going

Beginning at 15th level, when you succeed at a Constitution save, or recover an expended hit die. Additionally, you are immune to the exhausted condition.

The Road Never Ends

Beginning at 19th level, you may immediately succeed on a death save as if you rolled a 20 on a d20. You may do this once, and regain use of this feature following a long rest.



SCIENTIST

"As you can see from this series of slides, Earthlings are susceptible to a variety of types of injury. As having one's test subjects injured, an all too common an occurrence in field sociology, it is of the utmost importance to be prepared to render prompt medical attention. A dead subject is one from whom there can be little data collected, at least for sociological purposes. Towards that end I have developed a series of transocular injectors sized for the various known sophonts of the Solar System, and adjustable should the need arises to study other sophonts."

- From a presentation by Dr. Zatharnix to the European Science Council.

ON THE CUTTING EDGE

Science in the Rocket Age is a field that is advancing in leaps and bounds. More than just the invention of the radium rocket drive, the contact between species and the discoveries being made in the ruins of long dead advanced civilizations have led to a number of scientific breakthroughs. In less than a decade what was thought known by scientists from as divergent cultures as those of Earth and Europa have has been shattered and whole new disciplines are being invented to expound and test theories. To be a scientist is to be on the leading edge of progress, and not just of one's own species, but all species that call the Solar system home.

OUT OF THE LAB AND INTO THE FIELD!

While there are hundreds, even thousands of scientists hard at work in laboratories from Mercury to Jupiter, the real work is being done outside. In the field data can be gathered, theories can be tested, and inventions put through their trials. Let the number crunchers and pencil pushers back home worry about their calculations and equations, there is Science to be done, and done right here and right now!

CREATING A SCIENTIST

The first thing you need to determine when creating your scientist character is what they are studying. While science in the Rocket Age is moving at so fast a clip that the boundaries between disciplines is blurring, you still come from some discrete discipline and have a set of theories to explore. Are you from the social or the physical sciences? What on your adventures do you hope to discover? What questions must you answer, and how will you do so?

You didn't just pop out of a rocket ship with the knowledge implanted in your head (well, if you are a European Emissary you might very well have). Where did you study? Are you self-taught or a product of a university program? Did you graduate or did your research lead you to leave early?

QUICK BUILD

You can easily build a scientist by following these suggestions. First, your make Intelligence your highest ability score. Take the inventor career and chose the Applied Ballistics and Gravitic Manipulator discoveries. Next take the ICIC Researcher background.

CLASS FEATURES

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d6

Hit Points at First Level: 6 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per scientist level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: none

Weapon: Simple weapons

Tools: Choose two of: electronics, demolitions kit, engineer's tools, medical kit, rocket ships, rocket packs, science kit

Saving Throws: Intelligence, Wisdom

Skills: Choose four skills from the following: Engineering, History, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Performance, Science, or Religion

Equipment

You start with the following equipment in addition to any equipment from your background:

- A simple ranged weapon with 20 rounds of ammunition or a 20 charge battery
- A simple melee weapon
- A refurbished Ancient Martian datapad
- An engineer's tool, or medical kit, or A science kit
- An expedition pack or laboratory gear

Broadly Read

You are well read and have a broad education; though it might lack depth in some fields. At 1st level, you may add half of your proficiency bonus to any skill or tool you do not have proficiency with.

Scientist Career

At 1st level choose one of the following careers to pursue: doctor, engineer, or inventor.

Discoveries

At 1st level, you have learned several interesting and useful bits of knowledge that you can apply to daily life. Choose two discoveries from the list below. You gain an additional discovery at 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 11th, 14th 15th, and 19th levels.

Polymath

At 2nd level, choose two skills that you have proficiency in that are not linked to Intelligence. You add your Intelligence bonus to those skills in addition to the ability score bonus that normally applies.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th levels, you may choose one of the following. You may increase two ability scores by 1 point each. You may increase one ability score by 2 points. You may take a feat. Ability scores may not be raised above 20 using these bonuses.

Fast Work

At 5th level, you may use a bonus action to use a tool you are proficient with.

Quick Thinking

Beginning at 9th level, you may add your Intelligence modifier to your initiative checks.

Life Long Learning

At 13th level, you learn two new skill, tool, or vehicle proficiencies, or languages.

Broadly Applicable

At 20th level, choose two skills that are not based on Intelligence. You may apply your Intelligence modifier to those two skills instead of the ability score they are normally associated with.

Doctor

Doctors are welcome nearly anywhere in the Solar System. Even bitter enemies are happy to allow their foes to provide medical assistance, provided certain security precautions are taken. Medical professionals are particularly strained in the Solar System, as they must learn not just how to treat their own species, but sometimes widely different species as well.

Level	Scientist Features
1	Broadly Read, Career
2	Discovery, Polymath
3	Career Feature
4	Ability Score Improvement
5	Discovery, Fast Work
6	Discovery
7	Discovery, Career Feature
8	Ability Score Improvement
9	Quick Thinking
10	Discovery, Career Feature
11	Discovery
12	Ability Score Improvement
13	Life Long Learner
14	Discovery
15	Discovery, Career Feature
16	Ability Score Improvement
17	Get Out of the Way
18	Ability Score Improvement
19	Career Feature, Discovery
20	Broadly Applicable

Healer

Beginning at 1st level when you choose this career, when you use a med kit to treat a patient, the patient recovers 1d8 + your proficiency bonus in hit points.

On Your Feet

At 3rd level, you can use your medical kit to remove one of the following conditions: blinded, deafened, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned, or unconscious. You may also use your medical kit to remove one level of exhaustion from a patient, but this can only be done once between long rests. You must make a medical kit check to remove conditions. The DC to remove a condition is equal to the saving throw DC that caused the condition or if there was no saving throw that had to be failed to cause the condition, removing a condition is a DC 15 check using a med kit.

Field Surgery

At 7th level, you can perform surgery, rapidly restoring a patient to, if not health, at least able to get back on their feet. As an action you can grant an adjacent patient who has to make a death save advantage on their next death save. If a patient you have treated with field surgery has any unspent hit dice, they may spend one on their turn in lieu of making a death save.



Miracle Cure

At 10th level, you may use your surgery feature to bring back a patient that should be dead after having failed three death saves. You have one hour after the last failed death save to get to the patient and initiate surgery. However, bringing back the dead is difficult, and you must make a DC 20 Wisdom (Medicine) check. If you use miracle cure to bring back the dead, you may not use your field surgery feature again until after you have had a long rest.

Preventative Medicine

At 15th level, during a short rest you may spend your time preparing your patients for dangers they may face. If you do so, you may not use any other class feature during that time, nor may you regain class features or expend your own hit dice. You may affect any number of willing targets with preventive medicine, and all must be given the same treatment. When you use preventive medicine choose one of the treatments listed below. You may use preventive medicine a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier. This class feature recharges following a long rest.

The patient gains temporary hit points equal to half your level in scientist (rounded down) plus your proficiency bonus.

The patient becomes immune to one of the following conditions until they take a long rest: blinded, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, or stunned.

Regular Care

At 19th level, any patient who is under your care for more than a week gains advantage on Constitution saving throws and Death saves.

Engineer

Engineers don't just invent new things, they fix machines and keep them running. Their main concern is improving machinery, be that a rocket drive or a RAY gun, there is always room to make a device perform better, work longer, and be more efficient. They often take this approach to life in general, seeking perfection in all things.

Simple Mods

Beginning at 1st level you gain a pool of modification dice. You have an amount of modification dice equal to your Intelligence modifier. As an action, you may spend modification dice to enhance the functioning of a piece of equipment. When you do so, the modification die is tied to that piece of equipment and can be spent to add to any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw used with that piece of equipment. A Modification die given to a

vehicle may be used to activate one of its critical system's boost features or give that critical system the patched condition. Alternately, you may spend modification dice to enhance the benefits of a suit of armor, either removing disadvantage to stealth or increasing the AC by +1. No piece of equipment may benefit from more than one modification die at a time. Modification dice last until they are used or your take a long rest.

Your Modification die begins as a d8, it increases to a d10 at 10th level, a d12 at 15th level. You regain Modification dice when you take a long rest. You must have the appropriate tools to be able to use modification dice.

Three Pieces of Wire and a Battery

Beginning at 7th level, you may act as if you have a set of engineer's tools even when deprived of your favorite tool kits or the necessary parts. You may use modification dice and perform repairs without having the requisite tools and material, but any check you make to do so is done with disadvantage.

Fast Work

Also at 1st level, you may attempt two repairs during a short or long repair.

Permanent Upgrade

At 10th level, you may spend eight hours working on a piece of equipment to permanently modify its performance. Choose one of the following upgrades.

You may use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier. No piece of equipment may be upgraded more than once.

Accuracy

The weapon gains +1 to attack rolls used with it.

Armor

The suit of armor gains +1 to its AC.

Damage

The weapon inflicts +2 damage.

Durability

The device gains 25 HP. This is especially useful for vehicles.

Efficiency

Checks made using this device are at +2

Potency

Saving throws that this item requires others to make have the DC increased by +2

Range

The device's range is increased by 50%

Speed

The vehicle's maximum speed is increased by 50%

Further Upgrades

At 15th level you gain a number of uses of Permanent Upgrade equal to your Intelligence modifier, and a piece of equipment might have two upgrades.

Final Upgrades

At 19th level, you gain additional uses of Permanent Upgrade equal to your Intelligence modifier, and these upgrades double the bonus given.

Inventor

This is an age of invention! There are wonders to be gleaned from the sands of Mars, new theories that point to new application, and the stuff going on with material science, well, the sky is no longer the limit. There is no limit.

Inventions

At 1st level you have managed to turn some of your research into the wonders of the world into concrete applications. Choose one discovery you know. During a long rest you can manufacture a device that allows others to make use of that discovery. Each time you use this feature you can choose a different discovery. These devices tend to have a short lifespan and without your regular tinkering and care fall apart. The device remains functional until it spends 24 hours outside of your care, after which something breaks.

You may only make one invention per long rest, and may not have more than your Intelligence modifier in inventions under your care at one time.

Timely Advice

At 3rd level, your broad range of knowledge gives you insight into nearly any human activity or natural phenomena. Even better, you are willing and eager to share this knowledge with others. You may take the Help action as a bonus action.

Specialized Applications

At 7th level choose two tools you are proficient in. You may add double your proficiency bonus to checks with those skills.

Universal Theory

Beginning at 10th level you add your proficiency bonus twice on Analyze Artifacts checks.

Improved Inventions

Beginning 15th level, you can make two inventions during a long rest.

Breakthrough

At 19th level you have managed to perfect one of your inventions so that the result is a reliable and replicatable device. Choose one discovery. You may incorporate the discovery into a device that can then be manufactured, even mass produced, and no longer requires you to be constantly fiddling with it for it to work.

Discoveries

The scientist class has access to the following discoveries. Several discoveries allow you to create useful items or modify the discovery during a long rest. You may only use a long rest to gain the effects or modify the effects of one discovery and still gain the benefits of a long rest. Unless otherwise noted you may not take a discovery multiple time. Some discoveries have prerequisites that you must have before you can choose that discovery.

Anatomical Precision

Prerequisite: 7th level

Your attacks inflict a critical hit on a 19 or 20.

Applied Ballistics

You know how to properly angle fired bullets or even arrows, as well as how to modify weapons and ammunition for maximum efficiency. Your ranged attacks gain a bonus to hit equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Applied Leverage

Through careful study of esoteric methods of exercise, proper use of the physical properties of leverage and momentum, and putting your brain to work to enhance your brawn, you have learned how to best harness the innate fulcrum that is your body. You may add your Intelligence modifier to Strength checks, Strength saves, and attack rolls that use Strength, as well as damage using Strength based weapons.

Basic Sociology

People, merely parts of socially constructed systems, are easy to predict and manipulate once you have broken down their basic motivational factors into simple equations. You have advantage with your choice of Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), or Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

Behavioral Zoology

You can easily manipulate and train animals, and even communicate with them on a basic level by manipulating their simplistic instinctual behavior. You have advantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks. Additionally, you may speak with animals as per the spell *Speak with animals*.



Behavioral Ecology

Prerequisite: 7th level

You may use your knowledge of animal instinct to control a target. You must have at least a few minutes to analyze the target and speak to it, after which it must attempt an Intelligence save against a DC equal to 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. If the target fails, it gains the charmed condition for 24 hours or until your or an ally attack it. After the condition ends, the target goes on its merry way none the wiser like a good little drone.

Chemical Attack

Prerequisite: 5th level, explosives

When you manufacture a dose of your explosive you may choose to add one of the following conditions to those hit by the attack: blinded, deafened, poisoned, or stunned. The condition lasts for 1d6 + your Intelligence modifier rounds.

Energy Projector

You have developed a small device that projects a type of energy. When you make this discovery choose one of the following energy types: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or radiation. You may use this to make an attack that inflicts 1d8 points of damage of the chosen energy type with a range of 60 feet. You use your Dexterity to make this attack. This damage increases by +1d8 every two levels after you make this discovery.

Energy Projector, Adjustable

Prerequisite: Energy Projector

You may adjust your energy projector to shoot a cone 5' wide and 15' long. Those caught in the area of effect must make a Dexterity save with a DC equal to 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus.

Explosives

You have created an unstable chemical with a broad range of applications. During a long rest you may prepare a number of doses of this chemical equal to your Intelligence modifier. Each dose inflicts 4d8 points of fire and force damage to all targets within 10 feet. The dose can be thrown up to 20 feet using Dexterity for the attack roll. The explosive can also be set with a timer to explode at a certain time or attached to a trip wire to trigger as a trap, a Dexterity save is needed to suffer half damage (the DC of the save, as well to spot and remove is equal to 8 + your Intelligence Modifier + your proficiency bonus). The damage increase by 1d8 every two levels after you make this discovery.

Gravitic Manipulator

You have developed a device that allows you to manipulate gravity. When you make this discovery you may use this device to move an object up to your Intelligence score in pounds up to 30 feet per round. If the object is being held by a living creature (or is a living creature, we won't judge) the holder (or the creature) must make a Strength save with a DC equal to 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus.

Gravity Field

Prerequisite: 5th level, gravitic manipulator

You may use your gravitic manipulator to project a field of altered gravity. This area is a 20-foot cube that can be no more than 60 feet from you. Choose to either raise or lower the gravity to achieve one of the following effects. You can lower the gravity in order to induce a weightless zone, effectively making the area 0-G with all concurrent effects. Alternately, you can raise the gravity to the point where even motion becomes difficult, creating a field of difficult terrain. The effects last as long as you are using an action to maintain the field.



Gravity Punch

Prerequisite: 7th level, gravitic manipulator

You can use your gravitic manipulator to make attacks, striking foes with the pure force of gravity for Science! As an attack, choose a number of targets equal to your Intelligence modifier. Make an attack roll against these targets using your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. Successful attacks inflict 4d6 points of damage and move the target 5 feet.

Improved Gravitic Manipulator

Prerequisite: 7th level, gravitic manipulator discovery

Your gravitic manipulator has more power! You may use it to grant yourself a fly speed of 30 feet (perfect) or to move objects of no greater than 10 times your Intelligence score pounds.

Less Than Lethal

Prerequisite: 7th level

You can modify a weapon that does more than just hurt people, it hurts people in entirely new ways. Progress! During a long rest you can modify a weapon and the weapon remains modified for twenty-four hours. A modified weapon inflicts one of the following conditions on a successful hit: blinded, deafened, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, or stunned. The target suffers the condition for a number of rounds equal to your proficiency bonus. When you make these modifications you must choose rather the weapon will inflict its normal damage plus the condition or just the condition.

Linguistic Processor

You have created a device that can rapidly translate languages. However, this burns out its circuitry so the device needs to be shut off within an hour of being activated and allowed to cool down for an hour. While active, it translates any language the device hears, or any writing the device scans, into a language you know. You can decide when you activate it if you want this translation to be audible to anyone but yourself.

Mechanical Aid

You have developed several useful tools that can aid and assist you in your activities. Your aid gives you advantage on a specific skill or tool check. You may spend a long rest redesigning your mechanical aid; replacing the benefit you gain from it with another.

Medicinals

Prerequisite: 7th level

You have developed something like the patent medicines that snake oil salesmen peddle; only yours is based on scientific knowledge and careful research. During a long rest you may concoct a number of doses of your

medicinal equal to your proficiency bonus. When you concoct your medicinals, choose one ability score they are going to modify. You may choose each dose's ability score individually or make the entire batch the same. Unless using your invention feature, anyone but you cannot gain the benefit of consuming your medicinals.

It is an action to consume a medicinal. The medicinal gives a +2 bonus to the selected ability score. Each dose of a medicinal taken gives the user a level of exhaustion, however the disadvantage penalty towards ability checks does not apply to the ability score the medicinal is effecting. The effects of a medicinal wear off when you take a long rest, though any levels of exhaustion gained must be recovered from as normal.

Personal Photon Manipulator

Prerequisite: Photon Manipulator

You have managed to fine-tune your photon manipulator so that it can disguise you in real time. You can change your appearance, including your clothing, to match another creature that is no more than 1 foot taller or shorter and has the same general build and number of limbs. The image can be seen through the same as a photon manipulator.

Photon Manipulator

You have invented a device that bends light in a variety of ways. As an action you may use this device to create a silent 3-D image within 60 feet of you. You may use your action to cause the image to move or alter its appearance. A creature that physically interacts with the image ceases to believe it is real. A creature may study the image and attempt an Intelligence save to realize it is only a projection.

Psychic Dampening Field

Prerequisite: 10th level, psychic detector

You have developed a device that suppresses psychic powers. The device requires an action to activate and can run for a number of rounds equal to your Intelligence modifier. While operating all psychic activity within the field becomes impossible, and psychic activity passing through the field is blocked. The field covers a 20-foot cube.

Psychic Detector

You have created a device that detects psychic powers and activity within 60 feet. A Wisdom (Perception) check may be required if precautions are being taken to hide the psychic phenomena or if they are obfuscated in some way.



Psychological Theories

You may use your knowledge of the sophont mind to control a target. You must have at least a few minutes to analyze the target and speak to it, after which it must attempt an Intelligence save against a DC equal to 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. If the target fails, it gains the charmed condition for 24 hours or until you or an ally attack it. After the condition ends, the target goes on its merry way none the wiser like a good little drone.

Shielding Barrier

Prerequisite: 7th level, shielding system

You can use your shielding system to erect a wall of shimmering energy that blocks movement and attacks. Instead of projecting your shield around yourself, you erect it covering an area of 200 square feet. The barrier has a number of hit points equal to the temporary hit points of your shielding system (and if your shielding system has taken damage this is reflected in how many hit points the barrier has). The barrier blocks all movement through it.

Shielding System

You have developed a personal version of the RAY shield that the USRC is starting to equip its ships with. As a reaction or bonus action you may initiate the shield. While initiated the shield grants you a number of temporary hit points equal to your five times your levels in the Scientist class. The shield burns out when its store of temporary hit points are expended. Once initiated the shield cannot be shut down without canceling it entirely, likely burning out delicate circuits and crystalline projectors. While the shield is active you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks as the constant shimmer alerts others to your presence. You may use this feature once and regain use of it following a long rest.

Security Protocol

Prerequisite: 5th level, sentry system discovery

When you set up your sentry system you may choose to also activate a security protocol. This protocol reacts when the sentry system alarm activates. It may make an attack against any intruding creature with an attack modifier equal to your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. A successful hit inflicts 1d8 points of electricity damage. This damage increases by an additional 1d8 and every two levels after you take this discovery.

Sentry System

You have developed a set of sensors and a rudimentary robo-brain that can process data and alert you of threats. The system takes 10 minutes to deploy and covers a 20-foot cube. Any Tiny or larger creature that enters the cube activates the alarm and you are alerted. When you set up the sentry system you choose if the alarm is silent or loud, and may designate a number of creatures that have security clearance to pass through the secured area without activating the alarm. The sentry system can notify you of an alarm up to a mile away through a RADIO link.

Sensor Apparatus

You have fashioned a set of goggles that allow you to see beyond normal ranges for your species. While wearing these goggles you gain low-light vision, darkvision 60 feet (or increase your darkvision by 60 feet if you already have it), and gain advantage on (Wisdom) Perception checks.

Spy Drone

You have managed to invent a small device that can remotely sense natural phenomena. This device is only a few inches long and moves at a speed of 30 feet. It is equipped with a broad range of sensors and allows you to hear, see, and smell through it as if you were viewing events from its perspective via a dedicated RADIO link. The device is very agile and flexible and can enter tiny cracks and remain hidden (a DC 20 (Wisdom) Perception check to spot it).



SCOUNDREL

Slate Mac, known underworld figure of Emancipation, might not be the black hearted mobster we all think he is. Well, he is, and worse, but this past week he saved our fair city. It seems that someone tried to sneak a bomb into the rocket port, and Slate Mac heard about it. His response was both brutal and personal, and when the dust and RAY beams cleared there were three dead 31st Seal terrorists, a defused bomb, and the grinning face of Emancipation's most notorious Earthling chomping on a cigar and mugging for the cameras. -From the Emancipation Rumor, the city's trashiest tabloid.

ON THE FRINGES OF SOCIETY

Scoundrels have turned their back on society, or perhaps society has turned it's back on them. They live outside the normal social boundaries; whatever they might happen to be. They lie, steal, and betray to get what they desire, which more often than not is wealth, power, and the comforts those things bring. Yet, living outside the social norm allows them freedom and makes them part of a community all their own. Scoundrels build connections with other scapegraces, and these have their own sets of social boundaries. Woe to the scoundrel that breaks the norms of the underworld society, for then they are truly lost and alone.

RELUCTANT HEROES

Despite being outside social boundaries, Scoundrels are still a part of the social system. If the world falls apart, should some oppressive regime make life unbearable, or when something threatens the existence of all life, the scoundrel is thrust into events. To live free means that freedom must be fought for. There is not much point to great wealth and power if there is nothing but rubble and ruin to enjoy it in. Sometimes the scoundrel feels a pang of conscience and is moved to act. Sometimes.

CREATING A SCOUNDREL

The main question to ask about your scoundrel is why? The decision to live a life outside their culture's laws and norms is not undertaken lightly. Did you grow up already on the edge and some event pushed you over? Were you poor and hungry and this was the only way to survive? Did something happen to drive you out, or did you choose this as the means to an end?

Living a life of theft and deceit is not easy, and people still need people no matter what their shape or size. Who do you trust? Why is it they, and no one else? Is there even someone with whom you are honest? What exactly do you believe in, and what will you do for that person or cause?

QUICK BUILD

You can rapidly build a scoundrel by following these suggestions. Make either Dexterity or Charisma your highest ability score. Choose the Red Scorpion Operative background.

CLASS FEATURES

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8

Hit Points at First Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Scoundrel level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: light

Weapon: Simple weapons

Tools: your choice of: gambling kit, disguise kit, or lock picks

Saving Throws: Dexterity, Charisma

Skills: Choose three skills from Acrobatics, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Performance, Persuasion, Science, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth.

Equipment

You start with the following equipment in addition to any equipment from your background:

- A simple ranged weapon with 20 rounds of ammunition or a 20 charge battery
- A simple melee weapon
- A suit of light armor
- (a) a disguise kit or (b) a set of lock picks
- Civilian gear



Level	Scoundrel Features
1	Expertise, Sneak Attack
2	Cunning Action, Know A Guy
3	Scoundrel Angle
4	Ability Score Improvement
5	Uncanny Dodge
6	Expertise
7	Angle Feature
8	Ability Score Improvement
9	Misbehave
10	Angle Feature
11	Reliable Talent
12	Ability Score Improvement
13	Slippery Mind
14	Vicious Attack
15	Angle Feature
16	Ability Score Improvement
17	Elusive
18	Ability Score Improvement
19	Angle Feature
20	Infamous

Expertise

At 1st level, choose two skills, vehicles, or tools that you are proficient with. You may add double your proficiency bonus to these skills or tools.

At 6th level you may choose an additional two skills or tools you are proficient with, to gain this benefit.

Sneak Attack

Beginning at 1st level, once per turn you can deal extra damage to one creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage. This attack may be made with a ranged weapon. You do not need advantage if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of the target and is not incapacitated provided you do not have disadvantage on the roll.

The extra damage you inflict begins at +1d6, and increases by +1d6 at 3rd, 7th, 9th, 13th, 15th, 17th, and 19th levels, as seen on the table above.

Know A Guy

Beginning at 2nd level you can tap into the network of criminals in a settlement. To do so you must spend at least one hour visiting places criminals tend to be. At

the end of the hour, you acquire access to illegal goods (you will still have to pay for them), 1d4 thugs, use of a vehicle for a day, or an amount of money equal to your proficiency bonus x100. You may only use this feature once per week in any given settlement, otherwise you risk over staying your welcome and draw unwanted attention.

Cunning Action

Starting at 2nd level you may use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide actions.

Scoundrel Angle

At 3rd level choose an angle, the means by which you deceive, steal, and get by. Choose either cat burglar or con artist.

Uncanny Dodge

Beginning at 5th level, when an attacker that you are aware of hits you, you may use your reaction to halve the damage.

Misbehave

At 9th level your reputation in the criminal underworld has grown. When dealing with criminals or those who might know of your exploits you have advantage on Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), Intelligence (Investigation), or Charisma (Persuasion) checks. Additionally, you may make a check with one of the above skills against a DC 15, and if successful, may double the benefits of the Know A Guy feature.

Reliable Talent

At 11th level, when you make a check with skills, vehicles, or tools that you have chosen with the expertise feature you may treat any roll of 9 or lower as a 10.

Hardened Mind

At 15th level, when you are affected by a telepathy power, you have advantage on the saving throw and may attempt a saving throw every minute to resist it.

Vicious Attack

Beginning at 14th level, you may exchange a die of sneak attack damage to instead cause the target to suffer one of the following conditions: blinded, deafened, prone, or stunned until the end of their next turn.

Elusive

Beginning at 17th level as long as you are not incapacitated targets may not gain advantage on attack rolls against you.

Stroke of Luck

By 20th level you have lived a charmed life. Luck is with you in many ways. You can turn any d20 roll into a success. Once you use up your luck it is gone until you take a long rest.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th levels, you may choose one of the following. You may increase two ability scores by 1 point each. You may increase one ability score by 2 points. You may take a feat. Ability scores may not be raised above 20 using these bonuses.

Angles

Scoundrels are a varied lot; some make their way through graft and lies, others through skillful infiltrations and thefts. These angles, tricks and treasons used to gain wealth, power, or just for the thrill of the challenge, define not just what the scoundrel does, but who they are.

Cat Burglar

It takes more than simply skill to break into a building and steal the valuables hidden within. You have to have nerves of steel, courage to risk your body hanging from the side of a building, and the presence of mind not to panic when the heat is on. It also helps to have an alibi.

Fast Hands

Beginning at 3rd level when you choose this angle you can take a bonus action to use Sleight of Hand, lock picks, or take the Use an Object action.

Ledges and Windows

Also at 3rd level you climb at your regular movement speed, or if you have a climb speed it increases by +10 feet. You have advantage on Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to maintain your balance.

Case the Joint

At 7th level you have learned how to best spot security at a target. If you spend a day observing a location such as a building, office, or shop, you gain advantage on checks to pick locks as well locate and disable traps and alarms associated with the target. Alternately, you may study an individual, in which case you gain advantage on Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Disguise), Charisma (Intimidation), Charisma (Persuasion), and Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks targeting that individual.

Whisper Treads

Starting at 10th level you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks if you move less than half your base movement. You may forgo this advantage to use the Hide action while being observed.

Leave No Trace

At 15th level Intelligence (Investigation) and forensics kit checks made to identify you or places you have been are done with disadvantage. Furthermore, any traps you

disarm or locks you pick can be reset after you move more than 5 feet from them.

Lap of Luxury

By 19th level you have broken into and stolen so many things that you no longer need worry about money. You have connections and secret stashes spread across the Solar System that you can rely on to see you through the toughest times. An hour of legwork and a few RADIO calls and you have a secure place to stay, this classes' starting equipment, and \$5,000 in cash.

Con Artist

People like you, and you like to use people. Make no bones about it, no matter what good cause you might be putting your skills towards, someone is being betrayed. Better hope its not you.

Charmer

At 3rd level when you choose this angle, you can talk the scales off of a bahmoot. As an action, you may attempt to use your words, posture, and other inducements to get one target that can hear and see you, as well as understand your language, to do what you want. The target must make a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus. If the target fails, it gains the charmed condition for five minutes or until you or one of your companions does something to physically harm it. The charmed creature will consider you a trustworthy and friendly acquaintance. Once the charmed condition wears off, the target becomes hostile towards you, but unless already a violent person will not attack you.

You may use this feature once, and it recharges following a short rest.

Fast Talker

Also at 3rd level, you use Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), and Wisdom (Persuasion) as a bonus action.

Improved Charmer

Beginning at 7th level, a target that fails its saving throw against your charmer feature remains charmed for one hour. You may use charmer one additional time.

The Long Con

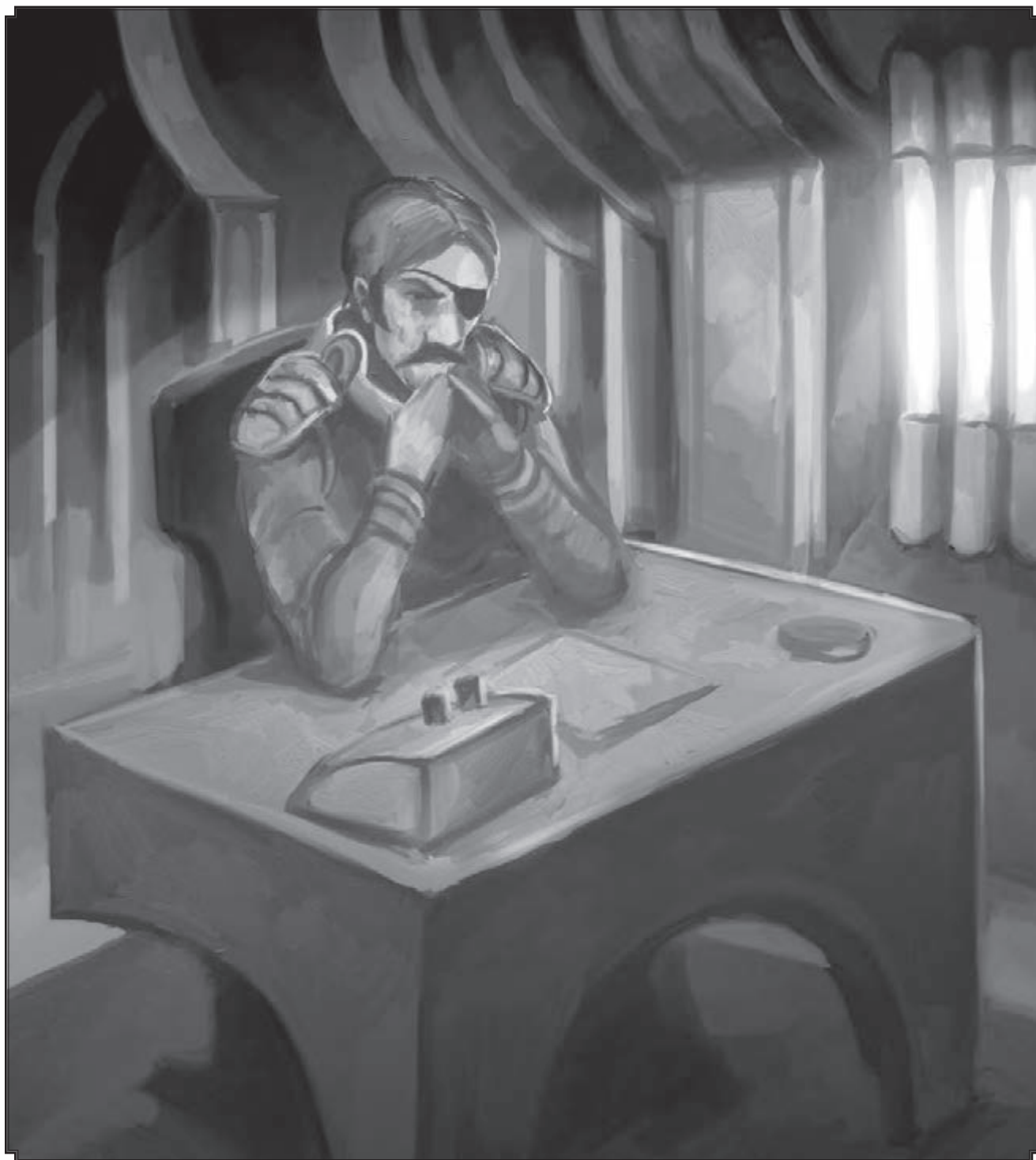
At 10th level, you may initiate a long-term confidence game with one target. Your charmer feature must first affect that target. Afterwards, the target remains charmed for 24 hours, and then makes another saving throw against your charmer feature. The target can continue to attempt these saves, and if it fails, continues to be effected by your charmer feature. You may have only one target subject to your long con feature at a time.

**Work the Crowd**

Beginning at 15th level, when you use your charmer feature, you may attempt to charm all targets within 30 feet of you that can see and hear you.

Entourage

At 19th level, you can maintain up to your Charisma modifier in targets under your long con feature. Furthermore, those affected by your long con feature attempt their Wisdom saves to throw off the charmed condition monthly instead of daily.



SOLDIER

Captain Cotter burst through the wall and into the room, RAY gun at the ready. The Silthuri slavers reacted quickly, their silthankas seeking the weak points in the Ranger's assault armor. He took one blow on the forearm, deflecting it away, while the other managed to crease the latches that held his bubble helmet on. With one mighty armored limb Cotter managed to kick one of the Martians away, pushing the other off with a twist of his metal clad body.

Bringing his beamer to bear, he hosed them down with streams of carefully tuned particles. This pair would be stunned and afterwards questioned. Hopefully they would lead him to the Red Scorpion. -From Cotter and the Scorpion, popular novel found in rocket port newsstands

DANGERS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The Solar System is not a safe place. Earthlings have spread across the planets and often do so violently, and just as often take what they can and force others out. Mars is a battlefield of conflicting ideologies, avaricious freebooters, and scheming princes. The jungles of Venus are often rent with gunfire as new weapons allow old enmities to be settled in a more permanent manner. Jupiter and its moons see the quiet struggle between several species as the Earthlings, Europeans, and now Jovians vie for dominance. All this doesn't even begin to take into account all the strange and magnificent alien beasts who look upon sophonts as tasty snacks.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

By traveling to strange places, meeting interesting aliens, and shooting them, soldiers have managed to rise to great heights. This is an era of conflict, but it is also an era where the old institutions are falling and new ones are rising. Why shouldn't someone with a strong arm and quick eye come out on top?

CREATING A SOLDIER

The main question is, "why do you fight"? Is it the only life you have ever known? A family tradition? Are you in it for the money? The glory? Fame and respect? Maybe you just fight because you enjoy it.

The why is important, but you also need to know where and who. How were you trained, was it a formal military or did you just pick your skills up through the college of hard knocks? Have you fought before, and against whom? Have you lost friends, and did you win that war?

QUICK BUILD

You can easily build a soldier by following these suggestions. Make Dexterity your highest attribute. Choose the 1st MEF background and the close quarters shooting fighting style.

CLASS FEATURES

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d10

Hit Points at First Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per soldier level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: All armor

Weapon: Simple weapons, martial weapons

Tools: demolitions kit

Saving Throws: Constitution, Dexterity

Skills: Choose two skills from Acrobatics, Athletics, Deception, Engineering, Intimidation, Investigation, Medicine, Science, Stealth, Survival

Equipment

You start with the following equipment in addition to that provided by your background:

- A suit of light armor or a suit of medium armor
- A martial weapon and a shield or two martial weapons plus 20 rounds of ammo or a 20 charge battery
- An explorer's pack



Level	Soldier Features
1	Second Wind, Fighting Style
2	Action Surge
3	Martial Specialty
4	Ability Score Improvement
5	Extra Attack
6	Ability Score Improvement
7	Martial Specialty Feature
8	Ability Score Improvement
9	Indomitable (one use)
10	Martial Specialty Feature
11	Extra Attack (3)
12	Ability Score Improvement
13	Indomitable (two uses)
14	Ability Score Improvement
15	Martial Specialty Feature
16	Ability Score Improvement
17	Action Surge (two uses)
18	Ability Score Improvement
19	Martial Specialty Feature
20	Extra Attack (4)

Second Wind

You have a limited ability to ignore pain and injury. You can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + your levels in soldier. This feature recharges after a short or long rest.

Fighting Style

At 1st level, choose one of the following fighting styles. You cannot take a fighting style more than once, even if you gain this feature again.

Archaic

You are skilled with some of the most ancient weapons sophonts has used. When wielding a weapon that does not have the charge or property capacity, you add +2 to the damage.

Close Quarters Shooting

When making a ranged attack against a foe within 5 feet of you, you do not suffer disadvantage.

Dueling

When you are wielding a weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 to hit.

Gunner

When firing from a moving vehicle you do not suffer disadvantage.

Heavy

When using a weapon with the heavy property you re-roll any damage dice that come up with a 1 or 2. You may reroll a die only once.

Mounted

When fighting while mounted, you and your mount use the higher of your armor class and saving throws.

Riflery

You gain a +2 bonus to attacks you make with two-handed ranged weapons.

Two-Weapon

When you engage in two-weapon fighting you add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

Action Surge

Starting at 2nd level, you can ride the adrenaline rush of combat and take an extra action on your turn. This feature recharges after a short or long rest. At 17th level you can use this feature twice before it is exhausted, but no more than once per turn.

Martial Archetype

At 3rd level choose one of the following military occupational specialties (MOS) as your primary focus as a soldier. Choose one: Ace Pilot, Gunslinger, Officer, Trooper, or Warrior

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 6th, 8th, 12th, 14th, 16th and 19th levels, you may choose one of the following. You may increase two ability scores by 1 point each. You may increase one ability score by 2 points. You may take a feat if using that optional rule. Ability scores may not be raised above 20 using these bonuses.

Extra Attack

Beginning at 5th level, when using the Attack action, you may attack twice. At 11th level you may attack three times when you take the Attack action. At 20th level this increases to four attacks whenever you take the Attack action.

Indomitable

Beginning at 9th level, you may reroll a saving throw that you have failed. You must keep this second roll, even if it is worse than your original roll. This feature recharges after a long rest. At 13th level you may use this feature two times before recharging it, and three times without recharge beginning at 17th level.

Martial Archetypes

Soldiers aren't just general killers; they have trained to refine their skills to a specific type of fighting. Ace pilots are the high flying heroes of the Rocket Age, people with radium in their blood and guts for days. Gunslingers focus on shooting quickly and accurately. Officers train their talents to lead others and to see the big picture as opposed to personal combat. The trooper seeks to perfect that which makes soldier a soldier. Warriors come from cultures that some would call uncivilized, but never to a warrior's face.

Ace Pilot

With nerves of steel and ice cold veins, ace pilots push the limits of sophont and machine. They are at their best when behind the throttles and steering columns of rocket ships, flying by the seat of their pants and never asking about the odds. You are one of these, the elite of the sky and the void beyond.

Air Superiority

Beginning when you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain a number of air superiority dice equal to your Dexterity modifier. These dice are d8s, and increase to d10s at 10th level, and d12s at 18th level. You may spend air superiority dice to add to piloting checks and attack rolls made with vehicle mounted weaponry. You regain spend air superiority dice following a long rest.

Hold It Together

At 7th level you may, as a bonus action, spend an air superiority die to do one of the following:

- Add the die to your vehicle's hit points
- Ignore the effects of a critical systems hit until the end of your next turn
- Active a critical system's boost feature until the end of your next turn

It Takes a Crew

At 10th level your cool head and deep understanding of all things vehicle related means that you can direct your crew to their highest levels of efficiency. As a bonus action you may give an air superiority die to any crewmember or crew section. Additionally, you or anyone who has air superiority dice from you, may add air superiority dice to Intelligence (Engineering) checks made with the vehicle you are piloting, and Wisdom (Perception) checks made from the vehicle you are piloting.

In the Sights

At 15th level, you may expend an air superiority die, when you successful attack a vehicle,. If you do so, you may

forgo regular damage to instead cause a critical systems hit.

Top Ace

At 18th level, you may expend an air superiority die to take an additional action on your turn. This action must be either a maneuver or attack with a vehicle mounted weapon. You may only use this feature once on your turn, but may use it again on your next turn.

Gunslinger

Gunslingers live and die by the gun. Sometimes they are former military, but just as often they can be criminals, competitive shooters, or just someone really good with a gun. No matter what their origins, gunslingers focus on being really good with a weapon often a specific type of weapon over all the others.

Fast Draw

At 3rd level when you choose this martial specialty, you choose to add your proficiency bonus to your initiative.

Weapon of Choice

Also at 3rd level, you choose a single firearm, most likely a pistol, that you have spent time honing it and your skills to mutual perfection. Choose one of the following perfections; it applies whenever you are using your weapon of choice. If you should lose your weapon of choice or wish to change to a different weapon or perfection, you may spend a weak practicing with the new weapon of choice or perfection. If you gain another perfection you must choose a different one or apply it to a different weapon of choice.

Accurate

You have made modifications to your weapon of choice and practiced firing at the center ring. You have a +2 to attack rolls with your weapon of choice.

Deadly

You have learned to make your own ammunition and modify those you purchase, increasing the amount of damage you do with them. When combined with your ability to hit the most vital spots of your target, the result is a deadly killing implement. You inflict +2 damage with your weapon of choice.

Doubled

You have two weapons of choice that you have practiced drawing and firing at the same time. Your weapon of choice must be a one handed firearm. When dual wielding your weapons of choice you may add your ability score modifier to the damage of your secondary attack.



Fancy

With gilding, engraving, and the way in which you wear it, your weapon of choice tells the world that you are one tough hombre and more than able to fill up boot hill. As long as your weapon of choice is visible, you gain advantage with Charisma (Intimidation) checks.

Quick

With filed down sights, cut away trigger guards, and the time you spent practicing your fast draw, you and your weapon of choice are smooth, speedy, and deadly. When wielding your weapon of choice add +2 to your initiative.

Sighted

You have spent time cleaning, maintaining, and aiming your weapon of choice. When firing at long range you do not suffer any penalty.

Trick Shooting

At 7th level, you have developed some spiffy trick shots. When you gain this feature, choose two of the trick shots from the list below. You learn another trick shot at 10th, 15th, and 19th levels. You may not choose a trick shot more than once.

Cunning Shot

You may choose to apply your proficiency bonus to damage with ranged weapons. You make this decision after you roll your damage dice, but before the result of the damage has been determined. You may do this once and regain use of this trick shot following a short rest.

Cutting Shot

You can target an inanimate target such as a rope, wire, or even a belt. You do not need to make an attack roll, your shot severs the target object and does not cause any damage to any living creature. If the targeted object is in the possession of a living creature who can act, they may attempt a Dexterity save with a DC equal to 8 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus to negate the effect.

Deadly Aim

You may spend an action aiming at a target. If the target is still in range and still in your line of sight the next time you may take an action, you may add your proficiency bonus twice to the attack roll against that target.

Fanning

To gain this trick shot, must be wielding a ranged weapon with an ammunition capacity or battery of at least two. You make a single attack roll. You may attack a number of targets equal to your weapon's remaining

ammunition or charges capacity. Each target must be within five feet of another target and within your line of sight. Apply the single attack roll against each target individually. You may use this trick shot once and regain use of it following a long rest.

Long Shot

You may shoot beyond the normal range of the weapon you are using. Any weapon you fire has the maximum range doubled when in your hands, though normal range modifiers still apply.

Perfection

You gain one additional gunslinger perfection for your weapon of choice.

Punch Through

When targeting a creature that has partial or three-quarters cover you may shoot through the cover and strike the target. If the maximum damage you can do with the attack exceeds the ability of the cover, the target does not gain any benefit from the cover.

Ricochet

You may send a shot bouncing off of a surface to strike a target that has full cover. Treat the target as having three-quarters cover for the attack.

Officer

The officer, rather a commissioned officer such as a lieutenant or a non-commissioned officer such as a sergeant, focuses more on being a leader of men than a lean mean killing machine. This is not to say that they are not superb combatants in their own right, but that having an Officer on your side is a force multiplier. Good leadership can make ten men fight as a hundred and be the difference between defeat and victory.

Commands

Beginning at 3rd level, the officer may issue special commands that enhance the combat efficiency of his allies. At 3rd level the officer chooses three commands. You gain an additional command at 7th level, 10th level, and at 15th level. Only one command can be active at a time. You may issue a number of commands per day equal to your Charisma bonus. Commands refresh after a long rest. Issuing a command is an action. Only allies who are in direct communication with the officer, those who are within 30 feet or in communication via wireless, may be affected by a command.

Attack Pattern Alpha

The officer calls out a preset tactic designed to take advantage of the situation. Each effected ally receives a command die that can be rolled and added to any

attack roll or saving throw. A character can have only one command die at a time. Command dice begin as a d6 and increase to a d8 at 10th level and a d10 at 15th level.

Focus Fire on the Target

You designate a specific target, a creature or object, and all affected by this order may make use their reaction to make an immediate attack on that target.

Foward!

You encourage his allies to charge forward. All affected by this command may use their reaction to take a move action.

Intensive Training

Must be 7th level to take this command.

You spend time between missions training his allies in basic weapons drill, fire and movement, and even routine calisthenics. Before the mission, the Officer may give a command die to each ally he spent at least two weeks with prior to the mission.

Interlocking Fields of Fire

By carefully sighting weapons teams and making use of restrictive terrain, you direct your allies to lay down a cordon of fire that is difficult to avoid. All affected by this command gain advantage on their next ranged attack, or if using an area effect weapon that calls for a saving throw, causes any saves to be made with disadvantage.

Mission Preparations

Through careful examination of the parameters of a mission and equally careful planning and preparation, you can ensure success. Any ally that spends at least six hours with you preparing for the mission begins the mission with inspiration.

Pull Back to Grid 13

You call for a fighting retreat, and careful training pays off when combined with curt and well-applied orders. All affected by this command may use a reaction to complete a Disengage action.

Spread Out and Watch for Flankers

You order your allies to the nest positions to keep watch for enemies and encourages them to be alert. All affected by this order gain advantage on their next Wisdom (Perception) test or have their passive perception increased by 5.

Steady Troopers!

With stern yet comforting words you grant each ally affected by this command advantage on saves against fear effects.

Improved Commands

Beginning at 7th level, you may have two active commands at a time.

Inspiring Leadership

At 10th level, if you possess inspiration points you may pass one to an ally within your command range. This feature recharges after a short or long rest.

The Big Speech

At 15th level, you may spend a short rest giving a rousing speech. These short words motivate his allies to fight all the harder, granting an inspiration point to all allies in command range.

Master Tactician

Your very presence on the battlefield gives comfort and courage to your allies. Your command range is increased many times as word of his deeds and subordinates and loyal followers pass along orders.





You may have three commands active at a time, and your command range is extended to include all allies within 30 feet or can hear him over a ranged connection, as well as those within 30 feet of them or can hear them over a wireless connection.

Trooper

Every group of soldiers needs the steadfast experienced trooper. A soldier's soldier, the trooper doesn't branch out and blend other skill sets with that of being a soldier, they are soldiers first and foremost. At the top of their chosen profession, a trooper's business is killing, and business is good.

Improved Critical

When you choose this martial specialty at 3rd level, your weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Soldier's Soldier

At 7th level you have learned a bit about everything a soldier might need to know. While you are not an expert, you do know enough to serve a variety of roles in a pinch. Choose six skills, tool, or vehicles. You may add half of your proficiency bonus (rounded down) to checks involving these skills.

Additional Fighting Style

At 10th level you choose an additional fighting style, but you may not choose the same style twice.

Superior Critical

At 15th level, your weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 18-20.

Last One Standing

At 18th level as long as you are above 0 hit points but less than half of your maximum you regain 5 + your Constitution bonus hit points at the start of your turn.

Warrior

Many cultures in the Solar System live in less technologically advanced societies that make their homes in wildernesses. From the jungles of Venus to the deserts of Mars, and even the forests of Ganymede these cultures raise warriors who excel at stalking prey, finding their way through difficult terrain, and attacking from ambush. Their way of war is different, more individual and personal than the massed armies of the so-called 'civilized' peoples.

Wilderness Survival Training

At 3rd level you gain proficiency in Stealth and Survival. If you already have proficiency in these skills you may add your proficiency bonus twice when making checks with these skills.

Alert Awareness

At 3rd level, your senses are more alert to threats and danger. You gain the following:

- You gain advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) and Wisdom (Perception) checks when at least 30 feet away from someone who does not possess this feature.
- By spending a minute quietly not moving, you may sense the movements of any hostiles within 300 feet of your position.
- You ignore difficult terrain.
- You have advantage on initiative checks
- You may move at full speed without taking any penalty to your stealth checks.
- When tracking you learn the exact number of creatures, as well as their sizes and how long ago they passed the area.

Point Man

At 7th level you may lead your teammates through dangerous regions, keeping them from becoming lost and remaining alert to danger. When leading your team, you gain the following:

- Difficult terrain does not slow your allies.
- Your group cannot become lost.
- You may forage for food as you go, gathering enough food for a number of people equal to your Wisdom modifier + your proficiency bonus.

Commando

At 10th level, when you attack a creature that is unaware of your presence, your first attack inflicts +2d6 damage. This bonus damage increases to +3d6 at 15th level, +4d6 at 19th level.

Hidden and Safe

At 15th level you increase the value of any cover you have by one step. Furthermore, you only need partial cover to take the Hide action.

Like A Fist from the Sea

At 19th level, when you attack from hiding using your commando feature, you may take an additional action or move. You may use this feature once, and it recharges after a long rest.

BACKGROUNDS

BACKGROUNDS

The backgrounds listed below are designed to suit the Rocket Age. They are flavored towards important or thematic organizations found throughout the Solar System, but can also be treated as generic models. You can choose rocket racer, for example, but have your character be a test pilot instead. The proficiencies, equipment, and background features remain the same, just change the name to something that better suits your character's concept and background.

1ST MARS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TROOPER

Note: This background works equally well for any character with a back story involving military service, such as those of other national armies active in the Solar System (the Great Powers of Earth or the Metisian Guard), as well as Jovian Clan warriors and Martian Maduri. It can also be suitable for those who took part in the Jade Revolution and the Liberation of Emancipation.

The Silmy Ridge incident and following battle led to the arrival of General Patton and the 1st Mars Expedition Force. In the years since, the 1st MEF has grown as it has moved from fighting an unexpected war of conquest to serving a peacekeeping role in the American Martian States. The Americans are still expanding their hold on Mars, but tend to focus more on fighting alongside their Kostrastian allies or opposing the machinations of the Nazis and other fascists.

Service on Mars is considered particularly strenuous and minimum tours of service are only two years. This has resulted in thousands of 1st MEF veterans coming to Mars, serving their tour, and mustering out. Some go home, some settle in an occupied city-state, but there are those who stick around looking for the next adventure.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Survival

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: Medical kit or gaming kit

Equipment: uniform, rank and insignia, battlefield trophy, \$100

Unit

The 1st MEF is a large organization that was formed ad hoc out of whatever units were available at the time. As such there are many branches of service and specialties that you may have been a part of. Roll or choose from the branch table.

Feature: Basic Training

You gain a benefit based on the unit you served with.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Initiate a combat scene.
- Use your military experience in a non-combat scene
- Risk your life to save another, taking damage in the process.

d8	Branch	Basic Training
1	9th Cavalry Division	Proficiency with horses and bahmoots, does not suffer disadvantage for shooting from moving mount
2	7th Cavalry Division (mechanized)	Proficiency with autos and does not suffer disadvantage for shooting from a moving vehicle
3	1st Infantry Division	Evasion (as per the Rogue class feature)
4	2nd Marine Battalion	Élan (if you spend an inspiration point, roll 1d20, on a 10+ you get it back)
5	101st Airborne Division	Proficiency with Acrobatics and rocket packs
6	Army Medical Corps	Proficiency with Medicine, add your Proficiency bonus to HP healed with a med kit
7	Apache Scouts	Proficiency with Stealth and gain advantage on Stealth checks in the wilderness
8	Army Signal Corps	Proficiency with Perception and electronics



BACKGROUNDS

Background	Proficiencies	Feature	Restrictions
1st Mars Expeditionary Force Trooper	Athletics, language, med kit or gaming kit, Survival	Basic Training	None
Eurpoan Emissary Corps	Electronics, Insight, language, Science	Emissary Implants	European only
Federated Shipping Associate	Insight, language, Persuasion, vehicle	Low, Low Prices	None
Freebooter	Deception, language, med kit or vehicle, Survival	Finds	None
ICIC Researcher	Latin, Science, science kit, skill	Discovery	None
Interplanetary Comintern Agitator	Deception, language, Persuasion, Russian	Workers of the Worlds, Unite!	None
Ioite Scavenger	Engineering, engineer's tools, Stealth, Survival	I Had that Right Here	None
Missionary	Arcana or Insight, language, liturgical language, Religion	Loyalty of the Faithful	None
Red Scorpion Operative	Deception, language, lock picks, Stealth	Shady	None
Rocket Tramp	Stealth, engineer's tools, language, Survival	Trinkets and Toys	None
Rocket Racer	Engineering, language, Science, rocket ships	On the Wing	None
Rocket Ranger	Language, Science, Survival, rocket packs	Rocket Rangers, Away!	None
Rocket Set	Two languages, two skills	Bottomless Pockets	None
Rocket Wire News Service Stringer	Camera, Investigation, language, Perform	The Scoop	None
Second Hatching Namer	Perception, two languages, Religion	Cute and Harmless	Lizard Monkeys Only
Trailblazer	Artisan's tools or musical instrument, Perception, language, Survival	Native of the Wild Places	None
US Rocket Corps Engineer	Engineering, engineer's tools, Science, tool set	Percussive Maintenance	None
US Department Attaché	Insight, two languages, Persuasion	Backed by the Power of the Federal Government	None
Vaudeville Player	Perform, language, musical instrument, Persuasion	Star	None
Venusian <i>Harvitiōri</i>	Language, Nature, Survival, tool	Energetic	Venusian Only
Venusian Speaker	Arcana, Medicine, med kit, Religion	Psychic Development	Venusians Only
Warpriest of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe	Ancient Martian, Hamaxe, Insight, Religion	Psychic Development	Martians Only
Wolfgang and Long Detectives	Forensics kit, Investigation, Insight, language	Legal Authority	None

EUROPEAN EMISSARY

Note: Must be European

The Europeans do not understand their fellow sophonts. While some within the High Council (or whatever passes for the European government, reports conflict) feel that before simply disintegrating all offending species it would be best to understand them. Thus the Emissary Corps was formed. Their minds wiped to protect the secrets of Europa and then reprogrammed with the information they need to know (from an European point of view) for their mission, Emissaries are sent out into the Solar System.

Their mission is simple, infiltrate other species and learn how they live by living as one of them. Despite the simplicity of these goals, complexity seems to constantly crop up. Europeans are different from all other sophonts, even their genders do not line up well with any others. Their diet contains a fair amount of toxins, for flavor, and they do not age. As an European Emissary, you are a fish out of water in the truest sense, only you are a fish trying to learn to be a bird.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Science

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: electronics

Equipment: datapad, data file on the people you are studying, microcircuit clothing modification, and \$100

Feature: Emissary Implants

You have an implanted recorder that monitors your sensory input and records it. This allows you to recall any event you have witnessed as long as you have access to a means to display it, such as datapad or robo-brain. You also have a small transmitter and disintegration bomb in you. When you have failed 2 death saves the transmitter beams your stored data back to Europa or the nearest saucer ship, and the bomb goes off to destroy your body.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Use the technology of the people you are studying when European technology would provide a better tool (and you have access to European technology that would serve).
- Participate in the cultural activities of your studied people, such as festivals, rituals, and traditions.
- Entirely misunderstand some aspect of another culture and suffer some form of humiliation or injury because of it.

FEDERATED SHIPPING ASSOCIATE

Note: This background works equally well for any character that buys and sells on their own account, such as trading post intendants or Pilthuri traders.

There are many companies operating shipping business throughout the Solar System, most of them Earthling. Most of these run simple transportation business that move other company's goods or buy goods on one planet and sell them to brokers on another. Federate Shipping uses a different model.

Federated employs two types of associates: terminal dealers and free merchants. The former acts much like any other broker, they take on goods brought to them, sell to the locals, and pay a percentage to Federated. Free merchants are subsidized by Federated in exchange for a percentage of the profits and often operate their own ships, choose their own goods, and run their own routes.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: one vehicle of your choice

Equipment: rocket wear, \$200 in trade goods, passport, \$100

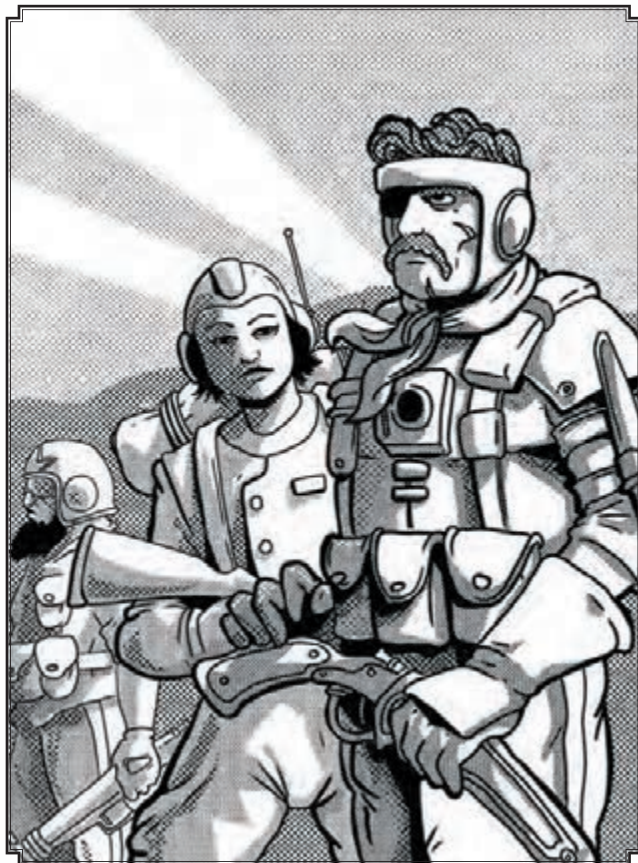
Feature: Low, low prices

You make deals that others can only dream of. When buying or selling you may to alter the price by your Charisma modifier x 10%.

Regain An Inspiration Point When You:

- Make a deal that puts you ahead.
- Forgo a profit in order to uphold ethical considerations.
- Your drive to make money causes you to lose something else of value or become injured.

FREEBOOTER



The freebooter movement began on Mars in the past few years and has spread to other planets and even jumped from its origins amongst Earthlings to be picked up by other species. In short, freebooters believe that governments are unnecessary and only exist in order to hold back those who are brave and bold enough to reach out and grab what is rightfully theirs. This is not necessarily a might makes right policy, though far too many freebooter bands behave that way, but without the limitations of governments a skilled and courageous individual can achieve a level of greatness heretofore impossible.

There is a common image of freebooter bands being rampaging monsters that travel the back ways of planets in order to rape and plunder. While some bands do behave this way, most are simply opportunistic and while willing to ignore laws and regulations in order to achieve their goals follow their own strict set of self-imposed codes of conduct. Many are based upon a desire to achieve a laudable goal, but chafe under the need to obey any authority not their own. A rare few see themselves, and are seen by others, as knights-errant or wandering gunslingers righting wrongs that the local governments either cannot or are guilty of.

Most freebooter bands are little more than mercenary outfits. Their numbers tend to be small, but they can perform missions that common soldiery are incapable of or form a training cadre for less technologically advanced governments or non-governmental agencies. Freebooter bands can be found in the service of Martian princes, guarding mining sites on Venus, or serving as disposable commandos for various groups.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Survival

Tools: med kit or vehicle

Languages: Any one of your choice.

Equipment: band badge, trophy from famous victory, assorted maps, small toy relic, explorer's clothes, \$100

Feature: Finds

Freebooters come across odd things. You have acquired one of the following common artifacts and know how to use it (you gain the appropriate proficiency as needed): datapad, digital camera, food synthesizer, or scanner.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Flaunt local laws to achieve your goals.
- Discover something of value on a distant planet, and claim it for yourself.
- Rush into danger without heed for life and limb, and are injured.

ICIC RESEARCHER

Note: This background is suitable for any character that pursues scientific or artistic research and study. There are many intellectuals who are not sponsored by the ICIC, from those working for universities to independent scientists, inventors, and artists.

The League of Nations maintains several special committees, the most famous of which is the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. The ICIC has a distinct focus of sharing and advancing science, though they are also involved in the humanities and arts. Many famous thinkers, such as Albert Einstein and Margaret Mead are active members. The committee is heavily involved in the exploration of the Solar System, and thanks to a combination of funding from private sources and the fruits of their own labor, ICIC researchers are some of the best equipped scientists the system has ever seen.

The need for new field scientists as well as the increased number of people applying for even the most basic grants has led to some radical changes in how the ICIC operates. Where once it simply provided forums and funding, the committee now provides training as well. Their 'finishing school' at Talsinth prepare researchers for field

work on the Red Planet. Plans are in the works to build another such program on Venus as well as a deep space exploration station in Earth orbit.

Skill Proficiencies: Science and one other of your choice.

Languages: Latin (the official language of the ICIC).

Tools: science kit

Equipment: notepad, 0-G pen, science kit, collection jar, safari or civilian clothes, \$100

Feature: Discovery

You gain one discovery as per the Scientist class feature.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Make headway towards proving your theories correct.
- Use intellect and knowledge to solve a problem.
- Abandon your research to pursue a humanitarian cause.

INTERPLANETARY COMINTERN AGITATOR

Once an independent organization, the Interplanetary Comintern has become a de facto arm of the Soviet State. Even so, the Comintern is so disbursed that many of the cells and agents maintain a degree of independence, often enough independence to worry Stalin. These cells work to educate workers, organize labor, and bring about social change from the bottom up. Despite their reputation as revolutionaries, most IPC agitators are non-violent, that is until pushed to far.

The IPC recruits widely, and not every member is a laborer or worker. Intellectuals, journalists, and even some wealthy philanthropists are in the ranks. While Earthlings are by far the majority Solar System wide, there are cells on every inhabited planet and many of these are entirely staffed by natives. Mars has seen a great deal of IPC activity, from the Ebb Revolutions to the ongoing work among the lower castes to liberate Mars, or enslave it to the Soviet machine, depending on who you are talking to.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Persuasion

Languages: Russian and one other of your choice

Equipment: rocket wear, disguise kit, pamphlets, \$100

Feature: Workers of the Worlds, Unite!

There are cells of the Interplanetary Comintern everywhere and you can easily contact them. Once per episode you can make contact with the local cell and gain information, equipment, and assistance. This allows you to gain advantage on an Intelligence based skill check,

acquire \$100 worth of goods and services, or gain an entourage of three mooks.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Recruit someone into the IPC.
- Prioritize your ideology over your own safety.
- Work willingly with capitalists or governments to achieve a common goal.

IOITE SCAVENGER

Note: loites aren't the only scavengers in the Solar System, just the best. This background can work for salvage workers or anyone that has lived a long part of their life surviving in a wasteland or ruins.

Many are surprised when they discover just how many loites have managed to escape their wasteland moon and make it out into the Solar System. Despite the interdiction of an European blockade, despite not possessing space travel technologies, and despite being rather unpleasant creatures, loites have begun to explore and even colonize planets from Jupiter to Venus. It is a testament to their hardiness and will that the Martian city of Kostrast is now facing an loite problem in the municipal garbage dumps.

Scavengers are the elite of loite communities. While any loite worth the name can find basic resources in any given environment, the scavengers are those that can find or build the most useful items, procure the best rotted foodstuffs, and locate that one thing needed to make life not just bearable, but to allow the community to thrive and grow.

Skill Proficiencies: Engineering, Survival, Stealth.

Tools: Engineer's tools

Equipment: overalls, an engineer's tool kit (made from repurposed scrap), assorted junk, \$10

Feature: I Had that Right Here

You always have something at hand or that you have spotted that can be quickly at hand with little effort. Once per episode you may find all the parts needed to construct a simple weapon, suit of light armor, tool kit, or piece of common equipment. The object you construct is a ramshackle mismatch of parts, wires, plastic ties, and gum, but serviceable. If the item requires a d20 roll to use and the die comes up a 9 or less it breaks. If it does not require a roll to use, roll a d20 whenever you use it, and it breaks on a 9 or less.

Regain an Inspiration Point When You:

- Find something useful in the trash.
- Survive an event that you thought would kill you.
- Risk your life to save another's.



MISSIONARY

Note: The missionary background is also good for religious figures in general, not just those out seeking converts.

The faiths of Earth have been greatly divided by the question of non-Earthlings having souls. Some claim that only Earthlings can receive the boons their deity's grant, including salvation. Others have a more open-minded approach. The largest and most powerful religious organizations, such as the Roman Catholic Church, have so far refused to weigh in on the issue, claiming it is still studying the issue.

Despite this debate, there are many Earth religions that have begun to set up missions on other planets and recruit converts. Buddhists, Christians, and Muslims have all sent missionaries to Mars and Venus, as well as the moons of Jupiter. In return, there have been a few proselytizing Kastari that have come to Earth, but these are rather fringe sects and have had little impact beyond the Rocket Set.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana or Insight, Religion

Languages: Your faith's liturgical language, any one other of your choice

Equipment: Vestments, holy items and text, \$50

Feature: Loyalty of the Faithful

You can connect with the local priesthood of your order and gain assistance. Once per episode you may make contact with the faithful in order to gain advantage on an Insight, Persuasion or Religion check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Convert another to your faith.
- Place yourself in danger to uphold your beliefs.
- Help another not of your faith to survive.

RED SCORPION OPERATIVE

Note: This background is suitable for any with a criminal past, not just those in service to the Red Scorpion Crime Syndicate.

Feared throughout the Solar System, the Red Scorpion Crime Syndicate has been gathering power and seeks to be the only criminal enterprise of any note. They have managed to take over many of the rackets on Earth, infiltrated the Pilthuri underground on Mars, and are busy trying to find out what sort of crime Venusians are up to. Their agents can be anywhere, and far from simply being a criminal network, the Red Scorpion is not above acts of sabotage or terrorism to get what they want.

Many who work for the Red Scorpion do not know the true nature of their employer. The syndicate is expert at suborning the upper echelons of other criminal organizations, businesses, religious movements, and even governments. Often operative are not fully inducted into the syndicate until they are in too deep, and once the scorpion has its claws on you it is only a matter of time before the tail strikes.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Stealth

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: Lock picks

Equipment: lock picks, plain clothes, trophy from a heist, \$50

Feature: Shady

You might not know the entire Red Scorpion network, but you know how to contact it. Once per episode you may seek it out in order to gain advantage on a Deception, Insight, or Persuasion check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Achieve your goals through deceit and stealth.
- Complete a mission for the Red Scorpion (or other crime boss).
- Risk exposure to save another's life or achieve your goals.

ROCKET RACER

Note: The rocket racer background is good for more than just racers, any skilled pilot should take this background, even a USRC test pilot.

Rocket races have become a popular sport over the past few years with the Solar Cup being the most famous but far from the only one. There are races sponsored by racing commissions, nations, and wealthy patrons, as well as impromptu races whenever fast ships and fearless pilots gather. Some of these are endurance runs covering millions of miles of space; others are short courses around a single planet or moon. The most dangerous are the slalom races that dodge asteroids, debris, or manufactured obstacles to test the limits of pilot and machine.

Rocket racers share several common traits, namely the desire to go faster and the skill to keep it together. Many fly experimental and unproven designs, pushing the edge into the break of infinity. The death toll is high, but those that succeed can be more than famous, they can be the best.

Skill Proficiencies: Engineering, Science

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: rocket ships

Equipment: vacc suit, rocket wear, racing trophies, \$100

Feature: On the Wing

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Push the limits of sophont and machine.
- Win a race against a worthy opponent.
- Show caution in the face of danger.

ROCKET RANGER

Note: Although only Earthlings may be official Rangers, any species can take this background as an unofficial 'deputy ranger'.

The few, the skilled and the daring, the Rocket Rangers are seen by most as a force for good in the Solar System. As a Ranger you can be certain that you are the best of the best, the elite that stands between the brightness of the Solar System and the darkness that encroaches from all sides. Through rigorous training, a history of heroic deeds, and unflinching adherence to a code of conduct, you seek to exemplify the heroism that people expect from you.

Skill Proficiencies: Science, Survival

Languages: Your choice of any one.

Tools: Rocket Packs

Equipment: Mark III rocket pack-atmospheric, rocket wear, note pad, 0-G pen, Solar System charts, Ranger's Handbook, \$100

Feature: Rocket Rangers, Away!

Once per episode you may use an action to declare, "Rocket Rangers, Away!" (the player has to say it out loud). When you do so all allies within 30 feet gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier + proficiency bonus, automatically succeed on death saves until the start of your next turn, and may use a bonus action to take the Dash action on their next turn.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Charge into danger to rescue another.
- Serve as an inspiration for another's actions.
- Defy orders to do what is just and right

ROCKET SET

Note: This background is suitable to any character hailing from a position of wealth and privilege, such as dilettante inventors or Silthuri nobles.

Rocket travel and visiting other planets is the in thing and the Rocket Set is the epitome of fashion in the Solar System. Famous, often for simply being rich and famous, the Rocket Set travel on luxury ships to distant worlds, tour strange cities, and party in alien bars. They are the new class of wealth, not hoarders but spenders, not builders but travelers, and oh so willing to see something no one has ever seen before.

Some of the Rocket Set travel because that is the thing to do. Many make long journeys to see the useable or be the first Earthling, Martian, or what have you to visit a place. Most just want to have a good time, and that is so much easier once you have slipped the bonds of home.

Skill Proficiencies: Any two of your choice

Languages: Any two of your choice

Equipment: rocket wear, formal clothing, large trunk, still camera, \$200

Feature: Bottomless Pockets

Once per episode you may spend an inspiration point to discover your proficiency bonus x \$100 in the lining of your coat, a pocket, tucked into a book, or otherwise misplaced.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Make time to enjoy luxuries.
- Use wealth and connections to solve a problem.
- Forgo comfort to achieve your goals.

ROCKET TRAMP

It is not just the wealthy and powerful of the Rocket Set who bounces around the planets. A much greater number of people have found a ticket to the stars, only with less luxurious accommodations. Rocket tramps find passage on ships through hook and crook, often as working rocket hands performing routine maintenance, but also as stowaways, criminals, jobbers, or other less savory occupations. How they get there is less important than the destination, and the next destination, and the next.

Once wherever they are going rocket tramps tend to stick around to enjoy the sights, taste new foods, and experience the wonder and thrills of an alien planet. Often they get into some sort of trouble that prompts them to leave, or the wanderlust kicks in and they drift towards the rocket port. Either way, there is always a



captain looking to hire on some crew, and someone willing to work for passage is a cheap way to fill out the lower decks.

Skill Proficiencies: Stealth, Survival

Languages: any one of your choice

Tools: Engineer's tools

Equipment: engineer's tools, rocket wear, trinkets from various planets, ticket on a freighter, \$50

Feature: Trinkets and Toys

You have picked up some oddities in your travels. When you roll on the trinket table, you make three rolls. In addition you have managed to find a working common artifact such as a scanner, digital camera, or datapad. You are proficient with this item.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Visit a place you have never been before.
- Interact with an alien in a positive way.
- Choose to stick around for a time instead of just bugging out at the first opportunity.

ROCKET WIRE NEWS SERVICE STRINGER

Note: This background works equally well for any journalist, be it a local or planetary newspaper or even the RADIO.

Reporting live on the Rocket Wire News Service or one of its many competitors, you don't just get the story, you live it. Rocket Wire News Service journalists go out into

the wilds, cross burning deserts, hack their way through thick jungles, travel with soldiers and revolutionaries to battle, and risk their lives to get the big scoop.

Most send back written reports and still photographs, but with the spread of television, live footage is becoming increasingly common.

The public loves this and consumes the reports of journalists in the field in ever increasing numbers. The population of Earth is becoming wealthier and better educated every decade, and both the colonies on Mars and Venus as well as the native populations provide markets that number in the billions.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Perform

Languages: Any one of your choice.

Tools: camera

Equipment: still camera, 50 film, notepad, 0-G pen, rocket wear, hand held RADIO, \$100

Feature: The Scoop

You have contacts across the Solar System. Some of them can pass you information or aid; all you have to do is ask. Once per episode you can reach out to your contacts in order to gain advantage on an Intelligence or Charisma based check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Uncover something newsworthy.
- Risk your life to get the story.
- Choose discretion over publication.



SECOND HATCHING NAMER

Note: Must be a Lizard Monkey

The Second Hatching movement has spread to lizard monkey bands across the face of Jupiter, its teaching traveling by word of mouth from one troop to another. As Venus was the First Hatching, so the arrival of more aliens, this time with the means to travel to other planets, is the Second Hatching. It is the duty of all to go forth and Behold and Name the new wonders to be seen, for until they have been Beheld and Named by the faithful, they do not truly exist.

To be a Namer is to be one of the elite of the Second Hatching. You have been chosen, trained, and prepared for this mission. Your fellow sophonts do not know that you are more than a particularly bright animal, and this façade must be maintained while you go forth to Behold and Name, for you must return to your troop and tell your brethren of what you have seen, and what it is to be called.

Skill Proficiencies: Perception, Religion

Languages: Any two of your choice

Equipment: collar and papers, name tag, stuffed toy, \$25

Feature: Cute and Harmless

Once per episode you can assume the demeanor of a cute and lost pet. Those who do not know you will likely ignore you or if they take interest in you give you a safe place to rest, food, and toys while they look for your owner. This can get you into places no one would allow an intelligent creature.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Name and Behold something new.
- First successfully pass as a simple pet to a new person.
- Reveal that you are far more intelligent than other's think.

TRAILBLAZER

There are many wild places on the Solar System, more so than there are settled regions. Trailblazers spend their lives in these areas, far from the help of others. For some this is a calling, they have left civilization behind to live alone in the hinterlands. For others this is the state they were born into, a life close to the land and surrounded by the natural world.

Trailblazers go by many names, most outsiders call them outdoorsman or rather pejoratively, tribals if they are from a less technologically sophisticated culture. No matter what they are called, these are the people you



want with you when you are trekking the deserts of Mars, the jungles of Venus, or the wastelands of Io. A good guide is worth their weight in radium.

Skill Proficiencies: Perception, Survival

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: Artisan's tools or musical instrument

Equipment: environmentally appropriate clothes, trophy of a hunt, \$25

Feature: Native of the Wild Places

You do not need to make any skill checks in order to find food, shelter, and water for yourself and a number of people equal to your Wisdom modifier. Also, you may attempt to communicate with sophonts you do not share a language with through gestures, pantomime, and sketches. When you do so make a DC 13 Intelligence check, if you succeed you can communicate moderately complex concepts.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Help another survive in the wilderness.
- Face down dangerous weather, deadly terrain, and fearsome animals.
- Spend a week alone in the wilderness.



UNITED STATES ROCKET CORPS ENGINEER

Note: This background works well for any character who is an engineer, as well as inventors, mechanics, and others whose daily work involves machinery and technology.

There are many engineers working radium drives throughout the Solar System, but the best of the best serve in the United States Rocket Corps. Not only does the USRC have the most stringent entry and training requirements, but the Corps is on the forefront of rocket ship technology, most evident by the recent introduction of RAY shielding technology to some of the war rockets in the fleet. Adding to this, the Corps is deployed system wide and long serving engineers can expect to see more than just one planet to planet run.

While most USRC engineers plan to serve the Corps for their entire careers, there are those who leave to seek work elsewhere. Most of these go on to work in the corporate sphere, but some strike out on their own as freelance troubleshooters, purchase shares in a rocket ship, or leave to chase some new technological marvel of their own creation. A rare few are discharged do to bad behavior or otherwise dismissed from service, but even a disgraced USRC engineer is considered better than nearly any other radium burner in the business.

Skill Proficiencies: Engineering, Science

Tools: Engineer's tools and one other of your choice

Equipment: rocket wear, engineer's tools, \$100

Feature: Percussive Maintenance

Once per episode when you fail at an Engineering check to repair a piece of equipment you may inflict damage on that item in order to get it working. Such a damaged item fails in a spectacular way any time it is used and the roll of the die comes up a 9 or less. If the item does not require a roll, roll a d20 each time it is used and if the die comes up a 9 or less it ceases to function.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Fix something that is broken.
- Use technology to solve a problem.
- Give in to the needs of the flesh.

US STATE DEPARTMENT ATTACHÉ

Note: This background is suitable for diplomats of all stripes and even Martian courtiers hangers on at Demarcation Point One, and attorneys.

The State Department is busy across the Solar System overseeing the interests of the United States. They operate formal missions and delegations to Martian city-states and Chanari tribes, as well as Venusian concordats, Ganymedian bands, Jovian clans, and even with the Europeans at Demarcation Point One. The department's attachés have to be capable of negotiating in palaces, desert wastes, alien forests, and even stranger locales.

Attachés are specialists who work in the field closely with the political group the department is wishing to influence. Often they have a specialty such as cultural or military matters, but the scope of the Solar System means that most attachés have to be jacks-of-all-trades. Then there are those others, those attachés the State Department doesn't like to talk about, and ones who go on missions of vital importance that can be easily disavowed.

Specialty

The State Department is rife with bureaus, committees, and sub-committees. All employ their own attachés to further their goals on the ground. You have a specialty that reflects the bureau you work for and your mission is to further its aims.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Languages: Any two of your choice

Equipment: rocket wear, identification papers, briefcase, 0-G pen, notepads, \$150

Feature: Backed by the Power of the Federal Government

You have friends in the US government who can lend a hand. Once per episode you can reach out to your contacts in order to gain advantage on an Intelligence or Charisma based check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Use negotiation and compromise to achieve your goals.
- You achieve a goal that helps the United States improve its political position.
- You peacefully and meaningfully interact with members of a different species, nationality, or culture.

d8	Specialty
1	Military
2	Cultural
3	Legal
4	Financial
5	Humanitarian
6	Technological
7	Espionage
8	Agricultural

VAUDEVILLE PLAYER

Note: This background is suitable for any artist or performer.

Vaudeville was dying out when the Einstein-Tesla-Goddard rocket was launched, but the opening of the Solar System has given it new life. The peoples of Earth want to not just hear about the wonders of other worlds, they want to see them. Aliens, technological marvels, and even lectures (provided they have accompanying slide shows) are huge draws. Likewise the peoples of other planets want to experience new and alien marvels. This has led to a surge of performers heading to Mars, Venus, and even the Jovian System to put on what would be humdrum performances back home, but to alien eyes are exotic wonders.

This new Vaudeville is no longer confined to beer halls and penny theatres. The rich and powerful want to see wonders and be entertained. Vaudeville players might find themselves performing in a packed auditorium, in front of dignitaries, or at in a Silthuri palace. They also might be found singing for their supper in front of wildcat miners, a tribe of Venusians, or a Chanari warband.

Act

Before you can take the stage you need to have an act. Some acts are based on a certain type of artistic style, such as music, comedy, or theatre. Others are based around interesting information such as lectures or technological demonstrations. Some acts are simply athletic displays, exhibitionism, oddities, or the infamous freak show.

d8	Act	Skill Proficiencies: Perform, Persuasion
1	Comedian	
2	Musician	Languages: Any one of your choice
3	Animal trainer	
4	Dancer	Tools: Any one musical instrument
5	Lecturer	
6	Athlete	Equipment: musical instrument, playbills, costume, props, \$50
7	Actor	Feature: Star
8	Curiosity	You have a group of adoring fans that can come to your aid.

Once per episode you can reach out to your fans in order to gain advantage on an Intelligence or Charisma based check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you :

- Use your entrainment skills to achieve your goals.
- Resolve a conflict without resorting to violence.
- Forgo the chance at fame to pursue a nobler goal.

VENUSIAN HARVITITORI

Note: You must be a Venusian to take this background.

When a Venusian reaches adolescence they are required to undergo a special journey known as the Harvititor. After ritual perpetrations and final instructions, the young Harvititori leaves their home tribe and travels the jungles seeking remarkable deeds and to uphold the Thirty-Three Noble Truths. Often this journey is with a small group of similar aged friends, but sometimes it is a solitary endeavor. Once the Harvititori has accomplished something remarkable, or at least a plethora of extraordinary but less than remarkable deeds, they return home to present their virtues to the elders and be accepted as an adult.

In this new era, many Harvititori are leaving Venus to complete their Harvititor on alien worlds. While this does allow for increasingly greater deeds, and has subsequently increased the level of deed needed to impress the elders, it has also had two unfortunate effects. First, those Harvititori returning from off-world journeys come home with strange ideas foreign to their home and people. Second, off-world travel has increased the numbers of the Lost, those who have gone on their Harvititor and choose to never return, but to journey on until the end of their days. This creates several problems, most notably that until a Harvititori returns and is accepted by the elders, they are still considered children and not afford adult rights or responsibilities.

Skill Proficiencies: Nature, Survival

Languages: Any one of your choice

Tools: Any one of your choice

Equipment: H'llthansat, trophy marking your tribal and concordat affiliation, baseball cap, \$50

Feature: Energetic

You are still young and have the energy of youth. Once per episode you may spend an inspiration point to regain your Constitution bonus + proficiency bonus in hit points or remove one condition effecting you.

You regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Commit a deed you think will be worthy of adulthood.
- Uphold a Noble Truth.
- Give up an opportunity to go back home.



VENUSIAN SPEAKER

Note: You must be a Venusian to take this background.

The concordats of the Ishtar Range do not have much in the way of a government, just loosely formed tribes that gather together as concordats. They do not have leaders per se, but the tribes choose some to be Speakers, the first amongst equals who have the right to call an assembly of a tribe and speak before it, and to speak as the voice of their tribe or concordat to outsiders.

The role of Speaker is both political and religious. The Venusians have many gods, and the Speakers speak for them as well as their mortal brethren. Most Speakers have some form of psychic ability, though by no means is this a requirement for the position.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Medicine, Religion

Tools: med kit

Equipment: speaker's staff and robes, book of your tribe's 33 Noble Truths and the 84 Secrets, a 1 point psychic crystal.

Feature: Psychic Development

You have 1 psychic power point. You may use psychic weapons and armor as if you were psychic, but do not have any psychic power unless you gain them separate from this background.

You regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Settle disputes through debate rather than violence.
- Act in a manner that favors your tribe or concordat.
- Discover a means of integrating alien influences into Venusian culture.

WARPRIEST OF THE ORDER OF THE SACRED HAMAXE

Note: the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe is a Martian religious sect, but it regularly ignores caste restrictions to promote deserving members to the priesthood. Although it is extremely rare, there are some non-Martians who have joined the sect and risen to warpriest. This background can also be used for non-priest ranked followers of an Order warband.

The Order of the Sacred Hamaxe is different from most Martian religious sects. First of all they accept as priests members of any caste, not just the Kastari. Second, they do not maintain temples, congregations, and other trappings of religious authority. Instead the Order forms nomadic bands that roam the face of the Red Planet and seek to dispense justice where there is none, defend the people from outside threats, and cure those they see as possessed by demons.

They are a powerful force on Mars, but one that does not lend its weight to any one place. Grudgingly accepted by most of the mainstream sects, the Order cares only about completing its mission. Not all actions the Order takes are valiant defenses of small communities against rampaging wild animals, freebooter bands, or other violent threats. They also heal the sick, are quick to respond to natural disasters, and use their powerful psychic abilities to cure the mentally ill, which the Order sees as casting out demons.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Religion

Languages: Ancient Martian

Weapon Proficiencies: Hamaxe

Equipment: vestments, Hamaxe, medical kit, 1-point psychic crystal, expedition gear

Feature: Basic Psychic Development

You have 1 psychic power point. You may use psychic weapons and armor as if you were psychic, but do not have any psychic power unless you gain them separate from this background.

You regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Save innocents from danger.
- Use your skills and abilities to heal a stranger.
- Provide charity to those in need.

WOLFGANG AND LONG DETECTIVE

Note: This background works equally well for any private detective, police officers, and others who seek to solve crimes and catch criminals.

There is no Solar System wide law enforcement office and little recourse for someone who wants to see justice done to a criminal who has fled to a different planet. Diplomats can work out extradition arrangements, and these are common on Earth, but on Mars, Venus, and especially Jupiter and its moons, there is almost nothing that can be done.

Wolfgang and Long can help. While they do not possess law enforcement powers they are the Solar system's only interplanetary detective agency with offices on Earth, Mars, and Venus, as well as a branch on the Anglo-American Sky Docks above Jupiter. Their agents work within the bounds of local law, unless breaking those laws is the only way to solve a case. In addition to hunting down fugitives, they also perform all the roles

of an investigative service, tracking missing persons, seeking evidence of wrongdoing, and advising on security precautions.

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, Insight

Languages: any one of your choice

Tools: forensics kit

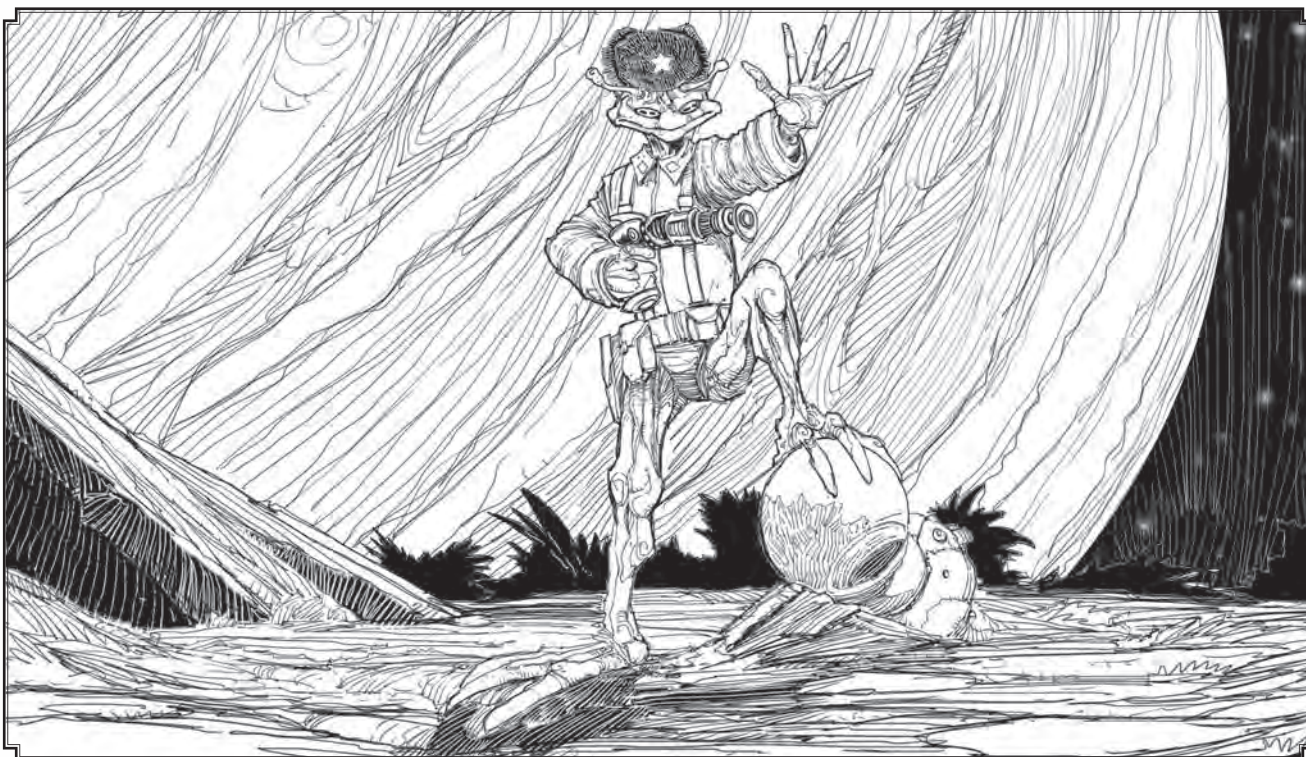
Equipment: uniform, badge, wanted posters, forensics kit, notepad, 0-G pen, \$100

Feature: Authority

You can connect with the local law enforcement officers and gain a few perks, brothers of the badge and all. Once per episode you may spend a point of inspiration to gain advantage on an Intelligence or Charisma based check, acquire \$100 in goods or services, or gain the service of 3 mooks.

Regain a point of inspiration when you:

- Catch and see the perpetrator of a crime punished.
- Go outside the law to achieve your goals.
- Risk personal relationships to see that justice is done.



EQUIPMENT

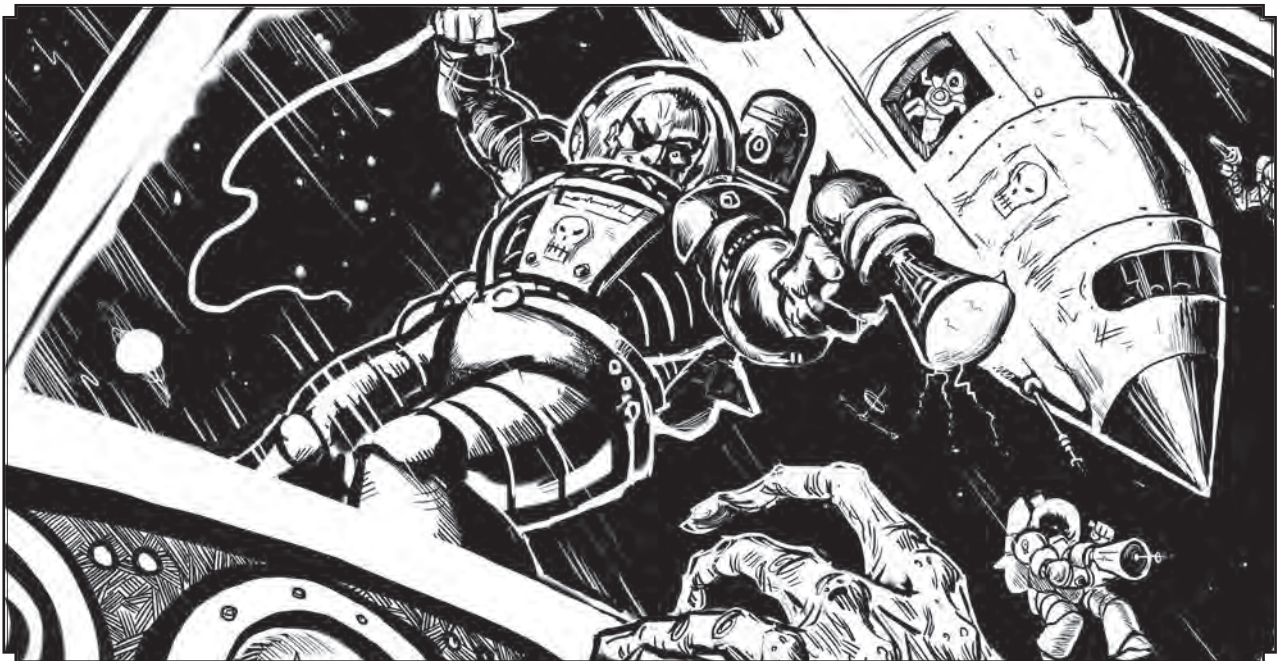
EQUIPMENT

This is an era of technological progress, of new inventions every day that make life better or the Solar System more dangerous. Listed below are the most common items used by adventurers in Rocket Age. If you do not see something here or prefer a piece of equipment from another source, hey, a dollar is a gold piece is a credit chip and so forth.

ALIEN EQUIPMENT

The prices given here are for the open market, which in the Solar system tends to be rather Earthling centric. Feel free to adjust the prices; some things are going to be cheaper closer to their points of origin than others. Certain pieces of equipment are not even available without going through back channels, black markets, or knowing the right person. Any character from a non-Earthling species can generally find gear their species makes for half the listed price. Europeans can check into the local embassy to pick up a half price disintegrator, Jovians can buy repulsion rifles off of a passing clan mate, and so on. It is up to the people at the table to make sure this not abused, use good judgment and try not to ruin anyone's fun.

When choosing your character's starting gear keep in mind that your options are open ended. Most classes offer any simple or martial weapon. Choose one that matches your character's species and background. If you are going outside of these bounds, come up with a good reason your Venusian is packing a disintegrator. It doesn't have to be complicated; maybe you saved an European's life, or just squished the sneaky squid and took his stuff.



Armor

Armor	Cost (in dollars)	Armor Class (AC)	Strength	Stealth	Weight	Properties

Light Armor

European robes	200	11+ Dex modifier	-	-	2	Extra-fingers, Integrated circuits, RADIO, sealed
Jovian battle harness	25	12+ Dex modifier	-	-	5	Extra-limbs
Leather Jacket	10	12+ Dex modifier	-	-	3	-
Metisian environmental suit	45	12+ Dex modifier	-	Disadvantage	10	Extra-limbs, RADIO, sealed
RADIO Suit	30	11+ Dex modifier	-	-	6	RADIO, sealed
Reinforced Clothing	70	13+ Dex modifier	-	-	4	-
Silthuri dueling armor	60	11+ Dex modifier	-	-	3	Impressive
Venusian battle straps	15	11+ Dex modifier	-	-	4	Bellepa

Medium Armor

Kastari war priest robes	100	13+ Dex modifier (max 2)	-	Disadvantage	10	-
Male Maduri armor	65	14+ Dex modifier (max 3)	-	-	12	-
Ranger armor, field	75	14+ Dex modifier (max 3)	-	-	8	RADIO, shielded, sealed
Silthuri war armor	175	14+ Dex modifier (max 3)	-	-	6	Impressive

Heavy Armor

Female Maduri armor	250	18	Str 16	Disadvantage	25	-
Metisian Guard combat suit	200	16	Str 13	Disadvantage	45	Extra limbs, RADIO, sealed
Ranger armor, assault	350	18	Str 14	Disadvantage	30	RADIO, shielded, sealed

Shields

Male Maduri war shield	45	+2	-	-	8	-
Female Maduri war shield	55	+3	Str 14	Disadvantage	10	-
Venusian wood shield	35	+2			6	BeHepa, Psychic



Armor Properties

BeHepa. Any creature smaller than large sized using this armor or shield suffers disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Extra-fingers. Any creature can wear armor with this property, but only those with more than five digits on each hand may use any of its properties.

Extra-limbs. Only creatures with more than four limbs can wear this armor.

Impressive. This suit of armor is stylish, ornamented, and decorative as well as functional. A creature wearing this armor has advantage on all Charisma checks to charm, impress, or appear to be an authority.

Integrated circuits. This armor contains built in circuitry that allows for additional properties to be added at a cost of \$1000 per property, see the list below.

Chameleon Field. As per the device listed below.

Data Storage. The armor can record and store information.

Flight 10. A small gravitic pulse modulator allows for slow movement.

Ghost Network. The suit can connect to ghost networks, or be connected by them.

Healing Matrix. As per the device listed below.

Psychic. The armor gains the psychic property.

Scanners. The suit of armor has a built in scanner as the device below.

Psychic. This armor is psychically active. Psychic power points may be transferred to it during a short or long rest, or to the user as a bonus action. Power points may be spent as a reaction to increase the armor's AC by 1 per point spent. The psychic crystal embedded in this suit can be replaced with a larger version, or additional psychic crystals can be added.

RADIO. The suit has a built in RADIO with a 50 mile range, as per the hand held RADIO below.

Sealed. The suit can be sealed against the outside environment. It has filters that remove any taint from the atmosphere as well as a 24 hour internal air supply. Waste is recycled and a tube allows water to be filtered from outside sources.

Shielded. The suit of armor has additional protections that grant the wearer resistance to cold, fire, and radiation damage.

Armor Descriptions

The following armors are commonly worn in the Solar System.

European robes. Europeans eschew visible armor in favor of these technologically sophisticated robes. Available in purple, blue, or red, the better to match the European's skin tones, their robes feature a variety of advanced features. At their most basic level, the robes are made from fibers that react to disperse energy or resist kinetic attacks. Robes issued to higher ranking Europeans often have microcircuit reactive armor, gravity distortion fields, and other features that protect the wearer from harm.

Female Maduri armor. In traditional Maduri legions the females are relegated to defensive fighting, forming the battle lines that the males charge out of and return to. Their armor is well suited to this task and although its thick plates of dense plastic and heavy ornamentation limit mobility, they do provide outstanding protection. A female Maduri clad for war is the immovable object other armies break against.

Female Maduri war shield. When deployed to form the main battle line of Maduri legions, female Maduri bring these massive shields of dense ceramic and plastic composites covered with thin layers of precious metals. Heavy and cumbersome, the war shields issued to the female legions are meant to be used as part of a nearly immobile shield wall.

Jovian battle harness. Jovian armor must be light and allow for free movement of the wings, which limits the degree of protection. Battle harnesses consist of straps of leather connecting plates of organic plastics that cover vital areas. Most harnesses come with a helmet of some sort and the finest feature adaptive plating that can slide to cover additional areas or be retracted for greater mobility.

Kastari war priest robes. The priests of Mars wear ornate robes whose only protective features are heavy pectorals, decorative plates, and exquisite jewels. Those who take a more active role in life, such as the war priests of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe, don armored robes that feature armor plates similar to those issued to the Maduri legions. It would be hard to call the most ornate and sturdy of these robes, as they look more like thick armor plating with strips of cloth hanging from it.

Leather jacket. A favorite amongst rocket pilots, the simple leather jacket provides limited protection on its own. Manufacturers have brought several new designs to market and today the rocket set can be found wearing leather jackets made from a variety of exotic hides that conceal armor plates and even advanced reactive gels scavenged from Ancient Martian ruins.

Male Maduri armor. Designed to allow the male Maduri legions to charge forth and crush their enemies, these suits of plastic and leather provide a fair mix of protection and mobility. The male legions are shock infantry and cavalry, scouts, and skirmishers meant to fight short sharp battles and then retreat to the safety of the females' battle line. Like all Maduri armor, male armor is highly ornate.

Male Maduri war shield. Generally round and meant to be used to actively block attacks, as opposed to the more stable and square shaped female war shields, the male Maduri war shields suit their role as shock troops. The shields are made from layered plastics and covered in bahmoot leather. Intricate geometric designs are painted on the shield, often including metallic paints that shimmer and shine in the light.

Metisian environmental suit. Designed for those Metisians not serving in the European military, these enclosed suits keep the nasty dirty Solar System away from their occupants. Internal air supplies and recycling allow the wearer to go days without needing to engage the advanced filtration systems.

Metisian guard combat suit. Based off of their environmental suit, the Metisian battle suit has layers of metallic ceramic armor that protects vital areas. A brutally practical people, the Metisians do not decorate their armor with anything save identifying markings. Even then, these are simple geometric patterns and blocks of color that designate the wearer's rank and role.

RADIO suit. The standard environmental suit of the rocket set, the RADIO suit is a skin tight covering that can be sealed against vacuum and other dangers. It features a large clear helmet that forms a protective bubble around the wear's head and allows for excellent visual range. The suit comes with a built in RADIO.

Ranger armor. The US Rocket Rangers require a range of armors based upon their mission. Most wear field armor, an armored jacket and trousers that protect against shrapnel and burns from a rocket pack that can be quickly sealed to protect from dangerous environments. Heavier battle dress is thicker and clumsier, but suitable to extended periods of wear in the depths of space.

Reinforced clothing. Adventurers often want to dress to blend in or wear clothing that is better suited to their environment than armor. Armored clothing is most popular on Mars where ready access to high-density plastics, either manufactured in some of the remaining foundries or scavenged from ruins, are most common. New fibers have been invented on Earth that can create cloth with ballistic and even ablative properties, and when combined with Martian plastics the end result is protective yet concealed, and often stylish, clothing. Any Perception checks to determine if a person is wearing armored clothing suffer a -disadvantage.

Silthuri dueling armor. Designed to protect the wearer and at the same time show off their physique, Silthuri dueling armor only covers the most vital areas of the body. Plates of armored plastic protect the head, heart, kidneys, and major arteries, and leave everything else bare. Even the lowest grade of dueling armor is highly ornate and decorated with precious metals and gems.

Silthuri war armor. In direct contrast to their dueling armor, Silthuri war armor is light but comprehensively covers the body. The suits are made of dense plastic plates with ballistic cloth and metal chainmail covering the joints. As one would expect of Mar's ruling caste, their war armor is gaudily decorated.

Venusian battle straps. The Venusians of the Ishtar Range wear little in the way of clothing or armor. When the concordats march to war they don sturdy leather straps that act as both weapon harnesses and body armor. These straps only cover the most vital areas so as to allow for greater mobility and to keep from chafing the Venusian's thick body hair. Some of the more renowned warriors wear battle straps enhanced with bone plates taken from the great beasts of Venus.

Venusian war shield. Made from iron hard woods native to Venus, or even the chest plates of thunder lizards and other large animals, Venusian war shields are a common sight amongst warriors of the Ishtar Range. The shields are usually round and serve a Venusian as something between a buckler and a full sized shield, which makes them almost too large for other sophonts to wield. The greatest warriors carry shields studded with psychically active crystals.



Weapons

The Solar System can be dangerous, what with angry aliens, hungry beasts, and all manner of people trying to put holes in your precious bodies. Try being polite, civil, and understanding. If that doesn't work, blast 'em.

Weapon	Cost (in dollars)	Damage	Weight	Properties
<i>Simple Melee Weapons</i>				
European Pain Baton	400	1d4 bludgeoning	1	Extra fingers, finesse, charge 1, light, stun (DC 13)
H'ilthansat	5	1d6 slashing	1	BeHepa, finesse, light, thrown (20/60)
Hand Axe	10	1d6 slashing	2	Finesse, light, thrown (20/60)
Speaker's staff	250	1d6 bludgeoning	5	Psychic, versatile (1d8)
Spear/ bayonet on rifle	2	1d6 piercing	4	Versatile (1d8)
Staff	1	1d6 bludgeoning	4	Versatile (1d8)
Survival knife	10	1d4 slashing	1	Finesse, concealable, light, thrown (20/60)
<i>Simple Ranged Weapons</i>				
Disintegration pistol	300	1d6 acid	2	Ammunition (40/120), beam, charge 1, concealable, extra-fingers, light
Hunting rifle	50	1d8 piercing	4	Ammunition (200/600), capacity (5), two-handed
RAY pistol	75	1d8 radiation	2	Ammunition (30/60), beam, charge 1, light, stun setting
Shotgun	35	1d6 piercing	4	Ammunition (30/150), blast (5'x 15'), capacity (2), two-handed, see below
Slug pistol	25	1d6 piercing	2	Ammunition (20/60), capacity (6), light
Slug pistol, hand cannon	45	1d8 piercing	4	Ammunition (30/120), capacity (5), heavy
Slug pistol, hold out	20	1d4 piercing	1	Ammunition (10/ 50), capacity (4), concealable, light
Stinger pistol	25	1d6 piercing	3	Ammunition (15/30), light, loading
Stinger rifle	55	1d8 piercing	6	Ammunition (40/80), loading, two-handed
<i>Martial Melee Weapons</i>				
Beaked mace	25	1d8 bludgeoning and piercing	5	-
Cavalry saber	15	1d8 slashing	3	-
Hamaxe	45	1d10 slashing or bludgeoning	6	Heavy, two-handed
Kithkasis throwing sword	60	1d8 slashing	2	Finesse, light, thrown (20/40), returning
Silthanka	90	1d8 slashing	1	Finesse
Spear fork	35	1d8 piercing	5	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Sunaxe	65	2d6 slashing	8	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Toothed saber	15	1d6 slashing	2	Special

Weapon	Cost (in dollars)	Damage	Weight	Properties
Venusian wood axe	35	1d10 slashing	4	BeHepa, heavy, psychic, versatile (2d6)
Warrior's claws	10	1d8 slashing	1	BeHepa, finesse, light, special
Whip	5	1d4 slashing	1	Entangle, finesse, light, reach 10
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons</i>				
Arrow caster	8	1d10 piercing	2	Ammunition (60/150), loading, two-handed
Big game rifle	100	1d12 piercing	12	Ammunition (300/600), heavy, loading, two-handed
Combat rifle	75	1d10 piercing	8	Ammunition (200/ 400), capacity (8)
Disintegration rifle	500	1d8 acid	4	Ammunition (120/600), beam, charge 2, extra-fingers, light
Flamethrower	150	1d8 fire	15	Ammunition, blast (10x30), fuel, heavy, two-handed
Flamethrower, radium enhanced	200	1d8 fire and radiation	15	Ammunition, blast 10x 30, fuel, heavy, two-handed
Ganymedian heartbow	150	1d10 piercing	4	Ammunition (200/600), two-handed
Gravitic pulse Gatling gun	500	1d6 force and fire	20	Ammunition (30/120), brace, burst (10x40), charge 1, heavy, two-handed
Gravitic pulse pistol	100	1d6 force and fire	4	Ammunition (20/80), charge 1, light
Gravitic pulse rifle	150	1d8 force and fire	6	Ammunition (40/160), charge 2, heavy, two-handed
Hunting bola	15	1d4 bludgeoning	1	BeHepa, thrown (30/60), entangle
Radium rifle, modern	600	2d12 piercing	35	Ammunition (500/ 1500), crew 3
RAY rifle	125	1d10 radiation	4	Ammunition (60/ 180), beam, charge 2, stun setting
RAY SMG	175	1d6 radiation	4	Ammunition (20/40), beam, burst (5x30), charge 1, stun setting
Repulsion float rifle	200	1d8 slashing	6	Ammunition (40/ 120), burst (5x15), capacity (50)
Rocket launcher	300	Varies	8	Ammunition (1000/ 4000), brace, crew 2, special
Silt sea harpoon	45	1d10 piercing	3	Thrown (30/ 60)
Slug machinegun, light	200	1d8 piercing	25	Ammunition (100/600), brace, burst (10x40), heavy, two-handed
Slug machinegun, heavy	400	1d10 piercing	35	Ammunition (200/ 1200), brace, burst (10x60), heavy two-handed
Slug SMG	75	1d6 piercing	6	Ammunition (30/ 60), burst (5x30), capacity (30)
Stun ball, modern	25	1d4 bludgeoning	3	Stun (DC 13), thrown (30/ 60)



Weapon Properties

Beam. This weapon fires a beam of energy.

BeHeпа. Weapons with this trait are designed for large hands. Any creature smaller than large sized suffers disadvantage when wielding the weapon. BeHepa comes from the Russian word for Venus.

Blast. This weapon does not target a single creature; instead it strikes a designated area of effect. All creatures targeted must make a Dexterity saving throw or suffer the listed damage for the weapon. Those who make the save take half damage. The DC for this saving throw is equal to 8 + the attacker's Dexterity bonus + proficiency bonus if proficient with the weapon.

Brace. A weapon with this property must be braced against a solid object such as a wall, mounted on a bipod or tripod, placed in a fixed mounting, or otherwise secured before firing or any attacks made with it suffer disadvantage.

Burst. This property allows a weapon to be fired in burst mode. When firing in burst mode, the weapon fires a blast weapon with the listed cone as the AOE. All creatures within this zone must make a Dexterity saving throw or suffer the listed damage for the weapon. The DC for this saving throw is equal to 8 + the attacker's Dexterity bonus + proficiency bonus if proficient with the weapon. A weapon uses 4 rounds of ammunition or charges for each burst.

Capacity. This weapon has an internal reservoir of bullets of the listed amount.

Charge. The weapon requires a battery to function, expending the listed number of charges each time fired.

Concealable. Weapons with this property are small and easily hidden, granting advantage on Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks to palm them and Charisma (Deception) checks to hide them.

Crew. Weapons with the crew property require more than one person to operate the weapon. One person is designated as the attacker and makes the attack roll for the weapon or sets the save DC for blast and burst weapons. If less than the required number of crew is available the weapon fires with disadvantage or grants advantage on saves for weapons with the blast property.

Entangle. Creatures struck with this weapon are knocked prone and suffer the grappled condition. A DC 13 Strength save removes the grappled condition.

Explosive charge. This weapon easily penetrates armor or creates enough of a blast that the shockwaves can bypass armor. Any hit with this weapon against a vehicle causes a critical systems hit.

Extra-fingers. This weapon is designed for creatures with more than five digits on each hand, all others suffer disadvantage when wielding this weapon.

Fuel. This weapon fires a flammable fuel. Targets hit by this weapon are set on fire for 1d6 rounds, suffering 1d6 points of fire damage each round. A fire may be put out with a DC 13 Dexterity save. If a person carrying a weapon with this property suffers a critical hit then their fuel reservoir is set off and they suffer 1d10 points of fire damage per round until they remove the reservoir, and they are set on fire.

Psychic. This weapon is psychically active. Psychic power points may be transferred to it during a short or long rest, or to the user as a bonus action. As a bonus action, the power points stored in the weapon can be used to grant it the returning or stun properties, costing 1 point per use. For 2 points the weapon can be used to parry beams (see Ancient Artifacts for the parry beams property). The embedded psychic crystal can be changed out for a large one, and additional small psychic crystals can be added.

Radiation leak. This weapon leaks small amounts of radiation, especially when fired. Anyone firing the weapon, and for crewed weapons the entire crew, suffers 1d4 radiation damage every time it is fired.

Returning. When thrown the weapon returns to the user.

Stun. A weapon with this property does not inflict damage; instead it has a chance to stun the target. A target hit with this weapon must make a Constitution saving throw with the listed DC or gain the Stun condition for 1d6 rounds.

Stun setting. As a bonus action this weapon can be set to inflict a stun effect (DC 13) instead of regular damage.

A NOTE ON RELOADING

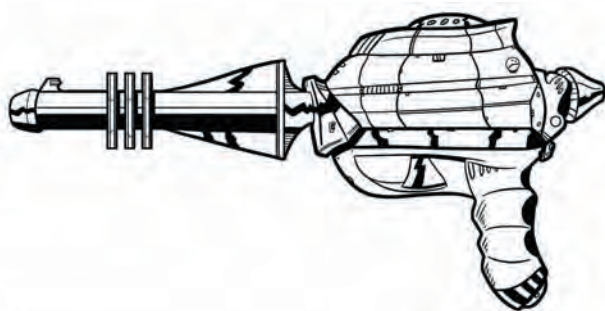
Many of the weapons in Rocket Age use clips, magazines, internal magazines, or batteries. Switching out to a fresh source of ammunition is a bonus action.

RECHARGING BATTERIES

It is assumed that all batteries can be recharged. Any radium or gravitic pulse drive ship, connection to an electrical grid, or generator can recharge a battery at a rate of 1 charge per round. Commercial recharging services are available at any rocket port or in most cities. These cost 5¢ per battery.

AMMUNITION

Type	Cost	Weight
Ancient Martian battery, 50 charges	100	1
Ancient Martian battery, 100 charges	250	1
Battery, 20 charge	1	1
Battery, 50 charge	10	2
Bullets, 100	1	2
Bullets, 500 rnd belt	6	11
Europian battery, 50 charges	200	-
Europian battery, 100 charges	500	-
Radium rifle shell, 5	15	5
Shotgun shells, 50	1	2
Stinger bolt, 20	2	2



Arrow caster. Wood is scarce on Mars, especially quality wood that can be made into bows. In response, the Maduri legions employ arrow casters, elastic bands made of bahmoot, or more rarely, ulodont tendons. The weapon is fired by placing one end beneath a foot, drawing the other end taut, and then fitting a long arrow into the band. These weapons are best used defensively, and they are normally employed by the female Maduri legions.

Beaked mace. Jovian militaries long ago switched to ranged weapons, but the beaked mace remains as the preferred weapon for duels. The beaked mace is a metal shaft with a bulbous head that sports one or more sharp hooked flanges. These beaks might be smooth or serrated, and designs vary amongst the clans. Much like swords on Earth, there is a certain romanticism about beaked maces and a broad range of qualities are manufactured.

Cavalry Saber. These heavy bladed swords are used by mounted troops, most notably the U.S. cavalry regiments on Mars. They are also a favorite amongst daring and

romantic adventurers on the Red Planet and elsewhere. Many rocket based militaries have begun to issue cutlasses, much the same type of weapon as the cavalry saber, for ship board defense.

Conventional firearms. By far the most commonly carried weapons are conventional firearms. From pistols to machineguns, chemically powered slug throwers are popular with civilians and militaries. It is not just Earthlings who make use of them, for traders have passed guns of varying quality to Martians, Venusian, and even the natives of Ganymede and Io.

Shotgun. Shotguns can fire in two modes. They can fire a slug that targets a single creature and inflicts 1d8 piercing damage or they can fire a blast of shot that uses the listed damage amount.

Europian disintegrators. Feared by all right thinking sophonts, the Europian disintegrator is a horrifying weapon that does not wound as much as render parts of the target into its component atoms. Using technology well in advance of anything known on Earth, the disintegrator fires a beam that vaporizes matter, taking off a limb on a grazing shot and completely destroying the target on a direct hit. Only a handful of these terrible weapons can be found outside of the Europian military, and those are in the hands of Europian Emissaries or other civilians.

Europian pain baton. The pain baton is a long metal rod, a meter and a half in length, which can be collapsed to a length of twelve inches. With a flick of his wrist, an Europian can telescope out the baton and deliver an awful blow, though the damage done is not strictly physical. The pain baton uses an electric pulse that causes its victim's neurons to suddenly fire with one message: searing pain. The effect is not limited to the area struck, and the wave of overloaded nerves can spread far beyond, a solid hit to a sensitive area can cause the pain to encompass a victim's entire body.

Ganymedian heartbow. Ganymedians are plant like lifeforms; despite their mostly human like appearance they are made of similar cells and organs as a tree or shrub. When a Ganymedian is nearing death, he may request to be given a very specific sort of funeral. Instead of returning to the forest as per the norm for their species, the corpse is treated using a secret formula that halts decomposition and in effect turns the body into a type of wood. The tribe's most skilled artists then carefully work this wood. The result is a bow crafted to the highest level of refinement made from the literal heartwood of a dead Ganymedian. These bows, always a deep greenish-brown in color, are highly prized for their strength and accuracy.



Gravitic pulse weapons. Gravitic pulse weapons generate small bursts of electrically charged gravitic energy, and then fling these bursts down the gun's barrel (or barrels) at the target. Upon impact, the charged bursts of gravitic energy explode in a release of kinetic energy and heat. Their impact is impressive, and the resulting damage can be significant. However, they are not true beam weapons like RAY and disintegrator guns, and are subject to layered armor and other defenses.

H'ilthansat. This ceremonial dagger is worn by Venusians who are on their wandering, the Harvititor. As a weapon, the H'ilthansat is not much different from any other knife, but it is of great symbolic importance to Venusians. If a Venusian is wearing one, he is to be treated as an honored guest by any other Venusian he encounters, and if the bearer so requests, granted assistance in whatever heroic feat or endeavor he is attempting. A non-Venusian carrying an H'ilthansat had best make some quick explanation, or other Venusians will assume that he killed someone on their Harvititor and stole their sacred knife.

Hamaxe. This weapon is considered by many to be the symbol of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe. A Hamaxe is a large and ungainly weapon that requires a great deal of training to use effectively in combat. Most are constructed of a stout plastic shaft a meter or more in length, though some centuries old hamaxes are made of metal. At the striking end of the shaft are two heads, one a beaked axe that easily breaks through armor, and the other a curved hammer that smashes through mail and bone with great savagery. The Hamaxe is thus an example of the Maduri preference for heavy shock weapons, and it is only cultural and religious taboos that keep its use from spreading beyond the Order. Occasionally a Hamaxe with a blade made from Aurlicam is found in ruins on Mars, and these are highly prized.

Hand axe. A common accessory for explorers and travelers, the hand axe is more a tool than a weapon. Even so, it can be turned to more martial use with ease. Nearly every species has some version of this, save for the Europeans, who probably don't even chop wood.

Hunting bolas. Venusians are brave, sometimes to a fault, but they are not stupid by any measure. Amongst the tribes of Venus, hunting thunder lizards and other large, dangerous game is a popular pastime for those seeking to gain respect from their tribemates and make a name for themselves. Attacking a gigantic beast with spear and axe is brave, but it often results in doing little more than annoying the beast before it eats you; because of this the Venusians have developed the hunting bolas, a weapon that evens the odds slightly and makes taking down a thunder lizard using nothing but primitive hand weapons merely suicidal as opposed to impossibly suicidal. Due to the risk of breakage or loss, few hunting bolas are crafted

from psychically active crystal, but those that are nearly like small grenades that entangle you while they spew energy across your body.

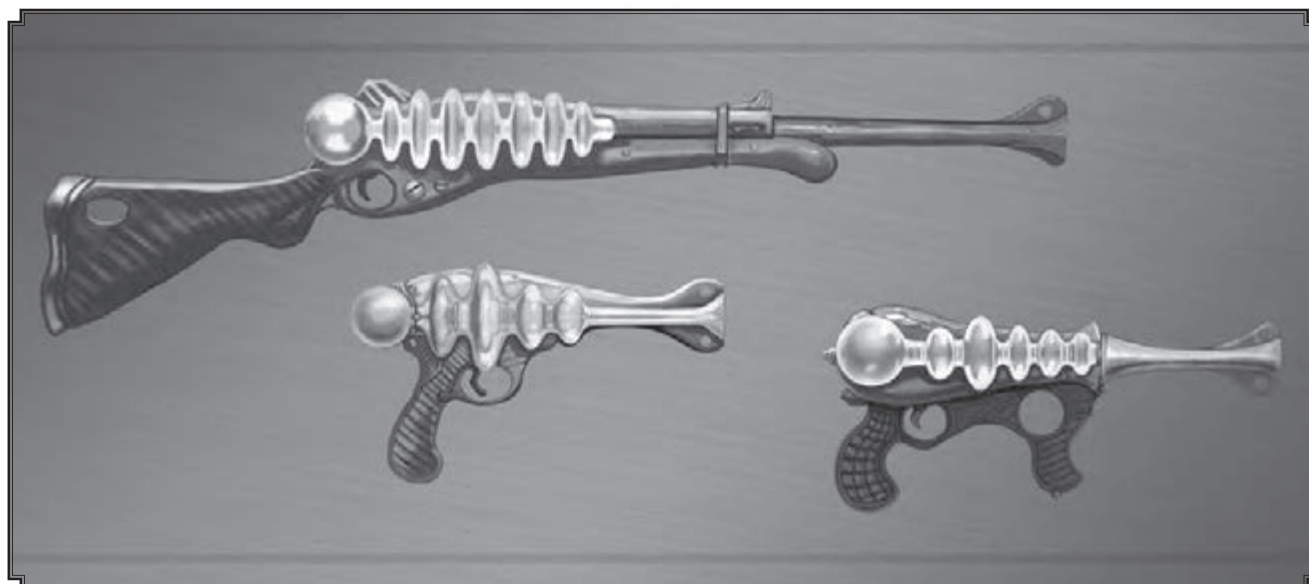
Flamethrower. A recent invention, the flamethrower began in the trenches of WWI and has developed since into a somewhat unreliable weapon of war. The most basic flame units are hand held flamers meant for clearing brush and starting back burns. Military grade flamethrowers have larger tanks and longer ranges. Some have taken to mixing a little radium fuel into their flamethrowers, though this is as deadly to the user as the target.

Kithkasis throwing sword. The traditional weapon of Metisian warriors, the Kithkasis throwing sword is too large to be properly called a knife, but too short to be a true sword. The weapon is usually made of steel and wood and highly decorated with carvings on the wooden handle and etchings along both lateral blades. Throughout the life of a warrior or noble their deeds are added to their weapon as additional decorations, and the most honored Kithkasis are those that have no room for new accomplishments. To own an undecorated Kithkasis is to be either a whelp with no history and no family, or the proud continuance of a glorious lineage that has retired their family sword.

MADURI SPORTS

Some legions make use of unpowered stun balls as a form of sporting or training activity. Units will face off against each other, all armed with unpowered stun balls, and attempt to get a ball through a ring guarded by the opposing team. These games are played in arenas dug into the ground, usually inside a city, and are big draws for the lower-castes (Silthuri and Kastari do not lower themselves to enjoy such spectacles). The games are violent and often deadly, but are seen as fitting ways for the Maduri to blow off excess aggression and energy. Oddly, those legions that play these sports are not the same as the ones who use unpowered stun balls in their police work.

Martian stun ball, modern The modern stun ball consists of a plastic and cloth sheath that covers one arm and holds the rubber-like ball in a curved groove. In use the ball is flung at the target, hopefully striking the head or other vital point and knocking the target senseless. This modern stun ball a pale reflection of the Ancient Martian model recovered from the ruins of large cities. The Ancients used a similar design of advanced composite material that is lighter and more flexible, as well as an energized ball that delivers a strong electric shock.



Radium rifle, modern. The modern radium rifle is descended from a weapon once common on Ancient Mars. The main disadvantage of the radium rifle, other than its size, is that the weapon tends to leak radiation when fired. Ancient Martian designs, of which the modern radium rifle is an inexact copy of, are more secure and their linear acceleration coils better insulated.

RAY guns. In many ways the best symbol of the Rocket Age, Radiation Accelerating Weaponry excite atomic particles to high velocity and focus them into a coherent beam. Invented several years ago by Nikola Tesla working from Ancient Martian designs, RAY guns are now in use by all the major powers of Earth as well as many civilians.

There are dozens of RAY weapon manufacturers, but the best are the Colt Arms Company and Tesla Workshops. Most others are of lower quality, knock-off designs based on reverse engineered models and using copper or gold compression chambers instead of the platinum and iridium that Colt and Tesla employ. Colt makes a range of RAY pistols for the civilian market, as well as exclusive designs for the US Rocket Rangers. Ancient Martian RAY weapons are superior to all but the best modern designs, and often feature ionic crystal compression chambers.

Repulsion float weapons. Utilizing the ability of a repulsion float field to generate an artificial gravity, repulsion float weapons create a powerful gravity field at the end of the barrel which pulls the ammunition from the back of the gun towards the front, and thus accelerates it to high velocities. Repulsion float technology is bulky and cannot be minimized to a degree to allow the construction of sidearms, thus limiting the lower end of Jovian firearms to rifles. Repulsion float rifles are

long, running from a meter and a half to two meters in length, with a bulbous hopper at the butt to feed plastic blocks into and a flared mouth at the end of the barrel. The repulsion field is created in this mouth, and needs a broad area to generate in.

Rocket launcher. Despite the massive jump in rocket science that led to the radium rocket drive, the humble rocket launcher is still just that, humble. One of the reasons is that radium fuel is dangerous to work with and the back blast can prove more harmful to the user's allies than the enemy. Rocket launchers fire rockets see Explosives below for damage. Rocket launchers are not terribly accurate and suffer disadvantage on attacks against targets smaller than vehicles of planetary scale or larger.

Silthanka. The Maduri are not the only Martians who carry arms. The Silthuri of many principalities have a martial tradition of their own, though one that is less practicable than that of the Maduri legions. The most common Royal Caste weapon is the Silthanka, a long slender slightly curved sword similar to an Earthling cavalry saber. Many of these swords have been handed down for generations and were constructed in the times of the Ancient Martians from exotic materials that have proved capable of holding a razor edge for millennia. Whether or not a particular Silthanka is millennia or merely centuries old, they are all works of great beauty, covered in gold or silver filigree and bejeweled to an extraordinary level. The oldest silthanka dating back to the time of the Ancients are made from Aurlicam.

Slug throwers. Long the standard hunting and military weapon of Earthlings, slug throwers use a contained explosion to propel metal into the target. There is a large



variety of slug throwers, but they all boil down into a few basic categories. Slug pistols include holdouts or 'pocket pistols' (such as the Colt detective special), larger pistols meant for regular wear and use (such as the Colt police positive revolver), and massive hand cannons (such as the Colt M1911 and newly released Colt Starfire 457 auto). For hunting the most commonly available slug throwers are shotguns (such as the Ithaca 37 pump action or any number of double barrel shotguns), hunting rifles (such as the Winchester Model 70), and of course big game rifles (such as the many calibers of the Holland and Holland Nitro Express as well as the Remington Thunder Lizard .570). Military rifles (such as the M1 Garand) are the mainstay of all modern armies, and increasingly modernized Martian legions. These are supplemented by sub-machine guns (the Thompson being very popular), light machine guns (such as the Browning Automatic Rifle), and heavy machine guns (such as the Browning .30 cal).

Speaker's staff. Carried by the Venusian priesthood, or speakers, these staffs of office are more than it would appear to be. The speaker's staff is a simple hand-carved branch decorated with reliefs showing the history of the concordat the Speaker serves. Venus is home to a range of exotic hardwoods, some of which are light yet still as strong and dense as steel. The carving of a speaker's staff is a long and arduous process, but every speaker must have their staff of office so that others will know who they are. The most prized speaker's staffs are tipped with psychic crystals that resonate with specific notes when struck, notes that can unleash deadly energies if properly tuned.

Spear. A knife on a stick, it seems every species has developed the concept at some point in its history. The Venusians and Ganymedians still make use of the humble spear, and the Ioites are known to fashion one out of scrap metal. Even more technologically advanced species such as Earthlings still use spears, though in their case it is by affixing a knife to a rifle.

Spear fork. Spear forks are not too terribly different from the many exotic polearms developed on Earth save for a slight Martian twist. The central head of a spear fork is a long, narrow spear, but two parallel heads that flank this spearhead, can be secondary spears, picks, or hooks. In most designs, these secondary heads can be removed and replaced by the user, allowing the tactical use for the spear fork to be changed to suit the situation. Usually it is the longer infantry versions that have this feature, and the shorter cavalry spear forks have three fixed heads, almost always spears.

Staff. This is a hardwood stick, usually slightly longer than the user is tall, designed to hit things.

Stinger. Conventional firearms, and even such exotic fare as RAY guns and Disintegrators, are not safe to use in the atmospheres of Jupiter, nor inside the space stations and domed settlements being constructed throughout the Solar System. Their ban in the later is obvious, but in the clouds of Jupiter a single spark could ignite a thin trail of methane, which if it leads to a gas pocket, or crosses a person or sensitive equipment, could lead to catastrophic results. Because of this the stinger, and its many imitators, was developed. A stinger consists of a cylinder of compressed gas that releases a short blast that propels a projectile with some speed and accuracy. The high winds and odd atmospheric conditions of Jupiter require this projectile to be heavy and stabilized in some manner. Normally, the projectile that the stinger fires is a short arrow, much like a old fashioned crossbow bolt, with fins that impart stability and put spin on the bolt as it flies through the air.

Sun axe. The sun axe exemplifies the Maduri obsession with melee weapons, and it is a brutal, heavy axe that can deal a great amount of damage to a target. With a metal shaft averaging four feet in length and two twin curved axe heads, the sun axe can be an ungainly and awkward weapon in unskilled hands, assuming that one who has not trained for it could lift its great bulk. The axe heads are highly decorated, as befits a weapon meant to be a reward for service, and often pierced with one or more eyes that both lessen the weight and impart a high keening noise as it is swung. The decorations are generally of sun rays, either radiating from the eye outward to show loyalty flowing from the Maduri to their masters, or from the edge in, symbolizing rewards coming from the master to the legionnaire. The most prized sun axes have blades made from Aurlicam, that mysterious metal of the Ancients.

Survival knife. A common tool and weapon of nearly every species, the knife sees service on the belts of any explorer who is even slightly prepared. Survival knives of Earthling manufacture have become very popular, and these tend to take the form of a drop point Bowie knife. Often they have a compass or waterproof match case in the grip.

Toothed saber. Those principalities that border the Great Silt Sea and wild bands of Chanari use this vicious weapon. It is constructed from a hardy scrub wood that grows in clumps in the silt, often forming small islands around its roots. When properly harvested and treated, the wood can be made into a weapon, though one that inflicts horrible wounds. When struck by a toothed saber, part of the wood splinters off in the wound, often leading to infections or even working its way deeper into the victim's body. This process leaves the edge of the sword with a jagged, tooth-like appearance. A creature struck

by a toothed saber must make a DC 13 Constitution save after combat or gain the poisoned condition and be unable to take a long rest until the thorns are removed with a DC 15 Intelligence check using a med kit.

Venusian wood axe. The wood axe is the traditional war weapon of the Venusian concordats of the Ishtar Highlands. While most are made from native Venusians hardwoods, steel axe heads have made their way to Venus and are a popular trade good, for while piloth'k wood is strong, it does not hold an edge like steel does. When specially carved and treated, and then decorated with the same psychic crystals used to make speaker's staves, the wood axe can even be used to block or redirect energy beams. Naturally the user cannot move his arms around fast enough to parry the blast from a RAY gun or disintegrator, but these exotic forms of energy seem to be attracted to the axe as if its intricate carvings and decoration act as some sort of energy receiver. The energy parried by the axe is either absorbed by the crystals or redirected in a different direction, depending on the axe's particular design.

Warrior's claws. Warrior's claws are a set of stone claws (though metal is becoming popular with those who trade with humans) that attach to the user's wrist and forearm. These claws are incredibly difficult to make and require the labor of expert stone knappers. They extend to an average length of forty centimeters past the wearer's fingertips and allow for savage slashes and cuts. Rarely warrior's claws can be found that are made from the same exotic crystals that adorn speaker's staves. Normally only one set of warrior's claws are worn, thus leaving the other hand free, but some particularly violent Venusians don two sets before battle.

Whip. A tool rather than a weapon, a whip can be used to lash out and trip a foe.

EXPLOSIVES

Sometimes you just have to blow something up. Let's not waste time talking about it, you are reading this section because you like big booms. Go ahead, have fun.

Using Explosives

Some explosives, notably plastique and TNT, require the use of a demolitions kit to explode. These take three actions to place and require a DC 15 Intelligence check with a demolition kit to use. The DC is modified as seen on the table below. A placed explosive goes off when a predetermined condition is met, such as a timer or when a specific circumstance occurs (which needs to be taken into account when the explosive is placed). If the check is failed by 5 or more, the explosive goes off in (1d10+1d6)-1d8 rounds, with any result of 0 or less meaning the explosive goes off immediately. Yes, it is meant to be that random.

A placed explosive that has not yet detonated can be removed by making a demolitions kit and an Intelligence check with the same DC used to place it, with the same risks of failure.

Thrown Explosives

Thrown explosives require an attack roll to hit a target and creatures caught in the blast area get a saving throw for half damage as normal. An empty area can be targeted and has an AC of 10. Unlike other thrown weapons it is important to know where an explosive lands. If a thrown explosive misses its target it lands within 1d4 x 10 feet of the target. Explosives without a thrown property are not designed to be thrown; these must be set to explode as above with a specific condition of impact chosen. Character's throwing such improvised explosives have disadvantage on their attack rolls.

Explosive	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Grenade, AT	5	4d10 Fire	2	Blast (5' cube), thrown (10/20), explosive charge
Grenade, Frag	1	1d10 Piercing	1	Blast (10' cube), thrown (20/40)
Grenade, Smoke	1	-	1	Thrown (20/40), see below
Molotov cocktail	1	1d8 fire	1	Blast (10' cube), see below
Plastique	10	6d10 Fire	1	Blast (10' cube), explosive charge
Radium fuel	1	3d10 Fire and Radiation	1	Blast (5' cube), see below
Rocket, AT	10	10d10 Fire	3	Blast (5' cube), explosive charge
Rocket, HE	5	10d10 Fire and Piercing	3	Blast (20' cube)
TNT, stick	2	3d10 fire	1	Blast (10' cube)



Grenade, AT. This grenade is designed to blow holes in tanks. Most AT grenades have some means of affixing themselves to a target such as magnets or adhesives. The grenade maybe placed instead of thrown, this requires an action and does not require an attack roll.

Grenade, Frag. Your basic grenade, chuck it at the enemy and hope you are out of the blast radius.

Grenade, Smoke. This grenade does not inflict damage but instead fills the blast area with smoke that obscures all vision through it for 1d8+1 rounds.

Molotov cocktail. The most popular improvised explosive made my Earthlings, this is nothing more than a fuel source stuffed in a bottle and lit with a soaking rag. Targets caught in the blast are set on fire for 1d6 rounds, suffering 1d6 points of fire damage per round. The fire can be put out by a DC 13 Dexterity save.

Plastique. A generic term for plastic explosives that can be molded into all manner of interesting shapes.

Radium fuel. Rocket fuel can be used as an explosive, though not a very good one. Targets caught in the blast are set on fire for 1d6 rounds, suffering 1d6 points of fire and radiation damage per round. The fire can be put out by a DC 13 Dexterity save.

Rocket, AT. Fired from a rocket launcher, this rocket is designed to penetrate armored vehicles

Rocket, HE. Fired from a rocket launcher, the HE rocket is designed for broad area attacks.

TNT, stick. A classic explosive, TNT is stable enough to be thrown if you really wanted to.

Explosive Placement Modifier Table

Factor	DC increases by
Per extra pound of explosive	+1
Placed in two rounds	+2
Placed in one round	+3
Trigger is a timer	+1
Trigger is a RADIO detonation	+1
Trigger relies on a specific event	+2
Trigger relies on a wired remote detonation	+0
Explosive is hidden Wisdom (Perception) DC 10	+1
Increase DC to spot explosive	+1 per DC increase
Increase DC to remove	+1 per DC increase

TOOLS

The necessary tools don't just make the job easier; in many cases they make the job possible.

Tool	Cost (in dollars)	Weight
Artisan's tools	15	5
Camera, digital*	200	2
Camera, movie*	50	20
Camera, still*	25	5
Data pad	4000	1
Disguise kit	20	5
Demolitions Kit	40	5
Engineer's tools	30	5
European medical bag	400	5
First aid kit†	5	1
Forensics kit	20	5
Gaming kit	10	2
Lock picks	30	2
Medical kit†	35	5
Musical instrument	5	3
Robobrain	1000	30
Science kit	30	5

* All three use the camera proficiency.

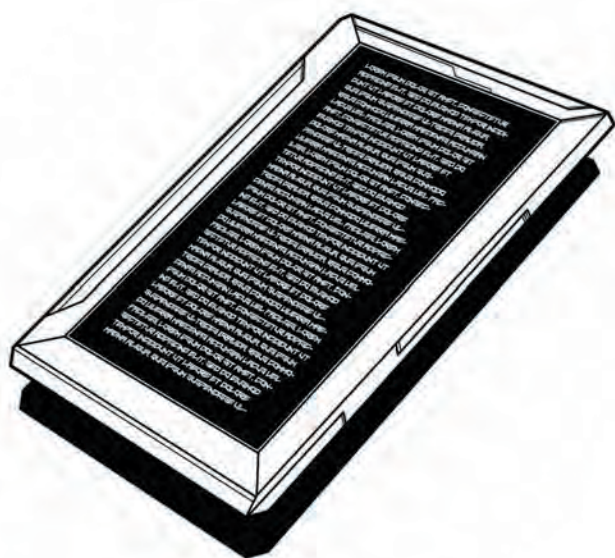
† These use the medical kit proficiency.

Artisan's tools. This set has all the needed tools for a single craft, such as blacksmithing, carpentry, or masonry. Each type of artisan's tools requires a different proficiency.

Camera. Images from the Solar System are big sellers and everyone wants a picture of themselves. Even the roughest freebooter band rampaging across Mars likes to stop and pose for the camera every now and then. Digital imaging is in its infancy and reliant on refurbished Ancient Martian designs, thus most cameras use film. Color film is also in its infancy as is color printing, but both are developing rapidly.

Data pad. Data pads have become a popular tool of the rocket set and even damaged ones taken from Ancient Martian ruins can sell for thousands of dollars. Data pads are thin pieces of metal, plastic, and glass that use a touch screen to display and interface with data. They usually are found with data on them such as

statistics, entertainment files, and books. This has helped researchers to better understand the lives of Ancient Mars and decipher long lost technologies. Data pads for purchase on the open market are generally 'clean' and have had all their data removed, if they had any to begin with. Data can be purchased, and there are a handful of operational data creation facilities on Mars that can turn modern films, books, and recordings into a format the data pad can access and store. A data pad can record and playback audio and visual data. Ancient Martian data pads can connect to ghost fields within 100 ft. Data packages must be purchased separately.



Disguise kit. This small suitcase has make up, prostheses, and wigs needed to impersonate another. Keep in mind the variety of species in the Solar System, you are not going to disguise a Venusian as a Metisian without a lot of work and more than a simple disguise kit contains. Maybe a really fat Metisian.

Demolitions kit. This easy to carry box contains pliers, wires, detonators, and other need tools to set off or defuse explosives.

Engineer's tools. This set of tools contains pliers, screwdrivers, wrenches, a ratchet set, and various other items needed to perform a wide range of activities including building and maintaining technological devices. There is also a slide rule, graph paper, templates, and a small guide book for the design side of things.

European medical bag. European medicine is an arcane art, and the use of these odd surgical tools should mystify lesser species. The European medical bag includes such useful devices as trans-ocular injectors, groinal retractors, and the thing that goes whirr-snap-ching.

The medical bag also doubles as a life sciences laboratory. Using the advanced medical devices inside, as well as the built in robo-brain, grants advantage on Wisdom (Medicine) checks and Intelligence (Science) checks involving biological sciences. The European medical bag contains twenty uses before it must be restocked at half the original cost.

First aid kit. This can be used as a medical kit to stabilize a creature. The first aid kit has 5 uses before it must be refilled at half the original cost.

Forensics kit. This black bag contains gloves, fingerprint dust, a magnifying glass, and other needed tools for investigating crimes.

Gaming kit. This set of cards, dice, and pieces can be used to play a verity of games for fun and profit.

Lock picks. This small billfold has a set of tiny tools for picking locks. In addition, there are the requisite connections and a small numeric keypad for cracking electronic locks.

Medical kit. Required tools for medical treatment, the medical kit allows use of the Medicine skill. However, those of the rocket set need more than bandages and medicines. Inside this black leather bag are a variety of testing kits that allow it to double as a life sciences laboratory. The medical kit contains twenty uses before it must be restocked at half the original cost.

MEDICAL KITS

First aid kits, medical kits, and European medical bags are far more advanced than the simple bandages and hope than doctors of the past had to rely on. These can be used to stabilize an injured patient (DC 10), provide some healing (heals 1d4 + Wisdom modifier HP, DC 15), or even treat disease (grants advantage on Constitution saves to resist or recover from a disease).

Musical instrument. This is a portable musical instrument; each type requires a different proficiency. There are thousands of musical instruments throughout the Solar system such as Venusian skin drums, Earthling guitars, Martian hornpipes, Jovian war cymbals, and even European key-tars.

Robobrain. This is a simple robo-brain. More information on robo-brains can be found in Tour of the Solar System.

Science kit. A briefcase filled with sciencey stuff.



TECHNOLOGICAL ITEMS

The Rocket Age is an era of progress, and not all of it involves killing things and destroying stuff. New technologies are being discovered daily, either through the inspired minds of inventors or reverse engineered from Ancient Martian devices. While Earthlings are at the forefront of this technological surge, other species are beginning to catch up, or with the Europeans and Jovians, are already slightly ahead.

Some of these items require a source of electrical power. Any item with a charge usage consume charges from a power source, such as a battery, at the given rate.

Item	Cost (in dollars)	Charges used	Weight
Data package	100	-	-
European chameleon field projector	5,000	1/ round	-
European healing matrix	2,000	5/ per use	-
European microcircuit clothing	300	-	-
Lantern, electric	30	2/ hour	2
RADIO, backpack	55	5/ hour	10
RADIO, desk	150	-	40
RADIO, hand held	25	1/ hour	-
Scanner	500	1/ hour	2
Scope	75	-	-
Tape recorder	30	1/ hour	2
Typewriter	15	-	5
Wound fungus	50	-	-

Chameleon Field Projector. An European invention, the chameleon field projector is a small silver-grey box with nine indentations spread across its surface. The projector can project a digital illusion of an area or person. If used to cover an area, it covers a cube.

The chameleon field generator can be worn and used to project an illusory disguise. When worn it can also be used to camouflage the wearer, grating advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals an illusion is in place, but does not reveal what is underneath.

Data Package. Used by data pads and robobrains, data packages are specialized programs that serve as expert advisors, reference works, data processors, and entertainments. Each data package must be purchased separately and any data pad or robobrain can hold an unlimited number of data packages. Data packages are tied to specific skills and grant advantage on checks involving those skills. Possible skills include: arcana, history, engineering, investigation, medicine, nature, religion, and science.

European microcircuit clothing. Europeans like to implant technology into everything they use, even their clothing. European microcircuit clothing is regular non-armor clothing that has one armor upgrade slot. The Europeans rarely make microcircuit clothing in styles other than their traditional robes. Microcircuit clothing has the integrated circuit armor property.

Flashlight. The most basic flashlight is a long tube that holds batteries with a lens on one end. Larger models are bulkier, but last longer. A flashlight projects a cone of light 5 ft. wide and 30 ft. long.

Healing matrix. Another European device, the healing matrix is a set of thin gold colored wires that attaches to a patient and burrows into their skin. Most people find this uncomfortable to say the least, but many Europeans don these matrices as part of their normal clothing. A healing matrix takes 1 hour to attune itself to the patient's biology, after which the patient gain the following benefits for as long as the matrix is worn. The patient automatically passes any death saves. Once per short rest the patient regains 1 hit die. The patient also has a +2 bonus to saves to resist poison and disease. However, while wearing a healing matrix the user suffers disadvantage on Dexterity checks as the system is rather intrusive and uncomfortable.

RADIO, backpack. Heavy and bulky, the standard field RADIO is a backpack mounted communication device intended for explorers and others far out on the edge of the unknown. On its own it has a range of horizon to horizon, but with the collapsible antennae and dish set up (a process that takes 1 hour) the RADIO can reach greater distances and even orbit.

RADIO, desk. Immobile, the desk RADIO is a console that should be attached to a power source. It has an interplanetary range.

RADIO, hand held. With only a 50 mile range, the hand held RADIO is a metal brick intended for short range communications between members of an expedition.

Scanner. Your basic scanner is either an Ancient Martin artifact that has been refurbished or an European device. Both do the same thing. A scanner looks for physical phenomena in a short range, 30 feet. It can detect the presence of or absence of life, movement, temperature, air pressure, and gross chemical compositions. This grants advantage on Intelligence (Science) rolls to analyze physical phenomena as well as advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect physical phenomena. The scanner is blocked by 1 foot of dense matter, such as lead, or a greater quantity of less dense matter.

Scope. Scopes are fitted to ranged weapons (but not thrown weapons). When used, they negate range penalties.

Typewriter. An elite 1938 word processor, the model listed here is a portable typewriter with a protective case.

Wound fungus. A Ganymedian development, wound fungus can be applied to any wound to quickly seal it and stimulate healing. While it works best with Ganymedians, other sophonts can also make use of this wonderful natural remedy. However, the wound fungus is meant to be reused, and only Ganymedian biology can sustain it, all others end up killing the fungus in a few minutes. Wound fungus is easy to use, just put it in the wound and let the fast growing fungi do its job. One application allows the user to immediately spend a hit die.

PERSONAL ITEMS

You need more than armor, weapons, tools, and technological wonders to explore the Solar System. You'll need food, film for that camera, and a tent to sleep in. You might want to get dressed before you go, just saying.

0-G Pen. A pen that can write in zero gravity as well as upside down and a range of environmental conditions is a wonder of modern technology.

Name/ Model	Price	Weight
0-G Pen	15	-
Backpack	10	2
Camp set, group	25	5
Camp set, personal	10	1
Clothing, business	20	-
Clothing, evening	30	-
Clothing, formal	30	-
Clothing, Ganymedian living clothing	5	-
Clothing, Jovian clan colors	15	-
Clothing, Martian caste	1-200	-
Clothing, rocket wear	20	-
Clothing, safari outfit	15	-
Clothing, workman's	5	-
Clothing, Venusian straps	5	-
Collection jars	5	1
Combat webbing	20	-
Film, movie, black and white, 25 minutes	5	40
Film, movie, color, 25 minutes	25	40
Film, still, black and white, 25 exposures	2	-
Film, still, color, 25 exposures	10	-
Handcuffs	5	-

Name/ Model	Price	Weight
Lantern, oil	10	1
Linguistic flip book	45	-
Meal, café	5	-
Meal, diner	8	-
Meal, restaurant	10-50	-
Meal, street food	1	-
Notebook	4	-
Pinthik	5	-
Psychic mood shard	80	-
Rations, canned, 1 day	2	2
Rations, dried, 1 day	1	1
Rations, squeeze, 1 day	5	-
Reference book	20	-
Rope, metal cable	10/ 10 ft.	1/ 10 ft.
Rope, plant matter	5/ 10 ft.	L/ 10 ft.
Rope, polymer, Earthling	15/ 10 ft.	L/ 10 ft.
Rope, polymer, Martian	20/ 10 ft.	L/ 10 ft.
Royal Karn sunshade	30	-
Satchel	5	-
Sleeping bag	15	3
Tent, four person	10	15
Tent, personal	5	5
Vacuum suit	40	10
Venusian hygiene caterpillar	10	-



Backpack. External frame backpacks and soft rucksacks are the norm for the Rocket Age. When wearing a backpack count your Strength as 1 point higher when determining encumbrance.

Camp set. Every explorer needs the personal basics for living rough. The personal set has a plate, mug, fork/knife/spoon combo, a towel, canteen, and a small hand spade. Group sets include pots and pans for cooking, large water bag, and folding stools.

Collection jars. A necessity for those interested in making scientific discoveries and bringing them back home, collection jars are more than simple containers. Each discipline requires a different set of jars. Geologists need to keep their minerals and soil samples safe, and the latter from drying out. Biologists need to preserve specimens. Anthropologists often bring back artifacts, and these must be protected from the wear and tear of travel.

Combat webbing. This system of straps fit tightly to the body and allow a variety of items to be connected in handy ways. When wearing combat webbing, your Strength score counts as 1 higher for the purposes of determining encumbrance.

Clothing. While there is a broad range of clothing available in the Solar System, they break down into a small range of categories. In the right setting, a tuxedo is just as formal as a beaded loincloth. For the most part the rocket set sport rocket wear clothing, tight fitting body stockings that can double as a vacuum suit with ease.

Business. Business wear tends to be conservative, though Earthling women wearing trousers has become a norm. Colors are drab, blacks, grays, and occasionally beige,

Evening. Eveningwear is nearly the height of Earthling fashion. Tuxedos, cocktail dresses, and the like are worn by all manner of sophonts, some even in the right settings. The influence of alien fashions can be seen in a splash of Martian color or a bit of Venusian wildness.

Formal. Where eveningwear is meant for parties, formal wear is worn at important and sober events. This is by far the most conservative of Earthling clothing styles with dark colors, starched collars, and very little skin exposed.

Ganymedian living clothing. Grown by Ganymedians and growing on Ganymedians, this mossey covering can be altered to provide whatever protection the wearer might need for inclement weather and warm or cold environments. It can host on non-Ganymedians, but wilts and dies in 1d6 weeks.

Jovian clan colors. Jovians wear something similar to the tunics or togas worn on Earth during ancient times. These simple clothes allow great freedom of movement while providing some modicum of protection from the weather. Clan affiliation can be determined by the cut, color, and adornment of the clothing.

Martian caste. Each caste has its own distinctive style of clothing, and while this varies from city-state to city-state, there are several commonalities. Julandri Laborers rarely are issued anything more than the minimum needed, which on hot Mars is a simple loincloth.

Julandri Courtesans are elegantly dressed in styles that flatter, tease, and flaunt their physical attributes. The Talandri wear very sturdy clothes and aprons to facilitate whatever craft they follow. Pilthuri don clothing similar in cut to that of their Silthuri masters, but without adornment, and often marked in some way to show who they serve. The higher castes dress in ornate clothing that befits their wealth and power. Silthuri wear clothing that shows off their wealth and lean bodies, and the current fashion in most city-states is to not wear anything made of cloth, but of spun precious metals, gems, and shiny plastics instead.

The Maduri have a broad range of uniforms, most of them gilt, gaudy, and festooned with emblems. Most Martian religious sects prefer robes of some kind, and the Kastari can be as ornate as any Silthuri prince or clad in simple grey or red cloth, as the local religious views dictate. The Chanari wear clothing made of natural fibers that suits their environment, with each tribe donning a distinctive set of styles and decorations.

Rocket wear. This skin tight suit of synthetic fibers is designed to be worn under regular clothes, but many of the rocket set prefer to wear just rocket wear. The suit can be sealed with a hood, gloves, and boots, giving it the sealed armor property. When sealed, vision is limited to a small plastic window in the hood, and sounds are muffled, causing the wear to suffer disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Safari outfit. Popular amongst explorers, freebooters, and for some reason, government officials in the field, safari outfits are practical and stylish. Loose pants, shirt, and jacket in a tan or khaki color are accented with sturdy brown leather boots, a scarf, and either a pith helmet or felt hat.

Workman's. The common laborer from Earth, or those sporting Earthling fashions, wears sturdy denim pants, a cotton shirt, suspenders, a light jacket, and a soft brimless hat. Overalls are also a common part of the outfit and replace the pants.

Venusian straps. These leather straps are sized for the Venusian frame and are meant to provide pockets and attachment points for equipment. Being covered in long hair, Venusians rarely care about modesty, and in fact most have little sense of the concept.

Handcuffs. The most common restraint in use by Earthlings, and thus increasingly other species, are the simple handcuffs. More comprehensive manacles are also available at twice the price. Basic handcuffs require a DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to escape, while manacles require a DC 25 (Dexterity) Acrobatics check.

Lantern. In days past lanterns burned oil to produce light, but these modern times have seen the advent of electric lanterns. Safer to use and often brighter than old fashioned fuel lanterns, electric lanterns are the standard for the rocket set. A lantern throws out a sphere of light that covers a 40 ft. area.

Linguistic flip book. There are thousands of languages in the Solar System and no one can be expected to speak all or even most of them. The linguistic flip book enables communication between different species and cultures. It is cumbersome and simplistic communication at best, but it is better than nothing. The flipbook has simple phrases and concepts illustrated alongside the proper words in two languages.

Meals. Adventurers can't live off of canned rations and jungle meat their entire lives. Grabbing a meal in town is a great morale booster. Quality and price vary from simple street foods bought from a cart or truck to fine dining with elegant settings and exotic fare. Unlike rations, meals are meant to be consumed on the spot, though they might last a few days if stored properly.

Notebook. Cloth covered cardboard, white pages, and a silk bookmark, what more do you need?

Pinthik. Ganymedians love to collect pins and other adornments and hammer them into their woody exterior. Their tendency to go out of their way to collect pinthik has led to the name being applied to any useless collectable that sophonts acquire. Many of the rocket set love to show off their pinthik, be they teeth from alien beasts, random assortments of jewelry, or even photographs of strange vistas.

Psychic mood shard. These small shards of psychically active crystal have no real use. Their matrices are broken, their mass is too little to store energy, and they have no impressed emotions or thoughts. These shards have become popular as they readily change color to show mood. While this is an interesting feature, they do grant advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks when used on a target. However, the shard must be in direct skin contact with the subject, and must remain there for at least 1 minute.

Reference book. Reference books cover a specific topic such as a single skill, planet, or species. When using a reference book a character has advantage with checks involving the specific topic. However, it takes at least five minutes to make use of a reference book.



Rations. Explorers and adventurers need food, and rations pack the most food in the smallest package. Modern rations are canned meats, vegetables, and even dairy or bread that should see most species through long treks into the unknown. Dried rations are bulkier, but often cheaper, and easier to acquire in the backcountry. Squeeze rations are plastic tubes with a nutrient paste available in a variety of flavors.

Rope. There are a variety of ropes available in the Solar System. Many are of natural fibers such as hemp or braided vines, while others are made from steel or even more exotic metals. Rope made from plant material has a load limit of 600 lbs, Earthling polymer rope has a load limit of 1,000 lbs., Martian polymer rope has a load limit of 1,500 lbs, and metal cabling has a load limit of 3,000 lbs.

Royal Karn sunshade. Made from the feathers of the royal karn, these sunshades are popular amongst the rocket set. Royal karn regularly shed their bright plumage and a growing industry in Kostrast and other more modern thinking city-states provides the raw materials and Talandri workers to make these exquisite parasols. However, more traditional principalities consider the use of royal karn feathers by any but the Silthuri caste to be a crime, often one punishable by death.

Sleeping bag. Ranging in style from simple cloth sacks to cut and fitted sleeves to slide your body into, the sleeping bag is a must have item for explorers in the far reaches of the Solar System. Sleeping bags come in a variety of environmental designs, such as the sand sacks used on Mars that protect from the cold desert nights to the bug proof jungle bags favored by explorers on Venus.

Tent. Unless you like sleeping under the stars a tent is a necessity when exploring the backcountry of the Solar System. Personal tents are quick and easy to put up and serve well for a single person and their gear. Group tents are larger and more stable, and tend to be favored by large expeditions and safaris. Much like sleeping bags, tents come in a variety of styles suited to specific environments.

Vacuum suit. The standard vacuum suit consists of a form fitting body covering, a bubble shaped helmet, and a set of air tanks with a 24 hour supply. Small heater units and cooling fans help maintain internal temperature. Vacc suits are not meant for combat, and anytime you are hit while wearing one you must succeed at a Dexterity save (DC equal to the damage dealt or 10, whichever is higher) or the suit is punctured and leaks 1 hour of air per round. Multiple hits stack, so several shots can make you run out of air.

Venusian hygiene caterpillar. Venusians have a lot of hair and they live in a tropical environment. This combination

makes hygiene difficult, as their hair tends to become a nesting ground for a variety of creatures, not all of them benign. Long ago the Venusians of the Ishtar Highlands discovered the usefulness of one of the creatures that likes to take up residence in their hair and began breeding them. The Venusian hygiene caterpillar eats microbes, dandruff, insects, fungi, and other unwanted pests, scrapes of dirt, and exudes a pleasant aroma as part of its natural biological processes. While Venusians are the ones most likely to serve as hosts to a colony of hygiene caterpillars, other species can benefit as well.

Gear Packs

The following packs make gear purchase easy. Any rocket port shopping concourse has shops that regularly outfits travelers. You can find a ready made set of gear for nearly any occasion.

Civilian gear. \$20

Briefcase, battery (20), hand held RADIO, a lunch, notebook, 0-G pen, newspaper.

Conquest pack. \$30

Backpack, canteen, 50' plant matter rope, flashlight, battery (20), hand held RADIO, 5 days canned rations, wire cutters, medkit, binocs

Expedition pack. \$35

Backpack, canteen, 50' plant matter rope, flashlight, battery (20), binocs, hand held RADIO, 5 days canned rations, wire cutters, medkit, utility knife, hatchet, 10 days dried rations, sleeping bag

Lab pack. \$20

Lab coat, hand held RADIO, 0-G pen, notebook, medkit, safety goggles and gloves, Bunsen burner, test tubes, collection jars, battery (20)

Rocket Gear. \$25

Duffle bag, 50 feet polymer rope, handheld RADIO, 10 days squeeze rations, flashlight, battery (20), still camera, 50 exposures of still black and white film

PSYCHIC CRYSTALS

Certain rare minerals form a psychically active matrix. The esoteric energy that powers psychic abilities can be channeled into a psychic crystal, and even better, drawn back out by someone who has learned the secrets of the art. Skilled practitioners have found a variety of other uses for psychic crystals, ranging from minor tricks to even causing them to explode.

Psychic crystals are rated by how many psychic power points they can hold. A crystal cannot hold more psychic power points than its rating. Attempts to channel more energy into the crystal than its rating fail.

Many claim the best psychic crystals come from Venus, and that planet seems to be particularly rich in psychically active crystalline formations. Mars once had large crystal deposits, but they are largely exhausted, though psychic crystals can still be found in ancient ruins or in the hands of the Kastari caste. Other planets do not have an abundance of psychic crystals, though some have been found on Earth and the moons of Jupiter. Only the giant Jovian itself seems to lack naturally occurring psychic crystals.

Raw psychic crystals are useable but their power is greatly enhanced by careful crafting and shaping of the stone. No raw crystal has been found to have a rating above 3, but worked crystals can be fashioned to a rating of 8 or higher. Today the only people known to be able to shape a psychic crystal are certain Speakers on Venus and a few rare Talandri on Mars.

Using Psychic Crystals

<i>Psychic Crystals</i>			
Rating	Cost	Rating	Cost
1	200	6	6400
2	400	7	12,800
3	800	8	25,600
4	1600	9	51,200
5	3200	10	102,400

Newly acquired psychic crystals are generally not bonded and have 0 power points in them. It takes some time to properly bond with a psychic crystal before it can be used; an hour per rating level spent in quiet meditation while holding the crystal suffices. Found psychic crystals might be bonded and will require some effort to change who they are bonded to. This process removes all stored energy. Psychic crystals are versatile items. In the hands of a psychically active character (anyone who has at least 1 psychic power point) crystal can be put to one of the following uses.

Channel Energy

The most common use of psychic crystals is to store psychic energy. Transferring psychic energy into the crystal takes ten minutes per power point and the user must be quietly meditating while holding the crystal. Drawing energy out is a much easier and faster process and takes a bonus action. The user must be holding the crystal to draw energy from it. No roll is required.

Explode

A psychic crystal can be triggered to explode, releasing all stored energy in a mighty burst. This can be done at a range of up to the user's Wisdom modifier x 10 feet.

An exploding psychic crystal affects a 10 foot diameter sphere and inflicts 1d10 psychic damage per power point stored in the crystal. Those affected by the blast may make a Wisdom save with a DC equal to 8 + the bonded user's Wisdom modifier + their proficiency bonus if they are proficient with psychic crystals to suffer half damage.

Focused Release

A bonded user can focus the energy stored within the crystal to make an attack. This requires an attack action and fires a beam of psychic energy at one target. The attack is made using the user's Wisdom modifier + proficiency bonus if applicable. The user decides how many stored power points are being used in the attack, and the attack inflicts 1d10 points of damage per power point expended.

Minor Tricks

The psychic crystal can be used to produce minor tricks that only use a trickle of psychic energy. These cost 0 power points to use, but the psychic crystal must have at least 1 power point stored in it for a minor trick to be possible. A minor trick requires a bonus action. Minor tricks include:

- Moving the psychic crystal 10 feet.
- Changing the color, flavor, or texture of up to 1 cu. ft. of matter.
- Light a flammable object.
- Shed bright light in a 20 foot radius..
- Cause a symbol to appear on an object for 1 hour.
- Cause the crystal to grow warm or cool to the touch.

Psychic Weapon

As a bonus action a psychic power point can be expended to generate a blade of psychic energy from the crystal. The user is proficient with this weapon. Attacks with the weapon use the user's Wisdom modifier for attack and damage. The weapon inflicts 1d8 psychic damage. The weapon remains until the user is no longer holding the psychic crystal, is rendered unconscious, or is dead.

Remove Bond

A bonded crystal can have the bond removed through a lengthy process that requires an hour of quiet mediation while holding the crystal. At the end of the hour the new user attempts to break the bond with a Wisdom check against a DC equal to 8 + the Wisdom modifier of the former user + the former user's proficiency bonus if applicable. If the check fails the person attempting to break the bond suffers 1d8 psychic damage per rating of the crystal and is rendered unconscious.



Trinket Table

d100 Trinket

1	A small Ancient Martian cube that projects a 1-inch diameter invisibility field.
2	The tooth of some alien animal mounted in gold and silver
3	Three modern Martian coins from different defunct city-states.
4	A Rocket Ranger insignia, half burnt.
5	A Cub's baseball cap.
6	A Ganymedian mushroom pet, it eats flies and purrs.
7	A set of Earthling comic books.
8	Ancient Martian straw that filters all liquids that passes through it into clean water.
9	Photos of the folks back home.
10	An European circuit tattoo, removable with some pain and blood loss.
11	A bullet with a name carved into it.
12	A palm sized piece of rocket ship hull on an aluminum chain.
13	Two 3 inch tall Ancient Martian statues of dancers that perform a routine at sunrise.
14	A set of dice for <i>tatzl</i> a Martian game in 4, 6, 14, and 24 sided shapes.
15	A paperback novel, <i>The Adventures of Ranger Robbie</i> .
16	A silk flag.
17	A plastic pouch of Jovian nutrient juice.
18	A Coke bottle, still capped.
19	A set of keys on a brass ring.
20	A deck of cards with caricatures of Martian princes as the face cards.
21	A small metal sphere that buzzes and hums when placed in water.
22	A collection of bottle caps.
23	Aviator sunglasses.

24	Marbles (aggies, commons, jaspers, shooters, swirlies, and tigers.)
25	A Maduri medal for bravery.
26	A church key.
27	A postcard showing the 'sights of Jupiter'.
28	A white silk scarf.
29	A fraternal order pin.
30	A soccer ball.
31	A small green glowing stone of unknown origin.
32	A map of the Empty Desert on Mars.
33	A cherry wood and silver fountain pen.
34	Monogrammed cigarette lighter.
35	A slide rule.
36	A gilded picture frame.
37	A roll of shot but undeveloped film.
38	A newspaper from an important date.
39	Thunder lizard tooth worked into a desktop pen and pencil holder.
40	A pad of engineer's graph paper.
41	Three metal disks that hover and flash lights when thrown into the air.
42	A shuttlecock.
43	A cracked psychic crystal that still glows faintly when thought at.
44	A silver whistle on a braided lanyard.
45	A key chain with a name on it.
46	A flask of whiskey.
47	A novelty pen.
48	A travel chess set.
49	A scale model of a rocket ship.
50	Ancient Martian inflatable chair that will inflate or deflate when in any atmosphere.
51	An alabaster bust of a Julandri courtesan, modern Martian craftsmanship.
52	A set of glass shards from Io, slightly radioactive.
53	Nine books of a ten book mystery series.

54	A bottle of patent medicine.	79	A strip of film from a famous movie.
55	A 72 rpm recording of Jazz favorites.	80	A truly bad detective novel.
56	A 3 inch metal cube that projects a holographic map of the Solar System.	81	A smooth Venusian stone that cools when held.
57	A bowling ball.	82	A poster advertising a popular comedy trio.
58	A fine cigar in a watertight tube.	83	A highly decorated silver bullet.
59	A pouch with 25 Julandri laborer work chits.	84	Ancient Martian metal cube that can heat one gallon of liquid to 105° once per day.
60	An Ancient Martian candy bar in a sealed wrapper, candy will not melt.	85	A leather thong with a pendant of a spider trapped in amber.
61	A set of alien finger bones on a leather thong.	86	A pet Jovian sky worm.
62	A small glass vial of soil from your homeworld.	87	An iridium locket of Martian manufacture.
63	A viewfinder with stereographic pictures of Olympus Mons.	88	Royal Karn hat feathers.
64	A gold wristwatch.	89	A dozen alien eggs that might hatch soon.
65	A haunch of dried bush meat from Venus.	90	A collection of matchbooks from bars across the Solar System.
66	An Ancient Martian water bottle that keeps its contents constantly chilled.	91	A coloring book with pictures of all the known sophonts.
67	Five tags that most Martian city-states use to show which Pilthuri clan owns which trade goods.	92	A hatband of tooled bahmoot hide.
68	A set of jacks and a rubber ball.	93	A small statue of a grey cat.
69	A small stone used to sharpen claws.	94	A steel vial of magnetic sand.
70	A bubble helmet sized for a small creature.	95	An egg shaped stone with veins of Venusian psychic crystal.
71	A religious text.	96	A compact with black kohl eyeliner.
72	A wooden paddle with a rubber ball attached to it by a long string.	97	A floppy hat with an adjustable brim.
73	An European sleep-inducing disk that causes nightmares 30% of the time.	98	A vial of 'Julandri Essence' perfume.
74	A button that proclaims "Vote for Roosevelt".	99	A set of knitting needles and a ball of yarn.
75	Autographed picture of James Cagney.	100	Double trinkets! Roll twice and keep both.
76	A book of magic tricks in European, all the directions are made for a sophont with lots of fingers.		
77	A prize from a midway arcade.		
78	A blessed religious token.		

FEATS



If you are using the feats optional rule, these may help.

ACE

Prerequisite: Proficiency with rocket ships or aircraft.

You are a superior dogfighter with several kill tallies emblazoned on your ship. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- When making a Piloting check, you treat a 9- on the die as a 10.
- When attacking with a weapon mounted on a rocket ship or aircraft you may take a free maneuver action before or after making the attack.

BLUNT

Prerequisite: You must not have any psychic power points, or powers

You are naturally immune to psychic powers. You gain the following benefits:

- Your Wisdom score increases by 1 to a maximum of 20.

- You have advantage on saving throws to resist attacks that cause psychic damage.
- When you are the target of a psychic attack the attack roll is done with disadvantage.
- You cannot be detected by psychic means, including powers.

However, you cannot benefit from any psychic discipline without attempting a saving throw against it and you gain no benefit from psychic armor and weapons.

BOON COMPANION

You have recruited a loyal companion who will live and fight beside you. You gain the following benefits:

- Choose a creature of CR 1/2 or less to be your boon companion.
- You can communicate with your boon companion through normal means, psychic disciplines, or simply body language and close fellowship.
- Your boon companion is treated as any other character, although its base stats are the same as a normal creature of its type with maximum hit points. It gains a hit die every time you gain a level.
-

- Your boon companion increases two of its ability scores by +2, and learns two new skills, tool, vehicle, or weapon proficiencies.
- Your boon companion has a Bond that reflects its relationship with you.
- When you gain ability score improvement your boon companion may increase one ability score by 1.
- Your boon companion acts on its own initiative according to your wishes. If you are unconscious, your boon companion is under the control of the player to your right.
- If you boon companion dies, you are morose and despondent for 1 week, during which you have the poisoned condition. After this period of mourning, you may attempt to recruit a new boon companion.

CONTACTS

You know some people who can help out. You gain the following benefits:

- Your charisma score increases by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- When you choose this feat, pick a sphere of influence. This sphere represents a group of individuals with whom you have good relations. When dealing with this sphere, you have advantage on any Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) and Intelligence (History and Investigation) involving that group. Possible spheres of influence include but are not limited to:
 - A profession
 - A religious order
 - A culture
 - Corporations
 - Criminal underworld
 - International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation
 - Interplanetary Comintern
 - Rocket Rangers
 - Rocket Set
- Once per episode you may find and arrange a meeting with someone in your network. When you do so, the GM will determine who the person is based upon the spheres of influence in your network. That person will have a useful skill (treat as having a skill at +6), be able to provide a safe hideout, give \$100 in goods and services, or lend the service of 1d6 mooks. You may use Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) to get more use from a contact, but such crass manipulation burns up what good will you have in

that sphere of influence and you cannot use that sphere of influence again until you have gained a level.

DANCE IT OUT

You know how to let your heart find joy and your soul recharge through dance.

- Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You may use a short rest to perform a dance. If you choose to do so, you may not use that short rest to spend hit dice or for any other means, in effect cancelling the effects of the short rest. Instead, you may regain the use of one species trait or class feature that recharges following a long rest.

DETECTIVE

You know how to ask the most probing of questions.

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You may use Intelligence (Investigation) instead of Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) to get information out of people and in place of Wisdom (Insight) to determine if they are lying.

DOCTORATE

Prerequisites: Proficiency with one of the following skills: Arcana, Engineering, History, Medicine, Nature, Religion, or Science

You are a knowledgeable and competent expert in your field. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- Choose one of the following skills: Arcana, Engineering, History, Medicine, Nature, Religion, or Science. When you make a check with that skill you treat any number on the die of less than 9 as a 10.

DON'T DIE ON ME!

Prerequisites: Proficiency with Medicine.

Not even death can take your patients from you. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- When a creature fails its death save you can still attempt to stabilize or revive them. For you there is a grace period until the end of your next turn after a creature fails a death save. If you can reach them in time, you may attempt a Wisdom (Medicine) check to stabilize them or use other means to give them hit points.



FIGHTING MAN OR WOMAN

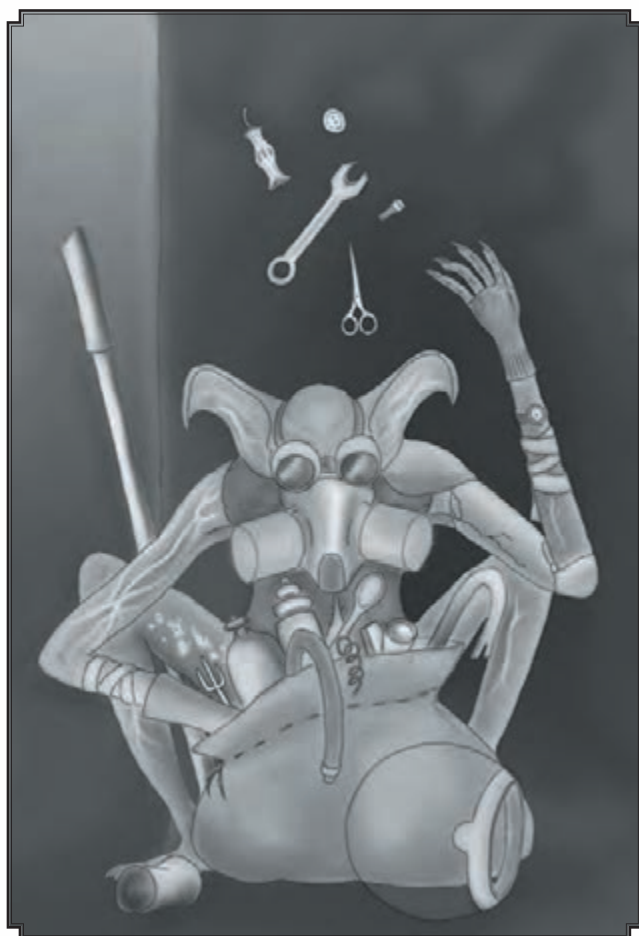
You are a skilled combatant more than capable of holding your own against impossible odds. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Strength or Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- You may take an additional action during combat. This may be an attack, move, bonus action, or reaction. You may do this once and regain use of this feat following a short rest.

HAND TALKING

You have learned how to communicate with those who speak a wide variety of languages.

- Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You may communicate simple ideas with someone who can see and hear you. Through gestures, grunts, pantomime, and a smattering of words in a dozen different tongues, you can engage in rather complex speech.



MAN OR WOMAN OF SCIENCE!

You have dedicated your life to science. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- Choose one skill, tool, vehicle, or weapon. You use your Intelligence (Science) skill for all rolls involving that skill, tool, vehicle, or weapon.

MENTAL CALCULATIONS

You can figure simple mass-velocity-vector combinations in your head.

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You may spend an action studying a situation. Nominate an action. On your next turn, you make the nominated action with advantage.

RESOURCEFUL POCKETS

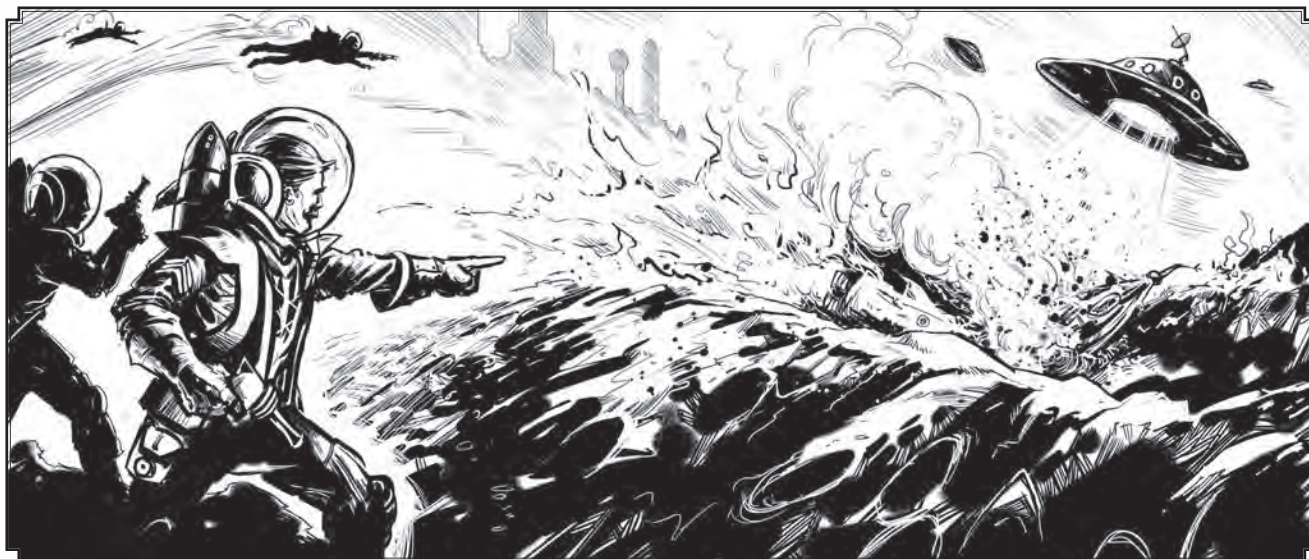
You always have what you need right at hand. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- As a bonus action you may attempt a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to discover an item in one of your pockets. This item must be able to fit into a pocket. The DC of the check is equal to 8 + 1/10th the cost of the item. You may use this feat once and regain use of this feat following a long rest. Naturally you must have pockets to use this feat.

RETURN TO SENDER

You are skilled at rapidly picking up and throwing objects flung at you. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- As a reaction, if a thrown weapon misses you or a thrown weapon with the blast quality lands within 5 feet of you, you may pick it up and throw it at a target within the weapon's normal range. If the weapon has the blast property it does not go off until after you throw it.



ROCKET MAN OR WOMAN

Prerequisites: Proficiency with rocket ships or rocket packs.

You are one of the top pilots in the Solar System. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- You add twice your proficiency bonus to checks with rocket ships and rocket packs.
- You may take 1 free maneuver per turn.

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

You excel at leaving a fight. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- You may use a bonus action to take a Disengage and Dash action as long as at the end of your move you are not adjacent to a hostile creature.
- You may use your reaction to take a Disengage and Dash action as a response to being damaged in combat. When you do so you may not end your move adjacent to a hostile creature.
- When you use this feat, you may not make an attack on your next turn.

TAKE COVER

You know that when the lead flies the best place to be is behind something solid.

- Increase your Dexterity score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You may take the Dash or Hide actions as a bonus action. If you use Dash, you must be moving towards cover.
- You increase the degree of cover you are behind by one level, but only just for you.

THROTTLE UP!

Prerequisites: Proficiency with a vehicle.

You have a need to go really fast. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1 to a maximum of 20.
- Any vehicle you pilot may accelerate at up to 50% of its top speed on your turn. You may do this once and regain use of this feat following a short rest.

PSYCHIC POWERS



PSYCHIC POWERS

Some in the Rocket Age have tapped into their psychic powers, powers that although supernatural have some scientific basis. Most psychics are part of a religious or philosophical order and couch their abilities in talk of mystical formulae, prayer, or esoteric thought. These may be Speakers from the Venusian concordats of the Ishtar Highlands or Kastari from Mars, but many other species produce psychics as well. Europeans are naturally psychic and have developed the most advanced scientific understanding of psychic phenomena. Martian castes other than the Kastari rarely have the access to the training needed to develop their powers, but some manage to do so in secret and in some principalities the Silthuri learn psychic skills as part of their education. In the mystical world, Earthlings lag far behind the other species, but do produce those with the talent to perform psychic feats, and these are just now becoming widely known and studied.

WHAT ARE PSYCHIC POWERS?

Psychic powers are the mental pathways psychics have developed to manifest their extraordinary abilities. They are modes of thought, often linked to gestures, expressions, and vocalizations. They can also be entirely silent, but most psychics learn to control their power by combining a mental path with a physical act.

In games system terms, psychic powers are the means by which we measure and adjudicate expressions of psychic energy.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

When a psychic power is manifested there is generally little to see, though telekinetic powers tend to be flashy. The air might be filled with static electricity, get colder or warmer, or even change in humidity. Sometimes a nimbus of light forms around the psychic or the target, people in the area develop sudden and brief headaches, or animals become skittish. These side effects are discernable to those in the know; any witnesses may make a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check to realize that a psychic power is being manifested within 30 feet.



ACQUIRING A PSYCHIC POWER

There are three ways that a character can acquire a psychic power. At 1st level when you choose a species, instead of taking the species ability score bonuses, including any for subspecies, you may choose instead to gain a psychic power. At higher levels you may choose to gain a psychic power instead of an ability score bonus when you gain a level that grants that feature.

GAINING PSYCHIC POWERS

The first time you gain a psychic power you gain the psychic sub-type. Each psychic power has a guiding ability score. This ability score will determine the DC to resist your psychic powers and your psychic attack modifier.

PSYCHIC POWER POINTS

You have a number of psychic power points equal to your level + your proficiency bonus. When you manifest a psychic power you spend a number of these points, usually just one. You regain spent psychic power points when you take a long rest or through the use of psychic crystals and psychically active weapons.

DC OF PSYCHIC POWERS

Some psychic powers allow the target to resist their use. The type of saving throw is determined by the power, and the DC is set using your guiding ability score.

$$\text{DC} = 8 + \text{guiding ability score modifier} + \text{proficiency bonus}$$

PSYCHIC ATTACK MODIFIER

Your psychic attack modifier is used when a power calls for you to make a psychic attack. Make an attack roll, adding your psychic attack modifier to the roll to determine if you hit the target.

$$\text{Psychic attack modifier} = \text{guiding ability score modifier} + \text{proficiency bonus}$$

MANIFESTING A PSYCHIC POWER

Psychic powers are brought into play through manifestation. When a character manifests a psychic power they spend at least 1 psychic power point, possibly more if they overcharge the power. All powers have a latent power that does not cost any psychic power points, but is not very powerful.

MANIFESTATION TIME

Most psychic powers require an action to manifest. A rare few can be manifested with a bonus action or reaction, see the power's description and overcharge options.

COST

Each psychic power costs a 1 psychic power point to manifest. This cost must be spent when the power is manifested.

LATENT FEATURE

All powers have a latent feature that does not cost power points and cannot be overcharged.

OVERCHARGING

A psychic can funnel more energy into a power and overcharge a psychic power. Your level limits the total number of psychic power points that can be spent on a power. You cannot spend more psychic power points to manifest and overcharge a power than your character level. Thus a 1st level character cannot overcharge their psychic powers, a 2nd level character can spend 1 psychic power point on overcharging, and so forth. Overcharging must be spent when the power is manifested and before any rolls that it requires are made.

Overcharging changes the power's parameters in some manner. Each power has a list of overcharging options, but all power can have their range, duration, number of targets, DC, or attack roll changed by overcharging, see the following table.

Overcharge Option	Change
Range	Spend 1 psychic power point to increase range one step from: • Self to Touch • Touch to 30 ft. • 30 ft. to 120 ft. • + an additional 120 ft.
Duration	Spend 1 psychic power point to increase duration by one step from: • 1 round to 1 minute • 1 minute to 1 hour • +1 additional hour
Targets	+1 psychic power point per additional target
DC	+1 psychic power point per +1 DC
Psychic attack roll	+1 psychic power point per +1 to attack roll

RANGE

Psychic powers have a range. The target must be within the listed range and be perceived by the psychic. Some psychic powers allow the psychic to use senses other than their natural ones to perceive a target.

DURATION

The listed duration of a psychic power is usually expressed as instant, in rounds, minutes, or hours. Instant durations occur at the speed of thought or faster, they take place the moment they are manifested and cannot have their durations increased through overcharging. All other durations begin the moment they are manifested and continue until the duration is exceeded at the end of the turn on which they were manifested.



CONCENTRATION

Psychic powers that require concentration last the listed duration but can end earlier if the psychic loses concentration. A psychic loses concentration if they manifest another psychic power that requires concentration or takes damage (concentration can be maintained with a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to 10 or the damage taken, whichever is higher).

TARGETS

Each Power has a listed type or number of targets. Self ranged powers can only be used on the psychic. The psychic must be aware of the target's presence.

AREA OF EFFECTS

Psychic powers use the same area of effects as spells in 5e.

COMBINING PSYCHIC EFFECTS

If a target is under the effect of more than one psychic power the one with the higher cost takes precedence and all others are canceled.

POWERS

Psychic powers are varied supernatural abilities that some creatures in the solar system of Rocket Age possess.

BIOMANIPULATION

Biomanipulation uses psychic energy to change living tissue. The results can be astounding; a person can grow horns, change their eyes to see at night, heal dreadful injuries, and resist even the harsh vacuum of space. Those who study biomanipulation tend to focus on their bodies and health, usually involving rituals that push and test their physical limits in order to awaken their psychic power.

Biomanipulation powers are tied to Constitution and you use your Constitution modifier to determine saving throw DC and psychic attack bonuses.

Bulwark

You alter the make up of your body, add ablative armor plates, and strengthen your tissues. The end result is the ability to shrug off injury that would kill a lesser being.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Constitution score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you have advantage on all Constitution saving throws. If you suffer a condition as a result of a

failed Constitution save, you may attempt another save at the end of your turn until you have succeeded.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

Your psychic energy flows into your very tissues and allows you to resist damage. Choose one of the following damage types: acid, bludgeoning, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, piercing, poison, psychic, radiant, slashing, or thunder. You gain resistance to that damage type until the power expires.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to add an additional damage type.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to gain invulnerability to the chosen damage type. If you overcharged to become resistant to an additional damage type you must spend 2 psychic power points per damage type you are gaining invulnerability to.

Environmental Adaptation

You alter your body in small and large ways to allow you to survive in extreme environments. These changes, like all biomanipulation powers, are blatantly obvious.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Constitution score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, choose one of the environmental adaptations below to become a permanent part of your body.

Manifestation Time. 1 action or reaction

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

When you manifest this power, choose one of the following environmental adaptations from the list. The players and GM should feel free to invent new environmental adaptations.

Aquatic. You grow a swim bladder, fins, and gills. You are now amphibious and can breathe under water. You also gain a swim speed of 30 ft. and resistance to cold damage.

Arboreal. Your limbs lengthen and your hands and feet become fully prehensile with a strong grip. You gain a climb speed of 30 ft. and low light vision. You have advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to swing or climb.

Arctic. You grow thick fur and a layer of blubber, as well as wide feet. You can move across snow and ice as if it was normal terrain and gain resistance to cold damage.

Desert. Your body thins and lengthens while your skin darkens. Your breathing apparatus become filled with fine hairs that filter out airborne contaminants. You treat sand and other loose soils as normal terrain, gain resistance to fire damage, and have advantage on any saves cause by airborne contaminants.

Vacuum. Your skin toughens to hold your pressure inside, you grow an organ that recycles the oxygen in your body, and you develop a gas pressure propulsion system. You gain resistance to cold and radiation damage; can hold your breath for Constitution score minutes, and (vacuum only) speed of fly 30 ft.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to add an additional environmental adaptation.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to suppress a permanent environmental adaptation for 1 hour.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase a speed you gained from an adaptation by 30 ft.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase a resistance you gained from an adaptation to invulnerability.

Fast Coordination

You enhance your coordination to amazing levels, but more importantly, make your movements faster than the eye or mind can track. You can dodge bullets, dance across minefields, and perform complex fine motor movements in the time it takes others to simply think about doing something.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, your AC increases by +1. Also, when you roll for initiative you do so with advantage.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction

Range. Self

Duration. One round

Until the end of your next turn you may take an additional reaction, action, move, or bonus action every turn. When this power expires you gain a number of levels of exhaustion equal to the number of psychic power points you spent.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to add an additional reaction, action, move, or bonus action.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to negate 1 level of exhaustion you will suffer, this spent point does not count against the total levels of exhaustion you will endure.

Genetic Hybridization

You draw on the latent genetics in every living creature, a heritage that stretches back through time and the evolutionary tree to the very origins of life. Using this model, you can cause your body to rapidly alter to mimic the physical features of other species.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Constitution score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you first learn this power choose one of the hybridization options from below and make it a permanent part of your body.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

When you manifest this power choose one of the options below. The chosen option becomes a part of your body until you dismiss the power or the duration ends. Creative players and GMs are encouraged to invent new uses for this power.

Claws, horns, or fangs. You grow a set of claws, horns, or fangs that can be used to make unarmed attacks. You are proficient with these natural weapons, and they can use either your Strength or Dexterity scores for attack and damage (choose which when manifesting this power). The natural weapons inflict 1d6 points of damage, your choice of bashing, piecing, or slashing depending on what they are.

Diggers. Your hands and feet become scoop like and your wrist and ankle joints alter slightly for greater strength and flexibility. At the same time your senses alter to help you find your way in the dark beneath the soil. The end result is a burrowing speed of 30 feet. You also gain blindsight 60 ft.

Nightvision. Your eyes subtly adjust to allow you to see in the dark. You gain darkvision.

Shell. You grow a tough shell over parts of your body. This shell gives you an AC of 10 + your Constitution modifier.



Spinnerets. You grow a set of spinnerets as well as small hooks and hairs on your hands and feet. This gives you climb 30, advantage on checks to keep hold of something, and a web line that you can shoot out. Your web line has a range of 30 ft, and either 10 HP of damage (the web has vulnerability fire) or a Strength save breaks the line. You can shoot this line to entangle a creature hit by it, which gains the restrained condition until they can break free.

Wings. You grow a pair of wings while at the same time lightening your bones. You gain a fly speed of 30 ft. You also gain vulnerability to bashing damage.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options: Spend 1 psychic power point to add a second option.

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage caused by natural weapons by +1d6 damage.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your new speed by +10 ft.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to suppress a permanent hybridization for 1 hour.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the AC of your shell by +1.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the length of your web line by 30 ft and add 5 HP to it.



Psychic Healing

You can project your psychic powers into a person and cause their tissues to rapidly reform, knitting broken bones, binding severed arteries, and undoing the damage that has been done.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Constitution score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, as an action you may touch a dying target and cause it to stabilize.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Touch

Duration. Instant

Choose one living creature. This creature recovers 1d8 + your Wisdom modifier lost hit points.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the amount of hit points recovered by +1d8.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to remove a condition the target is currently suffering.

Symbol of Confusion

You bend your body in an impossible manner, achieve an unnatural feat of coordination and movement, or simply make a hand gesture that defies description. Those that witness this display are psychologically scared by your actions.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may utilize a minor manifestation of this bizarre movement. As an action, one creature within 30 feet of you must make a Wisdom save or gain the stunned condition until the end of their next turn.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 30 feet

Duration. Instant

All creatures within 30 feet that can see you must make a Wisdom save or suffer 1d10 psychic damage and roll on the confusion table below. A creature that succeeds at the save suffers half damage and does not need to roll on the table.

The creature cannot take reactions and must take the action rolled on the table below.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage by +1d10 psychic damage.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to protect 1 creature in the area of effect from the power. That creature does not need to make a save and suffers no ill effect.

METAPSYCHIC

The discipline of metapsychics involves reaching out with one's mind and altering psychic phenomena. The metapsychic controls the ebb and flow of psychic energy, reads emotional impressions, and seeks out knowledge in places others could not even dream about. One of the less flashy disciplines, metapsychics often do their job with none the wiser.

Metapsychic powers are tied to Intelligence, and you use your Intelligence modifier to determine saving throw DCs and psychic attack bonuses when using these powers.

Bibliokinetics

You project your thoughts into a text, either physical or electronic, and absorb the knowledge directly into your mind. Nothing is secret from you if it has been written down.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, choose three skills, tools, or vehicles. You may add your proficiency bonus twice to these skills.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

You must target a text of some kind, either printed, carved, electronic, or otherwise written down. You absorb the knowledge within the text, knowing every word, every dot, every concept held within it. If the text is in a language you do not understand, in code, in electronic form behind a security lock, or otherwise protected, you may make a psychic attack to decipher the meaning. Unless otherwise specified, such as a protected electronic text, treat the target as having an AC 15 for the psychic attack. If the target has a DC to break an encryption, decode text, or breach a security barrier, that DC serves as the AC for the attack.

The knowledge you gain from these texts remains with you as if you had read it. The deeper understanding that bibliokinetics grants remains as long as the power is active, unless you record it as described in overcharging below. If the text is applicable to a skill check, you have advantage on that check.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to add an additional text to the effect.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to record a text, gaining a complete memory of every dot and line. You may only record a number of texts equal to your Intelligence modifier, but can replace an already recorded text with a new one, losing all memory of the replaced text.

Symbol of Confusion Effects

D10 Action

1-2	Creature moves its full speed in a random direction, stopping if it encounters an obstacle or hazard.
3-4	Creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined adjacent target. If there is no viable target the creature moves towards the nearest target at its full speed and makes an attack if possible. The creature will not move into a hazardous area.
5-6	Creature makes a ranged attack against a randomly determined target. If there is no viable target the creature moves towards the nearest target at its full speed and makes an attack if possible. The creature will not move into a hazardous area.
7-8	The creature just stands there and stares dumbly at the world.
9-10	The creature drops any weapons it has, unloading weapons that have ammunition and scattering the ammunition on the ground.



Dynamic Learning

You reach into the universe and tease out some of its secrets. This knowledge does not last long, but it can give you sudden insight into how the universe works, insight that can have immediate applications.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain proficiency in two skills, tools, vehicles, or weapons.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

Choose a skill, tool, vehicle, weapon, or armor. You gain proficiency in it for the duration of this power.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to add another skill, tool, vehicle, weapon, or armor.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to add your proficiency bonus twice to the chosen skill, tool, vehicle, weapon, or armor.

Enhanced Intelligence

Psychic energy sizzles through your brain, bringing your synapses to the maximum load. Your soul becomes infused with this energy and swells forth in bright auras visible under the right senses. All things are known or can be known and omniscience is just a moment away.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you attempt an Intelligence based check and roll a 9 or less on the die, you may reroll the die keeping the new result. You may do so a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction.

Range. Self

Duration. 1 round

Your Intelligence score increases by 1 until the end of your next turn.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Intelligence score by an additional +1

Enhanced Wisdom

You reach out with your mind and tap into the universal consciousness, feeling the flow of knowledge and understanding in to your soul. You do not just know all, you understand all, the relationships between the here and there, the was and is, and even the will be.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you attempt a Wisdom based check and roll a 9 or less on the die, you may reroll the die keeping the new result. You may do so a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction.

Range. Self

Duration. 1 round

Your Wisdom score increases by 1 until the end of your next turn.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Wisdom score by an additional +1

Psychic Concealment

You shroud yourself from psychic sense, even the enhanced sense of a telesenser. With a little more power, you conceal yourself from those using mundane senses as well.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you have advantage on all Stealth checks.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

Any attempts to perceive you using psychic means must succeed at a Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Arcana) check with a DC equal to 8+ your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. Those that fail the check are unaware that they failed to detect something.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the DC to perceive you by 1.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to make natural senses unable to perceive you as above.

Psychic Static

You broadcast psychic white noise, random thoughts, bizarre images, and half felt emotions. This static disrupts psychics and can even cause damage.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you have advantage on saving throws to resist all psychic powers.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 30 ft.

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
You generate a field of psychic static 30 ft. in radius. All creatures in that field must make a Wisdom save to use psychic powers, access psychic crystals, activate equipment with the psychic trait, or take any action with the psychic keyword.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to cause the field to inflict 1d6 psychic damage to anyone who has to save against this power. Those that succeed on the save take half damage.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the above damage by +1d6.

Psysense

You can reach out with your mind and detect the presence of psychic phenomena. You can also sense other's emotions and psychic residue from strong emotions.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you are automatically aware of any psychic power in use within 30 ft. of you, but not the direction or source of the power.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 30 ft.

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute.
Using psysense you can detect the use of psychic abilities. You cannot detect psychic abilities that are not in use. However, you can detect the recent use of psychic powers by analyzing the psychic signature left behind by their use. A power leaves a signature for one hour per psychic power point expended in its use. You can also use psysense to determine a subject's emotional state, as well as the psychic residue of strong emotions such as hatred, love, or even the death of sentient life forms. If there are attempts to hide psychic phenomena from you, if there are several phenomena you could detect, or you want to discern specific details such as the type of psychic power manifested or information about a person using psychic powers, you must make an Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to detect psychic potential, letting you know someone possess psychic abilities.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks when using this power.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to tag a creature or object so that your psysense can track the tagged target. You may have a number of tagged targets equal to your Intelligence modifier, and may lose a tag in order to replace it with another. A tagged target can be detected by your psysense as long as they are within range.

Tap Latent Psychic Energy

You have learned to draw psychic energy from your surroundings and even from living creatures.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Intelligence score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you recover 1 psychic power point every time you take a short rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Instant

You draw from the latent psychic energy of the universe, refueling your internal reservoir of psychic energy. Recover 1 + your Intelligence modifier psychic power points. When you do this you must move at least 100 feet from a point you have recently tapped in order to use this power in this way again.



Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase the range to touch and drain psychic power points from psychic weapons and crystals you are not bonded to.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase the range to touch and drain psychic energy from a living creature. The target may make a Constitution saving throw, and if they fail you may drain up to your Intelligence modifier in Hit Dice from the target, converting each Hit Die into 1 psychic power point.

PSYCHOMECHANICS

With psychomechanics you do not effect major changes in the world or even yourself. Your psychic powers are based on enhancing things you already physically do to a supernatural level. With the flow of psychic energy through you, you can lift boulders, run miles, and leap over buildings. Many practitioners of psychomechanics are unaware they are psychic; they just naturally use their powers to enhance their physical abilities.

Psychomechanics powers are tied to Strength and you use your Strength modifier to determine saving throw DC and psychic attack bonuses.

Enhance Constitution

Your energies build up within your body and fortify it. The constant flow of psychic energy makes your very



molecules less likely to decay, enhances your basic biological processes, and holds your cells together. At the same time your immune system becomes almost a separate thinking entity as it hunts down poisons and invaders with delightful glee.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Constitution score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you attempt a Constitution based check you may choose to do so with and roll a 9 or less on the die, you may reroll the die keeping the new result. You may do so a number of times equal to your Strength modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

Your Constitution score increases by 1 until the power ends.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Constitution score by an additional +1

Enhanced Dexterity

The psychic power flows through you, increasing your coordination, making you more flexible, and allowing you to achieve unheard of levels of precision. You can bend your body in ways your species would normally be unable to. Your reflexes reach an unnatural level. In short, you can pass beyond the normal limitations of your biology.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

Your Dexterity score increases by 1 until the power ends.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Dexterity score by an additional +1

Enhanced Strength

Through concentration and focusing your body's energies you can attempt feats of strength beyond mundane comprehension.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Strength score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you attempt a Strength based check and roll a 9 or less on the die, you may reroll the die keeping the new result. You may do so a number of times equal to your Strength modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute
Your Strength score increases by 1 until the power ends.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Strength by an additional +1

Mighty Movement

You channel your psychic energy into your legs, arms, heart, and lungs, as well as telekinetically adjusting your mass and velocity. This allows you to make psychically assisted leaps, lunges, and sprints.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Strength score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you gain this power your speed increases by 10 ft. Also, you gain proficiency in the Strength (Athletics) skill, and if you already have proficiency in that skill you may add your proficiency bonus twice to it.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action.

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute
Until the end of your next turn your speed increases by 40 ft. You can jump four times your normal distance.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to extend the duration by 1 round.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to gain one of the following movement types: burrow, climb, or swim, at your current speed.

Psychic Precision

You use your psychic powers to make your movements precise and accurate in ways mundane physics would not allow. While many use this to direct their attacks, you can also perform feats of athletics, acrobatics, and fine motor skills.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity or Strength score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain precision dice equal to your Strength modifier. These are d4s and may be added to any attack roll, or to Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Acrobatics), Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), and Dexterity (Stealth) checks. You add your precision dice after the roll is made but before the results are revealed. You regain spent precision dice following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
Your precision dice refresh and increases to d6s. When this power ends the precision dice return to d4s. You lose any precision dice spent during the duration of this power and regain spent precision dice as normal.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your precision dice to d8s.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase your precision dice to d10s.
- Spend 3 psychic power points to increase your precision dice to d12s.

Psychic Potency

Psychic energy funnels into your attacks, increasing their damage to remarkable levels. You could send a thrown playing card through a tree, cause bullets to strike with the force of cannon shells, and punch a hole in a tank.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Strength score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain potency dice equal to your Strength modifier. These are d4s and may be added to damage roll. You can use these dice to enhance any attack, or even to turn something that would not normally do damage, such as a thrown toothpick, into a weapon. Damage from potency dice are the same damage type as the attack they are being added to. You regain spent potency dice following a long rest.



Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

Your potency dice refresh and increases to d6s. When this power ends the potency dice return to d4s. You lose any potency dice spent during the duration of this power and regain spent potency dice as normal.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your potencydice to d8s.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase your potency dice to d10s.
- Spend 3 psychic power points to increase your potency dice to d12s.

Thunderclap

By shouting, stomping your foot, or clapping your hands together you generate a concussive force. This force originates from you and you can funnel it out towards your foes.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Strength score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may shout loud enough to be heard up to a mile away. This is a psychic projection and is not hindered by such mundane issues as outside noise, the vacuum of space, or having your mouth covered.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 15-foot cone centered on you

Duration. Instant

You generate a concussive wave of psychic energy in a 15 ft cone centered on you. This wave ignores such trivialities as the vacuum of space. All creatures in the cone must make a Constitution save or suffer 2d6 thunder damage and be knocked prone. Those that succeed at the save suffer half damage and are not knocked prone.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage by 1d6.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the cone by 15 ft.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to change the cone to a sphere with a diameter the same as the cone centered on you.

PSYCHOKINESIS

With psychokinesis powers you can create and manipulate energy, using it to attack, defend, or just amuse yourself. Psychokinetics tend towards arrogance; after all they can burn down the place with just a thought. They also tend to play around with the energies around them, something that does not put others at ease. This control of energies is fine enough to allow the psychokinetic to effect gravity in minor ways.

Psychokinesis powers are tied to Dexterity and you use your Dexterity modifier to determine saving throw DC and psychic attack bonuses.

Photokinetics

You bend and manipulate light. This level of manipulation is so fine you can even produce or extinguish light in a small area, creating blinding flashes or cloaking yourself in darkness. With a little effort you can create images composed of multicolored lights.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you are immune to the blinded condition and gain advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. Additionally, you can generate small images of light that are clearly artificial to a range of 30 feet.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

When you manifest this power, choose one of the following effects:

Bright. You raise the light conditions of a 10 ft. cube up to bright light.

Cloak. You lower the light conditions of a 10 ft. cube to darkness.

Flash. You create a flash of light in a 10 ft. cube. All creatures in this area must make a Constitution save or gain the blinded condition until the end of their next turn.

Image. You create a moving image no large than 10 cubic feet in size. This image can fool a person that is looking at it, but not anyone who interacts with it. Creatures viewing the image must make a Wisdom save or consider it to be real.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the area you affect by 5 cubic feet.

- Spend 1 psychic power point add sound, pressure, or temperature to an image you create. This increases the DC of any save to disbelieve it by +1. If you add all three, interacting with the image allows a new save but does not automatically negate it.

Psychokinetic Aura

Your psychokinetic powers project from you to create a zone of crackling energy that harms others and protects you.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, choose one of the following damage types: acid, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, radiation, or thunder. You gain resistance to that damage type.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

A field of energy that can damage others and does not harm you surrounds your body. Choose one of the following energy types: acid, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, radiation, or thunder. Your field is of that damage type and you become invulnerable to that damage type as long as the field remains.

Your psychokinetic aura extends out a few feet from you body and inflicts 1d8 points of the chosen damage type to any creature that starts its turn within 5 ft. of you.

Effected creatures may make a Dexterity save, and if successful suffer half damage.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to extend the aura by 5 ft.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to add a second damage type.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage by +1d8.

Psychokinetic Bolt

You can send out a short burst of energy in a contained package that is powerful enough to cause harm and damage. The type of energy varies; some prefer to send out a dart of kinetic energy, others like the flash and roar of gouts of flame. You don't have to point your finger, but it looks cooler when you do.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain a limited form of the psychokinetic bolt. You may fire this bolt as an action. This requires a psychic attack roll to hit but only inflicts 1d6 points of (your choice of acid, bludgeoning, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, piercing, poison, psychic, radiant, radiation, slashing, or thunder) damage and has a range of 30 ft. However, this does not cost any psychic power points to manifest.

Manifestation Time. Action

Range. 60 ft

Duration. Instant

You channel your psychic energy into a bolt that flies towards a single target. You must make a psychic attack roll, and if you hit, the target suffers 1d10 damage. When you manifest this power choose the damage type from the following: acid, bludgeoning, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, piercing, poison, psychic, radiant, radiation, slashing, or thunder.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to inflict +1d10 damage.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to cause the damage to linger, inflicting 1d10 damage at the start of the target's turn until it succeeds on a Constitution save.

Telekinetic Lift

You project your energy outward to move objects without touching them. You can lift larger and larger amounts of weight as you improve your psychic powers, because sometimes mass does matter. Why, with some concentration, you could even lift a rocket fighter! However, this power does not allow fine manipulation, it is all about the mass you can move and how far you can move it.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, with a thought you can lift and move unattended objects with your mind. A targeted object must be within 30 feet of you and cannot mass more than your Dexterity modifier x 10 pounds. Objects you lift do not move fast enough to cause damage. You may do this at will.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.



Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
You lift a mass no more than your Dexterity modifier x 100 pounds.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the mass you can lift by 100 pounds.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to throw the lifted object. Make a psychic attack roll and if you hit the target suffers 1d8 bludgeoning damage per 100 pounds of the objects mass and is knocked prone.

Telekinetic Shield

You channel your psychic power into a field of energy around you, deflecting attacks and keeping harmful energies at bay.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, all of your saving throws increase by 1.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
You project a field of energy to defend you from attacks and harmful environments. This field is close to your body and does not extend more than a few millimeters from you. This field grants you 10 + your Dexterity modifier temporary hit points. When these temporary hit points are gone the field ends.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the temporary hit points by +5.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to gain resistance to one for the following damage types: acid, bludgeoning, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, piercing, poison, psychic, radiant, radiation, slashing, or thunder. This lasts as long as the shield is active.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to create a bubble of environmental conditions inside your shield that can sustain you.

Telekinetic Manipulation

You project your energy out to manipulate delicate machinery, pick up and move small items, and perform feats of manual dexterity at a distance.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Dexterity score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may lift up to your Dexterity modifier in pounds at a range of 30 ft. You may perform any manual skill you know, such as Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), or use a tool, such as lock picks, at this range. You can also hold a weapon in your telekinetic grip and make attacks with it.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
You reach out with your mind and can snatch objects from other's hands, extend the range of your latent usage, and even pull unattended objects towards you. If an object is in the hands of a creature, the creature must make a Dexterity save or lose the item. If you use a tool or skill to disable an item held by a creature, that creature must make a save before you can manipulate the item.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the weight you can move by Dexterity score pounds.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to telekinetically break an object at range. If the object is unattended, make a psychic attack roll against its AC. If it is attended the wielder must make a Dexterity save. If you are successful in effecting the target, the target object suffers 4d10 points of force damage, which should break most objects.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage of the above by +1d10.

TELEPATHY

Telepathy, at its most basic this discipline is mental communication, but with any form of communication it can go so much further. Thoughts, words, images, sensations, all of these can be transmitted, as well as emotions. Beyond the simple transfer of information, a telepath can reach into another's mind and change memories, cause harm, and even replace the original psyche with their own.

Telepathy powers are tied to Charisma and you use your Charisma modifier to determine saving throw DC and psychic attack bonuses.

Empathic Allure

By subtly sending out empathic signals you convince others of your sincerity, attract them to your cause, and lure them into your web.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you have advantage on all Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), and Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute
Choose a target creature. That creature must make a Wisdom save or gain the charmed condition. When the effects of the power wear off, the creature is aware that its emotions were psychically altered.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to cause the target to be unaware its emotion were altered.

Empathic Strike

You channel a negative emotion and launch it towards a target, wracking their psyche and causing them to feel that emotion.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain proficiency with your choice of Deception, Intimidate, or Persuasion. If you already have proficiency with that skill, you may add your proficiency bonus twice to it.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 120 ft.

Duration. Instant

You launch a negative emotion at a target. Make a psychic attack roll. If you hit, the target suffers 1d6 psychic damage.

Furthermore, the target is overcome with a negative emotion. When you make this attack, choose from the lists of emotions below. The target suffers from the emotion and the linked condition until it passes a Wisdom save. The target may make its save at the start of its turn.

Anger. The target is overcome with feelings of rage and anger, the blood pounding in their head so hard they can hardly hear anything, their thoughts so focused on their hatred they ignore all else. The target gains the deafened condition.

Anxiety. The target is gripped by the inability to act as all of their possible choices seem to lead to bad ends. The target gains the stunned condition.

Despair. The target is hit by waves of hopelessness causing every action to require an inordinate amount of effort. The target gains a level of exhaustion.

Disgust. The most sickening and vile thoughts are pounded into the target's mind, thoughts so foul that they cause bile to rise and the bowls to churn. The target gains the poisoned condition.

Fear. The target's mind is assaulted by feelings of terror and panic. The target gains the frightened condition.

Sadness. The target is overcome with feelings of loss and sorrow, causing their eyes to swell up in tears and their vision to be clouded by all they have lost in life. The target gains the blinded condition.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage by +1d6.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to add a second emotion and linked condition to the attack.

Enhanced Charisma

Your psychic energies make your speech resonate in the hearts of others, your appearance glow with an amazing allure, and your every movement appear as one of grace and poise.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, when you attempt a Charisma based check and roll a 9 or less on the die, you may reroll the die keeping the new result. You may do so a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier, and regain uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action or reaction.

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

Your Charisma score increases by 1 until the power ends.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase your Charisma score by an additional +1



Spiritual Possession

You can project your psyche into another's mind, taking over their body and controlling it. This is a dangerous thing for as your psyche is no longer in your own body, that body becomes highly vulnerable. Plus, some would say even knowing this power is the act of a cruel and heartless being.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may exert your will in small ways, not fully taking over another's body but confusing the body and mind connection. Designate one living creature within 30 ft. That creature must make a Wisdom save or it gains the restrained condition until the end of its next turn. You may do this a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier and regain uses of this latent use following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Touch

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute.

One living creature you touch must make a Wisdom save. If they fail the save, you invade their mind with your psyche, pushing their own consciousness into a looping fantasy world. While trapped in this world the target has no knowledge of what is going on in the real world and is completely immersed in the fantasy.

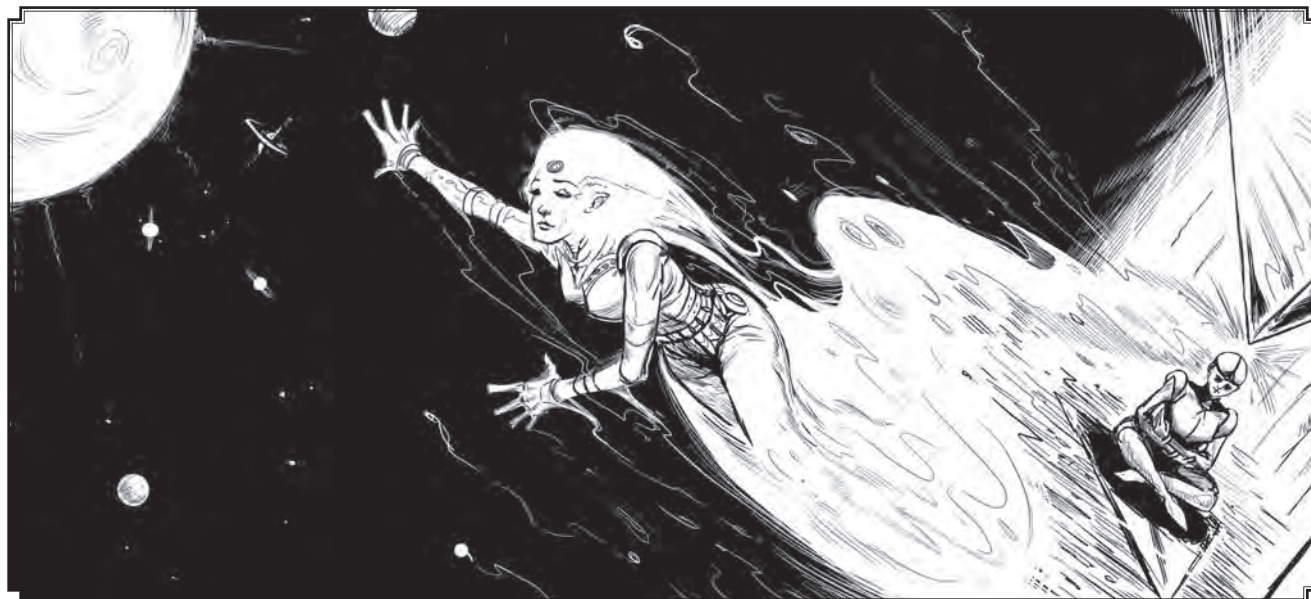
You have control of the target's body, inhabiting it with your consciousness. You use the target's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores for any rolls required, but your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You do not have access to the target's memories, skills, or other information.

While you are in control of the target's body, your own body enters a dormant state. Without a psyche to guide it, your body is treated as unconscious. At the end of the duration your psyche returns to your body and the target's psyche emerges from the fantasy world it was trapped in, gaining the stunned condition until the end of its next turn.

If your body dies before you can return to it, you are pushed into a fantasy world inside the target's mind, lost forever. If you have gained complete control of the target's body by obliterating its psyche or transferring it to your body, you may now inhabit the target's body and leave your old one to its own devices.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 5 psychic power points to attempt to transfer the target's psyche to your body. The target may make a Wisdom save to prevent this. If the save fails, the target is now in your old body and gains the stunned condition until the end of its next turn.
- Spend 15 psychic power points to attempt to obliterate the target's psyche, giving you control of the body. The target may make a Wisdom save at the start of its turn to resist, and suffers 5d6 psychic damage if it fails, half damage with a successful save. If the target psyche is reduced to 0 HP before the duration expires, it is destroyed completely.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase the damage dealt in the above by +1d6.



Telepathic Communion

You can reach out with your mind and touch another creature's, passing thoughts and ideas through, even words if you share a common language.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you can communicate telepathically with one other creature within 30 ft., but cannot use any of the overcharge options.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. 60 ft.

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

You share your thoughts with a number of creatures within 60 ft. equal to your Wisdom modifier. This is free and open communication and anyone can send a thought through this network.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- As a reaction, you may spend 1 psychic power point to close off a creature in the communion but keep them linked, the closed off creature can only send, but cannot receive thoughts.
- As a bonus action, you may spend 1 psychic power point to transfer inspiration between members of the network.
- As a reaction, you may spend 1 psychic power point after this power has been manifested but while it is still active to grant everyone in the network advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saves.
- As a reaction, you may spend 1 psychic power point after this power has been manifested but while it is still active to grant everyone in the network advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma related skill, tool, or vehicle checks.

Telepathic Intrusion

You force your mind into another's, reading their thoughts and digging deep into their psyche. This is often a very painful experience for the target, and at the very least unsettling. Many telepaths prefer not to learn this power for fear they will abuse it, or worse, come to enjoy it.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Charisma score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you have learned to pick up on the stray thoughts and emotions that living creatures broadcast as they go about their daily lives. You may sense the presence and approximate mental state of all living

creatures within 30 feet. Also, you may use this knowledge of leaked thoughts to gain advantage on a single attack roll, or cause disadvantage on another creature's attack roll targeting you. You may do this a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier, and uses of this latent feature are refreshed following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Touch

Duration. 1 minute up to concentration.

You force your way into another living creature's mind. The target may make a Wisdom save to resist, and if they do, you are forced out and the power ends. As an action, while in the target's mind you may search it for information, making a DC 15 Intelligence check each time you do so. If you succeed you learn one piece of information. While being under the effects of this power, the target is restrained, but can choose to attempt a Wisdom saving throw at the start of its turn to end the power. If you do not share a language with the creature or its Intelligence score is less than 3, the information you gain is only sensory.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to gain proficiency in a language the target has for the duration of the power.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to gain proficiency in a skill, tool, vehicle, weapon, or armor the target has for the duration of the power.

TELESENSE

The wise are calm, contemplative, and feel connections to their fellow sophonts, and often all life, the universe, and any entities beyond. Their powers are manifested through meditation, inner peace overlaid upon outer chaos, and often a radiating light of sublime beauty. Rituals performed to manifest Wisdom based powers involve long periods in meditative trances, the repetition of key thought-words, flower arranging, and contemplation of intricate designs.

Telesense powers are tied to Wisdom and you use your Wisdom modifier to determine saving throw DC and psychic attack bonuses.

Astral Projection

You can enter a trance and project your psyche out into the universe.



Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, during a short rest you may enter a trance and still gain the benefits of a short rest. While in this trance you may astrally project with a range of 60 ft., but may not use any overcharge options. You suffer all of the advantages and disadvantages of astral projection while in this state. You may do this a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier, and regain spent uses following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 hour

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 hour

You unfetter your psyche from your body and go for a little stroll. Your body is unconscious and you cannot access any of its senses while in this state. Your psyche exists in an astral state. While in this state you are incorporeal, you may pass through solid objects as long as you end your move in open space. You are immune to physical damage, but can still be targeted by effects that deal psychic damage. Your astral body looks like your own, or like anything you can imagine. It is transparent. You gain a fly speed equal to your speed. Your astral form does not need to breathe.

Your body is prone and helpless during this astral sojourn. You are unaware of your body's state but are alerted if it gets injured. As a bonus action or when this power ends you snap back to your body and reinhabit it, gaining the stunned condition for 1d4 rounds.

If your body dies while you are astrally projecting you are aware of the loss. You are now a disembodied psyche. You lose a point of Wisdom every 24 hours. When your Wisdom score reaches 0 you die. While a disembodied psyche you do not need to eat, sleep, breathe, or otherwise sustain yourself. However, you may not take a short or long rest.

Normally you may not manifest a psychic power while you are concentrating on another. However, with astral projection you may manifest another psychic power while still concentrating on astral projection, but the cost increases by 1. You may manifest a second, or even third, fourth, etc... psychic power while astrally projecting, but the extra cost increases by 1. For example, if you are astrally projecting and manifest psychic awarenesses, that power costs 1 more psychic power point. If you then want to manifest a third power, that power would cost 2 more psychic power points.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to render your astral form invisible.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to give your astral form a fly speed of 50 mph.

Enhanced Senses

You can enhance your natural sense to refine them to supernatural levels. This allows you to see, hear, scent, taste, and touch things others cannot normally perceive.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

When you manifest this power you gain one of the following effects:

- Blindsight 120 ft.
- Low-light vision
- Scent

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to double the range of the sense.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to double your proficiency bonus again to your Wisdom (Perception) check.

Lucid Dreaming

As you sleep you can project your psyche into realms unheard of, perceiving things that would not normally be perceived and gaining truths beyond all mortal bounds.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may sleep during a short rest and gain the benefits of a long rest. You may do this once, and cannot do it again until you take a normal six hour long rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. 6 hours unless interrupted.

During a long rest you may forgo the usual benefits of a long rest and instead enter a state of lucid dreaming. During this state your mind reaches out into the cosmos, wanders in the dream state beyond reality, and seeks out strange and terrible things. If your sleep is interrupted you do not gain any benefits from this power and do not gain any benefits from taking a long rest.

If you successfully complete a period of lucid dreaming, you gain a number of benefits from the list below equal to your Wisdom modifier.

- You recover half of spent psychic power points
- You recover half of lost HP
- You recover half of spent HD
- You remove one level of exhaustion
- You may exchange one psychic power you know for a different one of the same discipline. Your ability score does not increase because of this.
- You gain proficiency in a number of languages, skills, tools, vehicles, weapons, or armor equal to your Wisdom modifier. These proficiencies last until you take a normal long rest.
- You may manifest one psychic power you know at 0 cost, but may not overcharge it.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to remain asleep another six hours and gain an additional benefit from use of this psychic power.

Project Sense

You project one of your natural senses (and an awareness linked to that sense)

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, as a bonus action you may displace one natural sense (and any awarenesses linked to it) by 15 feet.

Manifestation Time. Bonus action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration up to 1 minute

You can set the point from which one of your natural senses (and any awarenesses linked to that sense) perceives the universe to a point up to 60 feet from you. You do not have to have line of sight to this point, but

if you are not familiar with the point in question you might end up projecting your senses into a wall or other obstruction. As a bonus action you may move this point, keeping it within 60 feet or your body.

Normally you may have only one psychic power with a duration of concentration active at a time and may only activate one psychic power at a time. However, you may spend 1 additional psychic power point to activate project sense while at the same time activating or concentrating on a different telesense power.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to extend the distance you can project the point to 500 feet.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 1 mile.
- Spend 3 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 10 miles.
- Spend 4 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 100 miles.
- Spend 5 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 1,000 miles.
- Spend 6 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 10,000 miles.
- Spend 7 psychic power points to extend the distance you can project the point to 100,000 miles.

Psychic Awareness

You use your psychic senses to replace one of your natural senses with the ability to perceive things beyond physical understanding.

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you gain proficiency in the Perception skill, and if you already have proficiency in that skill you may add your proficiency bonus twice to it.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

You can close off the distractions of one of your natural senses and hone in on the psychic signature of a specific source.



When you use this power one of the following senses must be inactive: hearing, heat/ cold and pain, smell/ taste, sight, or balance. When the psychic awareness is active it replaces the inactive sense. For example, if you have biosense active and sound inactive, you detect the information your awareness gives you of life forms based on a quality and quantity of sound.

If the sense you are rendering inactive is destroyed, the awareness deactivates until you take an action to activate it. For example, if you are using chemsense in place of sight and you gain the blinded condition, the awareness ends until you reactivate it and render inactive a different natural sense.

Psychic awareness functions much like the natural senses it replaces. When you use psychic awareness you make a Wisdom (Perception) check to find specific details, spot something that is trying to hide from your senses, or sort out the information you are looking for from the clutter of data your brain is receiving.

Psychic awarenesses have a range of 60 feet and are not dependent on the direction you are facing. This 60-foot radius bubble of psychic sense around you can detect when something new enters the range, the direction and distance of a subject, the intensity of the subject, any movement the subject is undertaking, and specific qualities of the subject. More than one subject may be detected at a time. A strong electromagnetic field blocks psychic awareness. A phenomena detected through the use of an awareness does not have concealment from you. However, it might have cover depending on the environment.

When you manifest this power, choose one of the following psychic awarenesses to replace a physical sense:

Biosense. Using biosense you can detect macrobiotics, living things above the microscopic level. The position, direction, and distance of the living thing can be determined, and with a bit of concentration the being's type, state of health, and even rough emotional state (depressed, excited, scared.)

Chemsense. Chemsense detects chemicals, such as chemical compounds, poisons, toxins, or explosives. This category may be as small as a single element, such as detecting if there is oxygen beyond an airlock, or it may be as broad as complex compounds and mixtures, such as detecting if there is breathable air beyond a door.

Locosense. Locosense is used to detect the location of a specific item or type of items. When manifested you must nominate a specific object or class of objects. The object nominated must be an inert thing, you cannot detect life forms using locosense, nor may you detect specific chemical compounds, or any other phenomena covered by a different psychic awareness.



For example, you can search for your favorite pistol, all pistols, or all firearms. However, you could not search for the chemical compound found in the frame of a firearm or in the ammunition, nor for a person holding a firearm (though if you are searching for firearms and you detect a dozen of them floating at roughly waist height you might have a clue that there are armed people in the room).

Radsense. Energy of various types can be detected by radsense, such as electromagnetic energy, radiation, gravitational, and thermal. You cannot detect chemical energy, kinetic energy, or mechanical energy. While electromagnetic fields block or hamper psychic awareness, you can still detect their presence and determine their qualities.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to extend the range of your psychic awareness by 60 ft.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to fine-tune your psychic awareness, granting advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made with it.

Psychocognition

Latent Feature When you learn this power your Wisdom score increases by 1. This may raise it above 20.

Furthermore, you may reroll a failed attack roll, ability check, skill check, or saving throw. You may do this a number of times per day equal to your Wisdom modifier, and regain uses of this latent use following a long rest.

Manifestation Time. 1 action

Range. Self

Duration. Concentration or 1 minute

You reach out with your mind to sense things as they were or will be. Choose postcognition or precognition effect when you manifest this power.

Postcognition allows you to mentally travel backwards in time to learn about a single person, place, or object. You see the past from the viewpoint of the target, or if you are trying to learn about a place your viewpoint is as a viewer seeing from above. Your postcognition has a temporal range of 1 year per point of your Intelligence score. While using this power you must be holding the object, touching the person, or in the place you wish to view. Also, you are blind and deaf to the real world, your senses lost in other times.

Precognition allows you to glimpse the near future. You do not see what will happen, but a multitude of things that might happen. This allows you to tweak fate slightly so that the desired outcome results.

You gain a number of PreCog dice equal to your Wisdom modifier. These dice are d6's and can be added to any

d20 roll after the roll is made but before the result is known. These dice are lost when the power expires.

Overcharge options. You may choose to spend additional psychic power points to use the common overcharge options as well as the following options:

- Spend 1 psychic power point to extend the temporal range of postcognition to 1 decade per point of your Intelligence score.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to extend the temporal range of postcognition to 1 century per point of Intelligence score.
- Spend 3 psychic power points to extend the temporal range of postcognition to millennia per point of Intelligence score.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase PreCog dice to d8's.
- Spend 2 psychic power points to increase PreCog dice to d10's.
- Spend 1 psychic power point to increase PreCog dice to d12's.

VEHICLES



VEHICLES

Vehicles are common in the Rocket Age. While rocket ships get you from planet to planet, once there adventurers must often rely on other means of transportation to get around. Boot leather and riding animals are popular, and cheap, but to travel great distances some form of vehicle is needed. As likely as not, these vehicles will get shot at, jump chasms, and otherwise get involved in dicey situations.

VEHICLES IN PLAY

The original 5e rules for vehicles were developed for relatively slow moving wind and muscle powered conveyances. They lack detail, but their purpose is to treat vehicles as means of getting from one place to another. In Rocket Age not only are vehicles more complex and capable of traveling greater distances at greater speeds, they are more important to the story. From the lowly automobile to the mighty war walkers of the Deutsche Marskorps, vehicles are an intrinsic part of the Rocket Age.

VEHICLE SCALE

Vehicles are not to the same scale as characters; even the largest of thunder lizards operates on a different level than a tank or airplane. All vehicles have a scale, either personal, planetary, or space. Personal scale vehicles are small vehicles that are treated more as a piece of equipment or a mount, such as motorcycles or rocket packs. Planetary scale vehicles are larger, they are usually armored in some way, require a crew, and can mount heavier weapons. Then you have the truly off the charts vehicles, the rocket and saucer ships of space scale. These vehicles are capable of traveling between planets, move at amazing speeds, and mount weapons that would vaporize any lesser target.

Scale is not just about size, but also power and speed. There is not much point in resolving a chase between a rocket ship and a person on foot. Nor is there much that a person wielding a RAY gun can do to something as large as a rocket ship. On the other hand, even a light RAY canon inflicts so much damage that there is little point in rolling the dice, the person on the ground is dead.

SCALES AND SIZES

The standard size categories are still applicable to personal scale vehicles. However, planetary and space scale vehicles can be much larger than even gargantuan-sized. For example, the Spitfire, a common fighter airplane of the 1930s is 30 feet long.

Within each scale there are the same size categories characters and other creatures use, though the dimensions are different.

SCALES AND GRIDS

If you are using a grid for combat, or just want an easy way to measure the relative distances between vehicles of the same scale, use this handy guide.

Personal scale vehicles operate on the same level as characters and monsters we are used to with a five-foot grid, no need to modify speed or damage.

Planetary scale vehicles are a different matter. They operate on a 20 by 20-foot grid. The speed and the range of their weapons are listed as increments on a 20-foot

grid, or cube for aerial and underwater vehicles. The damage their weapons inflict is for combat between vehicles of the same scale, for conflict between personal scale and planetary scale use the following formulae.

Space scale operates on a ten thousand mile cube. Yes, rocket ships, their speeds, and their weapons are that much greater. Speeds and ranges are set on a 10,000 mile scale. However, space is huge and although large, rocket ships make up a tiny part of any 10,000 cubic mile area. Any number of rocket ships can fit in that area, and any rocket ships within 10,000 miles of each other are considered to be engaged in melee.

When in atmosphere, space scale vehicles operate on a 1,000 mile cube. As all speeds and weapon ranges are listed in space scale areas, there is no need to perform any calculations once in an atmosphere. The change in cube size is merely for narrative purposes. It reflects the change in safe speed so close to a gravity well, diffusions of beams through an atmosphere, wind resistance, and similar factors.

For conflicts between vehicles of different scales, refer to the table below.

SPACE SCALE SIZES

Size	Dimensions
Tiny	40' x 40'
Small	50' x 50' to 90' x 90'
Medium	100' x 100' to 150' x 150'
Large	200' x 200' to 250' x 250'
Huge	300' x 300' to 350' x 350'
Gargantuan	400' x 400' or larger

PLANETARY SCALE SIZES

Size	Dimensions
Tiny	10' x 10'
Small	20' x 20'
Medium	30' x 30'
Large	40' x 40'
Huge	50' x 50'
Gargantuan	60' x 60'

Scale	To: Personal (and characters or monsters)	To: Planetary	To: Space
From: Personal (and characters or monsters)	No change	Divide damage and hull points by 10, divide ranges and speed by 20	Weapons ineffectual, ranges and speed ineffectual, treat space vehicles more as a building than a vehicle.
From: Planetary	Multiply damage and hull points by 10, multiply ranges and speeds by 20	No change	Weapons ineffectual, ranges and speed ineffectual, treat space vehicles more as a building than a vehicle.
From: Space	Weapons kill target, range and speed are largely irrelevant	Target destroyed with all on board, range and speed are largely irrelevant	No change



VEHICLE BASICS

For the most part vehicles use the same rules as any other actor in your game, with the following changes.

Narrative Movement

By far the easiest use of vehicles in your game is as a means to get from point A to point B. Each vehicle has a maximum travel speed listed in miles per hour. Modify this by terrain type as you would for any other traveling done, measure the distance traveled, and roll on some random encounter tables. Done.

Entering and Exiting A Vehicle

To use a vehicle you must get into it, and then get into position. For personal scale vehicles this is part of movement and getting into the vehicle (or strapping it on for things like rocket packs) is treated as difficult terrain. It takes 10 feet of movement to enter or exit a planetary vehicle, and 20 feet of movement for space scale vehicles.

Starting a Vehicle

Vehicles are not just ready to go when you get into them, they must be started. It requires 1 action to start a personal scale vehicle, 2 actions for planetary scale vehicles, and 8 actions for space scale vehicles. These are actions in total, and the captain, engineers, and pilots can all contribute to this total.

Repairs

Vehicles need regular maintenance to stay functional and all too often they are damaged in combat or through accident. Much like short and long rests that creatures take; a vehicle takes short and long repairs. Unlike creatures, vehicles do not possess the means to heal themselves and require engineers and mechanics to fix them.

Short Repairs

A vehicle may be stopped and repairs, refueling, and cooling down may be undertaken. This takes at least an

hour, but no more than two hours and is called a short repair. During a short repair a vehicle may be moving and functional, but all Engineering checks to repair the vehicle are at disadvantage. A critical system can be shut down during a short repair so that work can be done on it, negating the normal disadvantage for working on a functioning vehicle. Any weapons or systems that need to be recharged do so.

Short repairs are good to patch up the hull and bring failing systems to something approaching operational status. Engineers can make engineering checks to repair the hull or move a system from the failure condition to the damaged condition. Only one attempt can be made to repair hull points per short repair. Modifications to the vehicle require longer periods of time and a shutdown of critical systems and cannot be attempted during short repair.

Long Repairs

Regular shutdowns for maintenance and overhauls are necessary to keep vehicles in prime condition. A long repair takes at least 8 hours to complete. During a long repair weapons that require a recharge are recharged and the engineers can perform extensive work on the vehicle. Hull points can be repaired and the work done in a professional manner. Critical systems can be brought to fully operational status. Modifications can be made to the vehicle during this time.

A long repair does not require the vehicle to be shut down, but if it is in use than all Engineering checks to repair it are at disadvantage. A critical system can be shut down during a long repair so that work can be done on it, negating the normal disadvantage for working on a functioning vehicle.

VEHICLES IN COMBAT

Vehicle combat takes place in the same 6-second combat round as normal combat. Initiative is rolled, attacks are made and damage occurs. There are a few differences however, as detailed below.

Crew Rating	Initiative Check	Piloting Check	Engineering Check	Other Skill checks	Saves	HP	Challenge modifier
Green	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	5	-1
Trained	+2	+1	+1	+0	+0	8	0
Experienced	+3	+2	+2	+1	+1	14	+1
Veteran	+4	+3	+3	+2	+2	16	+2
Elite	+5	+4	+4	+3	+3	18	+3

CREW

Vehicles larger than personal scale often require crew to operate. Usually only the smallest vehicles of a particular type can be operated by only a single person. Each vehicle lists the number and type of crew needed to operate it.

CREW RATINGS

Not all crewmembers are equally skilled. The table above lists the most important stats for degrees of experience an NPC crew might have.

Assigning Crew

Before a vehicle can be operated crew must be assigned to all open crew positions. This is as easy as saying that “XXXX” is going to be the captain, the engineer, or the pilot. Some actions can only be taken by the person filling a particular position; the engineer cannot fly the ship if she is not in the pilot’s seat. Normally crew assignments take place when characters are entering the vehicle, but sometimes crew assignments need to be altered during play. If in combat this takes an action to accomplish.

Filling Multiple Positions

Due to loss or in the case of smaller vehicles it may be necessary for one character to fill multiple crew positions. This is possible, but keep in mind each character only has the standard number of actions per round, and crew actions count as actions. A single character may not fill the role of an entire crew section.

Vacant Positions

If a crew position is vacant then the actions associated with that position cannot be taken.

Crew Sections

Large vehicles do not have just one person serving as the engineer or gunner, but entire teams. A crew section is treated as one entity for all purposes unless otherwise noted. These are groups of NPCs, often nameless and faceless. Anything that targets an individual cannot target a crew section, there are just too many of them.

Crew Losses

Crews suffer damage the same as any other character. However, some ships are so large their crews are divided into sections. A crew section can only suffer damage when a crew critical system hit results or when a crew’s system is hit. If a crew section’s system is hit, that section gains the depleted condition.

DEPLETED CONDITION

The crew section has suffered numerous casualties and a loss of morale, and thus is not at full strength. All rolls the crew section makes are done with disadvantage. If a section gains the depleted condition and already is suffering from that condition, it has lost so many people it can no longer perform its functions. It should be noted that those losses are likely KIA.

Crew Positions

The following are the most common crew positions for vehicles. If a vehicle has an unusual crew position, it will be noted in the vehicle’s description. If a position is not filled, then the associated actions may not be taken.

Captain/ Command

There is only one captain per vehicle, but there might also be subsidiary command positions as well. Both may take captain and command actions. As a bonus action, the captain can take over any other position, losing access to captain and command actions but gaining access to the new position’s actions until the end of the vehicle’s turn. A vehicle acts on its initiative based on the captain’s initiative roll. Captains and command need to see outside and have three-quarters cover against attacks from outside the vehicle. Captain is the only position that must be assigned. If the captain is killed another crewmember will have to take over the position, likely doing their job as well.

Engineers

Most vehicles have an engineer or engineering section that maintain systems and repairs the vehicles. Engineers may take damage control and boost actions. Engineers generally are deep inside a vehicle and have full cover from attacks originating outside the vehicle. Engineering sections gain the depleted condition when the engine or drive suffers a critical systems hit.

Gunners

Every weapon on a vehicle has a gunner or gunnery section assigned to it. The gunner makes attack rolls with that weapon based on their ability scores and proficiencies. Gunners need to see outside and have three-quarters cover against attacks from outside the vehicle. Gunnery sections gain the depleted condition when their weapon suffers a critical systems hit.

Medic

Medics and medic sections can attempt the recover action. This requires a medical kit or medical bay, and a DC 13 Medicine check. If successful, one crew section loses the depleted condition. Medical sections gain the depleted condition when the medical bay suffers a critical systems hit.



Operator

Operators and operator sections use the vehicle's RADAR, scanner, RADIO, and other ship's systems not covered by the other positions or detailed in a vehicle's description. Operators using RADAR and scanners, or just Mark I Eyeballs can take scan actions. Operator sections gain the depleted condition when the RADAR, RADIO, or scanner suffers a critical systems hit.

Pilot

Pilots drive or fly the vehicle. They use their move to make maneuvers with their vehicles. Only one pilot can make maneuver actions in a turn. If the vehicle has more than one pilot the other pilots can use the Aid action or be temporarily assigned to the operator position. Pilots need to see outside and have three-quarters cover against attacks from outside the vehicle. Pilot sections gain the depleted condition when the controls suffer a critical systems hit.

Passengers

Passengers do not do much for the ship in combat but do count as a crew section or crewmembers for the assignment of damage.

Crew Actions

Each member of the crew or a crew section can take the standard set of actions on their vehicle's turn, including an action, a move, or when appropriate, a bonus action or reaction. Except for the pilot most crew will not take a move, or their move is part of another action and incidental to the combat.

In addition to the usual options for actions, and let us be honest, we do not foresee many uses of the Dash, Disengage, or Hide actions in vehicular combat, vehicle crews do have the option to take one of the following actions.

Boost

Engineers or engineering sections can take the boost action to improve the performance of the vehicle's systems. The engineer makes a DC 13 engineering check, and if successful grant a critical system the boost condition as seen in the vehicle's description. Systems that have the patched condition or are damaged or failed cannot be boosted. The effects of a boost end when the combat ends.

Co-ordinate

Captains or command crew can take this action, though player-characters may take on the role as the chief of a crew section (see below). A co-ordinate action involves barking orders, giving advice, and bolstering morale. The character makes a DC 13 Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), or Charisma (Persuasion) check,

and if successful, may grant advantage on the next action of one crewmember or section. This advantage must be used before the end of the vehicle's turn.

Damage Control

Engineers or engineering sections can take this action. A DC 15 Intelligence (Engineering) check is required to successfully complete this action. If successful, the ship either gains 1d6 temporary hull points or a critical system is granted the patched condition.

Rally

Captain or command crew can take this action requiring a DC 15 Charisma (Deception), Charisma (Intimidation), or Charisma (Persuasion) check, and if successful, one crew section loses the depleted condition.

Scan

Operators, pilot, or captains can take this action. This is a Wisdom (Perception) check with a DC dependent on what is being looked for. The scan action can also be taken to pinpoint targets or look for obstacles. This requires a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check modified by the appropriate proficiencies if using RADAR or a scanner. If successful, either one pilot or one gunner is granted advantage on their next maneuver or attack, respectively, as long as the maneuver or attack occurs before the end of the vehicle's turn.

Other

Some vehicles allow other actions to be taken as detailed in their descriptions.

Player Characters in Vehicular Combat

Player characters will often take the role of a crewmember on a vehicle. When they do so they are affected as any other crewmember would be with the following changes listed below.

Player Characters as Crew

The player character takes on the crew position and makes all appropriate rolls.

Player Characters as Crew Section Chiefs

A player character can be assigned as the chief of a crew section. As chief they make all rolls for the section using their own ability scores, proficiency bonus, skills, and so forth. They may also use the rally action or coordinate actions on their section. A chief of a crew that suffers the depleted condition takes 2d12 fire damage. If the crew section is destroyed, the chief may opt to suffer the same fate as their crew, or instead attempt a DC 15 Constitution save, and if successful does not die but is reduced to 0 hit points and is stable.

Initiative

The captain rolls initiative for the vehicle, or in the case of personal scale vehicles, the pilot. The entire crew takes their turns on the vehicle's initiative in any order the captain decides. Each crewmember or section must complete his or her turn before another can begin.

Movement

Vehicles are not as agile as people. They are faster, can travel farther, and travel in environments no mortal was ever meant to journey through. However, vehicles require time to reach these speeds and are hampered by their means of propulsion and control.

Piloting Check

To perform a maneuver, dodge a hazard, or otherwise operate a vehicle, the pilot will have to make a piloting check. This is a d20 roll against a DC set by the GM. Success means that the pilot is successful in their attempt,

while failure results in the pilot not achieving the desired result. Common maneuvers such as regular turns, taking off and landing, or just flying from one point to another do not require a piloting check, but sharp banks, taking off in a hurry, landing on difficult terrain, and such do. During combat even the simplest of turns becomes difficult and a piloting check must be taken.

Piloting Check: d20 + 8 +Dexterity bonus
+proficiency bonus (if proficient with the vehicle)

Maneuvers

During combat, pilots will take maneuvers actions instead of using their normal move. To complete a maneuver the pilot must make a piloting check with the listed DC. If the check is successful the maneuver is completed. If unsuccessful, the vehicle suffers the failure entry for that maneuver. If the vehicle is traveling at less than 25% of its maximum speed the piloting check is made with advantage. Vehicles traveling at more than 75% of maximum speed

Maneuvers			
Maneuver	DC	Effect	Failure
Accelerate	10*	Vehicle increases speed by up to its acceleration rating.	Vehicle does not accelerate.
Boot legger turn	13	Vehicle moves at current speed and turns in place to face the direction it just traveled.	Vehicle gains the Out of Control condition.
Decelerate	10	Vehicle decreases speed by up to its acceleration rating.	Vehicle does not decelerate.
Evasive Actions	13	Attacks against the vehicle suffer disadvantage until end of its next turn.	None
Hard break	13	Vehicle reduces speed by up to twice its acceleration rating.	Vehicle gains the Out of Control condition.
Pass by	15	Vehicle moves close to a target vehicle of the same scale and passes by it. Attacks made before the target vehicle makes another maneuver ignore the normal disadvantage penalty for firing from a moving vehicle.	Target vehicle may use a reaction to make a single attack per gunner or gunnery section against the maneuvering vehicle without suffering disadvantage for firing to or from a moving vehicle.
Ram	Opposed pilot checks	Vehicle collides with target	None if target is of a smaller or larger scale. Vehicle gains the Out of Control condition if target is of the same scale.
Side slip	15*	Vehicle moves forward up to current speed and to the side up to 25% of current speed.	Vehicle gains the Out of Control condition.
Stomp It!	13	Vehicle increases speed by up to twice its acceleration rating.	Vehicle suffers an engine or drive critical systems hit.
Tight turn	15*	Vehicle makes a 90° turn.	Vehicle gains the Out of Control condition.
Turn	13*	Vehicle makes a 45° turn.	Vehicle continues in a straight line.

* No pilot check needed if vehicle is traveling at less than 25% max speed.



suffer disadvantage on all piloting checks. Should a vehicle attempt a maneuver while engaged in melee with another vehicle all failed maneuvers result in a collision.

Collisions

Either through pilot error or by purposeful action vehicles may collide with other vehicles, creatures, or objects. A vehicle colliding with a vehicle of a larger scale is destroyed. If there is only a one step difference in scale, the larger vehicle suffers hull point damage equal to 1/10th of the smaller vehicle's hull points at the time of the collision. If there is a two-step difference in scale, the larger vehicle is unaffected. If the vehicles are of the same scale, both vehicles suffer a critical systems hit and a loss of 2d10 hull points. For the purposes of collisions, treat creatures as being of personal scale and adjust the above damage accordingly. Treat obstacles as being of the same scale to the vehicle that collides with it.

Out of Control Condition

A vehicle with the out of control condition may not attempt to maneuver but instead takes a randomly chosen maneuver (there are only 11 maneuvers, so roll a d12 and count down from the top, rerolling any 12). It requires an action and DC 15 Piloting check to regain control of a vehicle.

Attacks

Vehicles make attacks in the same manner as creatures except with the following differences.

Vehicles as Targets

Attacking a vehicle works much as attacking any other creature or object. Personal scale vehicles can be targeted separately from the pilot, as can any passengers being carried. For larger scale vehicles, unless otherwise noted the crew can be targeted separately by any attack and have either total or three-quarters cover (captains, command sections, pilots, operators, and gunners have three-quarters, all other have total cover). Shooting at or from a vehicle is done at disadvantage.

Called Shots

A vehicles' critical systems or exposed crew may be targeted. This is extremely difficult to do and requires a steady hand and sharp eye. The attacker suffers a -10 penalty on their attack roll. If targeting a critical system, the attack inflict 0 damage but instead causes a hit on that critical system. If targeting exposed crew, the attack inflicts its regular damage on the target crew, passenger, or crew section, but does not inflict any hull damage.

Vehicles and Damage

Vehicles take damage to their hull points. When a vehicle's hull points reach 0 all further damage results in a critical system hit. If a vehicle has lost all of its hull points and has suffered damage to all of its critical system, the vehicle is a wreck and is destroyed.

Vehicles are immune to psychic and poison damage, as well as all conditions except for invisible, petrified, and conditions that specifically effect vehicles. Vehicles are resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical or psychic weapons.

Hull Points

A vehicle's hull points are a measure of the ability of its body and frame to support it and protect the creatures and systems inside. When a vehicle is reduced to 0 hull points all further hits from a weapon of the same scale inflict a critical system hit instead of inflicting damage.

Temporary Hull Points

Damage control can hold a vehicle together long enough for it to stay in the fight or flee to safety. However, these repairs are patch jobs, and a vehicle loses all temporary hull points following the end of combat. When a vehicle with temporary hull points suffers damage that damage is taken from its temporary hull points first, and any excess is applied to the regular hull points.

Damaged Condition

The first time a critical system is hit it gains the damaged condition. The exact effects of this condition vary by critical system. A damaged critical system may be repaired or patched, but cannot be boosted. A damaged critical system that suffers another hit gains the failed condition.

Failed Condition

The second time a critical system is hit it gains the failed condition. The exact effects of this condition vary by critical system. A failed critical system may be repaired or patched, but cannot be boosted. Further hits on that critical system have no effect, as the system is already FUBAR.

Patched Condition

Engineers can keep critical systems functioning even if the systems have suffered damage. The patched system maintains its full function until that system suffers another critical system hit. A critical system can only have the patched condition once, and then must be repaired. A system with the patched condition cannot be boosted. After combat all systems with the patched condition lose the condition and revert back to either being damaged or failed.

Critical Systems Hit

A vehicle possesses critical systems it requires to be fully operational. Each vehicle has a critical systems table that lists all of its most important systems and the effects of those systems being damaged or gaining the failure condition. When all critical systems are at least damaged and the vehicle has 0 hull points, the vehicle is destroyed.

A vehicle can receive a critical systems hit in three ways. If the vehicle's hull points are at 0 any further successful attacks from the same scale result in a critical systems hit. If an attack roll with a weapon from the same scale results in a critical hit against a vehicle, the vehicle suffers a critical systems hit instead of receiving extra damage. Finally, a called shot might inflict a critical systems hit.

When a vehicle suffers a critical systems hit, roll on the critical systems table to see which system is affected. The first time a system receives a critical systems hit it gains the damaged condition with the listed effects. The second time a system receives a critical systems hit it gains the failed condition with the listed effects.

Destroyed Vehicles

A vehicle is destroyed when it has 0 hull points and all critical systems have at least the damaged condition. Some critical systems hits will also result in a destroyed vehicle. Unless otherwise noted, the crew of the vehicle may use a reaction to attempt a DC 15 Dexterity save to escape the vehicle. Those who fail are trapped in the vehicle and suffer its fate. A creature trapped in a destroyed vehicle suffers 2d6 fire and bashing damage at the start of their turn until freed.

Repairing Critical Systems

Critical systems can be repaired during short or long repairs. It requires a DC 13 Intelligence (Engineering) check to return a damaged system to operational status, and a DC 15 Intelligence (Engineering) check to bring a system in the failed condition to the damaged condition. The damage control action can also temporarily patch critical systems during combat. A character may attempt only one repair in this time. An engineer's tool kit is required.

Restoring Hull Points

Hull points can be repaired during a short or long repair. This requires a DC 13 Intelligence (Engineering) check and an engineer's tool kit. A successful check allows the vehicle to regain 1d10 + the Engineer's Intelligence modifier hull points. Only one attempt can be made to repair hull points per short repair.

VEHICLE STATS

The following stat blocks are for the most common vehicles found in the Solar System.

Scale. The vehicle's scale, personal planetary, or space.

Size. The vehicle's size within its scale.

Type. The type of vehicle and thus the vehicle proficiency needed to pilot it.

Armor Class. The vehicle's armor class; add the pilot's Dexterity modifier to the vehicle's AC.

Hull Points. The number of vehicle hull points as well as the number of dice rolled to determine hull points. Newly purchased vehicles have the maximum hull points possible, while used models or those in service will have fewer. Add the assigned engineer's Intelligence modifier to the vehicle's hull point total.

Speed. The vehicle's maximum speed listed in miles per hour as well as its combat speed. Combat speed is listed in scale, feet per round for personal scale vehicles, number of 20-foot cubes for planetary vehicles, and number of 10,000-mile cubes for space scale vehicles (or 1,000 mile cube for space scale vehicles in atmospheres).

Acc. The vehicle's maximum acceleration per maneuver listed in miles per hour as well as its combat acceleration. Combat speed is listed in scale, feet per round for personal scale vehicles, number of 20-foot cubes for planetary vehicles, and number of 10,000-mile cubes for space scale vehicles.

Handling. The number of maneuvers the vehicle may take per turn.

Challenge. The challenge rating for facing this vehicle in combat.

Crew. The type and number of crew positions needed to operate the vehicle, as well as the number of passengers it can carry.

Cargo. The amount of cargo the vehicle can carry.

Special Features. Any special features the vehicle has are listed in this section.

Actions. Lists any crew actions in addition to the normal crew actions that all vehicles can take and attacks.

Critical Systems. This table lists the critical systems the vehicle has and their boost, damaged, and failure statuses. When a vehicle suffers a critical systems hit, roll on this table to determine which system has been hit.



PERSONAL SCALE VEHICLES

MOTORCYCLE

Personal large automobile

Armor Class 10 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 90 mph, 820 combat

Acc 20 mph, 205 combat

Handling 3

Challenge 1/2

Crew 1 pilot, up to 1 passenger

Cargo 50 pounds

Quick start. This vehicle requires a bonus action to start.

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Actions

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Cost: \$100

Motorcycles are a popular means of travel in the wildernesses areas of the Solar System. They can handle rugged terrain, are easy to maintain, and often cheap to purchase. Like any internal combustion engine the main limitation is fuel. There are few fuel depots away from major rocket ports save on Earth. Often those traveling by motorcycle must carry a great deal of food, and make up the extra weight by living off the land.

Motorcycle Critical Systems

d2	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling by 2

ROCKET PACK

Personal small rocket pack

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 18 (3d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 400 mph, 3,520 combat
Acc 100 mph, 880 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 1
Crew 1 pilot
Cargo none

Quick start. This vehicle requires a bonus action to start.

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, pilot, reduces one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation, blast 10' x 10' area.

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, rocket pack explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Cost: \$2,000

Personal rocket travel is in its infancy, but rocket packs represent the cutting edge of rocket design. Using miniaturized radium rockets the rocket pack allows a person to fly without the encumbrance of being wrapped in a shiny metal shell. This freedom does come at a price, a biological body is not suited to the rigors of high speed aerial or space travel. Accidents tend to be fatal, and having a tank of radium fuel strapped to your back is not always the best of ideas.

Rocket Pack Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
5	Crew	n/a	Pilot suffers 1d12 fire damage	Pilot suffers 2d12 fire damage
6	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling by 2 or no maneuvers



PLANETARY SCALE VEHICLES

ARMORED CAR

Planetary small automobile

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 45 mph, 20 combat

Acc 10 mph, 5 combat

Handling 2

Challenge 1

Crew 1 command, 1 pilot, 1 gunner, 1 operator

Cargo 200 pounds

Actions

45mm cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 piercing (planetary scale), blast (1x1).

Machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 1d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

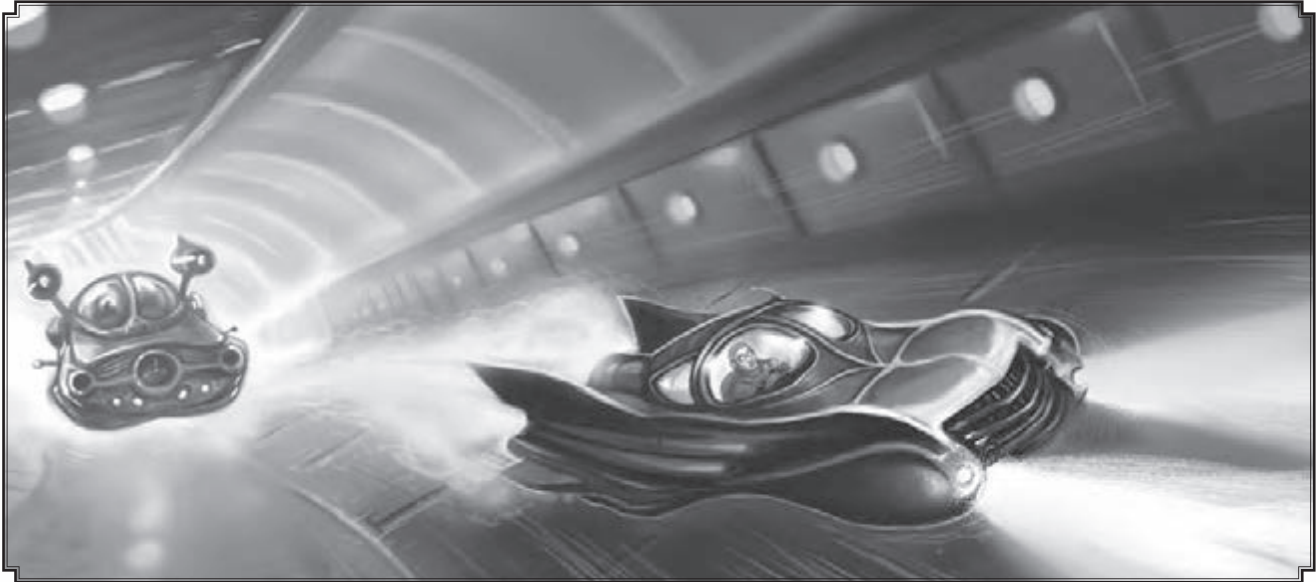
Machine gun. Attack, command, ranged, 1d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Armored Car Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	45mm gun	Add engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 piercing	Ammo explodes destroying vehicle
5	Machinegun	Add engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 piercing	Ammo explodes inflicting 2d6 fire damage on one crewmember
6	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
7	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0
8	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost

Cost: \$12,000

While tanks are somewhat rare off Earth, armored cars and their cousins, combat cars, are more common. At its simplest, the armored cars are nothing more than a civilian chaises with armor plating and a machine gun, and several explorers (as well as revolutionaries and bandits) drive Fords or other popular models that have been turned into mini-tanks. Every self-respecting nation of Earth produces its own specially built armored cars, some looking like tiny wheeled tanks complete with turrets and light cannons. A few of the wealthier Martian princes have managed to purchase or have made for them armored cars, often with Martian weapons and armor in place of Earthling technology.



CAR

Planetary small automobile

Armor Class 10 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 12 (2d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 90 mph, 40 combat
Acc 20 mph, 10 combat
Handling 2

Challenge 1/2
Crew 1 pilot
Cargo 600 pounds

Cost: \$700

The automobile has become a ubiquitous sight on Earth, and is becoming common in Earthling dominated parts of Mars and Venus. Thousands of models are in production, and the technology is simple enough for backyard or garage amateurs to build their own. The only limits to the spread of the automobile are the existence of a support system, namely fueling stations. These are rare off Earth, though both national interests and private companies on Mars and near Roosevelt Station on Venus operate depots. Gasoline, cheap on Earth, is at least fifty times its normal price off world, at least until someone discovers oil reserves on Mars or Venus.

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Car Critical System

d4	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
3	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
4	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0



FIGHTER PLANE

Planetary medium airplane

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 36 (6d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 440 mph, 190 combat
Acc 110 mph, 50 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 2

Crew 1 pilot

Cargo 25 pounds

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Targeting system. The pilot does not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Bomb. Attack, pilot, dropped, 2d10 fire (planetary scale), blast (2x2), one use

Quad machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 4d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Rockets. Attack, pilot, ranged, 4d10 fire (planetary scale), burst (1x1) one use

Cost: \$24,000

Twenty years ago, the airplane was the height of human technological achievement, and those who flew and built them were accorded fame and honor. The rocket ship has replaced the airplane as the great motivator of human endeavor, relegating the airplane to the same level as the automobile, popular and needed, but not nearly as impressive as soaring between the planets. Stunt planes and fighter craft have not developed very much since the beginning of the decade, but transport planes have seen a leap forward, becoming larger and more reliable. Planes are finding a new life on alien worlds both in the hands of Earthlings and native governments.

Fighter Plane Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	Vehicle may not accelerate and begins to fall at 150 feet per round.
2	Targeting system	Increase weapon ranges by 50%	Targeting system no longer grants advantage	Targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Bombs	Add engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Bomb may not be released	Bomb explodes destroying vehicle and killing pilot.
5	Quad machine guns	Add	Reduce damage to 2d10 (personal scale) piercing	Armament offline
6	Rockets	Add	Rockets offline	Rockets explode inflicting 4d10 fire damage (planetary scale) on vehicle and 2d12 fire damage (personal scale) on pilot
7	Crew	n/a	Pilot suffers 1d10 fire damage	Pilot suffers 2d10 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0

ROCKET SLED

Planetary small rocket pack

Armor Class 12 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 500 mph, 200 combat
Acc 125 mph, 50 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 1
Crew 1 pilot, up to 4 passengers
Cargo 200 pounds

Open topped. The vehicle has open crew, cargo, and passenger compartments. Creatures and objects only have half cover from attacks originating from outside the vehicle.

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Actions

Flare burn. Attack, pilot section, melee, 3d10 radiation (planetary scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain or command section, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 6d10 radiation (planetary scale) on all creatures and vehicles within 2 areas.

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Cost: \$7,000

Rocket sleds are used to ferry passengers and cargo between rocket ships, and in the asteroid belt from rock to rock. They are becoming popular in the skies of Jupiter, though their rocket flame is dangerous if a methane cloud drifts by. There have been several modifications of the humble rocket sled to turn it into a racing craft or an enclosed cargo hauler.

Rocket Sled Critical Systems

d6	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan checks gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
6	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 2	Reduce handling to 1



TANK

Planetary medium automobile

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 42 (7d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 30 mph, 10 combat

Acc 10 mph, 5 combat

Handling 1

Challenge 3

Crew 1 captain, 1 pilot, 1 gunner, 1 operator

Cargo 500 pounds

Environmentally sealed. The vehicle can be sealed against outside environments and has an internal air supply for 24 hours.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Tracked. The vehicle ignores difficult terrain that is not water based.

Actions

75mm cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 4d10 piercing (planetary scale), blast (1x1).

Machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 1d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

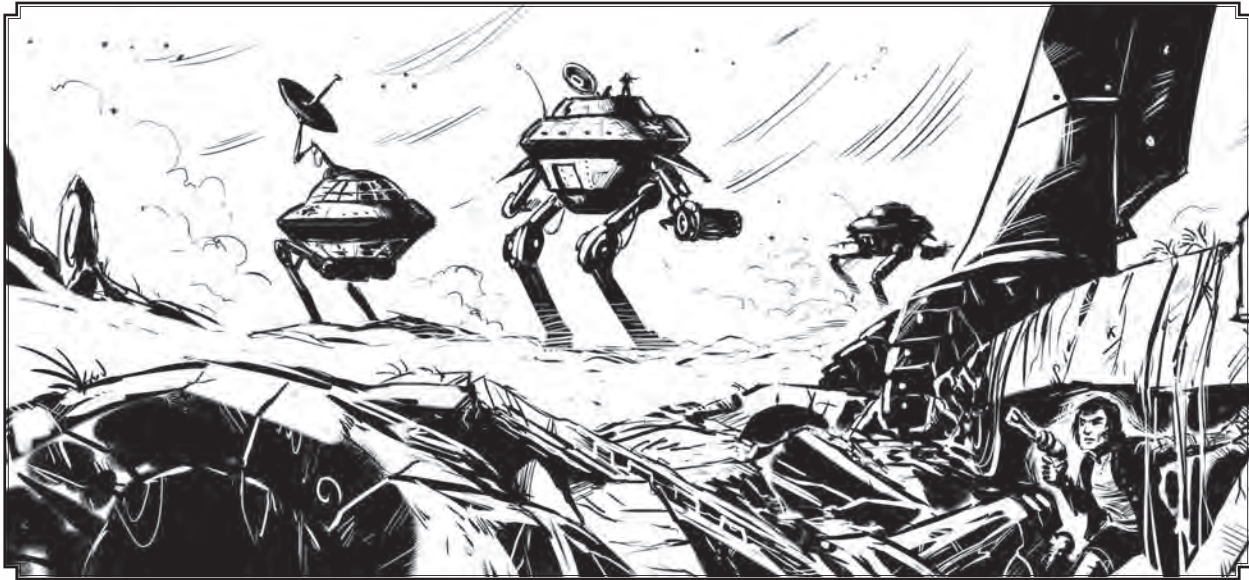
Machine gun. Attack, captain, ranged, 1d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Cost: \$46,000

Tanks are still the mainstay of most militaries, though they see little action beyond the accumulated forces on Earth. Most armored units spend their time performing garrison duty or in war games, though the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Germany have all managed to transport small numbers of armored fighting vehicles to Mars. For the most part, only the Americans and British make any great use of tanks or armored cars in their Martian conflicts. The Germans have largely replaced its armored units of the Deutsche Marskorps with war walkers, and the French and Italians have yet to establish reliable supply lines and fuel depots in their Martian territories.

Tank Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	75mm gun	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 piercing	Ammo explodes destroying vehicle
5	Machinegun	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 piercing	Ammo explodes inflicting 2d6 fire damage on one crewmember
6	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
7	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0
8	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost



WAR WALKERS

The mainstay of the Deutsche Marskorps, the war walker is held to be the future of armored warfare and the greatest weapon in Germany's arsenal. The war walker is an Earthling design based on artifacts and schematics discovered in the ruins of an Ancient Martian city near Kalthonia, one of the Martian city-states under Nazi rule. By reverse-engineering the detailed construction plans, Nazi scientists were able to reconstruct the ancient war machine using Earthling materials and technology. At least this is what they claim, in truth the war walker is only a shadow of what the Ancient Martian walking tanks were, but even so it is a deadly weapon.

War walkers stand on two or more legs, are capable of traversing rough terrain, and mount a host of weaponry. These highly mobile fighting platforms range from five to twenty meters tall, can carry much more firepower and armor than a conventional tank, and run on a combination of gasoline and electrical engines. This gives them a huge operational range and the ability to rapidly deploy into nearly any terrain.

Even the large main battle tank models are faster than anything in the arsenals of Germany's rivals; better armed and armored as well. The smaller reconnaissance war walkers have only two crewmen, one to pilot the walker and one to operate the weapons platform while the larger *sturmschreiter* ('storm walker') battle tanks have crews of five. It is the pilots that make the difference, and not everybody is suitable to serve such a role in a war walker.

The Ancient Martian designs hinted that the pilots of the walking tanks were somehow bred or raised (possibly grown) to serve that function. No details of this rearing process have been discovered, but the schematics concerning the neuro-electrical interfaces through which the pilots performed the complex task of guiding a war walker in combat were highly detailed. The initial test subjects all died, but the Nazi scientists persevered, and in the end a system that allowed its user to not just survive, but to be able to detach himself from the walker was developed.



PANZERSCHREITIER

Planetary huge war walker

Armor Class 18 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 84 (14d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 35 mph, 15 combat

Acc 5 mph, 1 combat

Handling 2

Challenge 8

Crew 1 captain, 1 pilot, 1 operator, 3 gunners

Cargo 500 pounds

Achilles» heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the vehicle suffers two critical systems hits.

Environmentally sealed. The vehicle can be sealed against outside environments and has an internal air supply for 24 hours.

Legs. The war walker has four legs and can easily step over obstacles smaller than itself.

Neural interface. The pilot is connected to the ship via a neural interface link that grants a free maneuver per turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on the pilot.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Kick. Attack, pilot, melee, 3d10 bludgeoning (planetary scale).

Dual machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Dual machine gun. Attack, gunner, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Heavy RAY cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 6d10 radiation (space scale), one use, recharges on a 5 or 6 on a d6.

Rockets. Attack, gunner, ranged, 4d10 fire (planetary scale), burst (1x1) three uses

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 14d10 fire and piecing damage (planetary scale) on all creatures and vehicles within 5 areas.

Cost: \$100,000

Panzerschreitier Critical Systems

d10	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Dual machine guns	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 (personal scale) piercing	Armament offline
5	Rockets	+	Rockets offline	Rockets explode inflicting 4d10 fire damage (planetary scale) on the vehicle and 2d12 fire damage on pilot
6	Heavy RAY canon	+	Reduce damage to 3d10 (space scale)	Armament offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling to 0
9	Neural interface	n/a	The pilot gains the stunned condition until the end of the vehicle's next turn.	The pilot is rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
10	Legs	n/a	Vehicle is unsteady and may not cross obstacles or difficult terrain.	Vehicle falls over suffering 3d10 bludgeoning damage (planetary), all crew suffer 2d12 damage (personal) and are stunned until the end of their next turn.

PANZERSPHÄHLÄUFER

Planetary small war walker

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 30 (5d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 65 mph, 30 combat
Acc 20 mph, 10 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 2
Crew 1 pilot, 1 gunner
Cargo 100 pounds

Achilles heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the vehicle suffers two critical systems hits.

Environmentally sealed. The vehicle can be sealed against outside environments and has an internal air supply for 24 hours.

Legs. The war walker has four legs and can easily step over obstacles smaller than itself.

Neural interface. The pilot is connected to the ship via a neural interface link that grants a free maneuver per turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on the pilot.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Kick. Attack, pilot, melee, 1d10 bashing type (planetary scale).

Dual machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Dual machine gun. Attack, gunner, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot or gunner, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 5d10 fire and piecing damage (planetary scale) on all creatures and vehicles within 5 areas.

Cost: \$75,000

Panzersphähläufer Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Dual machine guns	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 (personal scale) piercing	Armament offline
5	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
6	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1
7	Neural interface	n/a	The pilot gains the stunned condition until the end of the vehicle's next turn.	The pilot is rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
8	Legs	n/a	Vehicle is unsteady and may not cross obstacles or difficult terrain.	Vehicle falls over suffering 3d10 bludgeoning damage (planetary), all crew suffer 2d12 damage (personal) and are stunned until the end of their next turn.



STURMSCHREITIER

Planetary gargantuan war walker

Armor Class 20 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 102 (17d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 20 mph, 10 combat
Acc 5 mph, 1 combat
Handling 2

Challenge 10
Crew 1 captain, 2 pilots, 4 gunners, 1 operator
Cargo 1 ton

Achilles heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the vehicle suffers two critical systems hits.

Environmentally sealed. The vehicle can be sealed against outside environments and has an internal air supply for 24 hours.

Legs. The war walker has four legs and can easily step over obstacles smaller than itself.

Neural interface. The pilot is connected to the ship via a neural interface link that grants a free maneuver per turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on the pilot. Due to the dual pilot system if one pilot dies the other must make a DC 18 Constitution save or be reduced to 0 hp..

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

45mm cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 piercing (planetary scale), blast (1x1).

Kick. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 bashing type (planetary scale).

Dual machine gun. Attack, pilot, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Dual machine gun. Attack, gunner, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Dual machine gun. Attack, captain, ranged, 2d10 piercing (personal scale), burst (10'x40').

Heavy RAY cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 6d10 radiation (space scale), one use, recharges on a 5 or 6 on a d6.

Rockets. Attack, gunner, ranged, 4d10 fire (planetary scale), burst (1x1) three uses

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 17d10 fire and piecing damage (planetary scale) on all creatures and vehicles within 5 areas.

Cost: \$250,000

Sturmschreitier Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Engine	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate, vehicle decelerates at a rate of 1 area per round.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Dual machine guns	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 (personal scale) piercing	Armament offline
5	45mm gun	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 piercing	Ammo explodes destroying vehicle
6	Cargo	n/a	Half of the cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
7	Rockets	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Rockets offline	Rockets explode inflicting 4d10 fire damage (planetary scale) on the vehicle and 2d12 fire damage on pilot
8	Heavy RAY canon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d10 (space scale)	Armament offline
9	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d10 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d10 fire damage
10	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling to 0
11	Neural interface	n/a	The pilot gains the stunned condition until the end of the vehicle's next turn.	The pilot is rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
12	Legs	n/a	Vehicle is unsteady and may not cross obstacles or difficult terrain.	Vehicle falls over suffering 3d10 bludgeoning damage (planetary), all crew suffer 2d12 damage (personal) and are stunned until the end of their next turn.



ROCKET SHIPS

The great wonders of the age are the mighty rocket ships that have carried humanity from its Earthly home to distant planets, and hold out the hope of penetrating to the farthest reaches of the Solar System. Powered by radium-fueled rocket engines, rocket ships are by far the fastest and most impressive vehicles humanity has ever developed. In the seven years since the first Einstein-Goddard-Tesla design, the rocket engine has undergone a rapid development becoming more efficient, providing greater thrust, and capable of reaching speeds that boggle the mind.

Hundreds of companies build rocket engines and rocket ships, as well as all the other secondary components such as life support, communications, armor, and weaponry. The competition to build a better engine or other ship component is great. This has led to a range of dirty tricks, industrial sabotage and espionage, and the scouring of the Solar System for ancient technologies like those found on Mars. So far, the basic radium engine is the norm, but experiments are being carried out with cesium, uranium, and more exotic elements.

ROCKET SHIP BASICS

The core component of a rocket ship is the rocket engine, without this the vessel is just a silver spear floating through space. Rocket engines work by accelerating radium (or other elements) to a higher energy state, and then expelling these atomic and sub-atomic particles out the back end, thus providing thrust. By altering the flow rate out the nozzle or the mix ratio in the acceleration chamber, the velocity of the ship can be increased or decreased. It should be noted that rocket ship exhaust is hot, both in temperature and radioactivity, and a person caught in the blast of a landing or take-off will likely die.

A rocket engine without some sort of control would just be a missile launched into the void, never to return. In an atmosphere, normal aviation control surfaces, such as wings and rudders, can be used, but this is not an option in the void between planets. While travelling through a vacuum, adjusting the angel of thrust controls rocket ships, basically the nozzle or nozzles at the end of a rocket engine are angled, directing the thrust in a different direction and the ship on the opposite vector. This is not as fine of a control system as aviation rudders and flaps, but allows for gross maneuvers and vectors. Fine control outside of an atmosphere relies

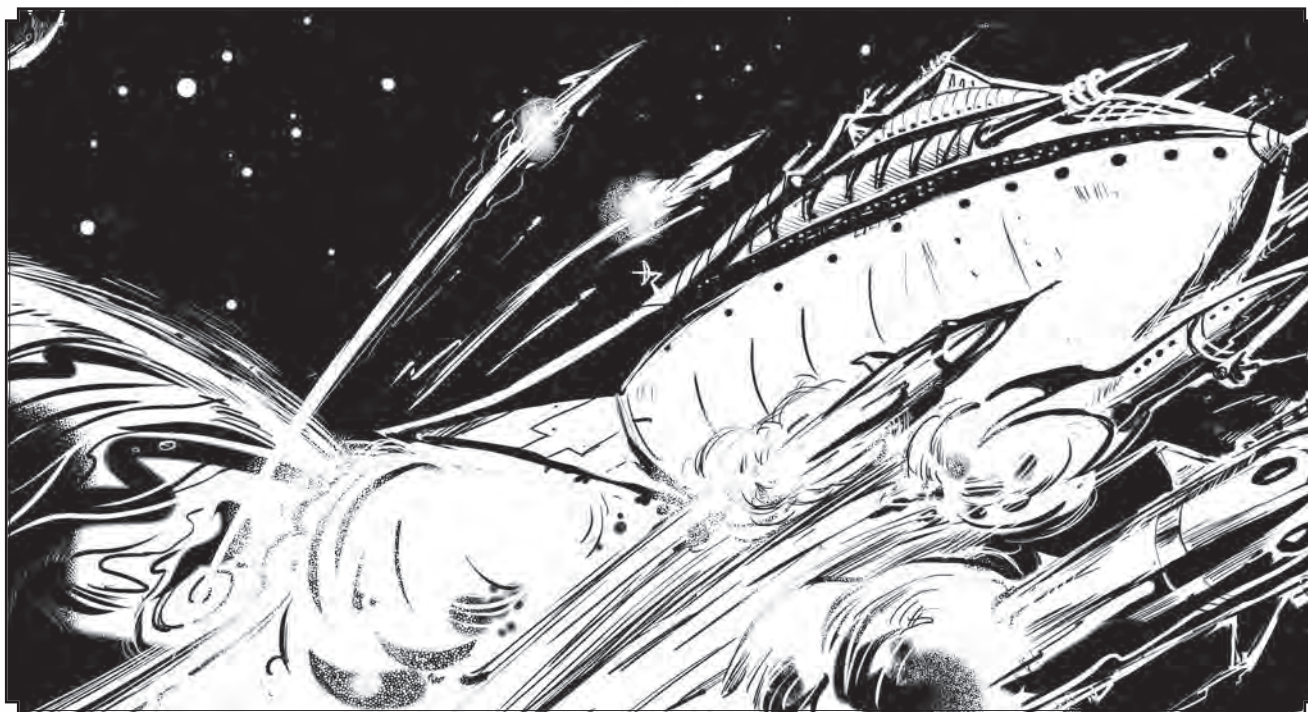
on a series of thruster plates, small conventional rocket engines spaced around the outside of the hull. These thruster plates are not powerful enough to launch the vessel out of atmosphere and break a gravity well, but are more than capable of creating small course and attitude alterations.

Beyond the systems need to move and maneuver the vessel, there is a great deal of diversity with regards to rocket ship design. All have some kind of life support system, as well as landing gear, communications equipment, and a hull. Many have armor or weaponry for the Solar System is a dangerous place and far out among the planets there is little or no law. Mining ships have specialized compartments for cargo as well as processing facilities. Merchant ships have a lot of cargo space, though most of the cargo that is profitable to transport by rocket ship is of the small, but expensive variety, bulk shipments being generally limited to rare ores such as radium. Warships have more weapons and armor, but also more crew, as well as redundant systems in case of damage. Finally, the broad class of personal rocket ships, the kind used by freebooters, private explorers, and the idle rich, knows no limits to the variety of components installed.

ROCKET SHIP HULLS

By far the best hulls for rocket ships are made of a bonded composite of aluminum and steel, welded together and then riveted for increased strength. This creates an airtight shell that can then be stuffed with whatever passengers, crew, and components that the builder envisions. The standard hull shape is an elongated cone with a pair of wings and short stubby tail fins (though these fins can be rather long if they double as landing gear). The base of the cone houses the engine or engines, and the tip is generally the location of the bridge and primary controls. A shiny silverfish exterior is the norm; both for fashion sense and because unpainted, but highly polished hulls reduce drag and weight (paint weighs a lot when applied across the hull of a large rocket ship). Often the wings and fins are treated to give the surface a contrasting color, it is here that national or private insignia are often found.

Inside the hull, the rocket ship differs greatly from a more mundane craft, namely in that it is stacked vertically. Each deck level is laid across the axis of the cone, not longitudinally along the length, creating a series of circular decks that get progressively large the closer one gets to the base of the cone. This is so that when in space the thrust of the engine allows for the



creation of an artificial gravity, the base of the cone becomes 'down' for the passengers and crew. Once in the gravity well of a planet, important control stations and furniture are gimballed to change their orientation ninety degrees, though most of the ship remains in its normal orientation. This makes a tail down landing not only easier, but highly practical when one considers that it is only the thrust of the rocket engine that keeps the ship in flight, and thus by slowly reducing that thrust one can land the ship, tail down, on a point no smaller than the diameter of the tail fins/landing gear.

LIFE SUPPORT

There are two general approaches to life support systems on board rocket ships. By far the more common is to use oxygen scrubbers and electric lighting, as well as heating and cooling, to provide basic life support. Water is stored in large tanks, which due to the cone design of most rocket ships are placed in the rear of the vessel. Waste is recycled, and those parts that cannot be turned back into potable water are vented into space. With air and water being recycled, and electricity being provided by the ship's engines, only fuel and food remain as limitations on the range of a rocket ship. Both are stored, alongside the water, in holds at the base of the ship.

On vessels designed for longer voyages, such as the journey to Saturn and the outer planets, a different

system needs to be used. First of all, these deep space rocket ships must be larger than their compatriots that traverse the relatively shorter distances between Earth, Mars, Venus, and the Jovian System. This is so that they can carry enough fuel and food to last the voyage. However, due to limitations of rocket engine and hull technology, there is an upper limit of rocket ship size. This means that the deep space ships must recycle more air and water, and even other waste elements. Every scrap of waste is turned back into something useful, and even human excrement is transformed into nutrient pills, not terribly filling or palatable, but they will keep you alive. Condensation traps throughout the ship help recycle every ounce of water, and the strategic placement of houseplants helps clean the air. Conservation of fuel requires that these ships be kept at a colder temperature, making them uncomfortable habitats, but giving the deep space explorer his signature item, the woolen rocket jumper and shipboard scarf.

WEAPONS

Combat in space is a tricky business; the speeds and distances involved make most conventional weaponry obsolete. By far the most popular weaponry found on rocket ships is the RAY cannon, often installed in banks along the hull or wings. These have the range and speed (RAY blasts move at the speed of light) to reach out and destroy targets. However, RAY cannons are expensive and often are limited to militaries,



and so other weaponry systems have come into use. Conventional artillery pieces have been modified for use on rocket ships, though the smoke and recoil of these weapons, as well as their noise, make them fit only for the most desperate or money conscious of ship designers. Rocket pods are often equipped to allow for sudden blasts against incoming fighters or other small craft.

ARMOR

Rocket ship hulls normally have a thin layer of armor in order to protect against debris and meteoroids. This armor is enough to turn away light projectiles such as bullets fired from rifles and other small arms. Defense against larger and more powerful weapons is rare and usually only seen on warships. Normally this consists of layers of hardened steel that deflects conventional ordnance and ablates when under fire from RAY cannons. However, the Americans have developed a new defensive system that generates an electrostatic charge across the length of the hull. This charge negates RAY beams, dissipating them harmlessly across the field.

RADIUM DRIVE

Rocket ships are powered by radium drives. These complex engines use refined radium to produce both thrust for the vessel and to generate power for the ship's systems. Radium drives spew hypervelocity radioactive particles out the back end of the rocket ship, providing thrust to move the ship. A running radium drive generates an envelope around itself that repels small particles of matter. This field can be tuned and amplified through various means to encompass the entire ship. While not powerful enough to shield the ship from attack, it does prevent high-speed collisions with space borne dust and debris.

SENSORS

For the most part rocket ships use RADAR, telescopes, and Mark I eyeballs for their sensor systems. This means that the information they can gather is rather limited. With standard sensors you can determine bearing, speed, size, and sometimes composition of objects and ships. However, clever brains have been working on the problem for several years and even with this limited data input a great deal of information can be extrapolated.

AMERICAN ROCKET SHIPS

The flagships of the American Rocket fleet are the Presidential class battle cruisers, currently standing at nine vessels, the Teddy Roosevelt, Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, Adams, Grant, Harrison, and Wilson. Each battle cruiser is the center of a squadron consisting of Capital class cruisers, Hero class frigates, Admiral class destroyers, and various support ships such as the Scout class patrol boats and the Pioneer class transports. The Rocket Rangers have their own ships, the Tribal class corvettes. These fast, but heavily armed ships are scattered across the Solar System at various bases and are designed to put their own firepower and a squad of Rangers into any trouble spot between the orbits of Jupiter and Venus within twenty-four hours.

BRITISH ROCKET SHIPS

The British fleet is smaller than the American, but built around a different strategic goal. Whereas the American fleet is decentralized and designed for rapid deployment, the British fleet remains stationed at two points, Earth and Mars orbit. Additionally, British rocket ships are larger and more fearsomely armed and armored than their American cousins. At the top of the list of heavily armored warships are the Monarch class dreadnoughts, the largest warships in the Solar System (save for the European's Imperial class ships, but they do not count, we hope). Two of these behemoths are already in service, with another three under construction on Earth. Eight Nelson class battleships and fifteen invincible class battle cruisers are split between the two fleets. The smallest vessels in the British fleet, the Cochrane class frigates, are scattered throughout the Solar System protecting British interests. Several tenders and other small craft round out the fleet.

CIVILIAN ROCKET SHIPS

The most common civilian rocket ships are the bulk freighters, ranging from the small (comparatively) Conestoga class (made in Portland, Oregon by Boeing Rocketry), to the gargantuan Soviet Lun class bulk hauler. In addition to the freighters, several luxury yacht style rocket ships are available, such as the Trireme built by Armstrong Rocket Ships (this model features wood paneling on the inner bulkheads, gold faucets, and a smooth, comfortable ride). Private citizens can also purchase mining, salvaging, and exploration ships, with many of the latter in the hands of various universities and other academic or scientific organizations.

FRENCH ROCKET SHIPS

French designs are a middle ground between the smaller, but technologically sophisticated American rocket ships and the lumbering British behemoths. They are sleek and fast, well armed and armored, yet number only in the dozens. Most of the French fleet is in Earth orbit, with a small task force maintained above Mars. The fleet of the French Third Republic adheres to the American system of combining one large ship, in the case of the Martian task force the American-built, but French designed Lafayette class battleship, with several smaller ships (the Révolution class cruisers and Navarre class frigates). Where the French are pushing the edge of rocket ship design is in the field of rocket fighters and their attendant carriers, and the French Guêpe class attack craft and their Ruche class carriers are prime examples of this.

GERMAN ROCKET SHIPS

The Germans have long looked to emulate or top the British Royal navy, whether it is on the sea or in space. To this end, Hitler has been building larger and larger vessels, leading to a mass confusion in the German Rocket Navy. Last year's massive Brandenburg battleship will be dwarfed in a few years by the size of the new Star class battle cruisers, yet they are both officially classified as equal in strength. The same has happened with destroyers, frigates, and all manner of vessels, as two ships from different classes will be listed as the same type of vessels, but one will be much larger than the other. Furthermore, the largest rocket ships to be built, the Kampf class super dreadnaughts, will be three times the size of the current six year old Reich class dreadnaughts. In short, a German warship can be nearly any size, and this often has little to do with the type of vessel it is supposed to be.

SOVIET ROCKET SHIPS

Although the Soviet Union has the third largest fleet, Soviet rocket ship design lags behind that of the other major powers. It does build large ships, but they are not the most technologically advanced and often lack the heavy RAY cannon batteries, the internal hangers for smaller rocket sled based fighter craft, or much in the way of the creature comforts found in the designs of the other major powers. The pride of the Soviet fleet is the Lenin, a huge dreadnought kept in Earth orbit (as is most of the acknowledged Soviet fleet). Most of the warships that the Soviets have deployed are in the form of blockade-runners and raiders, and they use these to

support their covert operations throughout the Solar System. These small, light, but fast vessels are easily disguised as small transports or yachts, allowing them to enter orbits unnoticed in order to conduct clandestine landings and other acts of subterfuge.

OTHER ROCKET SHIPS

The Japanese maintain a small fleet, as do the Belgians, Italians, and Brazilians. Other nations field at least one rocket ship, and often not more than that. Australia and Canada have fleets of less than fifteen and twelve ships respectively, but as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, their ships operate closely alongside the British fleets and during any conflict are expected to integrate into the command structure of the Royal Navy. Turkey has two ships, as do many of the smaller or less powerful European nations such as Norway, Sweden, and Greece. Of interest, the Vatican has purchased and had adapted several of its own ships in order to deliver its missionaries safely to other worlds, even though there has yet to be an official ruling of the souls of Martians and Venusians. To date, these missionary ships have only been used to transport priests and other clergy to Mars and Venus in order to minister to the human populations there, rather convert the inhabitants. Finally, Mexico and Chile each have one rocket ship, though neither nation tends to actually launch its very singular fleet, merely keep them earthbound as display pieces.



BATTLESHIP

Space huge rocket ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 96 (16d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 310,700 mph, 25 combat
Acc 77,675 mph, 5 combat
Handling 1

Challenge 10

Crew 1 captain, 1 command section, 1 operator section, 1 medical section, 2 pilot sections, 3 engineering sections, 12 gunnery sections, plus up to 30 passengers
Cargo 1,000 tons

Fighter bays. The ship has a bay that holds 12 rocket fighters. The ship's engineering sections can take actions affecting any fighters in the bay.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, or remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Targeting system. Gunnery sections do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Battleship Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Heavy RAY Cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d10 Radiation	Armament offline
6	Rocket pod	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	One rocket pod's damage is reduced to 1d10 fire	One rocket pod is offline
7	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
8	Rocket pod ammo	n/a	One rocket pod is offline	One rocket pod's ammo explodes killing a gunnery crew section and inflicting 4d10 fire damage (space scale) on the ship
9	Crew	n/a	One crew section gains the depleted condition	One crew section killed
10	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Ship may not take maneuvers
11	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo lost	All cargo lost
12	Launch bays	Bay may launch 1 more ship.	Launch bay capacity reduced by half, all ships in bay suffer 1d12 fire damage (space scale).	Launch bay offline, all ships in bay destroyed

AMERICAN BATTLESHIPS

American battleships (called battle cruisers) have been fitted with experimental RAY shielding in place of light RAY cannons. Remove three gunnery sections, the light RAY cannon actions and critical systems entry. Instead, American battleships gain the following:

RAY shielding _____ The ship has resistance to beam weapons.

Critical Systems

d12 _____ 4

System _____ RAY shielding

Boost _____ Ship gains immunity to beam weapons.

Damaged _____ For every hit from a beam weapon roll a d20. On a 9 or less the beam passes through the shielding unaffected. On a 10 or higher the ship retains its resistance to beam weapons.

Failure _____ RAY shielding offline.

Cost _____ adds \$500,000

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineering section, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew section, crew section ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot section, melee, 6d10 radiation (space scale).

Launch fighters. Action, command section, up to 6 fighters currently in the fighter bay may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Heavy RAY cannons (4). Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 6d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannons (3). Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Rocket Pods (5). Attack, gunnery section, melee, 2d10 fire (space scale). Rocket pods fire a spread of projectiles that grant the attack advantage.

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain or command section, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 12d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$2 million

AMERICAN FRIGATES

American frigates have been fitted with experimental RAY shielding in place of light RAY cannons. Remove six gunnery crew sections, the light RAY cannon actions and critical systems entry. Instead, American frigates gain the following:

RAY shielding _____ The ship has resistance to beam weapons.

Critical Systems

d12 _____ 4

System _____ RAY shielding

Boost _____ Vehicle gains immunity to beam weapons

Damaged _____ For every hit from a beam weapon roll a d20. On a 9 or less the beam passes through the shielding unaffected. On a 10 or higher the ship retains its resistance to beam weapons.

Failure _____ RAY shielding offline.

Cost: _____ adds \$500,000



BLOCKADE RUNNER

Space medium rocket ship

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 30 (5d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 400,800 mph, 35 combat
Acc 100,200 mph, 10 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 2

Crew 1 captain, 1 pilot, 1 engineer, 1 operator, 1 gunner,
 plus up to 10 passengers

Cargo 200 tons

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel, and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$750,000

Blockade Runner Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crew suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0

BULK FREIGHTER

Space huge rocket ship

Armor Class 10 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 42 (7d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 100,000 mph, 5 combat

Acc 25,000 mph, 1 combat

Handling 1

Challenge 2

Crew 1 captain, 1 operator section, 1 medical section, 1 engineering section, 1 pilot section, 2 gunnery sections, plus up to 30 passengers

Cargo 4,000 tons

Quad cargo holds. The ship has four cargo holds each with a 1,000-ton capacity and a separate critical systems entry.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a

short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineering section, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used twice and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew section, crew section ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, piloting section, melee, 6d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannon. Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannon. Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 12d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$1 million

Bulk Freighter Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light Ray cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew section gains the depleted condition	One crew section is killed
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1.	Reduce handling to 0	Ship may not take maneuvers
9	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
10	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
11	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
12	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost



DESTROYER

Space medium rocket ship

Armor Class 16 +chief pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 42 (7d10 +chief engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 388,375 mph, 35 combat

Acc 97,095 mph, 10 combat

Handling 2

Challenge 3

Crew 1 captain, 1 command section, 1 operator section, 1 medical section 1 pilot section, 1 engineer section, 10 gunnery sections, plus up to 10 passengers

Cargo 250 tons

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Targeting system. Gunnery sections do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineering section, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used twice and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew section, crew section ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot section, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Heavy RAY cannons (4). Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 6d10 radiation (space scale).

Rocket Pods (6). Attack, gunnery section, melee, 2d10 fire (space scale). Rocket pods fire a spread of projectiles that grant the attack advantage.

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale).

Cost: \$800,000

Destroyer Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, targeting system offline	RADAR offline, all pilot checks at disadvantage
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Heavy RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d10 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew section gains the depleted condition	One crew section killed
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1.	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0
9	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
10	Rocket pod	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	One rocket pod's damage is reduced to 1d10 fire	One rocket pod is offline
11	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
12	Rocket pod ammo	n/a	One rocket pod is offline	One rocket pod's ammo explodes killing a gunnery crew section and inflicting 4d10 fire damage on ship

EXPLORATION SHIP

Space small rocket ship

Armor Class 12 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 600,000 mph, 30 combat
Acc 150,000 mph, 5 combat
Handling 1

Challenge 1

Crew 1 captain, 1 engineer, 1 operator, 1 pilot, 0-4 gunners, plus up to 6 passengers
Cargo 50 tons

Laboratory. All Intelligence (Science) checks made in the laboratory are done with advantage.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Sample storage. The ship has an additional 5 tons of cargo space that can store material in climate-controlled environments.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used twice and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel, and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 3d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannons (4). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 6d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$500,000

Exploration Ship Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed to 96000 mph/ combat speed to 15	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light Ray cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 damage	One crew suffers 2d12 damage
8	Controls	n/a	Reduce handling to 0	Ship may not take maneuvers
9	Laboratory	n/a	Laboratory no longer grants bonuses	Laboratory offline
10	Sample storage	n/a	Half of sample storage is lost	All sample storage is lost
11	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
12	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost



FREIGHTER

Space large rocket ship

Armor Class 10 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 36 (6d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 77,675 mph, 5 combat

Acc 19,420 mph, 1 combat

Handling 1

Challenge 1

Crew 1 captain, 1 engineer, 1 operator, 1 medic, 1 pilot, 2 gunners, plus up to 20 passengers

Cargo 1,000 tons

Dual cargo holds. The ship has two cargo holds each with a 500-ton capacity and a separate critical systems entry.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used twice and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 5d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannons (2). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 10d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$650,000

Freighter Critical Systems

d10	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light Ray cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crew suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1.	Reduce handling to 0	Ship may not take maneuvers
9	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
10	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost

FRIGATE

Space large rocket ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 60 (10d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 291,435 mph, 25 combat

Acc 72,860 mph, 5 combat

Handling 2

Challenge 5

Crew 1 captain, 1 command section, 1 pilot sections, 2 engineering sections, 8 gunnery sections

Cargo 500 tons

Fighter bays. The ship has a bay that holds 6 rocket fighters. The ship's engineering sections can take actions affecting any fighters in the bay.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, or remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Targeting system. Gunnery sections do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineering section, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew section, crew section ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot section, melee, 5d10 radiation (space scale).

Launch fighters. Action, command section, up to 6 fighters currently in the fighter bay may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Heavy RAY cannons (4). Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 6d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannons (6). Attack, gunnery section, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain or command section, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 10d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$1.2 million

American Frigate on Page 179.

Frigate Critical Systems

d12	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Heavy RAY Cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d10 Radiation	Armament offline
7	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
9	Crew	n/a	One crew section gains the depleted condition	One crew section killed
10	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Ship may not take maneuvers
11	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo lost	All cargo lost
12	Launch bays	Bay may launch 1 more ship	Launch bay capacity reduced by half, all ships in bay suffer 1d12 fire damage	Launch bay offline, all ships in bay destroyed



MARK III RANGER ROCKET PACK AND SPACE ARMOR

Space tiny rocket pack

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 30 (5d10 +pilots Intelligence modifier)
Speed 21,749 mph, 20 combat
Acc 7,940 mph, 5 combat
Handling 4

Challenge 5

Crew 1 pilot

Cargo 15 pounds

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Targeting system. The pilot does not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, pilot, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, pilot, pilot ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Dual light RAY cannon. Attack, pilot, ranged, 2d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Cost: \$185,000

Mark III Ranger Rocket Pack and Space Armor Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, targeting system offline	RADAR and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Dual light RAY cannons	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	Pilot suffers 1d12 fire damage	Pilot suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling by 2

PATROL BOAT

Space small rocket ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 700,000 mph, 40 combat

Acc 175,000 mph, 10 combat

Handling 3

Challenge 1

Crew 1 captain, 1 pilot, 1 engineer, 1 operator, 2 gunners

Cargo 50 tons

Targeting system. Gunnery sections do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel, and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 3d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannons (2). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 6d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$150,000

Patrol Boat Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system offline	RADAR offline and targeting system offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crew suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling by 2



RANGER CORVETTE - *TRIBAL* CLASS

Space medium rocket ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 48 (8d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 600,000 mph, 30 combat
Acc 150,000 mph, 5 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 5

Crew 1 captain, 1 command, 1 operator, 1 medic, 1 pilot, 3 engineers, 7 gunners, plus up to 10 passengers
Cargo 25 tons

Cells. The ship has four cells that can be used to hold prisoners. Each cell requires a DC 18 Strength check to break out or a DC 18 Dexterity (lock picks) check to pick the lock.

Fighter bays. The ship has a bay that holds 2 rocket fighters. The ship's engineers can take actions affecting any fighters in the bay.

Launch tubes. The ship has launch tubes capable of launching 8 rocket pack equipped creatures. The ship's engineers can take actions affecting any rocket packs in the bay.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, or remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

RAY shielding. The ship has resistance to beam weapons. (Is this the same as other ship types?)

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Launch fighters. Action, command, 1 fighter currently in the fighter bay may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Launch rangers. Action, command, up to 4 creatures currently in launch tubes may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Light RAY cannon (5). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Rocket Pod (2). Attack, gunnery section, melee, 2d10 fire (space scale). Rocket pods fire a spread of projectiles that grant the attack advantage.

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Cost: \$1.5 million

Ranger Corvette - Tribal Class Critical Systems

2d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
3	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system offline	RADAR offline and targeting system offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crew suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 2	Reduce handling to 1
9	RAY shielding	Vehicle gains immunity to beam weapons	For every hit from a beam weapon roll a d20. On a 9 or less the beam passes through the shielding unaffected. On a 10 or higher the ship retains its resistance to beam weapons.	RAY shielding offline.
10	Launch bays	May launch 1 extra ship	Launch bay capacity reduced to 1, all ships in bay suffer 1d12 fire damage	Launch bay offline, all ships in bay destroyed
11	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
12	Rocket pod	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	One rocket pod's damage is reduced to 1d10 fire	One rocket pod is offline
13	Rocket pod ammo	n/a	One rocket pod is offline	One rocket pod's ammo explodes killing a gunnery crew section and inflicting 4d10 fire damage on ship
14	Launch tube	May launch 1 more ranger	Launch tube capacity reduced by half, all creatures in the tubes suffer 1d12 fire damage	Launch tubes offline, all creatures in tubes killed
15	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
16	Light RAY cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline



ROCKET FIGHTER

Space tiny rocket ship

Armor Class 14 + pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 12 (2d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 800,000 mph, 70 combat

Acc 200,000 mph, 20 combat

Handling 3

Challenge 1

Crew 1 pilot

Cargo 20 pounds

Single crew. This vehicle has only one crew who must perform all the actions. The pilot may use a bonus action to take a scan action or operate the vehicle's weapons.

Targeting system. Pilot does not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, pilot, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, pilot, pilot ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 2d10 radiation (space scale).

Turbo boost. Bonus action, pilot, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Quad light RAY cannons. Attack, pilot, ranged, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 4d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cost: \$75,000

Rocket Fighter Critical Systems

d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed to 400,000 mph/ combat speed to 35,000 mph	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage, may not use targeting system	May not use scan checks or targeting system
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Quad light RAY cannons	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 2d10 radiation	Armament offline
5	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
6	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
7	Crew	n/a	Crew suffers 1d12 fire damage	Crew suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 1	Reduce handling to 0

YACHT

Space medium rocket ship

Armor Class 10 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 30 (5d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 600,000 mph, 30 combat**Acc** 150,000 mph, 5 combat

Handling 1

Challenge 1

Crew 1 captain, 1 engineer, 1 operator, 1 medic, 1 pilot, 2 gunners, 2 stewards, plus up to 12 passengers.

Cargo 250 tons

Luxuries. This ship has all the amenities. A short rest taken inside the ship removes one level of the exhausted condition. The owner of the ship has advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made while inside the ship.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the

poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used twice and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel, and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Light RAY cannon(2). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, captain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 8d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Drink, sir? Bonus action, steward, target one living creature, creature gains an inspiration point or may spend a hit die as a free action, useable once per episode.

Cost: \$1 million

Yacht Critical Systems

2d6	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
3	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Light Ray cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d8 radiation	Armament offline
6	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
7	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
8	Crew	n/a	One crew suffers 1d12 damage	One crew suffers 2d12 damage
9	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 0	Ship may not take maneuvers
10	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All cargo is lost
11	Luxuries	n/a	Luxuries no longer grant bonuses	Luxuries are destroyed.
12	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed

VEHICLE WEAPONS

Planetary and space scale vehicles often mount weapons that no creature could possibly carry. The following weapons can only be mounted on vehicles or in fixed installations. All damages and ranges are to scale. Vehicle weapons are considered martial weapons for proficiency.

VEHICLE WEAPON PROPERTIES

Vehicular weapons have the same properties as normal weapons as well as the following:

Dropped. The weapon can only be fired at targets below the vehicle and within a gravity well.

Explosive charge. This weapon easily penetrates armor or creates enough of a blast that the shockwaves can bypass armor. Any hit with this weapon against a vehicle causes a critical systems hit.

Spread. The weapon fires a spread of shots and has advantage to hit targets.

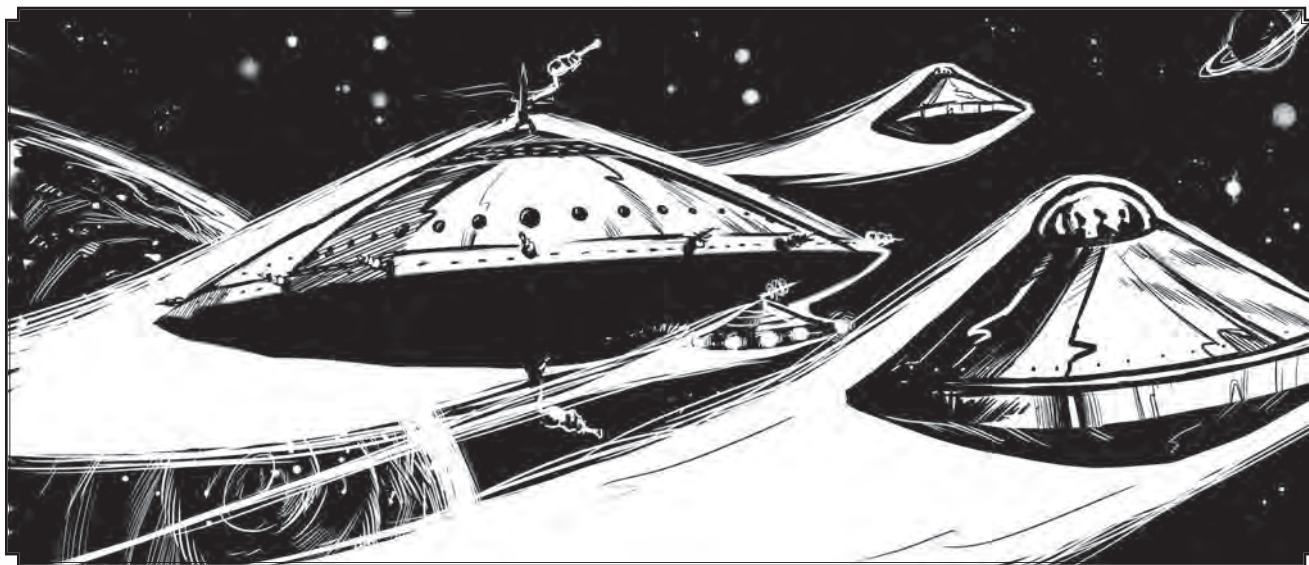
Planetary Scale Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost	Properties
45mm cannon	1d10 piercing	\$500	Ammunition (60/ 240), explosive charge, loading
75 mm canon	4d10 piercing	\$1,500	Ammunition (80/ 320), blast (2x2), explosive charge, loading
Bomb	2d10 F	\$150	Dropped, blast (2x2), explosive charge
Rockets	4d10 fire	\$300	Ammunition (100/ 400), blast (1x1), explosive charge

Space Scale Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost	Properties
Disintegrator cannon, heavy	6d12 acid	n/a	Ammunition (8/16), beam, explosive charge, extra fingers
Disintegrator cannon, light	1d12 acid	n/a	Ammunition (8/16), beam, explosive charge, extra fingers
RAY cannon, heavy	6d10 radiation	\$25,000	Ammunition (5/10), beam
RAY cannon, light	1d10 radiation	\$15,000	Ammunition (5/10), beam
Rocket pod	2d10 fire	\$2,500	Ammunition (melee only), spread





SAUCER SHIPS

Powered by their advanced alien technology, the European saucers present a distinct threat to any rocket ship that tangles with them. With their gleaming metallic hulls, the way in which they seem to fly through space without regard to physics, and the deadly disintegrator cannons that can destroy a ship with one well aimed blast; the European saucer fleet defies Earthlings' understanding of science and technology. Although there are no doubt a great variety of saucers, only five different models have been seen, others may be in hiding or in storage on the surface of Europa. The Europeans themselves seem to not care what their different models are called, thus the Grand Admiral's nomenclature is used.

By far the most commonly encountered of the European saucers, the Victory class attack fighter is a small vessel with a crew of three. Like all other European ships, it is saucer shaped and propelled by gravitic manipulation, allowing it to achieve astounding speeds and complete maneuvers that would be beyond the possibilities of a rocket ship. This speed and maneuverability are its main defense, and the pilots (assumed to be Europeans) are some of the most reckless fliers in the solar system. Victory class attack fighters are armed with two light disintegrator cannons, more than enough to cripple or destroy most rocket ships, but no match for the heavily armed and armored warships of France, Great Britain, the United States, or Germany.

The main class of saucers used by the Europeans, the Champion combines the speed of the gravitic engine with the superior firepower of the disintegrator in one tidy package. However, to be fast and deadly, the Champion class sacrifices armor and operational range. These small

warships simply cannot carry enough food and fuel for extended cruises, and must operate close to Europa. Because of this, they are rarely, if ever, seen outside of the Jovian System.

Deployed in tight defense around Europa and throughout European space, the Triumphant class star cruiser is a threat to all shipping in the Jovian System. Heavily armed and armored, the Triumphant class star cruiser packs over twenty disintegrator banks along its perimeter, and an additional heavy disintegrator cannon on its dorsal and ventral surfaces. It also carries six Victory class attack fighters in an underside hanger bay.

The three Conqueror class battleships in the European fleet are deployed in a high orbit over Jupiter, supposedly to monitor Earthling activity around the gas giant. These huge saucers mount multiple disintegrator cannon batteries, four heavy disintegrator cannons on its ventral and dorsal surfaces, a squadron of Victory class fighters, and two companies of Metisian Guard. They are a constant threat to all Earthling ships going to, and coming from, Jupiter, but to date have not even responded to hails; they just float in space, mute and menacing.

By far the largest warship in the Solar System, only one Imperial class stellar dreadnought has been built, though a second is under construction at the shipyards at Demarcation Point One. The Imperial is a massive vessel, slow but armed with banks of disintegrator cannons that could easily level a city the size of New York. In addition to its own firepower, the Imperial also carries two squadrons of Victory class star fighters and an entire battalion of Metisian Guard. The sole example of this class, the Imperial is in permanent station in orbit around Europa, its gleaming sides threatening all who view it.



ATTACK FIGHTER - *VICTORY CLASS*

Space tiny saucer ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 24 (4d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 900,000 mph, 80 combat

Acc 225,000 mph, 20 combat

Handling 4

Challenge 2

Crew 1 captain, 1 pilot, 1 gunner, 1 operator, plus up to 1 passenger

Cargo 100 pounds

Gravitic pulse drive. The ship may take 1 free maneuver.

Luxuries. This ship has all the amenities. A short rest taken inside the ship removes one level of the exhausted condition. The owner of the ship has advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made while inside the ship. Europeans and Metisians can make use of these luxuries; all other species are rather squicked out by them.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Neural interface. The pilot, captain, and gunners are connected to the ship via a neural interface link. Each connected crewmember may take a free ship action on their turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on every linked crewmember.

Scanner. The ship's scanner is very precise and can be used to determine range, bearing, and perform detailed analysis of composition, presence of lifeforms, and even internal make up of a target. Scan checks are done with advantage.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Achilles» heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the ship suffers two critical systems hits.

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Dual light disintegration cannons. Attack, gunner, ranged, 2d12 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 4d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Attack Fighter - Victory Class Critical Systems

2d6	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Gravitic pulse drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses	May not accelerate or decelerate, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses
3	Scanner	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system is offline	Scanner and targeting system are offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Dual light disintegration cannons	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d12 acid	Armament offline
6	Neural interface	n/a	All linked crew gain the stunned condition until the end of the ship's next turn.	All linked crew rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
7	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
8	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d12 fire damage
9	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 2	Reduce handling to 1
10	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
11	Luxuries	n/a	Luxuries no longer grant bonuses	Luxuries are destroyed.
12	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline



COSMIC BATTLESHIP - *IMPERIAL CLASS*

Space huge saucer ship

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 90 (15d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 74,570 mph, 5 combat
Acc 18,640 mph, 1 combat
Handling 2

Challenge 10

Crew 1 captain, 1 command, 1 operator, 1 medic, 2 pilots, 4 engineers, 8 gunners, plus up to 16 passengers

Cargo 1,000 tons

Fighter bays. The ship has a bay that holds 12 *victory* class saucer ships. The ship's engineers can take actions affecting any fighters in the bay.

Gravitic pulse drive. The ship may take 1 free maneuver.

Luxuries. This ship has all the amenities. A short rest taken inside the ship removes one level of the exhausted condition. The owner of the ship has advantage on Persuasion checks made while inside the ship. Europeans and Metisians can make use of these luxuries; all other species are rather squicked out by them.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Neural interface. The pilot, captain, and gunners are connected to the ship via a neural interface link. Each connected crewmember may take a free ship action on their turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on every linked crewmember.

Scanner. The ship's scanner is very precise and can be used to determine range, bearing, and perform detailed analysis of composition, presence of lifeforms, and even internal make up of a target. Scan checks are done with advantage.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Heavy disintegration cannons (4). Attack, gunner, ranged, 6d12 acid (space scale)

Launch fighters. Action, command, 6 fighters currently in the fighter bay may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Light disintegration cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d12 radiation (space scale).

Quad light disintegration cannon (4). Attack, gunner, ranged, 4d12 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 15d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Cosmic Battleship - Imperial Class

2d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Gravitic pulse drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses	May not accelerate or decelerate, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses
3	Scanner	n/a	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system is offline	Scanner and targeting system are offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Quad light disintegrator cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 2d12 acid	Armament offline
6	Heavy disintegration cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d12 acid	Armament offline
7	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d12 fire damage
8	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling to 0
9	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
10	Luxuries	n/a	Luxuries no longer grant bonuses	Luxuries are destroyed.
11	Neural interface	n/a	All linked crew gain the stunned condition until the end of the ship's next turn.	All linked crew rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
12	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All of cargo is lost
13	Launch bays	Bay may launch 1 more ship	Launch bay capacity reduced by half, all ships in bay suffer 1d12 fire damage	Launch bay offline, all ships in bay destroyed
14	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
15	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
16	Achilles' heel	n/a	Ship suffers 2 critical systems hits.	Ship suffers 3 critical systems hits.



SPACE FRIGATE - *CHAMPION CLASS*

Space medium saucer ship

Armor Class 16 +pilot's Dexterity modifier

Hull Points 54 (9d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)

Speed 270,309 mph, 25 combat

Acc 67,580 mph, 5 combat

Handling 3

Challenge 5

Crew 1 captain, 2 pilots, 1 operator, 1 medic, 3 engineers, 8 gunners, plus up to 6 passengers

Cargo 75 tons

Achilles heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the ship suffers two critical systems hits.

Gravitic pulse drive. The ship may take 1 free maneuver.

Luxuries. This ship has all the amenities. A short rest taken inside the ship removes one level of the exhausted condition. The owner of the ship has advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made while inside the ship. Europeans and Metisians can make use of these luxuries; all other species are rather squicked out by them.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Wisdom (Medicine) checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Neural interface. The pilot, captain, and gunners are connected to the ship via a neural interface link. Each connected crewmember may take a free ship action on their turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on every linked crewmember.

Scanner. The ship's scanner is very precise and can be used to determine range, bearing, and perform detailed analysis of composition, presence of lifeforms, and even internal make up of a target. Scan checks are done with advantage.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Light disintegration cannons (8). Attack, gunner, ranged, 1d12 acid (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 9d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Space Frigate - *Champion Class Critical Systems*

2d6	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Gravitic pulse drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses	May not accelerate or decelerate, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses
3	Scanner	n/a	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system is offline	Scanner and targeting system are offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Light disintegration cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 1d10 acid.	Armament offline
6	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline
7	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
8	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d12 fire damage
9	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 2	Reduce handling to 1
10	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
11	Luxuries	n/a	Luxuries no longer grant bonuses	Luxuries are destroyed.
12	Neural interface	n/a	All linked crew gain the stunned condition until the end of the ship's next turn.	All linked crew rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.



STAR CRUISER - TRIUMPHANT CLASS

Space large saucer ship

Armor Class 14 +pilot's Dexterity modifier
Hull Points 78 (13d10 +engineer's Intelligence modifier)
Speed 221,220 mph, 20 combat
Acc 55,305 mph, 5 combat
Handling 3

Challenge 8

Crew 1 captain, 1 command, 1 operator, 1 medic, 2 pilots, 2 engineers, 6 gunners, plus u to 4 passengers
Cargo 200 tons

Achilles» heel. This vehicle has an exposed heat transfer grating that if hit can lead to a devastating series of chain reactions. Targeting this grating is difficult and it is heavily armored (AC 22). If hit, the ship suffers two critical systems hits.

Fighter bays. The ship has a bay that holds 6 *victory* class saucer ships. The ship's engineers can take actions affecting any fighters in the bay.

Gravitic pulse drive. The ship may take 1 free maneuver.

Luxuries. This ship has all the amenities. A short rest taken inside the ship removes one level of the exhausted condition. The owner of the ship has advantage on Persuasion checks made while inside the ship. Europeans and Metisians can make use of these luxuries; all other species are rather squicked out by them.

Medical bay. The ship has an extensive medical bay that grants advantage on all Medicine checks taken there. Additionally, the medical bay can be used during a short rest to regain 1 spent hit die per patient, remove the poisoned, stunned, or unconscious conditions from a patient. A patient can only take advantage of these features once per episode.

Neural interface. The pilot, captain, and gunners are connected to the ship via a neural interface link. Each connected crewmember may take a free ship action on their turn. However, every time the ship suffers critical systems damage the psychic feedback inflicts 2d12 psychic damage on every linked crewmember.

Scanner. The ship's scanner is very precise and can be used to determine range, bearing, and perform detailed analysis of composition, presence of lifeforms, and even internal make up of a target. Scan checks are done with advantage.

Targeting system. Gunners do not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Backup systems. Bonus action, engineer, reduce one damaged or failed system to full status. This feature may be used once and uses are regained following a short repair.

Escape pod. Bonus action, any crew, crewmember ejects from vessel and floats free, hopefully to safety.

Heavy disintegration cannon. Attack, gunner, ranged, 6d12 acid (space scale)

Launch fighters. Action, command, 3 fighters currently in the fighter bay may launch. Those that do take the accelerate maneuver as a free action.

Quad light disintegration cannons (5). Attack, gunner, ranged, 4d12 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, pilot, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 13d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Star Cruiser - Triumphant Class Critical Systems

2d8	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
2	Gravitic pulse drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses	May not accelerate or decelerate, gravitic pulse drive does not grant bonuses
3	Scanner	n/a	Scan checks at disadvantage and targeting system is offline	Scanner and targeting system are offline
4	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
5	Quad light disintegration cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 2d12 acid	Armament offline
6	Heavy disintegration cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 3d12 acid	Armament offline
7	Quad light disintegration cannon	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to 2d12 acid	Armament offline
8	Backup systems	n/a	Backup system requires an action to use	Backup system offline
9	Crew	n/a	One crewmember suffers 1d12 fire damage	One crewmember suffers 2d12 fire damage
10	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling to 2	Reduce handling to 1
11	Medical bay	n/a	Medical bay no longer provides bonuses	Medical bay is offline, any crew in bay are killed
12	Luxuries	n/a	Luxuries no longer grant bonuses	Luxuries are destroyed.
13	Neural interface	n/a	All linked crew gain the stunned condition until the end of the ship's next turn.	All linked crew rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds.
14	Launch bays	May launch more ship	Launch bay capacity reduced by half, all ships in bay suffer 1d12 fire damage	Launch bay offline, all ships in bay destroyed
15	Cargo	n/a	Half of cargo is lost	All of cargo is lost
16	Escape pod	n/a	Escape pod requires an action to use	Escape pod offline

ADVENTURES



So, you are going to run a ***Rocket Age*** campaign. Now what? Being the Gamemaster, or GM for short, is one of the most daunting tasks in role-playing. Whole books have been written about how to do this. There are many seminars at conventions and advice is offered online on how to be a good GM. In this chapter I am offering you (and note this chapter is more of a direct communication between me, the author, and you, the reader) a few rules of good GMing, but there is not the space to include everything. It would be like putting a whole separate book inside of this one, and frankly I would rather give you thousands of words on the setting of ***Rocket Age*** than a rehash of what you already know and what experience can teach you.

Beyond the four simple rules listed below, this chapter offers guidelines for situations that arise in the Solar System of ***Rocket Age***, campaign styles, and several adventure seeds to get you started in ***Rocket Age***. If you are a player, please don't read past the four rules of good GMing, lest you spoil some of the fun.

FOUR RULES OF GOOD GMING:

Rule 0: Have fun, it's why we are all here. Part of the job of the GM is to enable everyone at the table to have fun, and it's your most important job.

Rule 1: The GM is always right. This means that if you don't like part of the rules, you can overrule them. It also means that the setting of ***Rocket Age*** can be changed to fit the needs of your group. Don't like Erisians? They're gone, poof. Think languages should be more limited? Fine, change it. Just remember to let your players know what changes you are making. And also:

Rule 2: Be consistent. Do not make arbitrary rulings and then go back on them next week. This means you should not make changes unless you are comfortable with the results.

Rule 3: Be fair. Do not favor any one player over another, nor the NPCs over the PCs. Always keep in mind Rule 0. Also, you are not the adversary of the player characters, you are the person managing the action and helping the story along. Do not, I repeat, do not set up an adversarial relationship with the players. It is not you against them, and there are no winners in role-playing.

EPISODE TIME FRAME

In addition to the turn, round, short rest, and long rest, **Rocket Age** introduces a new time frame, the episode. Several species and classes, not to mention artifacts and other pieces of equipment have features that refresh based upon episode. An episode has no set definition, though by default the assumption is that an episode will be one complete adventure from the hook to the conclusion. However, your gaming group might take a long time to play through a single episode, or might not even use an episodic style of play. If you prefer, an episode can be a week or even a single play sessions. Just make sure the exact parameters of an episode are determined before playing **Rocket Age**.

EXPANDED ROLL

Some checks or rolls in **Rocket Age** do not give binary yes/ no results. We call these expanded rolls. When an expanded roll is called for, the check is made as normal, but the effects can vary depending on the final result of the roll. To determine the final result, subtract the DC from the result of the check.

INSPIRATION POINTS (OPTIONAL RULE)

Rocket Age is a pulpy-style game of two-fisted action, daring heroism, and mad science. Our heroes are bigger than life figures, even at the start of their careers, and should be treated that way, at least as far as the mechanics of the game are concerned. They should be capable of astounding feats of prowess, amazing daredevil acts, and much more. Oh, so much more.

The rules for Inspiration work a little differently in the universe of **Rocket Age**. Our heroes do not have Inspiration. Instead, they have inspiration points that work similarly, but can be used in new and exciting ways.

Each character has a number of inspiration points equal to 1+ their proficiency bonus. They may spend these to enhance their rolls, boost their characters, recover from injury and stress, and to alter the plot of the game. Inspiration points recover at the end of the Episode, but a character can gain an inspiration point in much the same way they can gain Inspiration, through good role-playing.

GAINING INSPIRATION

All characters start an Episode with a number of inspiration points equal to 1 + their proficiency bonus. Inspiration points do not carry over from Episode to Episode, nor may they be transferred (though some class abilities, feats, and psychic powers allow this). Once spent, inspiration points cannot be regained until the start of the next Episode or unless awarded through play.

Inspiration points are awarded to characters that actively role-play their personality traits, ideals, bonds, and flaws in a manner that impacts the game in some form. A character can only gain one inspiration point award per game session. The best way to go about this is for the players to reward each other as the Game Master often has a lot to deal with during a game session.

SPENDING INSPIRATION

Characters spend inspiration points in one of several ways, detailed below. Once spent, the inspiration point is lost. Several of the means of spending inspiration points allow for players to narrate some aspects of the game or require the player and Game Masters to negotiate changes in the narrative. You may only spend 1 point of inspiration on a single action.

Alter the Plot

By far the most powerful of ways to spend inspiration points is to alter the plot of the game. Spending 1 inspiration point allows the player to dictate a small change in the scene, adding or removing a feature. The prison cell could have a loose bar, the guards at the loading dock could take their potty break, or a car pulls out in front of pursuers. Whatever the alteration, it does not change the inherent nature of the scene, our heroes are still in jail, the dock is still guarded, and there is still a chase going on. What plot altering does do, is make things more interesting, and throws a complication into the plans of villains.

A character can go 'all in' cashing in 3 inspiration points to end a conflict or a scene immediately. The cavalry (on Mars it might actually be people on bahmoots) arrives in the nick of time, the villain is called away, or something distracts the angry mob and turns their attention towards a new target. The current scene ends, but is not resolved in any way. The Game Master decides how the scene ends, but it should be in a manner that fails to accomplish our heroes' goals, yet their opponents fail to accomplish theirs as well. Of course, out of the frying pan and into the fire endings are always welcome.

Avoid Death

If a character has failed two death saves, instead of attempting a third, a character may spend 1 inspiration point to cheat death. The character does not die, but instead suffers some other dire consequence. Foes carry the unconscious character off, a hideous and long-term injury is suffered, or everyone assumes the character is dead and is left behind (especially if the body cannot be found). Whatever the outcome, the player and the Game Master should work out what happens, and the effects should be long lasting.



Get Advantage

The simplest way to spend inspiration points is to gain advantage on a roll. While this is not terribly exciting, it can be important for a critical action.

Talk Them Through It

If a character has the means of communicating freely with someone, they may spend 1 inspiration point and talk their ally through the use of a skill. This can be face-to-face communication, over a RADIO, or through psychic means. As an action, the character spending the inspiration point designates one creature that can understand them and communicate with them as the target. The target may attempt a skill check using the target's ability score modifier and the character spending the inspiration point's proficiency bonus.

PLAYER CHARACTERS AND SHIPS

Not every *Rocket Age* campaign will involve rocket ships to a large degree. In some rocket ships will be a part of the background, a means to get from A to B and that is all. There are thousands of stories you can tell in the Solar System that do not directly involve rocket ships. For those of you that want to include rocket ships as a major part of your game, this leaves the burning question as to how the player-characters get their hands on something that costs hundreds of thousands of dollars.

There are a few ways this can be accomplished, provided your group is on board with how you acquire a rocket ship. You can just buy one, which makes rocket ships something that higher-level parties are going to move into. The player-characters can just steal one, and this should be harder than it sounds. Another option is to have a rocket ship loaned to the party by a benefactor, corporation, government or other organizations. Naturally the entity loaning the ship will want something in return, and that price may be higher than mere dollars.

You can start a party out with a ship at 1st level. There should be a reason they have this ship, such as one of the characters own it, it is loaned, or a character built it. This starter ship should be a Challenge 3 or less ship, with freighters and explorers being the best choices.

POISONS

There are many dangerous substances that can be used as poisons. The Solar System is a vast place, but the following poisons are the most common and well known.

Brain Slug Juice (ingested or injury)

Derived from the rare Venusian brain slug, a parasite that is found only in certain giant bromeliads, brain slug juice is a deadly poison, but especially so to those who have

psychic abilities. Venusians have been known to coat their weapons with the juice of brain slugs before going into combat with Europeans. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer 1d10 poison damage, 2d12 if the creature has psychic abilities, and gains the poisoned condition for one hour. A poisoned creature may not use any psychic power.

Death's Head Mushroom (ingested or injury)

Another deadly poison from the jungles of Venus, the Death's Head Mushroom is an off-white mushroom with distinctive brown mottling that gives it the appearance of a grinning skull. Consumed, it causes severe abdominal pain and internal hemorrhaging. If boiled, and then the fluid reduced to a syrup, it can be used to coat projectile



Poison	Price	Dose
Brain Slug juice	\$1500	1
Death's Head mushroom	\$300	1
Io's Tears	\$650	1
Jeweled Scorpion venom	\$400	1
Mustard gas	\$100	1
Succession	\$40,000	1
Tear gas	\$25	1

heads, causing the wounds inflicted to bleed profusely and muscles to cramp painfully. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer 2d10 poison damage and gains the poisoned condition for one hour.

Io's Tears (ingested)

This extremely rare poison is made by refining the toxins inherent to the soil of the blasted wasteland of the moon Io. The resulting brew is filled with toxic substances that can quickly incapacitate and kill. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 15 Constitution save or become poisoned. The poisoned creature suffers 2d8 poison damage every hour and must repeat the save. After three successful saves, the effect ends.

Jeweled Scorpion Venom (ingested)

A single sting from a Jeweled Scorpion can fell even a bull bahnoot, a factor that has led to its persecution, as well as its use amongst assassins on Mars. Jeweled Scorpion venom kills by necrotizing tissue and can spread throughout a victim's blood stream at an alarming rate, destroying arteries and veins as it rampages unchecked by the body's natural defenses. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 15 Constitution save or gain the poisoned condition until they successfully overcomes the poison. The poisoned creature suffers 1d10 poison damage at the start of its turn and must repeat the save. After three successful saves, the effect ends.

Mustard Gas (inhaled)

This child of the Great War has seen limited use on Mars by both the Nazi and Italian governments in their conflicts with rebellious Martians. The effects of exposure are devastating, beginning with an itchy rash and leading quickly to dermal blistering, lesions, blindness, choking, and lung damage. Mustard Gas rarely kills, though the intense pain and lifelong respiratory damage makes up for that. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution save or become poisoned. The poisoned creature suffers 1d8 poison damage and gains the blinded condition.

Succession (ingested)

One of the greatest of open secrets on Mars is the existence of the poison known as Succession. It is said that the Ancients created it as a means to humanely execute criminals, or possibly as a great weapon, the legends differ. What is known about it is that it is extremely rare and can only be found in Ancient Martian ruins, and even then most ruins do not contain even a hint as to the location of the poison. The name Succession comes from its unique properties of being odorless, colorless, tasteless, and leaves no telltale traces in or on the victim's body.

A person who has been exposed to Succession simply stops living, the cause appearing to be completely natural. Thus, this poison is said to have aided in the ascent to the throne of many an ambitious second son or other Silthuri. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 18 Constitution save or become poisoned. The poisoned creature suffers 10d10 poison damage on a failed save, or half on a successful save. Every 12 hours the creature suffers the damage again, and must repeat the save. After seven successful saves, the effect ends.

Tear Gas (inhaled)

A non-lethal poison deployed by police and armed forces throughout the Solar System as a form of riot control, tear gas is rarely used on the battlefield, though some desperate Martian princes are trying to get their hands on some. The poison causes no damage, but can bring about incapacitating blindness and pain, even render a person so consumed by misery that they are effectively unconscious. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution save or become stunned until the end of their next turn, and must make a second save or gain the blinded condition for 1d10+1 rounds.

PROFICIENCIES

There are several new proficiencies in *Rocket Age* and they are listed below.

Tool Proficiencies

The following tool proficiencies are important to adventuring in the Solar System.

Camera. This proficiency covers still and video cameras, as well as film and digital. It usually uses Charisma.

Cartographer's tools. These tools are used to create and read maps and charts. Intelligence is normally the governing skill.

Demolition's kit. A demolition's kit is needed to set or defuse explosives. Intelligence is normally used, but delicate situations might require Dexterity.

Electronics. This proficiency covers the use of any electronic device not already covered by proficiency, such as datapads, RADIO, RADAR, robobrains, and scanners. Most often Intelligence is used with electronics.

Engineer's tools. These tools are necessary to repair, build, and maintain technological equipment. The Engineering skill covers analysis and creation, engineer's tools cover the application of that knowledge. Intelligence is often used with engineer's tools, but Dexterity might be important for delicate tasks.

Forensics kit. Forensics kits are used to find clues that lead to solving crimes. Locating and indentifying trace



samples, blood types, fingerprints, and crude chemical analysis are possible in the field. Intelligence is often used for analysis and discovery.

Lock Picks. These are used to disarm both mechanical and electronic traps and locks. Due to the delicacy of the tasks, Dexterity is often used with lock picks.

Medical kit. These tools, instruments, and medicines are used to treat injury, cure disease, and analyze biological samples. Wisdom is used for treatment, but Intelligence is used for analysis.

Science kit. These sample jars, reagents, instruments, and notebooks are used to gather and analyze physical phenomena. Intelligence is most often used, but delicate samples might require Dexterity to collect.

Vehicle Proficiencies

You do not need a proficiency to pilot a vehicle, as any idiot can get lucky once. However, if the character assigned to the pilot or engineer position on a vehicle has proficiency with that vehicle they may add their proficiency bonus to the AC and hull points of the vehicle, respectively.

Airplanes. This is the ability to pilot an airplane, as well as gliders and other fixed wing aircraft.

Automobiles. This is the skill of driving cars trucks, tanks, motorcycles, and other powered ground based vehicles.

Bahmoots. This covers riding, caring for, and treating injured or sick bahmoots, ulodonts, and other Martian riding animals and beasts of burden.

Rocket pack. This covers all rocket packs for the small personal rocket pack to the nearly ship sized Mark III that

Rocket Rangers use for interplanetary travel. Rocket ship proficiency also covers smaller rocket powered vehicles such as rocket sleds.

Rocket ship. This covers all rocket-powered vehicles of space scale.

War walkers. This is the skill of piloting the feared war walkers of the Deutsche Marskorps.

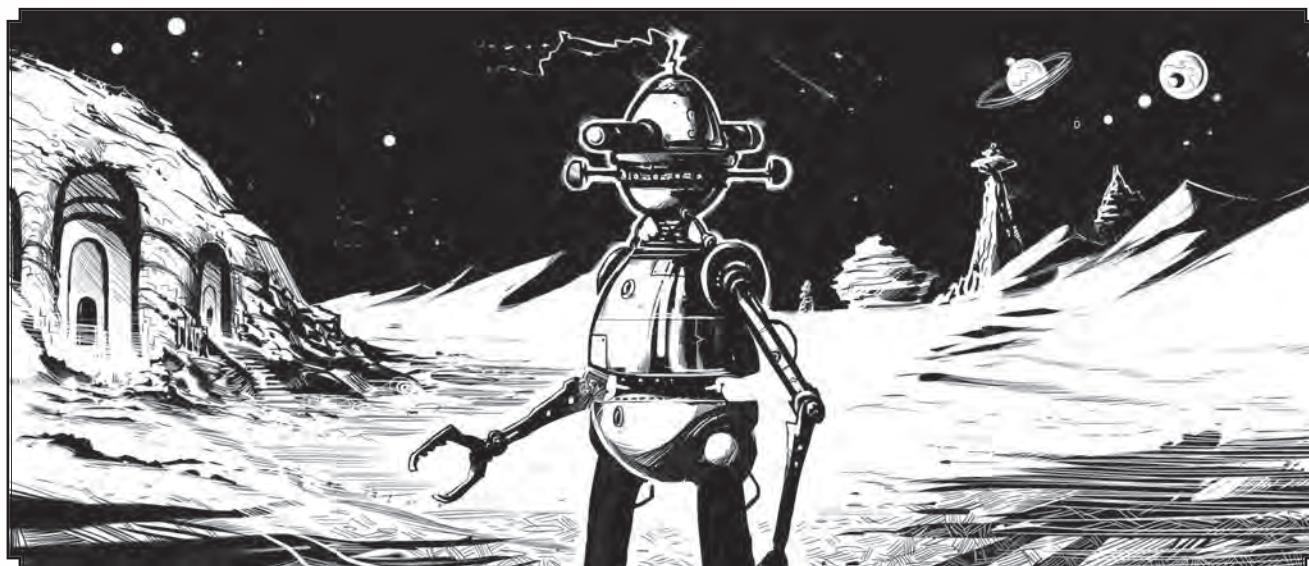
ROBOBRAINS

Robobrainns are complex machines that range from simple computational devices to fully sentient artificial intelligences. The Ancient Martians made great use of them, and some facilities were entirely robobrain managed. Adventurers have learned how to access these long abandoned robobrainns, though this is difficult and dangerous.

Hacking Robobrainns

Robobrainns can be communicated with, though only the largest and most advanced have the sophistication to provide stimulating conversation. Common robobrainns lack a personality and can only receive and display data. More advanced models can be spoken with, and even deceived, intimidated, or persuaded into action.

By far the most common means of accessing robobrainns is to hack into them by connecting to the robobrain or through a ghost network the robobrain is connected to. Discovering the pass codes used by the Ancients to secure their devices makes this as easy as entering a string of numbers and letters (in Ancient Martian of course). However, the Ancients did not leave their pass codes just laying around.



Hacking Check

A hacking check is an Intelligence check modified by the character's proficiency bonus if they are familiar with electronics. If the character has already successfully hacked into part of a system they have advantage on attempts to hack into other parts. A character can only attempt to hack into a robo-brain or ghost field a number of times equal to their Intelligence modifier before they are shut out of the system until they gain more experience (in other words until they gain a new level).

Hacking check: d20 + Intelligence modifier
+ proficiency bonus (if proficient with electronics).

Robobrain and Ghost Field Hacking DC's

Type	DC
Public ghost field	13
Facility ghost field	15
Common robo-brain	15
Partially sentient robo-brain	18
Fully sentient robo-brain	20
Roboman	25

GHOST FIELDS

Ghost fields are localized RADIO transmissions that cover a specific area and allow data to be sent from device to device. So named due to modern Martian superstitions, ghost fields are not supernatural at all. Usually they are found in ruins dating to the Canal Era or earlier, but some cities have operating ghost fields that form the basis of the local communication network. Kostrast is by far the most well known Martian city-state with an active ghost field, though it only extends to cover the palace and neighboring districts.

Nearly all ghost fields have some form of security barrier that prevents unauthorized access and must be hacked into (the pass codes are long forgotten). This is done using hacking checks much like with a robo-brain. Once accessed, a user can connect to any device linked to the ghost field, though again many devices have pass code protections and must be individually hacked.

SKILLS

Most 5e skills work the same in *Rocket Age* as they do in other settings. Athletics is still good for jumping and climbing, and Religion will let you know about that weird thing the Kastari is doing in the temple at night.

There are two new skills, Engineering and Science, and the Arcana and Medicine skills work a little differently.

Arcana

The Solar System of the *Rocket Age* does not have magic, but there are psychic powers. Arcana can be used to analyze psychic phenomena, and can be used in place of Engineering or Science when working with psychic technologies.

Engineering

This skill is a catch all that includes building and repairing technological devices, analyzing newfound technologies, and inventing new technology. Most uses of the Engineering skill require an engineer's tool kit.

THE BROKEN CONDITION

Equipment breaks, is poorly manufactured, or is not maintained. The broken condition represents a piece of equipment that is no longer working properly. Most often it is obvious when a piece of equipment gains the broken condition, it is damaged in some obvious way such as being dropped from a height or an attack is directed against it. Other times it might not be so obvious, or the GM might want there to be a chance that the piece of equipment breaks, in which case roll a d20 and the equipment gains the broken condition on a 9 or less. Any time a piece of technological equipment including weapons and armor, is used on a natural 1 results, that item gains the broken condition.

An item with the broken condition causes any rolls made in its use to suffer disadvantage. If a broken item gains the broken condition again it is destroyed. A DC 15 Intelligence check using engineer's tools removes the broken condition from an item.

Medicine

Medicine works much as it does in other settings save that advances in medicine allow someone equipped with the medical kit to spend an action and make a DC 15 medicine check to allow a patient to recover 1d4 + Wisdom modifier hit points. No patient can receive treatment for an injury more than once, but can again receive treatment again following a short rest.

Science

There are many disciplines of science and this skill covers them all. Science is mostly used to gain knowledge about physical phenomena, but can also be used to analyze data and formulate hypotheses.

TRAPS AND HAZARDS

Exploration is a major part of *Rocket Age* and any good exploration of the unknown should run into hazards and delving into Ancient Ruins simply must see traps employed. There are many hazards and traps in the Solar System and some are gathered here for your amusement.

HAZARDS

The following hazards are listed by where they can be found. However, this is not to say that someone suffering from Jovian Lung Mist might land in Kostrast and start an epidemic. The standard 5e rules cover additional hazards that are more Earth based and analogues of these can be found on other planets.

Some of the hazards listed below involve expanded rolls as explained in Ancient Artifacts. In short, an expanded roll gives results based on a range of results, including multiple levels of success and failure. As always, the use and implementation of expanded roll is up to the GM.

Gravity

Most of the interesting places in the Solar System have gravities close enough to 1 standard G to make any differences unnoticeable. However, the void of space and the asteroid belts lack any significant gravity, and some technologies can generate areas of lowered or increased gravity. In areas lacking significant gravity, 0-G in common parlance, creatures must make a DC 11 Acrobatics check at the start of their turn or be unable to move. Areas of increased gravity, 2 G and higher, cause all psychical

actions to be done with disadvantage and inflict a level of exhaustion per hour of exposure (and even higher gravities can simply crush a creature to death).

Radiation

There are many radioactive environments in the Solar System, but the ones most likely encountered by adventurers are the insides of radium drives and certain ruins on Mars and Io. Radiation danger is expressed in levels ranging from 1-5 as seen on the table below.

Radiation Level	Example
1	Leaking radium fuel bunker, most radium rocket drive engineering compartments
2	Void of space, some Martian ruins
3	Vat of radium fuel, inside a radium drive
4	Worst Martian ruins, radium mine
5	Glowing cities of Io

Damage
1 radiation damage per round
1d10 radiation damage per round
2d10 radiation damage per round
3d10 radiation damage per round
4d10 radiation damage per round



OPEN SPACE

Open space is empty, except when isn't.

Gravitic Eddy. Gravity is weird and it gets even weirder when European ships go blasting through it. Gravitic eddies are naturally occurring, but can also be the result of powerful gravitic manipulation devices such as gravitic pulse drives.

Avoid. DC 13 pilot check.

Meteor Swarm. A swarm of meteors or just simply space debris is in the ship's path. This requires a simple operator check to spot and a simple pilot check to avoid. If either fail the ship suffers 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

Spot. DC 13 RADAR or scanner check.

Avoid. DC 13 pilot check.

Space Madness. Space madness is a temporary insanity that some people suffer when in space for too long. A living creature can spend their Wisdom score equal to weeks in space before risking space madness. After this amount of time, the creature must make a DC 13 Wisdom save every 24 hours (or longer depending on their circadian cycle) or begin to show the effects. Space madness has six stages. Each day of space madness a creature can repeat the Wisdom save and if they pass remove a stage of space madness. If the save is failed the space madness increases by one stage. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check can keep a creature stable at their current stage of space madness for one day and if the DC is exceeded by 10 or more reduce the patient's madness by one stage.

Space Madness Stage	Effect
1	Disadvantage on all ability checks.
2	Disadvantage on attack rolls.
3	Creature may no longer take a long rest
4	Creature suffers 1d6 points of psychic damage per day spent at this stage or higher.
5	Creature becomes homicidal.
6	Creature becomes suicidal.

Spot a gravitic eddy (DC 15 RADAR or scanner check)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	You fail to spot the eddy and the ship slams into it suffering 1d6 bludgeoning damage and a critical system hit.
-5	The ship clips the eddy and suffers 1d6 bludgeoning damage.
-1	You spot the eddy too late but still manage to warn the pilot. The pilot can attempt to avoid the eddy but does so with disadvantage.
0	You spot the eddy and the pilot can try to avoid it.
+5	You spot the eddy in plenty of time and the pilot has advantage on the roll to avoid.
+10	Not only do you spot the eddy in time but if avoided you can plot a course that slingshots the ship around the eddy giving it a free acceleration maneuver, or in narrative time, a 25% boost in maximum speed.

Avoid a gravitic eddy (DC 13 pilot check)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	As below but the ship is caught in the eddy and trapped.
-5	You hit the eddy full on and the ship suffers 1d6 bludgeoning damage and a critical system hit.
-1	You clip the eddy and the ship suffers 1d6 bludgeoning damage.
0	You avoid the eddy.
+5	You manage to slingshot around the eddy and gain a free acceleration maneuver, or in narrative time, a 25% boost in maximum speed.
+10	As above but you may take two free acceleration maneuvers, or in narrative time, a 50% boost in maximum speed.



Prepare for an oncoming solar storm (DC 13 Intelligence (Engineering) check)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	The ship suffers 2d6 points of radiation and lightning damage and a critical system hit.
-5	The ship suffers 1d6 points of radiation and lightning damage and a critical system hit.
-1	The ship suffers 1d4 points of radiation and lightning damage.
0	The ship does not suffer any damage.
+5	Your preparations are nearly perfect and the ship can ride out another day of the storm with ease.
+10	Your preparations are long lasting and you can ride out the rest of the storm in safety.

Spot a solar storm (DC 13 RADAR of scanner check)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	You fail to spot the storm and the ship suffers 1d6 radiation and lightning damage and a critical system hit.
-5	You fail to spot the storm and the ship suffers 1d6 radiation and lightning damage.
-1	You spot the storm but a little too late. The engineer has disadvantage on the check to prepare.
0	You spot the storm and warn the engineer about it.
+5	You spot the storm in plenty of time; the engineer has advantage on the check to prepare.
+10	You spot the storm with enough time to plot a course to avoid it. This adds 500,000 miles to the length of your journey but negates the need to risk the storm.

Solar Storm. A fragment of star matter has been expelled and is causing all manner of havoc in this part of the Solar System. There is not much that can be done to avoid it, but if spotted early the engineer can ready the ship and get damage control prepared. A particularly large storm might require more than one check for the preparations, usually only 1d6 days worth at most, with one preparations check per day.

Vacuum. A creature exposed to vacuum is at risk of dying. The creature suffers 1d10 radiation damage per round. After a number of rounds equal to the creature's Constitution modifier, the creature is reduced to 0 hit points and begins to die. A creature with the vacc suit proficiency can add their proficiency bonus to the number of rounds before they begin to die.

Venus

Venus is hot and muggy, wet and buggy, and all around miserable for creatures not adapted to it.

Bloat Worm. Amongst the various dangers of the Venusian jungle is the bloat worm. Actually the larval form of one of the planet's most important pollinators, the jade winged bee, bloat worms hatch from eggs laid in the nostrils, mouths, and other orifices of large animals. The site of infection swells when the eggs hatch, develops an acute rash, and suffers from horrid pain, which only increases when the victim hatches after three days. The worm then burrows into any soft tissue it can find and feeds until forming a cyst-like cocoon. A week later it hatches out as a beautiful jade-winged bee, ready to feed on nectar and start the whole cycle over again.

A creature may be exposed to bloat worm anytime they take a long rest in or near one of the swampy areas of the Venusian jungle. It is a DC 13 Constitution save to resist the disease. An infected creature suffers 1d4 piercing damage and may not take a long rest (and this will likely cause exhaustion in a short amount of time). Every 24 hours the creature may attempt another DC 13 Constitution save to fight off the infection. The infection runs its course over 10 days. It is difficult to treat, requiring a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check to reduce the length of the infection by one day. Only one check may be attempted per day.

Bug Swarm. Bugs are everywhere on Venus and often take the form of stinging or biting insects that can be a distraction. A bug swarm fills a 5 by 5 foot area and causes any creature starting its turn in the swarm to suffer disadvantage on all rolls.

Deep Mists. The mists that cloak the valleys and lower slopes of the Venusian highlands are dangerous. Odd creatures live there and feed off that which drops from above, and often as not are willing to drag a creature even deeper to make feeding easier. The mists are divided into eight zones as shown in the following table. The depths are approximate as the mist layer varies in thickness.

Jungle Heat and Humidity. The heat and humidity of the Venusian jungle can be intense. Any creature not native to the planet must make a DC 10 Constitution save after each long rest or suffer a level of exhaustion. Furthermore, mechanical and electronic equipment tends to just simply rot in the humidity of Venus. Unless someone trained in engineering is willing to spend a short rest every 24 hours tending to a piece of equipment that piece become corroded. A corroded piece of equipment fails entirely if a 1 is rolled during its use. A broken piece of equipment can be restored to working order with 1 hour of work and a DC 13 Engineering check. Vehicles operating on Venus suffer

a critical system failure if not attended to. This works the same as regular equipment above, but each critical system requires an hour of maintenance every 24 hours.

Sticky Fronds. The plants of the Venusian jungle are dangerous, and not just the ones that try to eat you. Simply brushing against one is enough to cause problems. Dangerous plants can be spotted and avoided using the following expanded rolls; one needed per 24 hours spent traveling through the jungle. Although listed as poison damage in the following table, the plants can just as easily cause piercing or acid damage instead.

Spot dangerous flora (DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	Yep, this is bad. You try to steer clear at the last moment but instead fall into the patch of dangerous plants. It will take a DC 13 Athletics check to get you out and you will suffer 1d6 points of poison damage each round until you escape.
-5	You walk right into the dangerous plants and suffer 1d6 poison damage.
-1	You spot the danger but only seconds before you stumble into it. You have disadvantage on the roll to avoid.
0	You spot the danger in time and can warn others.
+5	You spot the danger in time and your warning is well received, you and all those you warn have advantage on the check to avoid the danger.
+10	As above, but also you see something useful in the dangerous patch of brush.

Avoid dangerous flora (DC 13 Dexterity save)

Result (DC +/-)	Effect
-10	Yep, this is bad. You try to steer clear at the last moment but instead fall into the patch of dangerous plants. It will take a DC 13 Athletics check to get you out and you will suffer 1d6 points of poison damage each round until you escape.
-5	You no more than simply brush against the plants, and suffer 2d6 poison damage.
-1	You put your hand right in them suffering 1d6 poison damage.
0	You manage to avoid the dangerous plants in time.
+5	You alter your course to avoid the dangerous plants and can take a free aid action to help out a person within 5 feet avoid the plants.
+10	You pass these dangerous plants with ease and may mark them so that all following have advantage to avoid them.

Zone	Depth	Visibility	Damage per round
1	0-1,000 feet	Dim light.	None
2	1,001-2,000 feet	Visibility reduced to 60 feet	1d6 bludgeoning
3	2,001-4,000 feet	Visibility reduced to 20 feet	2d6 bludgeoning and fire
4	6,001- 8,000 feet	Visibility reduced to 5 feet	1d6 bludgeoning and fire (planetary vehicle scale)
5	8,001-16,000 feet	Visibility reduced to 1 foot	1d6 bludgeoning and fire (space vehicle scale)
6	16,001-36,000 feet	Darkness	6d6 bludgeoning and fire (space vehicle scale)
7	36,001-72,000 feet	Dim light	10d6 bludgeoning and fire (space vehicle scale)
8	72,001+ feet	Bright light	20d6 bludgeoning and fire (space vehicle scale)



Mars

On Mars the desert is the most obvious hazard, but danger lurks in the canals, the palaces of the princes, and the ruins of the Ancients.

Bahmoot Fever. A zoonotic virus that can pass from infected bahmoots to Earthlings and Martians, as well as other mammalian lifeforms. It begins as a dermal rash that spreads from the site of infection (usually the legs or arms) to across the body. A high fever, wracking cough, and general lethargy follow. Bahmoot fever is not normally fatal, but it can be terribly debilitating.

Contact with an infected bahmoot is the most common means of contracting this disease. The infection can be resisted with a DC 13 Constitution save. Failure causes one level of exhaustion at the end of a long rest and disadvantage on all Constitution saves. A creature suffering from bahmoot fever may not spend or regain hit dice. A new save may be attempted following a long rest and one successful save cures the disease. Bahmoot fever is easily treated with antibiotics (some of which can be found in the herbal pharmacy of the Chanari tribes) and a DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check.

Canal Choke. Although for the most part Ancient Martian technology keeps the canals clean in the areas around cities, it is not unheard of for more rural places to harbor a plethora of nasty bacterium in the waters (or for cities to have poorly functioning machinery for that matter). Canal Choke is one of these dangers of drinking unfiltered waters on Mars, and the most lethal. The first symptoms are a burning in the throat, followed by difficulty breathing and swallowing, intense abdominal pain, and finally the rupture of the stomach and esophagus. A character suffering from this disease cannot speak save in a hoarse whisper until recovered.

Drinking contaminated water is the most common means of exposure to canal choke. An exposed creature must make a DC 12 Constitution save or become infected. Infected creatures cannot take a long rest or speak in more than a whisper. An infected creature can attempt another save every 24 hours and must pass three saves to overcome the disease. Each failed save after the initial save to stave off infection counts as a failed death save which cannot be removed until the creature is cured. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check cures canal choke.

Open Desert. The open desert of Mars presents the usual range of heat and dehydration dangers that any desert offers. In addition, the open deserts of Mars are difficult terrain due to the depth of shifting sand.

Red Sand Fleas. All intelligent life on Mars loathes the red sand fleas, and anyone found infected by them will be banned from cities, killed by Chanari, and generally

despised. Unlike terrestrial fleas, these little red arachnids are indiscriminate feeders, sucking sap from plants as readily as blood from animals. Normally, they attack plants and can ruin an oasis or a field in days, but they are also happy to hitch a ride on a passing animal in the hopes of getting to a new patch of plants. The Chanari have many tribal remedies to repel red sand fleas, but as the fleas seem to be unwilling to latch onto Earthlings, Earthling clothes, scents, and even hair is becoming the preferred method of keeping these little nasties at bay. Infection causes fatigue, itching, and a rash. For some reason, red sand fleas seem to prefer Venusians to any other creature. Prolonged infection rarely kills an animal, but has been known to drop those who are already weakened.

Contact with an infected creature or plant can spread red sand fleas. The infestation can be resisted with a DC 13 Constitution save. Failure means the character is infested with red sand fleas and suffers disadvantage on all Charisma checks, saves, and associated skills. The fleas cannot be gotten rid of save through a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check and the appropriate medicine to kill off the infestation or 24 hours spent bathing.

Jupiter

Clouds of Jupiter. The skies of Jupiter are filled with clouds of deadly gases. Most of these are simply gases that suffocate, and the normal suffocation rules apply. Some clouds are toxic and require a DC 13 Constitution save each round of exposure or suffer 1d10 poison damage and gain the poisoned condition for one hour (half damage with successful save). Below the habitable zone (which is only a few thousand miles deep) the temperature and pressure rapidly increase. Exposed creatures suffer 1d10 fire and 1d10 bashing damage per round, with the damage increasing by 1d10 for every 1,000 feet of descent.

European Mind Burn. Europeans seem to be immune to nearly any disease, but they do suffer from a peculiar psychic bacterium that infects their minds, as it does all psychically active creatures. The first sign of illness is a loss of psychic abilities, followed by intense fever, powerful headaches, and bleeding from the ears and nose. Cerebral hemorrhaging is common as the disease progresses, as is paralysis and coma. Death is all too common for those infected by this rare bacterium.

Only a creature that possesses psychic disciplines can contract mind burn. The disease is passed through telepathic connections. A DC 13 Wisdom save is needed to avoid infection. An infected creature cannot spend power points nor do they regain power points. After every long rest the infected character must attempt another save, with three successes curing the disease. For every failed save the creature suffers 1d8 psychic damage that cannot be healed until the disease has been cured. Even European

medicine struggles to cure mind burn. It can be cured with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Medicine) or Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Gas pocket. The skies of Jupiter are filled with floating pockets of dangerous gases. These are usually noble gases that choke off oxygen or flammable gases that run the risk of ignition. A creature caught in a gas pocket of unbreathable air begins to suffocate. Flammable gas pockets are ignited if lit or if at least 1 point of fire or radiation damage is inflicted within it. Gas pockets range from a few feet in diameter to miles across. Ignited gas pockets inflict 2d6 points of fire damage to all creatures caught in them (DC 13 Dexterity save for half damage). This damage can be increased in scale for truly large pockets, with pockets hundreds of feet across inflicting planetary vehicle scale damage, and those miles across inflicting space vehicle scale damage.

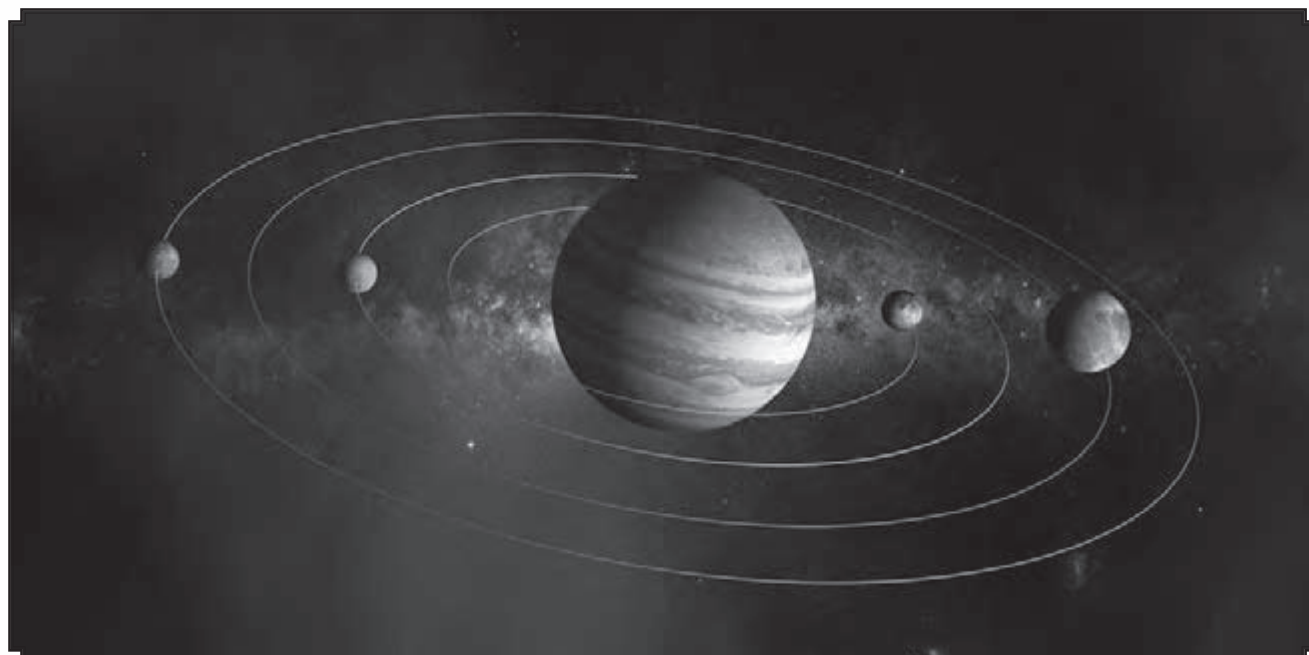
Spotting a gas pocket. DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Science). A successfully spotted gas pocket can be avoided.

Jovian Lung Mist. The atmosphere of Jupiter is not a safe place, with methane and other gas pockets just floating around ready to suffocate the unwary, not to mention the fact that the local flora and fauna are a tad aggressive. In addition, there is a rare microscopic organism that floats on the breeze, waiting to attack and feed on the lung sacks of any creature it comes into contact with. A newly discovered form of copepod that is only .0196 inches in length causes Jovian lung mist. This tiny animal normally feeds on vegetation and decaying carcasses, but will occasionally swarm into the air and float on the wind currents, looking for a likely place to raise its young, preferably a set of warm, moist lungs. Infection is

sudden and nearly always fatal, and often accompanied by difficultly breathing, intense thoracic pain, and internal bleeding.

Creatures exposed to Jovian lung mist must make a DC 15 Constitution save or become infected. There are five stages of Jovian lung mist as shown on the table below. Following each long rest the character must make another save, losing a stage if successful or gaining one if the save is failed. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check cures Jovian lung mist.

Jovian lung mist stages	Effect
1	Creature may not regain hit dice.
2	Creature gains a level of exhaustion.
3	Creature suffers 1d8 poison damage, may not take a long rest
4	As above, but creature gains a level of exhaustion.
5	Creature begins to suffocate.





Io

Io Ick. Not a single disease, but a plethora of dangerous microorganisms and environmental pollutants that abound on the blasted moon of Io. Just stepping out of an airlock exposes one to the disease, as does exposure to Ioite bodily wastes and fluids. Symptoms are mild, but long lasting, and include headaches, lethargy, sinus pain and discharge, hair loss, blurred vision, and sometimes capillary rupturing.

A creature exposed to Io Ick must make a DC 10 Constitution save or gain a level of exhaustion every 12 hours. The only natural cure is to spend a week in a clean environment. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check cures Io ick, or prevents it for 24 hours.

Surface of Io. Io has been bombarded with atomics as well as bio-weapons and powerful mutagens RAYs and bombs. Most of these have long since done their damage, but some areas are still dangerous. Pools of mutagenic energies still exist in some ruins and cause horrible injuries.

Any creature exposed to mutagenic energies must make a DC 15 Constitution save per round of exposure or suffer 2d12 poison and radiation damage (successful save for half damage) and roll on the mutation table below.

Traps

Ancient ruins are likely to have some sort of security precautions in place, especially Ancient Martian and Erisian ruins as those two civilizations were at war with each other. This is not to say that modern facilities won't have traps, there is no reason why an enterprising inventor (likely of the mad variety) or paranoid European wouldn't trap their lair. They have a liar after all.

Alarm Sensors

Mechanical trap

This trap uses an electronic sensor to detect intruders and trigger an alarm. The type of sensor can vary and only detects one class of phenomenon, such as heat or motion,

Mutations

d10	Mutation	Effect
1	Limbs stretch	You limbs become thin and dangling, lose 2 points of Strength. However, you can reach 5 feet farther.
2	Brain withers	Your mind caves in on itself, lose 2 points of Intelligence, yet you are now immune to the frightened and stunned conditions.
3	Internal organs mutate	Your internal organs mutate and while still functional, are not up to the task of keeping you alive, lose 2 points of Constitution. Good news, you are now resistant to poison damage.
4	Joints shift	Your joints crack and pop, and although you now have a greater range of movement, they are not as strong nor do they move as quickly or steadily as before. Lose 2 points of Dexterity, but you can now squeeze into narrow openings up to one third of your height.
5	Inner eye closes	Whatever it is that allows a person to be psychic has died inside you. You cannot gain psychic power points or learn powers, and if you have any they are lost. Hey, on the bright side you are now resistant to psychic damage.
6	Facial distortion	Your facial features melt and reform, and not in a good way. You lose 2 points of Charisma. Upside, you gain a bite attack that inflicts 1d8 points of piecing damage.
7	Mental giant	Your brain and braincase grow to astounding size, giving you +4 points of Intelligence. However, your body withers away to fuel this rapid growth and you lose 4 points of Strength and your speed is reduced by half.
8	Tentacle	One of your arms becomes a flexible tentacle that is not dexterous enough to manipulate an item (though you can still hold things with it). Bonus, this tentacle secretes acid and can be used to attack inflicting 1d8 points of acid damage.
9	Hulking brute	You grow 3 feet in height, possibly pushing you into a new size category, gaining 4 points of Strength. However, your brain is starved during this transformation and you lose 4 points of Intelligence.
10	Lucky you!	You gain 1 psychic power point and learn 1 power, then roll twice on this table.

or the trap projects a beam that if broken sets off the alarm. Multiple alarm sensors can be set up to detect different phenomenon, thus creating a more complex trap. Often an alarm sensor triggers other effects elsewhere in the ruin.

Spotting an alarm sensor is a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The sensor can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. When the trap is triggered the alarm goes off, though this might not always be audible and may only be a message sent over a ghost field to security robomen letting them know it is time to wake up and get back to work. If the alarm is audible in the area the trap is set the loud noises and flashing cause a great deal of distraction. All within the area must make a DC 10 Wisdom save or gain disadvantage on all rolls and be unable to concentrate on psychic disciplines until the end of their next turn.

Automated RAY Turrets

Mechanical trap

Black hemispheres descend from the ceiling and begin firing. Automated RAY turrets are generally placed in the ceiling within covered recesses. These are usually linked to an alarm sensor that protects an area and are triggered when the alarm goes off. Facilities with active robobrain may have RAY turrets under the robobrain's control.

It is a DC 15 Perception check to spot the RAY turrets when they are in their recesses, but if already deployed they are rather obvious (though the turrets themselves may be camouflaged). An automated RAY turret can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. RAY turrets have +6 initiative, +4 to hit, and inflict 1d10 radiation damage (beam and stun setting). A RAY turret is AC 12 and has 10 hit points.

Cameras

Mechanical trap

Many Ancient facilities have cameras and microphones covering their interiors, though not all such systems are complete and functional. Cameras allow the facility security to monitor activity, and although the security guards are long dead (or in stasis, just saying), robomen and robobrain may still be watching.

Often cameras are obvious but they may be hidden and thus require a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The sensor can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. They can be avoided with a DC 18 Dexterity check, and if successful the camera feed remains constant and appears to whoever is watching that all is normal.

Electronic Counter Measures

Special trap

Electronic counter measures, or ECM for short, are a form of security protection placed on robobrain, robomen, and datapads. They are designed to cause damage if the security of the device is tampered with. ECMs are activated when a hacking attempt fails. A pulse of energy is sent into the device used to bypass the security, overloading the device and destroying it an inflicting 2d8 lightning damage on any creature touching the device. If a psychic connection is being used to hack into the secured device, the user suffers 2d8 psychic damage.

EM Grids

Mechanical trap

Rare, EM grids emit a powerful field that shuts down electronic devices, including robomen. Most are triggered by alarm sensors but some have their own means of activation or are under robobrain control. Living creatures are not directly affected by EM grids.

It is a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect the presence of an inactive EM grid, the hum and slight glow makes active ones easily noticeable. The grid can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Within the area the grid covers, all electronic devices are rendered inoperative. Robomen caught in the grid must make a DC 13 Constitution save or become paralyzed until the effect ends or they are removed from the area. An EM grid can remain active until its power supply runs out, but most are on a 15-minute timer.

Electronic Locks

Mechanical trap

Mechanical locks are a rarity in ruins, and increasingly for modern facilities that are willing to spend the money. These are not traps per se, but an electronic lock can be set to activate a trap if an attempt to bypass them has failed. It is a DC 13 to 18 Dexterity check using lock picks or an engineer's kit to bypass an electronic lock. Breaking an electronic lock is difficult, requiring a DC 18 Strength check.



Holo Projectors

Mechanical trap

Holo projectors overlay a holographic image over reality in the hope of confusing viewers. These holograms affect more than just sight and sound; they have scent and sometimes touch features as well. Truly advanced holo projectors can create a reality that is so powerful, and often backed up by energy fields and gravitic projectors, that they can cause actual damage.

Before they are activated, holo projectors can be spotted with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The projector can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Once activated the artificial reality they are projecting is nearly indistinguishable from reality and must be interacted with to be able to see through them, requiring a DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom save. Even once seen through as a holo projection the overlay remains and imposes disadvantage on all rolls to interact with the hidden reality.

Mist Sprayers

Mechanical trap

Small nozzles set into the walls and ceiling spray a chemical mist that affects the minds of living creatures. Some mists are designed to incapacitate, others to kill, but the worst are those that cause bouts of madness. Usually an alarm sensor activates the mists.

The spray nozzles that deploy the mists are difficult to spot requiring a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The sensor can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Once deployed the mists are easy to spot as they fill an area with a colored cloud. Creatures that breathe the mists must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer one of the following effects:

Incapacitating mists. Those that fail their save are rendered unconscious for 1d8 minutes.

Killing mists. Those that fail their save suffer 2d8 psychic damage at the start of every turn they are in the mists.

Psychoactive mists. Those that fail their save fall under the effects of the *confusion* spell for 1d8 rounds. At the end of their turn they may attempt a DC 15 Wisdom save to recover from the effect.

Security Fields

Mechanical trap.

An alarm sensor is tripped and energy fields are activated. There are two types of security fields, restraining and stunning. The first forms around intruders or in doorways and blocks passage. The second is meant to hamper intruders until security can arrive to take them into custody or kill them.

To spot a security field requires a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The sensor can be disabled using lock picks or engineer's tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Blocking security fields have a golden glow and prevent energy and matter from passing through them. Blocking security fields have AC 10 and 50 HP, recovers 10 HP per round, and if the field is reduced to 0 HP it destabilizes and dissipates. A blocking security field can appear in a doorway but also may be designed to appear around intruders. Those caught in a descending blocking field must make a DC 15 Dexterity save or be trapped inside a box formed by the field (and with only enough air for 10 minutes).

Hampering fields fill an area with bluish tinged energy and inflict a stunning effect. Creatures caught in the field must make a DC 13 Constitution save or gain the stunned condition for 1d8+1 rounds.



CAMPAIGN TYPES

There is no right way to run a ***Rocket Age*** campaign. The setting has been designed so that you can craft whatever type of story you might want from epic battles that change the Solar System to more personal tales of heroism, and even such genres as romantic comedy, noir, or grind house. The choice is yours, and these campaign seeds are just a starting off point.

Agents

The characters work for one of the organizations active in the Solar System, be it the US Rocket Rangers, the Interplanetary Comintern, or even the 31st Seal. Usually this service sees them working as secret agents, playing a deadly game of cloak and dagger across the expanse of the Solar System. Paranoia is not a mental condition in this line of work, it is a survival trait, and today's friend may be tomorrow's enemy, or victim.

While it may not be as upbeat and hopeful as the Solar System of ***Rocket Age*** should be, the secret agent campaign can be a lot of fun. The main advantages are that the action can take place all over the Solar System and that the GM can give convenient plot hooks in the form of orders and mission from on high. In a well-played 'agents style' campaign, the players are so busy dealing with plots and counterplots that they often generate their own plot hooks, thus making full use of their agency and the characters' Agency. The downside is that, like military campaigns, the players may feel constrained by their assignments, forced to play a certain type of game, such as counterespionage on Mars, when they really want to run around the jungles of Venus.

Explorers

Possibly the most classic of campaign types of ***Rocket Age***, exploration should be your goto when first approaching the setting. There are millions of opportunities for exploration, from the jungles of Venus to the outer fringes of the Solar System. Even Mars, the planet best known by Earthlings, is largely unexplored, not to mention the many moons of Jupiter, most of which have only had a minor aerial survey.

The heroes could be independent operators, exploring for the love of adventure and the possible profit, or they may be working for someone else. Numerous nations are keen to find new resources to exploit, new lands to plant their flags on, and new ways to gain prestige. Being the first nation to send an expedition to the outmost limits of the Solar System and bring them back yields immense bragging rights. It is not just nations that fund explorers, for universities and corporation are as equally eager to make new discoveries, though for very different reasons. This is an age of Science, yes with a capital 'S.' Discovering a new

species is becoming humdrum, but a whole new world of new species, this is the stuff of legends. Universities fund expeditions to promote the scientific understanding of the Solar System, but also to outcompete their rivals and peers for grants, prestige, and sheer audacity. Corporations send out expeditions to find new markets, new resources, and maybe even new technologies to exploit. Their motives are less pure than the simple pursuit of Science, and their means are often morally grey, but their financing is often much greater.

There are several sources for conflict in a campaign based around exploration. Facing alien environments, strange natives, and dangerous creatures should be enough, but it often never is. With all these different factions out trying to make the next big discovery, conflict between explorers is a certainty. This may take the form of verbal sparring and the occasional barroom scuffle, or it can escalate into deadly acts of sabotage. Open violence is a possibility, though only the most depraved men of Science would contemplate such actions, most notably the Nazis and possibly the Soviets, but also anyone pushed too far or driven mad by what they have seen out there. Just keep in mind that expeditions in the Jovian System are being watched, and the Europeans are always judging.

Natives

Rocket Age is ostensibly about Earthlings as they spread across the Solar System, but it need not be. There are stories to be told from the alien perspective, and these can provide a rich and rewarding role-playing experience. There are two general categories of Natives campaigns, those about aliens dealing with Earthlings on their home planets, and those about aliens doing the traveling and exploring.

On their home planets the obvious campaign is one of resistance and adaptation to new ideas, technologies, and rulership brought by the Earthlings. An entire campaign can be based around the Ganymedians fighting off the prospectors coming to destroy their forests in the hunt for gold and radium. Likewise, centering a campaign on the political and military struggles of a free Martian prince and his closest advisors would be challenging and exciting. There is no reason that the Earthlings have to be the heroes; they make excellent villains, especially the more extreme ideologies behind Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

Campaigns based around natives on their homeworlds needn't always make conflicts with Earthlings as their primary plot. The story of a band of Martians in service to the Brotherhood of the Hamaxe and their journeys across the face of Mars righting wrongs and solving crimes could be an interesting campaign. Likewise, the trials and travails of a tribe of Venusians struggling to survive on their jungle covered planet, complete with rival concordats, deadly



animals, and the internal political machinations that follow the rise to Speaker could make a great campaign.

By taking the aliens out into the Solar System, but placing them entirely as the focus of the campaign, the GM and players can throw a lens onto the nature of humanity and Earthling culture. Imagine telling the story of a group of Venusians visiting New York City. How do they react to subways, traffic laws, and having to pay for things?

Pirates

I'll say it just once, space pirates. Where there is merchant shipping there are the jackals that prey upon them and given the size of the solar system, there are plenty of places to hide. These may be hidden asteroids, secret moon bases, or even just an out of the way place on Mars, Earth, or even Venus. A space pirates game presents plenty of opportunity for ship-to-ship combat followed by brutal fights down the corridors of a merchant vessel. By rotating this with deals on the surface of planets to sell contraband, or possibly to buy some and do a little smuggling on the side, the GM can vary the tone and feel of the game. This is not to mention all the fun things that criminals can do, rob a bank and fly away, kidnap a wealthy industrialist and hold him for ransom, or just simple, plain old fashioned con jobs. Keep in mind that a space pirates campaign will need foes that are not marks, and Rocket Rangers, space navies, and even rival pirates all should be at the top of a long list of foes to fight, avoid, or negotiate with.

Being space pirates is not terribly heroic, but there are ways around that. Our pirates may be noble criminals out to avenge some slight or crime against them, possibly Martians displaced by Earthling conquest who prey on Earthling shipping that is stripping their planet bare. Perhaps the player characters are Robin Hood types, using their ill-gotten gains to finance charities or an idealistic agency, such as the Interplanetary Comintern or the Lincoln Brigade. For something really off the wall, the heroes are all Europeans who have learned about Earthling pirates, both historical and current, and wish to understand more by becoming pirates themselves.

Soldiers

Conflict is widespread in the Solar System, and playing a campaign centered on a group of soldiers fits the setting well. The main factor that needs to be considered in a soldier's campaign is, whom are they fighting for? A campaign about the dogfaces of the US MEF is a very different tale than one revolving around Maduri loyally serving their prince against foes both Martian and Earthling. Player characters could even be crew on board a rocket ship sitting somewhere in the Jovian System, waiting for the war to start and performing brinkmanship

games against their foes, allies, and even the Europeans themselves.

Naturally there are some marked benefits to this type of campaign. The player characters have a superior who not only gives them their missions, but also can help by providing direction and equipment. A Soldiers campaign will be full of action, and most of it of the straightforward kind. For side plots and story ideas, look no further than the massive library of military fiction and movies that Western culture has produced in the past half century, especially those that deal with the Second World War. The downside to this type of campaign is that it may become repetitive, fight, fight, fight, even with some Rest & Recreation periods mixed in. Also, being part of a military chain of command places the player characters under some else's authority, and thus unable to make clear choices about the types of missions that they can undertake.

Despite the numerous ongoing conflicts in *Rocket Age* there is no good reason not to add another. Feel free to start the Second World War on Mars with US MEF and DMK troops firing on each other and the whole thing snowballing into a war whose flames engulf the entire Solar System. By using the existing material as a starting point and progressing your story along the lines that you want, the Solar System is shown as a living, evolving place, even if all you are doing is blowing it up.

A Ship and A Crew

Perhaps the most classic sci-fi campaign type in the history of role-playing, stretching all the way back to GDW's classic *Traveler* game. The basics of this sort of campaign are that the party are all part-owners (or otherwise invested in) a rocket ship. Keeping that ship in the air is the prime motivation, though every player character will likely have a secondary motivation as to why they want to keep flying. They will have to take jobs in order to pay for fuel, maintenance, food, and other necessities and these jobs can be nearly anything, and usually cover the sorts of episodes that feature in the other campaign types above.

The biggest benefit of this type of campaign is that it allows for a lot of player-driven story telling. In effect, it is the players who decide what the next episode is going to be, as their characters have the option of not taking a job, choosing this one over that one, and directing the flow of the over-arching plot. This power to make decisions is called agency, and in A Ship and A Crew, agency on the part of the player characters is king. Another benefit is that it allows the GM and players to treat the Solar System of *Rocket Age* as one big sandbox to play in. The movement of the player characters through the setting is entirely governed by their choices and only restricted by what jobs they want to take.

The downside is that the GM may not know where the campaign is heading at any given point. This means she must be good at playing off the cuff and ‘winging’ it, not something everyone wants, or frankly, can do. Without a solid structure the GM must be ready to offer the player characters multiple options, basically have a handful of jobs on hand for them to pick from, and be ready to go with whichever is chosen. True, there will be times when outside forces limit the heroes’ agency, but these should be rare.

EPISODES

The action of *Rocket Age* takes place in a series of episodes, each a roughly self-contained story that follows the adventures of our heroes. These episodes are further divided into reels, each reel representing one game session or a major part of the plot for those who play longer sessions. As the source material for *Rocket Age* is drawn primarily from the old serial adventures of such as those of *Flash Gordon* or *Buck Rogers* (as well as the pulp sci-fi of the 1930s and 1940s), this system is an appropriate means of structuring the game.

A good episode should begin with a hook in the first reel, something to get the characters motivated and the players excited. From there, further reels increase the action until a climax is reached where the heroes’ fortunes turn and the conflict nears resolution, often with a twist in the middle. Finally, the episode ends with the last reel that wraps up loose ends, resolves outstanding conflict, and brings the heroes their rewards, followed by the time to roll credits, bring up the lights, and send folks home.

The structure of individual reels is up to the GM, as every group spends different amounts of time at the table. Try

and leave on a dramatic note as this encourages folks to come back next time. Cliffhangers are good, but a weekly cliffhanger gets stale, even Republic Pictures, the most famed of the serial studios, didn’t do a cliffhanger a week.

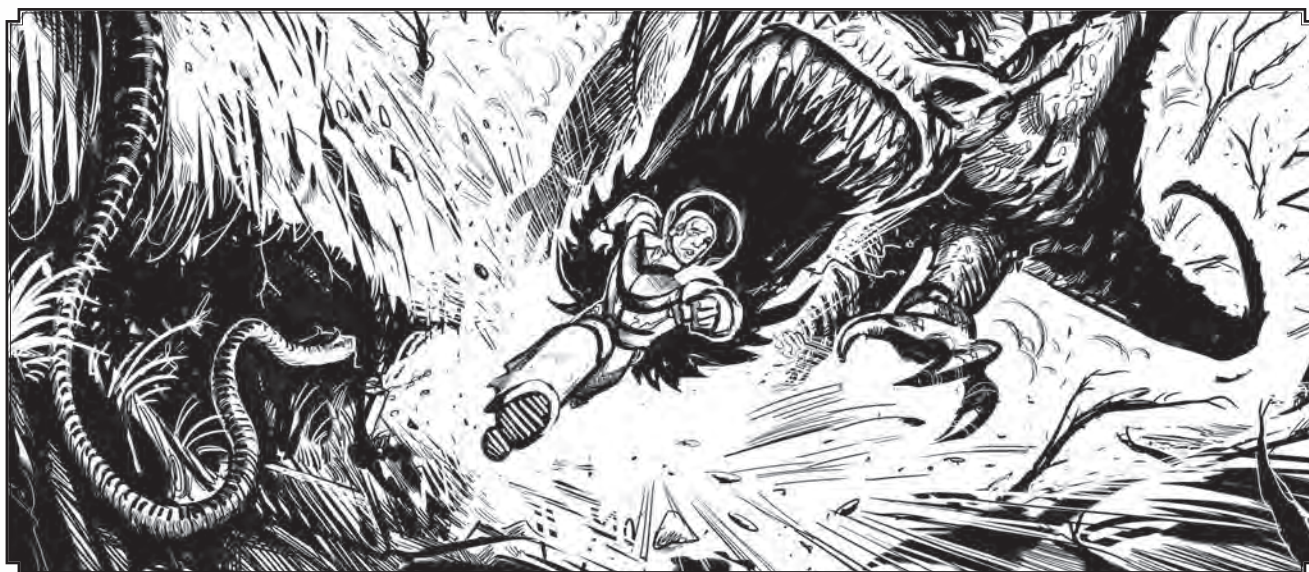
Below are four episode outlines to get you going. Each has a first reel giving the hook, a rising action that covers the middle reels, a climax to cover the last few reels, and a denouement to wrap up the last reel. Feel free to modify these for your own particular serial. No stats are provided so that they can be developed by the GM to suit the level of the characters.

Beyond the Rings of Saturn

First Reel: The heroes are all called to the terrestrial mansion of an eccentric industrial magnate, Jonas Hollingsworth. Mr. Hollingsworth is wealthy, but enfeebled by childhood polio. Unable to walk he has turned his mighty will towards improving his mind, and in recent years to financing expeditions into the furthest reaches of Africa, South America, Venus, and Mars. His next expedition involves sending a rocket ship out beyond the orbit of Saturn.

The player characters are offered commissions as officers on this ship, the *Argos*. The *Argos* is a specially designed ship utilizing the latest in technology, including RAY shielding. Our heroes will take command and pilot it out beyond the farthest reaches of Earthling explored space, map the depths of the orbits of Uranus and Neptune paying special attention to any life supporting moons, and return to a hero’s welcome.

Rising Action: The ship has several experimental systems, and the first task is a simple shake down cruise to Mars. The first couple of reels should deal with minor issues, such as equipment failures and eccentrics amongst the





crew. Resupplying on Mars gives an opportunity for side adventures on the Red Planet and a taste of that world's exotic culture. An attack by Cilician pirates after leaving the orbit of Mars for Jupiter provides some action and a chance to test out the ship's combat abilities. Navigating through the Asteroid Belt, not to mention the political situation in the Jovian System provides additional drama (the player characters will need to stop at Demarcation Point One to pay court to the Grand Admiral).

Climax: Once out beyond Saturn, things start to go wrong. Space madness infects a member of the crew at the same time several important systems are damaged by sabotage. The culprit, a Nazi spy, is found and dealt with. Between Saturn and Uranus the player characters are attacked by a Nazi rocket ship, leading to a pitched battle amongst the stars. While in the orbit of Uranus, the heroes discover a Nazi research station that is experimenting with electronically controlled animated dead. Finally, the player characters survey the moons of Uranus and Neptune, but must balance the mission to explore with their dwindling food and fuel resources.

Denouement: Hopefully the heroes return with maps of the outer planetary systems and samples of life from the moons of Uranus and Neptune. As the first Earthlings to venture so far, a ticker tape parade is expected and received and they become famous for their exploits. All is not well, for while away Mr. Hollingsworth died under mysterious circumstances, though he did leave the *Argos* to the player characters in his will, as well as an annual sum to cover operating costs. However, the Nazis are on the player characters' trail, and want revenge for the discovery and destruction of their secret research station.

Drums in the Jungle

First Reel: Attacks on the Ore Fields and on hunting expeditions from The Lodge have increased, with several people killed or wounded and thousands of dollars of property destroyed. Something has stirred up the Venusians, and the Rocket Rangers at Roosevelt Station are overwhelmed trying to keep a lid on the situation while at the same time rescuing those under fire. Most disturbingly of all, the Venusians are not using their traditional primitive weapons, but are making excellent use of modern rifles, grenades, and submachine guns.

These attacks are not being carried out by any of the local tribes, but are the work of a distant concordant that has had little contact with off-worlders. This concordant, the Stony River Concordant, has been heavily infiltrated by Venusians in the service of the Interplanetary Comintern. Listening to the tales of horror and war brought to Mars by the Earthlings, a pre-emptive strike deep into the heart of Earthling territory was planned, and carried out with the help of some Earthling and Martian Interplanetary Comintern agents (as well as modern firearms).

However, the IPC handlers soon lost control of their Venusian warriors after a particularly destructive attack on several wildcatter camps. The original plan was to strike and fade back into the jungle, but the fractious Venusians argued against the idea, and after a debate that lasted three days, the majority of the Venusians split off and started their own rampage of terror.

Rising Action: The first order of business will be to establish where the player characters are, and the best way to do that is to introduce this episode while they are already on Venus, either wrapping up an episode there, or getting some well-deserved Rest & Recreation at The Lodge. Just hearing about the attacks is not enough, and the heroes should be caught in one, having to fight or flee from a handful of SMG armed Venusian warriors. This makes the danger immediate and personal, and helps add to the conflicted nature of the whole episode.

Fighting the Venusians in the dense jungles should prove troublesome. The deadly flora and fauna of Venus should pose as much of a problem, if not more so, than the twenty or so gun-toting natives. Thunder lizards, disease, and even the hot and humid conditions should challenge the party members as they try to stop the rampage before more innocent lives are lost. Complicating this situation is the fact that two other bands of Venusians are out and about. A party of hunters is busy tracking down a thunder lizard, and the hunters would be startled to find out that a rival tribe is on their lands attacking their allies. Also, news of the raids has reached the ears of the local Speakers, and a body of warriors has been assembled to put a stop to this before things escalate.

The player characters and the three bands of Venusians are not the only ones involved. A squad of Rocket Rangers is at work trying to locate the raiders, and should they encounter the player characters they will rather condescendingly order them to return to their 'civilian' matters. A group of miners from the Ore Fields, armed and organized by the mine owners, is also hunting the raiders, and they don't care which Venusians they find, as long as the monkeys pay. Finally, Major Reginald Stratford-Collingham is leading a team of trackers and hunters from The Lodge to bring down the savage ape-men.

Climax: Once the player characters have tracked down the rampaging Venusians, they still have to deal with them. The returns on their investment of blood and time are starting to fall short, and already dissenting voices are beginning to campaign for an end to the raids and a return to their own lands. This can be done through negotiation, threats, or even open combat. The last option may be the most volatile, as a running gun fight in the jungle, especially against foes who can easily take to the trees, promises to be a deadly encounter.

Denouement: The miners and the mine owners, as well as The Lodge, will reward the player characters for bringing in the heads of the rampaging Venusians. A peaceful solution will only garner praise from the Rocket Rangers, and from Captain Running-Tree in particular. In either case, the player characters, if successful, are the heroes of the hour, at least to some. If they used violent means to put an end to the raids, they will find that they have new friends amongst those who hate the Venusians, and possibly lose friends amongst the Venusians themselves, especially if the raid leads to misplaced violent revenge against friendly concordats.

Even after the raiders are stopped, either through violence or peaceful means, further issues need to be dealt with. First, how did they get these weapons and why did they go on this rampage? Tracking the raiders back to their homelands should be difficult; the effort will be made somewhat easier if a prisoner survives to be interrogated. Even then, bringing retribution to the tribe should be somewhat morally grey, after all the Venusians have little central authority and most members of the concordant likely did not know about the raid nor did they condone it. On the other side of things, the Earthlings, especially those at The Lodge and the Ore Fields, are highly agitated. Disproportionate responses by Earthlings towards any Venusians, be they malicious or not, are to be expected, and anti-Venusian groups will gain much support. It may only be a matter of time before the green jungles of Venus are stained red with blood.

Haunted Ruins of the Red Desert

First Reel: The towers sticking out of the sands of the Empty Desert have long been assumed to be the upper ruins of the lost city of Atharnal, a great city of the Ancients. These ruins are not the remains of a city at all, but a small research station established just shortly before the Destruction of Eris. Here, the Ancients conducted research into new means to aid their less intellectual cousins by creating intelligent mechanical life that could perform complex and dangerous tasks. One possibility was that these robomen would be used against the Erisians, thus eliminating the need to risk Martian lives.

When the End came, the scientists feared for their families and fled back towards the cities that they had come from. Before they left, they did manage to shift power from the global power network (which was destroyed by the massive shower of planetary fragments) to a back-up geothermal plant beneath the main laboratory complex. As the end of all they knew and loved drew closer, one scientist set the combat robomen on automated security protocols in the event that an Erisian landing force should happen upon the research station and turn the products of the laboratory against the Martians.

In the intervening millennia, the research station at Atharnal has fared better than similar facilities. Seeing fire rain from the sky and programmed to defend and protect the research station, the combat robomen activated maintenance and engineering robomen, originally designed to work deep mines, in order to construct some sort of protective barrier. Needing further help for such a large project, laborer and service robomen were also activated, and the base's main computer system was upgraded to better coordinate the efforts of all these disparate robomen.

Rising Action: The player characters learn of the Ruins of Atharnal while on Mars, or are directed towards them by their regular patrons or employers. The journey out to the ruins will be a dangerous one, and not just because of the dangers of the Red Planet. True, several wastelands and a small silt lake will need to be crossed, all while carrying along their own food and water, but the true threat is that three Chanari tribal lands, as well as a rugged dead Canal Zone, need to be crossed as well. Adding to this, the dead Canal Zone has recently become infested with bandits and heretical Martian zealots. One could take a rocket ship, but the actual coordinates of the ruins are unknown, and they will be difficult to find from the air. Also, localize magnetic disturbances in the area that the ruins are purported to lie in play havoc on compasses and even RADAR or RADIO signals.

Adding to all these difficulties, there are others on the hunt for the lost city. Archpriest Jasil, a powerful leader in the Orthodox Fellowship, is determined that no more Ancients' resting places be disturbed by the Earthling interlopers. Towards this end he is leading his own expedition of loyal Maduri and a band of allied Brotherhood of the Hamaxe heroes to the ruins to defend them. Captain Barkov of the Soviet Union has already left with her expedition. Acting on clues that a RAY shielding device could be found in the ruins, she will stop at nothing to secure it and the ruins for her nation. Finally, with all this activity concerning some Ancient Ruins out in the wastes, both the Nazis and a local prince, Prince Havitalik, have outfitted their own expeditions. The Nazis, under Obersturmbannführer Gerste have two war walkers to assist them, as well as plenty of armed soldiers and Martian slave laborers. Prince Havitalik, for his part, has outfitted his Maduri with Earthling weapons, as well as arming himself and his personal guard with RAY pistols. He is also making use of several automobiles to carry him and his expedition.

With five factions, including the player characters, searching for Atharnal, the first part of the adventure should involve some shady doings in town while the expeditions are being fitted out. The rivals should be introduced, and opportunities for espionage and sabotage explored. Once underway, the rivals will find themselves outside of any official jurisdiction, and thus the level of violence and deadliness should go up. As they near the



area that the ruins are allegedly in, a race to be first can knock some expeditions entirely out of the running, and leave others hungering for revenge.

Climax: Once there, the ruins need to be found and explored, though this will prove challenging. Not only do the rival expeditions need to be dealt with, the robomen of the research base will not take kindly to intruders. This can lead to a six-way battle, but more likely alliances will be formed, broken, and reformed, creating a shifting web of deceit and backstabbing. Only one faction can have the station at the end.

Denouement: The obvious rewards are fame and glory for whoever can take and hold Atharnal, and then return with the proof. More tangible rewards can be found in valuable Ancient Martian artifacts, as well as lost technologies that can be reverse engineered. A fortune can be made off of even the smallest thing, but the Shielding Device, if it exists, and especially the robomen and their wireless networking system, are the true treasures. Of course, there is the issue of holding onto the finds, and the ruins themselves. It is likely that the player characters will make dangerous enemies during the course of this episode, for the Soviets, Nazis, Orthodox Fellowship, Brotherhood of the Hamaxe, and Prince Havitalik are not ones to take a setback with gentlemanly airs. Even if the immediate rivals are killed others might be sent to exact revenge or take the ruins and artifacts themselves. Not forgetting, of course, the three Chanari tribes who may have been deeply offended by the heroes crossing their territory, and who are not above following them into the ruins and demanding tribute or blood.

Missile X

First Reel: Dr. Everett Foster is a genius, he is also insane. Although he holds several lucrative patents, money does not motivate him, just the pursuit of science. That and an abiding belief that his kind – namely Earthlings, male Earthlings at that – are destined to rule the Solar System. That the Europeans should block this manifest destiny, a destiny that is apparent to any rational mind, infuriates him. To this end, he has prepared his own one-man war against the Europeans, having decided that a first strike to cripple their little moon will set events in motion that will bring all of Earth together to destroy this menace once and for all.

As part of his plans, Dr. Foster has secured a secret laboratory in a deserted city on Mars, using the money from his patents to hire assistants, bodyguards, and other personnel to staff the laboratory. Already construction on Missile X and research into its groundbreaking guidance system are underway, soon the deadly rocket will be

ready to launch. None know of this, and Dr. Foster has taken several precautions to keep his plans and laboratory a secret from prying eyes. This includes capturing and holding prisoner a British expedition that unknowingly set out to explore the same ruins that Dr. Foster was using. Several members of the expedition were killed, but its leader, Dr. Collings and his daughter, Elizabeth (as well as a dozen others), are Foster's 'guests' until after the launch.

Rising Action: John Simon was one of Dr. Foster's lab assistants, seeing what the research and construction of Missile X was leading towards, fled to warn the powers of Earth. Unbeknownst to Simon, the evil doctor had laced his assistant's food and drink with a powerful poison whose antidote was administered in the evening meal. Dying, Simon stumbles across the heroes and relays his tale, including the location of the secret lab on Mars.

Possibly, another hook would be for the player characters to learn of the lost Collings expedition and go in search of them. Following clues left on Mars, the heroes retrace the steps of the expedition from its origins in Emancipation, across the open desert (while battling Chanari tribes along the way), and across jagged basalt ridges to the lost city of Hithyar.

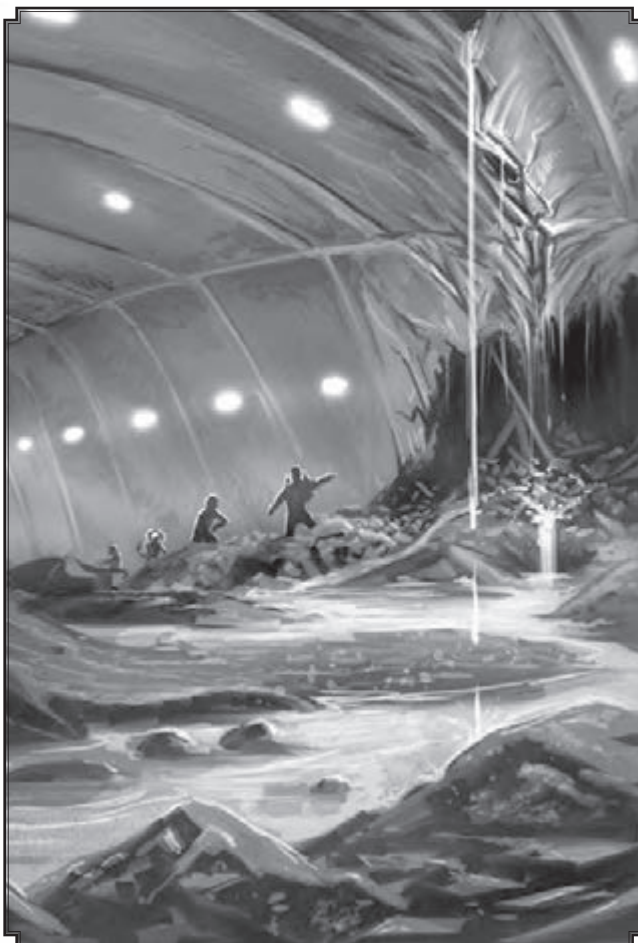
In either case, the laboratory must be discovered and infiltrated. This will be difficult, as Dr. Foster has hired some of the most cutthroat mercenaries in the Solar System to be his security team. Stealth and subterfuge should be the order of the day, followed by a running gunfight through the streets of the abandoned city and into the halls of the secret laboratory. Along the way, the player characters should have the opportunity to rescue the Collings expedition only to find the mad scientist has taken Elizabeth Collings to the control room to watch the launch of Missile X (and hopefully seduce her in the process).

Climax: In the end, the player characters must battle the most loyal of the doctor's henchmen (though the lab assistants will likely run and cower during any combat) to stop the launch of the missile and rescue Elizabeth Collings. Naturally, the heroes will arrive right as the final countdown begins, and if they do not stop it in time Missile X will launch and bring about the First Earthling-European War. Even if they are in time, Dr. Foster is not above using young Miss Collings as a hostage to ensure the success of the launch or his own escape.

Denouement: With Missile X stopped, the player characters can breathe a sigh of relief. If the evil doctor is defeated, his henchmen scatter to the desert winds. The Collings will be happy about their rescue, and a romantic subplot could develop between one of the player characters and Elizabeth. In any event, Dr. Collins will be happy to hire the player characters on his future expeditions, and give

them high praise in the newspapers and in academic circles. Despite his madness, Dr. Foster was a genius, and Missile X is a wonder of modern technology. Should it be dismantled for further study, or destroyed lest it or its technology fall into the wrong hands?

Should Dr. Foster escape, he will take a handful of thugs and other henchmen with him. Lost in the Martian desert it seems that they are doomed to a slow death by dehydration, or a more rapid one at the hands of the Chanari, but it is hard to keep a genius down, and Dr. Foster will likely rise again with another scheme to set the Solar System on fire. This can happen even if he is captured or otherwise defeated, as long as the body is never found.





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JOVIAN
SPACEWAYS

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TOUR OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM



MERCURY



VENUS



EARTH



MARS



THE MOON



ASTEROID BELT



MERCURY

Average Distance from Earth: 149.5 million km
Environment: barren
Native Lifeforms: None

VENUS

Average Distance from Earth: 130.5 million kilometers
Environment: Tropical jungle and savanna
Native Lifeforms: Venusians, various large reptiles and insects

EARTH

Environment: Varied
Native Lifeforms: Earthlings, mammals, reptiles, insects, fish

THE MOON

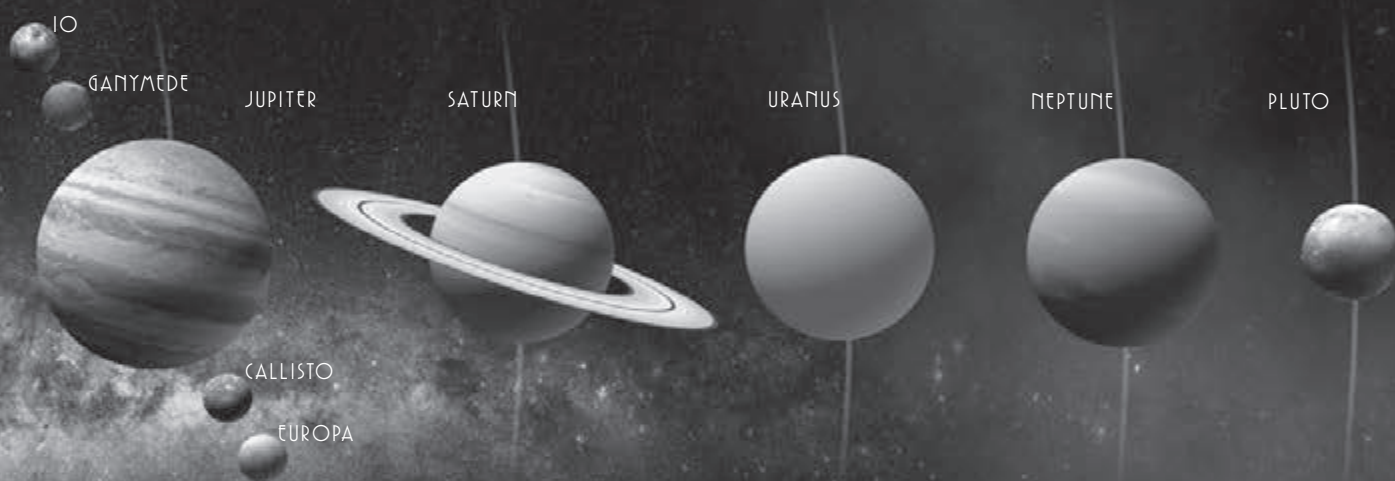
Average Distance from Earth: 384,403 km
Environment: Thin atmosphere, low gravity
Native Lifeforms: Lichens and moss

MARS

Average Distance from Earth: 225 million km
Environment: Arid and warm
Native Lifeforms: Martians, various reptilian, mammalian, avian, and other lifeforms

ASTEROID BELT

Average Distance from Earth: 305 million km
Environment: varied, largely barren
Native Lifeforms: None



JUPITER

Average Distance from Earth: 778 million km
 Environment: Hot with high pressures in the depths, moving sky islands and clouds of dangerous gases
 Native Lifeforms: Unclassified lifeforms

EUROPA

Average Distance from Jupiter: 671,000 km
 Environment: Temperate wet
 Inhabitants: Europeans

GANYMEDE

Average Distance from Jupiter: 1.07 million km
 Environment: Temperate forests
 Inhabitants: Ganymedians and other mobile plants

IO

Average Distance from Jupiter: 422,000 km
 Environment: Toxic wasteland
 Inhabitants: Ioites and various mutated monsters

CALLISTO

Average Distance from Jupiter: 1.88 million km
 Environment: Arctic wastes
 Inhabitants: Yeti, pinipeds, fish

SATURN

Average Distance from Earth: 1.5 billion km
 Environment: Unexplored
 Inhabitants: Possible large flying creatures

URANUS

Average Distance from Earth: 2.86 billion km
 Environment: Unexplored
 Inhabitants: None predicted

NEPTUNE

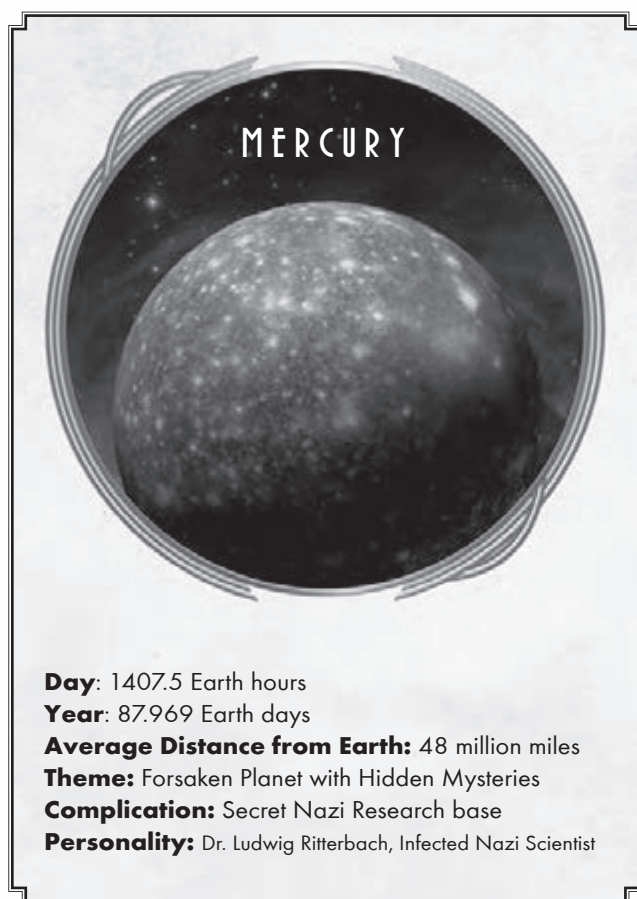
Average Distance from Earth: 4.4 billion km
 Environment: Unexplored
 Inhabitants: None predicted or encountered

PLUTO

Average Distance from Earth: 23.3 billion km
 Environment: Frozen
 Inhabitants: Not likely

TOUR OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

MERCURY



"Approach vector is locked, prepare for transition to orbit."

Dolan leaned back in his crash chair and rubbed his eyes. This fool's errand, poking around Mercury in the hopes of finding rare ores, paid well. The non-stop flight from Earth, seven days in a cramped exploration and mining rocket, was proving to be too much. He didn't know he was the only pilot until he had got on board, and by then he had spent most of the advance.

At least the rocket was a newer model with a hybrid robo-brain that could take the controls for the routine stuff. Most of the flight had been routine, and Dolan had only needed to pay close attention to lift off and Earth orbit traffic. Even so, he was a responsible pilot and had only left the cockpit to use the toilet.

The RADAR dinged and pinged, something, no, three somethings were coming up from the planet. Dolan straightened up and looked over at the display. No ghosts or echoes here, these were solid contacts rising from the surface and heading his way. There shouldn't be anyone down there; it was common knowledge that Mercury was a dead end.

"Hope-1 to unidentified rockets, Hope-1 to unidentified rockets, please identify yourselves." The RADIO hissed and popped, but no response came through. He pulled down the telescope eyepiece, thinking again how much it looked and felt like a submarine's periscope, and got the three bogies into focus.

They were long and sleek with swept back fins and grey painted hulls. Although moving fast, at this distance he could bring them into resolution and see their markings.

"Oh shit." Dolan switched on the intercom. "Oh shit, people we have Nazi fighters inbound, repeat, Nazi fighters i bound, taking evasive actions, strap in!"

Hope-1 slewed around, its drive flaring and fighting the inertia of the orbital insertion. Dolan wanted to cut in the long range RADIO and broadcast a distress call back to Earth, but he needed both hands and all his wits to side slip the rocket on its attitudinal thrusters and head back out to deep space.

The three fighters closed and opened up with their quad RAY cannons, stitching lines across the exploration ship's hull. Red lights sprang up all across the systems board and Dolan only barely registered that the long and short range RADIO dishes



were gone, as well as the portside thruster controls. The Hope-1's own RAY cannon opened up, missing, but draining off needed power.

Something crashed on one of the decks below, something not secured for these sorts of maneuvers. The fighter pilots were good, better than a Rocket Corps washout like Dolan, and they passed close by under the Hope-1, leaving the bulk of the ship between them and the RAY cannon mounted in the dorsal turret.

Before they could make another pass he had to get some distance, get out of the gravity well and light off the radium drive at full blast. Another tight maneuver, another crash below the cockpit deck, and a lot of screaming on the intercom. Dolan saw he wasn't going to make it even before a few long-range pot shots from the fighters took off three fins and the turret. Hull breach warnings flashed and klaxons blared across the ship.

Dolan may have washed out of the Solar System's top-flight rocket school but there was one maneuver he had learned and learned well. As the fighters made another close pass, holing the Hope-1 in a dozen places and setting the engine room on fire, he hauled up on the now balky controls, swinging the flaring radium plume of the rocket around and toasting one of the fighters into charred radioactive ash.

And then the Hope-1 exploded.

The closest planet to the sun is a tiny rock flying through space, one side a burning molten expanse devoid of life, and the other a frigid wasteland devoid of life. Mercury is tidal locked to the Sun, meaning that it does not rotate, but always keeps the same face sunward. There is hardly any gravity here, and no atmosphere to speak of. Honestly, there is nothing to attract anyone to visit this barren lump in the sky. Only three rocket ships have braved the solar flares and coronal storms to survey Mercury, and all three left without seeing anything of promise.

Festung Sieg

Mercury has attracted some attention however, and its isolation and bareness is exactly the sort of place that Hitler has been looking for. Tucked away underneath the ice and rock on the dark side of Mercury is a closely guarded secret base from which the Nazi Party hopes to spread its rule across the Solar System. This facility, named Festung Sieg (Fortress Victory) serves two functions, that of a storehouse for the materiel of war, and as a research station.

The more prosaic storehouse is stocked with all manner of weapons, supplies, and equipment need for the future conquests of the Third Reich. Guns, ammunition, tanks, rocket ships, war walkers, all are stored in climate-controlled chambers. Enough food to feed the entire Wehrmacht for a decade is kept ready and safe from rot and vermin. The gasoline and radium stockpiles alone rival those of any two other nations. Two regiments of SS are kept in constant training, this is in addition to the SS guards who protect



and operate the facility. All told, Hitler can wage war for years without ever tapping into his reserves or supplies on Earth and Mars.

If the storehouses push the bounds of credulity, it is the research labs that push the bounds of sanity and humanity. In these cavernous vaults, Ancient Martian technology is studied and reverse engineered, experimental weapons and rocket ships are designed and tested, and far worse experiments are conducted. That they are more than willing to experiment on living subjects explains why the Nazis are well ahead of other nations in the biological sciences. Three main projects are currently underway at Festung Sieg, all the result of mad greed, cruelty, and ambition. The main project is the creation of a legion of super soldiers. Perfect Aryans bred and born on Mercury, brought up with nothing, but the Party ideology, and trained to the height of human perfection. So far, the oldest of these super soldiers are only five years old, but already they are perfect little Nazis. As an adjunct to this program, research is underway to develop artificial conception and incubation, allowing the Nazis to create as many soldiers as they can without the need for keeping the mothers healthy and happy. So far this research has born no fruit, but it is only a matter of time before the keys to artificial human procreation are found, and then hundreds of thousands more super soldiers can be bred and trained.

Even more bizarre and horrific are the experiments performed on captives. Vivisection is the least of the atrocities committed by the scientists at Festung Sieg, projects range from flesh grafts to the joining of human and machine components. The effects of exposure to various chemicals and radiations are being carefully studied with the hopes of developing new weapons or new techniques to enhance the super soldiers being raised at the facility. The creation of disease-based weapons is also underway, and shows remarkable promise.

By far the most shocking experiments are being conducted in Lab 8, a laboratory that is kept off limits and hidden from even the other scientists and soldiers. Only the most trusted, and most insane of Hitler's minions have access to Lab 8, and for good reason. Here experiments with cross-species blending and genetic engineering are underway. The Nazi scientists are far from being able to reliably conduct genetic engineering, but this has not stopped them from trying. The results are often lethal to the organisms being experimented on, but a few have survived attempts at either altering their genetic structure or creating new life forms from scratch to form a 'zoo' of the deformed,

the insane, and the monstrous. Likewise, cross-species reproduction has so far eluded the researchers at Festung Sieg, but they continue on anyways, hoping to unlock the potential of Earthling-Venusian and Earthling-Martian hybridization.

Dr. Ludwig Ritterbach, Infected Nazi Scientist

Like many of the scientists willing to work at Festung Sieg, Dr. Ritterbach is a true believer in the Party line. On Earth he turned in fellow scientists suspected of treasonous behavior, or even of secretly being Jews. His genius, as well as his dedication to the party, gained him the opportunity to work on the highly secret projects in Lab 8. The shocking horrors that are daily perpetrated in that laboratory do not faze him one bit, in fact he has become even calmer and more coldly logical since beginning work there.

Some see this as a sign that the doctor's psyche is strong enough to handle the rigors of this work, others that his mind is close to breaking and is merely creating a shell in order to survive. Either way, no one knows the truth; that Dr. Ritterbach is no longer Dr. Ritterbach, but something else entirely. One of the monsters created in the lab, an



accident involving the chemical manipulation of a rare Venusian slug, turned out to be intelligent and parasitic. Working alone one night, Dr. Ritterbach was attacked by the slug, which then burrowed into his body, attaching itself to his spinal column. This alien parasite has taken control of the doctor, and although it can use his memories to drive the body and maintain its cover; it is only a matter of time before the monstrous slug plays its hand. All it really wants is the chance to breed more of its kind, and so it continues to experiment on unenlightened members of its species. In addition, the slug hopes to find a way to reproduce itself sexually using the doctor's body, but so far none of its test subjects have shown any promise; however there are a lot of beings in Lab 8, and even more in the rest of Festung Sieg. Then again, if it can get to Earth or Venus a suitable host or mate can be found.

MERCURY STORY HOOKS

- A secret RADIO message has been received by an organization or government that the player characters have worked with in the past. The message tells of a secret Nazi base on Mercury, and promises to defect with the location and plans. Can the party infiltrate the base, discover the defector, and get out alive?
- After a battle with Nazi agents involving some truly bizarre hybrid monstrosities, one of the player characters discovers minute traces of dust on one of the creatures. This dust matches a rare combination of elements only found on Mercury. Where did this thing come from, and how did it get dust on it from a planet that only a handful of Earthlings have ever set foot on?
- A prominent university from one of the player character's home nation offers to hire the party to explore Mercury. Although most agree that there is little of interest there, a handful of scientists at the university want to study the unique properties of the planet's geology. All the party has to do is fly there, land, and collect some rock samples.

VENUS



Length of Day: 124 Earth Hours
Length of Year: 224.7 Earth Days
Average Distance from Earth: 25.6 million miles
Theme: Exploration and Exploitation
Complication: Who Owns Venus?
Personality: Johnny Iacoli, American Rocket Pilot and Freelance Explorer

We all froze at the sound. The roar was unlike any I had heard, deep and rumbling, echoing off the trees, and carrying on for what seemed like forever. My native guides, a pair of Venusian warriors hired back at the Lodge gestured to each other and slowly backed down the trail.

"What was that?"

"Hush, little one." The taller of the two, though the shorter was at least nine feet tall, slowly raised her hand to her face and laid her palm across her mouth. I had been on Venus long enough to know some of the native's hand signals and this wasn't shock. It meant something along the lines of quiet-we-are-in-danger.

I backed up with them and the roar sounded again. It might have been closer or from a different direction, I couldn't tell with all the echoes.



My guides went up a tree, not even trying to keep quiet. This wasn't good. The shorter one, we they called her Sally back at the lodge, cut a vine with her claws and lowered it down for me. How nice of them to help out the person who hired them, it's not like I had arms made for brachiating and sharp climbing claws or anything.

The taller one, who wanted everyone to call him Runs in the Dark, secured one end of the makeshift rope. I gave it a pull and then froze again. Not fifty yards away was a thunder lizard, thirty tons of angry reptile with a head made to bite through the shell of the armored jungle tortoise. The guidebooks estimated a bite pressure of over 12,00 psi. It was looking past me.

I turned and saw another one, maybe twenty yards off. How such large creatures could move silently through the jungle I will never know. My guides were calling for me, begging in a mixture of English and Venusian for me to climb up. Seemed like a good idea. They both started pulling in the vine as fast as they could, which was not helpful and made me almost fall.

Then the two thunder lizards charged, each other. The pair snapped their jaws together inches below my dangling feet and I dropped my custom RAY rifle. I may have screamed. The Venusians certainly did, but they got me up on the branch high above the dueling thunder lizards.

"Thanks, at last. When one kills the other we can grab my rifle and head back to the Lodge."

"No, no killing today hairless one."

I looked down, it certainly looked like a fight, and both were bleeding from gashes along their flanks. There was a lot of roaring, snapping of jaws, and every now and then their bodies slammed together and with their vestigial arms slapping around.

"These two are, how do you say, making new thunder lizards."

Unaccountably feeling somewhat voyeuristic I looked back at my guides. "How long until we can sneak off?"

"A day maybe two." Sally gave the look that Venusians use for a shrug, a sort of upper body spasm.

"No, three at least." Runs in the Dark bared his teeth at Sally and she replied in Venusian. The two argued for a while, their voices rising above the sounds from below. The hooting and hollering rose and fell, but ended when Sally slapped Runs across the face, hard, and he went off to another branch to sulk.

"A day, maybe two."

Well hell, that is too long stuck in a tree with these two.

"Earth or Venus days?"

"Days are days."

A day on Venus is over a hundred and twenty hours long. Runs sulked the whole time.

Venus is the wild frontier of the Solar System, a planet whose extents have been barely explored, whose wonders are largely undiscovered, and whose future is in gravest doubt. Only part of the highlands area, the only area easily or safely inhabited by Earthlings, has been thoroughly explored. The remainder of the highlands has been mapped using aerial surveys, but these have yielded little more than a general idea of the landscape. Most of the highlands are covered in thick jungles that flow up the jagged mountainsides like a great green wave. Further aerial reconnaissance is hampered by the fact that the planet is very humid, and between the low lying banks of clouds and the mist-shrouded jungle canopy there is only a small window of clear sky. Only the bravest or dumbest of pilots are willing to risk their rocket ships and their lives dodging giant trees in order to make a more detailed survey of the highlands.

Venus is impossibly hot and humid, the air is said to have the consistency of boiling soup. Daily temperatures range from a cool 24°C, but quickly rise to 41°C by midday. Humidity hovers around 95% throughout the day, and showers are frequent, even on clear days, as the water forms droplets in the lower atmosphere and splashes back to Venus. The higher one goes on Venus, the lower the temperature and humidity, making the highlands the only habitable portion of the world, the more expensive real estate is higher upslope.

Below the highlands are the mysterious fog cloaked lowlands. A permanent band of cloud cover fills the areas below 3,000 meters, looking for all the world like a vast sea of grayish mist. This veil has only been penetrated in the past few years using apparatus a bit like a diving bell. Air pressure increases rapidly as one descends, and the heat reaches levels that quickly soften rubber and make any metal surface too hot to touch. No rocket ship has plunged into the perpetual sea of clouds that laps against the mountainsides and returned.

Venus is home to a great diversity of life; from swarms of insects so small that they are nearly invisible to the

VENUSIAN GLOSSARY

Beejezeubs: Any one of several scary nocturnal predators that haunt the jungles of the Highlands. *"Don't go past the perimeter fence, or the beejezeubs will get you."*

Digger: Slang term for a worker in the Ore Fields, often followed by a descriptor of their profession if they did something other than prospect or panhandle for radium ore or gems. *"The new waitress at the Lodge used to be a digger-harlot, but she's washed off and moved up hill."*

Dinosaur: Any large reptilian creature native to Venus. *"Bob got ate by a dinosaur last week, one of those tall spiny types."*

Down Cloud: The area of Venus below the highlands. *"There's an expedition going down cloud next week, they might need a cook if you're looking to wash off."*

Dry: An adjective used to describe something that is excellent, fine, or superior. *"Have you seen the new film at the canteen? It's very dry."*

Earn a Dry Bed: Someone who has made enough money or otherwise secured a trip back to Earth. *"Johnny struck it rich wildcatting and earned a dry bed."*

Glow Dirt: Slang term for high yielding radium ore. *"I done struck glow dirt, and will be rich if'n no one jumps me claim."*

Monkey Man: Derogatory term for the native Venusians. *"Who's that monkey man think he is, telling me I can't go through this pass."*

Mud-to-Mud: Used to refer to someone who died on Venus and is buried there. *"Ol' Bill got shot by a claim jumper, he's mud-to-mud now."*

Placer: A type of mining featuring small hand dug or panned mines in alluvial deposits, often with the use of forced water to remove sand and gravel. While not a style of mining endemic to Venus, it is a cheap form of mining used commonly by wildcatters. *"There's placer mines all over that valley, and they have nearly cut off all the water coming through."*

Ruckitt: Any one of a number of skin diseases that humans catch in the hot and humid climate of the Venusian Highlands. *"I've got the ruckitts so bad, I can't sleep."*

Shasqatari: From the native Venusian word for 'human', applied to any newcomers to Venus. *"If those shasqatari don't pay attention in the jungle, they'll end up dinosaur meat."*

Up Hill: Something snooty, fancy, or wealthy, comes from the tendency for the mine and government officers to build homes higher in the mountains in order to reach more temperate altitudes. *"That British hunting lodge is so up hill, they won't let our type in."*

Venusquake: Tectonic activity on Venus. *"Another venusquake and the whole bridge will come crashing down!"*

Wash Off: The act of moving from the low class ore fields to a higher position in the social strata of Venus. *"One day I will wash off and get a job at the Lodge."*

Wildcatter: Originally used to describe maverick oil explorers in Pennsylvania and Texas, on Venus it refers to any independent miner. *"The wildcatters out on Windy Ridge are stirring up the Venusians, we better get out there and calm things down."*

mighty sixty feet tall predators known as thunder lizards. In between are hundreds if not thousands of species of insect and reptile that fill every conceivable niche in the layered jungle ecosystem. Many of these are hazardous to Earthlings, possessing sharp claws and fangs, deadly spines, poisonous flesh, or the ability to spit or spray toxins at great distances. Even the plant life is often dangerous, and more than in the manner of poisonous fruit. Several varieties of bromeliad are carnivores, and though only a few are large enough to swallow a full grown man, the smaller varieties are more than capable of nipping off an errant finger or even hand. The highest form of life on Venus is the native Venusians, tall strongly-built ape-like beings who have a complex society, language, and primitive

tool use. They are easily the equivalent of Earthlings in intelligence, though they have not developed much in the way of metallurgy, and thus their technological base has been limited to works in stone and wood. Even so, they are exquisite craftsmen in their primitive way, and those few who have adapted to Earthling ways have picked up the intricacies of modern technology.

While it is not uncommon to see a native Venusian in Roosevelt Station or performing at Livingstone Lodge, the vast majority are still 'wild' and live spread across the highlands in extended clans called Concordats. They practice a primitive economy based around communal use and barter, as well as a pseudo-democracy with religious



overtones dominated by their 'Speakers.' The clash between the native Venusians and Earthlings is one that has been brewing since the first rocket ships blasted down into the trees, and many colonists are apprehensive about the threat promised by the jungle drums pounding in the night.

There are two main factors that bring people to Venus, the exotic nature of the planet and its mysteries, and the chance to make a fair amount of money. Like Mars, Venus attracts adventure seekers, tourists, game hunters, and scientists who wish to plumb its depths and hunt its jungles. The other sort of colonists, those seeking to make their fortune, end up in the Ore Fields. Venus is blessed with radium, as well as precious metals and gems. The Ore Fields are dominated by a handful of mining companies, forcing those wishing to exploit the planet's greatest resources to either work in horrid conditions or become rogue wildcatters.

JOHNNY IACOLI

Born to Italian immigrants, Johnny is a first generation American who has managed to turn his lowly start in life into a career as a dashing and successful rocket ship pilot and explorer. His parents worked hard to afford to pay for their eldest son to go to college, but Johnny left after just three semesters to join the fledgling US Rocket Corps. After two years of service, he managed to have himself honorably discharged on Mars. There, he signed on as a pilot for a small cash-strapped French expedition into the Southern Polar Regions. This expedition turned out to be unusually lucky, and Johnny walked away with his pay and a large share of diamonds and gold taken from an Ancient Martian ruin. Seeing as how the Martians frown upon tomb robbing, Johnny took his small fortune, bought a rocket ship of his own, and moved to Venus. If you need a ship capable of surviving the most dangerous of missions, and a pilot brave or crazy enough to try it, Johnny and his *Fool's Fortune* are what you are looking for. Call or leave a message at 145 Congreve Street, Roosevelt Station.

VENUSIAN HIGHLANDS

All of the major settlements on Venus are located in the Highlands, and it is where it is where most of the exploration and economic activity takes place as well. To date, only the Ishtar Range has been thoroughly explored, and even then there are a plenitude of valleys, hidden calderas, and isolated plateaus that have only been mapped

from the air. The rest of the Highlands are unknown, virgin territory, inhabited by only a few wildcatters and wild tribes of Venusians.

The highlands are not divided into areas controlled by one Earthling nation or another, instead these rugged jungle covered mountains and valleys are dotted with stations, bases, and other settlements individually owned or claimed primarily by Brazil, Britain, Germany, and the United States. Other nations are involved to some degree, but in the main, only to a limited extent. Several of these, especially those that are dedicated to scientific research, are used by more than one nation. Corporations or universities interested in exploitation or exploration of Venus own the rest.

Only a small percentage of the Highlands have been thoroughly explored, and even less settled. Most of the Earthling activity is in the Ishtar Range on the planet's southern continent. These settlements tend to clump together, partially out of mutual support, but mostly because only the northern portion of the range has been heavily explored, though the whole range has been mapped from above using low flying rockets. Fort Washington is the primary American base, and serves as the center for US, British, and French explorations. It sits on a long, narrow plateau that it shares with Roosevelt Station, another US base that is also the primary rocket port on the planet. Livingstone Lodge is nearby, a short rocket ride across some of the most beautiful terrain in the Ishtar Range. Smaller outposts and bases can be found on the nearby slopes, most notably Sacajawea, Cleopatra, and Maxwell Montes.

To the southwest lies the Ore Fields, an area of shallow valleys and small plateaus that boasts the highest concentration of radium ore in the Solar System. No single nation lays claim to this wealth, and various mining companies, most of whom are either American or British owned, work the fields. On the edge of the Ore Fields and throughout the surrounding mountains are small camps of wildcatters, rogue miners who operate outside the jurisdiction of the mining companies. Wildcatters are a wild, solitary, and suspicious bunch, always fearful that either the big companies or claim jumpers will steal their small placer mines and the priceless radium that they yield.

Further south beyond the Ore Fields are the ancestral homes of the Kind'alkakla or White Mountain Venusians. Their grand ceremonial fortification at Algontawanala looms above the jungle and can be seen from several kilometers away. To date, the Kind'alkakla have been peaceful and

tolerant towards the Earthlings, but this tolerance is being sorely tested as wildcatters and scouts from the mining companies have begun to cross into their lands. Potential mineral strikes are not the only reason that the Kind'alkakla have attracted the attention of the Earthlings. Grand Crater, a possibly bottomless impact crater that stretches far beneath the Highlands into the soupy murk of the mist shrouded Lower Venus lies within their territory. The slopes of the crater are littered with the ruins and artifacts of a technology and sophistication unknown to the native Venusians, and indeed, possibly older and more advanced than humanity's own grand achievements. Unfortunately for the Earthlings, the Grand Crater is sacred to the Kind'alkakla, who deny access to all outsiders, even Venusians from other Concordats. That several secretive teams of researchers have managed to get in and out, taking artifacts and measurements in the dark as they flit through the twilight jungles, is one of the major complaints of Hambtruan, the High Speaker of the Kind'alkakla.

VENUSIAN HIGHLANDS

Theme: Wild Frontier

Complication: Conflicting Factions, Each with their Own Claim to the Land

Personality: Hambtruan, High Speaker for the Kind'alkakla (White Mountain) Venusians

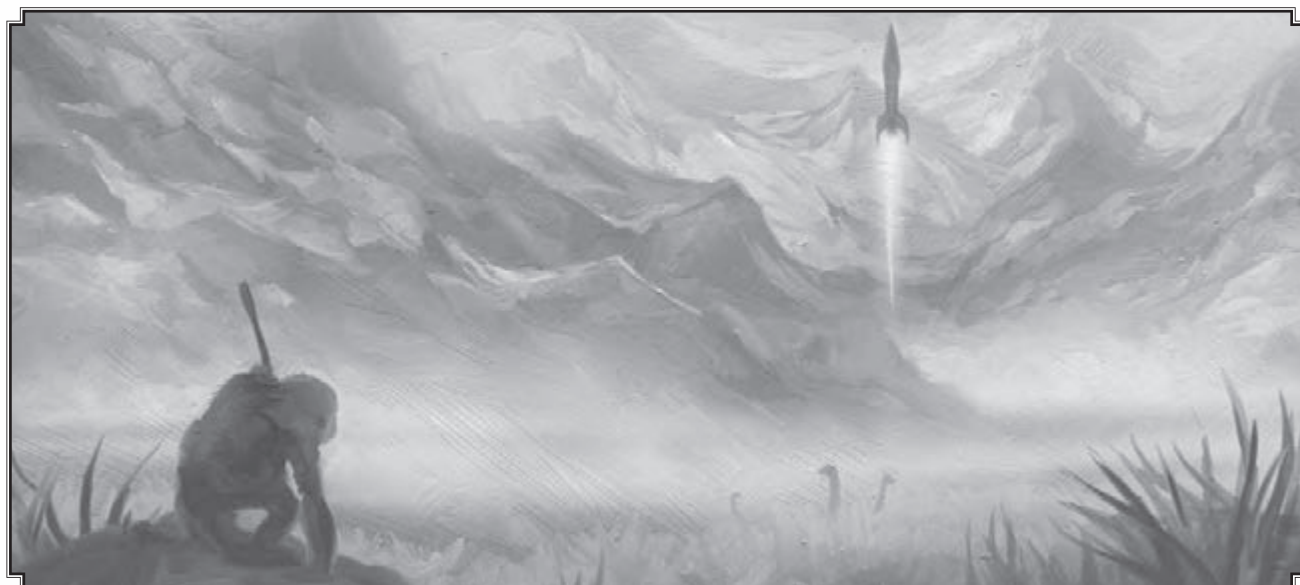
Hambtruan, High Speaker for the Kind'alkakla

Once, many years ago, Hambtruan was one of the greatest warriors in the Ishtar Highlands, a Venusian who could

claim not just the heads of many of his Concordat's foes, but the heads of three Great Thunderers as well. From the Emerald Plateau to the Long Canyon, Hambtruan's name was chanted around the night fires of the Kind'alkakla and cursed in the Jisikal'ti and Hastiamnuban Concordats. As a mighty warrior, he attracted a small band of followers and a large harem of the most beautiful Venusian women in the Concordat, and quite a few from outside (though some saw this as quite scandalous). His children numbered more than fifty, and Hambtruan was as wealthy as the naturally communistic Venusians can be, for they measure wealth more in fame and accolades than in material goods.

As he neared his sixtieth year, it became time for the old silver-backed warrior to retire to a life of quiet contemplation, rise to the level of Speaker, or wander into the jungle for one last 'Long Hunt'. Hambtruan had the support of his many followers, plus his large family, and thus winning the election to become a Speaker was not difficult. The day he mounted the steps of Algontawanala to receive his staff of office and join the ranks of the Speakers was the same day that the clouds were rent by a horrendous thunder and a bright gleaming bird fell from the sky on a column of fire. Humanity had come, and the Ishtar Highlands would never again be the same.

In the intervening five years, Hambtruan has stood forth as his people's greatest diplomat and liaison with the *Shasqatari*, or Hairless Ones. It was he who first put forth that the Earthlings be treated with respect and not driven back into the sky, that they be granted land on which to build their homes and 'bases', and that peace should be





the rule when Venusians and Earthlings interact. Many shouted that the old warrior had lost his liver's blood, but the Speakers listened and with sage hearts heeded Hambtruan's words. They alone knew his grand plan, his true heart, and the darkness of his liver. The Kind'alkakla were to bide their time, learn the Earthman's ways, their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the secrets of their thundering sticks and flying metal birds.

Once that is done, it will be time to drive them forth and out of their land, off their world, and back to whatever hellish place they come from.

ALGONTAWANALA

High in the Ishtar Mountains, sitting in the caldera of an extinct volcano lies the Venusian holy site of Algotawanala (Venusian for "Tower of the People"). It is the central gathering place and accorded truce land of the many bands that make up the Kind'alkakla Concordat. The Kind'alkakla hold their Concordat moots here, as well as maintain their fortress and emergency stores. As such it is considered sacred to the Kind'alkakla, a place that it is death for even those of other Concordats to enter.

From the air Algotawanala looks like a giant bull's eye. Eight concentric rings of baroquely carved stone encircle a plaza that is dominated by a towering structure that reaches one hundred meters into the thick Venusian air. The rim wall of the caldera forms a ninth ring and acts as the outer wall of the site. Within each ring are chambers

for the storage of foodstuffs and enough living quarters for the entire Concordat.

ALGONTAWANALA

Theme: Venusian Holy Site

Complication: Sits atop a radium deposit

Personality: Kaltamala'k, Venusian Priest

The central tower and the stone rings are made from carefully carved and fitted dry stone, though the ever invasive Venusian flora have found footholds in the stone and act as a living mortar of sorts. Inside the central tower are living and ritual spaces for the Speakers, priest-like figures that have forsaken their band allegiances in order to serve their people and maintain the holy site. Thirty yards up the north face of the tower is a broad balcony from which the High Speaker himself can address the gathered throngs below.

Algotawanala, like other such sites scattered across Venus, serves multiple purposes. First and foremost it is a peaceful, sacred gathering place for the tribes of its Concordat. Rival tribes who would normally attack each other on sight can safely meet here, and pass to and from the place in relative peace (pilgrims adorn their bodies with the latex sap of the Ghilis'cait tree). Venusian religious observances are little understood by humans, but appear to center on animistic rites and sacrifices, with ritual dance and scarification featuring prominently. Second, provisions are stored here



against famine, Venusquakes, or other disaster, allowing for the rapid recovery of the bands of the Concordat. In the event of large-scale warfare with another Concordat, the Kind'alkakla can retreat to Algotawanala and fight from behind its fortified walls. Finally, important decisions that affect the whole Concordat can be brought to debate and vote here, though given the long winded and garrulous nature of Venusians, these have been known to take weeks or months (and thus are a second reason for providing living space and provisions).

Sadly, Algotawanala sits above a large radium deposit. This no doubt accounts for the short lifespan of the speakers who serve here, but also has drawn the interest of Earthlings. American and Brazilian interests are already heavily invested in the existing ore fields of the Ishtar Mountains, however it is an open secret that German and Japanese agents have been trying to open negotiations with the Kind'alkakla Concordat to allow for limited exploitation of this needed resource. So far this has proven futile, and already the Japanese have begun to make threats.

ALGONTAWANALA STORY HOOKS

- A priceless artifact, the Staff of the Speaker, has been stolen from Algotawanala. The Venusians are angry, and a general uprising may happen at any moment. The player characters are tasked with catching the culprit before he or she gets off-planet, and returning the staff before the pot boils over.
- Fort Washington has spotted what it thinks are the lights of a rocket ship over the air above Algotawanala. A reconnaissance by US forces would be a major diplomatic error, so they have asked the player characters to quietly check it out. Is it looters, smugglers, or something else?
- While in Roosevelt Station, the player characters are approached by an aging Venusian down on his luck. It seems he left his people to work for the Earthlings in the Ore Fields, but has fallen into the grip of an Earthling vice – strong drink. He is dying, and would like the player characters to help him cross several kilometers of dangerous jungle so that he can die at Algotawanala.

Kaltamala'k, Venusian Priest

From the time he was born, Kaltamala'k was known to be destined for greatness. Born with an atrophied and useless right arm, but with the pure white fur that

signified the blessings of the gods, all the Kind'alkakla waited in anticipation for what the screaming newborn would grow to be. They were not disappointed, for he showed such a vast intellect and sharp wit that he had mastered the Thirty-Three Truths practically before he was weaned. The prodigy continued to impress, and at his Coming of Age stood forth and recited not just his lineage (as was usual), nor merely the Laws of The People (as was expected), but the entire history of the Kind'alkakla and all six thousand lines of the epic paeon to the gods, the Hashturik. Kaltamala'k was immediately inducted into that most prestigious of orders, the Priesthood.

As a priest, the young Kaltamala'k excelled, completing the work of his first year's apprenticeship in nine months, defeating each of the elder priests in oratorical and rhetorical competitions, and in all ways excelling beyond any other who had come before. In his nineteenth year he stood for election to the Speakers, an unheard of age for any Venusian to attempt elevation to that most august body. To the surprise of all but Kaltamala'k, he won and ascended the Algotawanala to don his stole of office.

When the Earthlings came, he was the most vocal of the faction that followed Hambtruan's call of peace and study. As the past five years have gone by, Kaltamala'k has become less and less enthralled with the idea, as he has seen the original few acres of the Ore Fields that the Earthlings were allowed to work grow to encompass over two thousand hectares of once fruitful jungle, the surrounding waters polluted with mine tailings and toxic runoff, and the manner in which not just his people are treated by the Earthlings, but the way that the Earthlings treat each other. There is no Truth in what they do, the presence of the Lodge and other signs of social strata based on wealth and violence sicken him, and he has come to fear what will happen when these *Shasqatari* grasp for more – and they always seem to want more.

When Oleg Akhmerov secretly came to him with offers of friendship and solidarity with the Interplanetary Comintern, the Venusian priest was at first apprehensive. Soon, he came to understand that the Soviets were much like his people, valuing freedom, equality, and communal sharing of both hardship and reward. Now he speaks not just for his own Concordat, but for all Venusians, urging them that the time of waiting and learning is drawing to a close, and that with the guidance and weapons of the Soviets, the Hairless Ones will not conquer Venus.

GM SECRETS

Unbeknownst to outsiders, the Kind'alkakla have already allied themselves with one of the Earthling tribes, namely the Soviets. Playing on the Venusians' native communal lifestyle, Communist agents have managed to find common ground with the Speakers and several other prominent Venusians in the area.

In exchange for pledges of friendship and brotherhood in the Interplanetary Comintern, the Soviets have begun to arm the Kind'alkakla with modern weapons designed to fit their larger frames. These adaptations consist primarily of extended stocks and enlarged trigger guards and have the word "Венера" (Russian for Venus) stamped on the trigger guards. Most of these deadly pistols, sub-machine guns, and rifles are being kept at Algontawanala for use against the Japanese or Germans.

The Interplanetary Comintern has steadfastly warned the Kind'alkakla about both of these potential enemies and warnings have only been reinforced by the threatening attitude of the Japanese envoys that have tried to negotiate for mining rights. Of course, the Kind'alkakla are just as prepared to use their new arsenal against any Earthling tribe that attempts to take their holy site by force. Some of the redesigned weaponry is in the hands of Kind'alkakla who have chosen to journey off planet with their Soviet friends and now serve as shock troops for clandestine Soviet activities. Stalin is rumored to be building an entire battalion of seasoned Venusian assault troops armed with the brutal Венера model PPD-34 sub-machine gun.

FORT WASHINGTON STORY HOOKS

- The player characters are out and about on their business somewhere in the wilds of Venus when they are ambushed by Rocket Rangers and ordered to lay down their arms and surrender. Once captured, they are taken to Fort Washington and placed in the brig, awaiting trial. Did they actually commit a crime, or is this just all a big mistake?
- While in a Roosevelt Station bar, the player characters get into a brawl with several off-duty Rangers from Ft. Washington. Great friends or enemies can be the result of this altercation.
- The distant Bwhat'analk Concordat has been restless, but the Rocket Rangers are stretched too thin right now to go investigate. Can the player characters conduct a quiet reconnaissance of the Venusians and report back to Captain Running-Tree?

The base is under the command of Captain Luther Running-Tree of the United States Rocket Rangers. Captain Running-Tree is a decorated veteran of the Great War, as well as numerous skirmishes throughout the Solar System. Although considered by some to be a strict commander, Running-Tree is willing to look the other way in order to allow his men to perform their duties in the harsh Venusian climate. Many of these men were assigned to Venus because they were considered misfits in their original units, and the men and women of Fort Washington have a bad reputation for being barely fit to serve or for being embarrassments to the uniform (not that many walk around in uniforms designed by pencil pushers who have never been off Earth).

FORT WASHINGTON

Sited on the broad, level plateau of New Kansas, Fort Washington is the center of American activity on Venus, and home to both the 33rd Rocket Squadron and the 3rd Platoon, Company A of the First Rocket Rangers Battalion, 'The Flying Leather Heads'. The Fort is a dispersed collection of prefabricated huts made of aluminum, not the best building material for stopping the planet's intense heat, but a perfect choice to prevent corrosion in the constantly damp atmosphere. Great fans installed at either end of these corrugated metal huts attempt to bring fresh air inside, but often fail miserably during the heat of the Venusian summer.

Despite being a somewhat ramshackle and not altogether regulation base, Fort Washington has an exemplary record as far as carrying out operations in the Ishtar Range is concerned. To date, the men of Fort Washington have successfully conducted over a dozen rescue missions saving expeditions that have run into trouble, stopped three wars between rival groups of wildcatters, repelled attacks by various native jungle life-forms, and fought a long and deadly campaign against a wandering Concordat of native Venusians.

Captain Luther Running-Tree, USRR

Born on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, Luther looked forward to a life of desperation and deprivation.

When the Great War began, he gleefully enlisted in an effort to not just get off the reservation, but also to be a warrior, something his people, the Lakota Sioux, greatly respect. Running-Tree served with honor and distinction during the war, and managed to turn his natural talents for leadership into a career. When the Rocket Corps was formed in 1934, he had the background and medals to swing a transfer from the US Army.

Luther excelled as a Rocket Ranger, even more so than he did as an infantryman. Fearless, competent, and charismatic, the aging soldier is at his best when leading his small platoon against the dangers of Venus. Although some would see a posting to Venus as a punishment (Mars is far more prestigious), the situation on the jungle planet is far more complex and needs a strong hand to manage. Luther is that man, though he does seem to have some sentiments concerning the native Venusians and threats to their land and way of life, and has acted against human, and even American, interests in the past.

GRAND CRATER

Theme: Mysterious Ruins Deep in the Jungle

Complication: Taboo to Venusians, Irresistible to Humans

Personality: Dr. Emily Caruthers, British Archaeologist

GRAND CRATER

Sometime in the distant past a large meteorite impacted high in the Ishtar Range, leaving behind a crater whose depths remain unknown. The crater can only be reached by traversing up a long narrow valley, almost a deep incision in the mountainside, which hints that the meteorite fell at an angle before creating the main crater, perhaps bouncing as it travelled. This in itself presents a bit of a mystery, as meteors are not known to behave in this manner, though plummeting rocket ships might. However, the real attraction of Grand Crater is that both the narrow groove carved in the planet's surface and the crater itself are littered with artifacts of an unknown provenance and origin.

These artifacts are unlike anything else found within the Solar System save a few oddities claimed by the Ancient Martians. They are either of a metal whose composition is yet to be definitively classified, or a type of rubber or plastic whose properties are beyond any craft or art known to Earthling or Martian. A rare few artifacts show signs of having a power source and are in working condition, but

as yet no one has figured out a way to safely operate them, nor their purpose. To date, attempts to work the buttons and switches on the artifacts have either yielded no result save for flashing lights and low humming, or have caused the catastrophic destruction of the artifacts, and at times, the researchers as well.

Further study is needed; however two obstacles stand in the way of both scientists and treasure hunters alike. First, the Grand Crater lies on the extreme edge of the explored sections of the Ishtar Range. It is a journey of several weeks through the jungle and over rugged mountains to reach the site, and there is no convenient clearing or other landing place for a rocket ship. More importantly, Grand Crater is held in sacred awe by the native Venusians, and it lies on the edge of the territory of the somewhat peaceful Kind'alkakla, but adjacent to the 'wild' Concordats of the Jill'yalla and Bwhat'analk. Any trespassers can expect at least a cold reception from the Venusians, with the more savage Concordats likely to react violently at the slightest provocation.

Emily Caruthers

Despite the delicate political and moral implications of exploring the Grand Crater and its intriguing artifact scatter, there are those who are willing to do so. Some are motivated by fame, others riches, but the most tenacious are those whose sole reason is to solve the mystery and bring the light of science to the dim interior of Venus' Grand Crater. Foremost of the latter is Emily Caruthers, one of the few women to earn a postgraduate degree from Cambridge University, and the only woman to do so in the field of history.

Her archaeological work began in the Near East, where she labored beside such notable figures as T.E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell. As the younger member of the party, she played a secondary role in both those two notables' archaeological and later political exploits. Caught in the Near East at the outbreak of the Great War, Caruthers managed to escape to Egypt with the help of her Arab friends. There she participated in several noted expeditions along the Nile, before sneaking into the entourage of T.E. Lawrence disguised as a shepherd boy. By the time she was discovered, the Arab Revolt was well under way, and Caruthers found herself swept into both the battles and following negotiations.



After the war she continued her archaeological pursuits, joining and eventually leading expeditions throughout the newly liberated Near East and as far away as China and Java. With the beginning of the Rocket Age, Caruthers appealed to her former mentor, T.E. Lawrence, and accompanied him on his ill-fated 1934 voyage to Venus. It was there that she first encountered the Grand Crater, and delving into its mysteries has become an overriding passion, some would say an obsession. Given the political and physical difficulties of getting to the Great Crater, Caruthers has only completed three limited expeditions, but she is constantly scheming for a fourth. These attempts to violate Kind'alkakla territory are against the wishes of the US, British, and other Earth governments, and have seen her at times imprisoned in Fort Washington or forcibly transported back to Earth.

GRAND CRATER STORY HOOKS

- A desperate radio message reaches the player characters. Dr. Emily Caruthers has been caught by 'wild' Venusians from the Jill'yalla Concordat and will likely be sacrificed to their primitive gods. Can the party rescue her in time?
- One of the player characters is contacted by a mysterious stranger who offers him a large amount of cash if he will go into the Grand Crater and return with a very specific type of artifact. Who is this person, and is the deal too good to pass up?
- Rogue artifact hunters and native Venusians have been found murdered in the area around the Grand Crater. Earthlings and Venusians are on edge, and blame the deaths on each other. The situation threatens to ignite the passions of both groups, unless the party can solve these grisly murders in time.

LIVINGSTONE LODGE

Not everyone comes to Venus as part of a national agenda or to make their fortunes on the Ore Fields, some come to experience the wonders of this alien world, and kill them. For these intrepid sportsmen and women there is Livingstone Lodge, offering as the advertising has it, "World Class Luxury in the Venusian Highlands".

Perched high in the Ishtar Mountains on the edge of the Emerald Plateau, the Lodge (as it is commonly known) is a sprawling wood and stone building of opulent luxury. Guests can stay in rooms in the Stanley Inn, or in private bungalows connected to the main lodge. Hunting and naturalist excursions leave on a regular basis, and the dining hall serves the highest of cuisine alongside Venusian fruits and meat.

LIVINGSTON LODGE

Theme: Wealth and Racism

Complication: Beneath the Glam, Discontent Stirs

Personality: Major Reginald Stratford-Collingham, retired British Army, now lodge 'Guide'

The luxury and care shown to the guests is beyond measure, reflecting an old world, and indeed older century's tastes. Uniformed staff tends to the guests' every whim; the Lodge is decorated with the finest of accoutrements as well as with native Venusian handicrafts for that 'exotic primitive' feel. There are even a dozen Venusians on the staff, though most are part of the Tribal Dances of the Monkey Men floorshow.

LIVINGSTONE LODGE STORY HOOKS

- A routine jungle excursion tour is late reporting back in. Someone needs to go out and find them, using the utmost discretion of course. There is no need to worry the other guests, and surely there is a simple, and not at all dangerous, reason why they are late getting back.
- Big Joe is a particularly large and cunning carnivorous thunder lizard who roams the lands near the Lodge. The owners of the Lodge want his impressive skull hanging in the main dining hall, and have offered a large bounty to anyone who can bring Big Joe down.
- Jumpin' Jack Brown, a famous jazz trumpeter, and his band have been booked to perform at the Lodge. Their three month gig is interrupted when Jumpin' Jack disappears from his room. The band refuses to perform without him, and the management is worried about the Lodge's image. After all, if a well-known musician can just vanish, what about the guests?

Major Reginald Stratford-Collingham

A career officer in the British Indian Army, the Major, as he is known, has seen action on the North-West Frontier of India, as well as in France and Palestine during the Great War. Following the end of the war, the Major found himself cut out of Army politics and forced to retire on a half-pay pension. Seeing himself as still a young buck (despite the fact that he turned fifty in 1925), the Major headed for Africa where he spent what little fortune he had on several game safaris. As it turned out, the Major was a better big game hunter than field officer, and soon he was operating his own safari outfit, taking rich Americans and Europeans out on short forays into the bush. This proved profitable, despite the Major's poor handling of money, but soon grew tiresome for the aging adventurer.

In 1937, he was approached by three London businessmen with an offer to come work for them as the head gamesman at a lodge they were constructing on Venus. The chance to see the wonders of that alien world, and shoot them, excited the Major and he took up their offer immediately. Sadly, age and the rigors of life on Venus have not been kind to him, and the Major's malaria flares up repeatedly, prompting him to dose himself with liberal amounts of quinine mixed with gin. In eighteen months that he has been on Venus, the once robust man has become corpulent. Jaundice and gout are setting in, and he is rarely as sober as he should be. Still, a roaring drunk, *actual* British Major and Big Game Hunter is still a boon for the 'atmosphere' of the Lodge.

ROOSEVELT STATION

Theme: Forgotten Outpost on the Edge of the Republic

Complication: Underfunded and Overworked

Personality: Daniel Steinwick, Station Superintendent

ROOSEVELT STATION

Although the Ore Fields can boast a large landing pad for bulk freighters, and several other stations across the planet have their own small landing fields, Roosevelt Station serves as the main rocket port for the Ishtar Mountains, and thus for Venus as a whole. The station is managed by the US Rocket Corps, though the bulk of the USRR ships and men are at the nearby Ft. Washington.

Roosevelt Station, named after Teddy, not the current president, is a broad dirt rocket field with a scattering of surrounding corrugated aluminum sheds, housing tools, and personnel. Beyond this well cleared if somewhat bedraggled area has grown a civilian town of wooden houses (which rot quickly in the damp and heat), tents (which rot even faster) and a few stout stone structures. A ring of shanties thrown up by the destitute and desperate forms an irregular ring around the edge of the station, save in the direction of Ft. Washington which is kept clear of obstructions.



ROOSEVELT STATION STORY HOOKS

- A large German expedition to the furthest reaches of the Ishtar Range is being organized. Oddly, it is going entirely overland, and not arranging for rocket ships to scout or make resupply drops. The American Consulate is curious, and quietly asks the party to join the Germans and find out what they are up to.
- A washed up prospector approaches the party with an offer. He is hard up for cash, and just wants to get out of the jungle, so he is willing to sell them a map to a rich gold strike he found, at a steep discount.
- Strange artifacts have been trickling into the markets of Roosevelt Station, their provenance unknown. Those who have handled the artifacts become easily agitated; long exposure seems to destroy any and all self-control. Where are these things coming from, and how do they affect the human mind so strongly?

As an extra-territorial body of the United States, American laws and colonists dominate Roosevelt Station, but certain sections of the surrounding town have divided along national lines, the largest of them being the Brazilian, British, French, and even German quarters. These have been nicknamed Little Rio, New Tunbridge Wells, Paris-Venus, and Fuhrer's Ville respectively, though not all of the names are popular with their inhabitants. Most of the colonists operate businesses that serve the needs of the Rocketmen, explorers, wildcatters, and other Earthlings on Venus. A small portion of the shantytown is made up of disgraced native Venusians, many of whom have been seduced by Earthman vices, most notably opium and alcohol. These decrepit individuals are not welcome back in their home Concordats, and eke out a miserable living as brute laborers.

Daniel Steinwick

As the Superintendent of Roosevelt Station, Steinwick must somehow keep the rocket port and associated structures in working order despite the lack of supplies and the harsh environment of the Ishtar Mountains. Metals, cloths, wood, rubber, and plastics are constantly under attack by mould, fungus, and corrosion. The heat is oppressive, the humidity

unbearable, and the people that the USRC sends to him are invariably from the bottom of the barrel. Somehow, he keeps the station running, even though regulations are often tossed out the window in order to do so.

Steinwick got posted to Roosevelt Station because he was not caught stealing from the warehouse at his previous posting as quartermaster at Edison Station, Mars. Unable to prove anything, yet certain he was guilty, his superiors simply gave him a promotion and transferred him to Venus. So far, Steinwick has found little of value that he can easily steal, but instead found that there is quite a lot that would be useful to his new command that can 'disappear' from other locations. It is this willingness to commit crime, as well as a keen mind that sees the solution to impossible problems, that has allowed him to keep Roosevelt Station in operating order. The odd thing is that after months of working hard to achieve something, Steinwick now has a growing sense of pride and duty, feelings normally foreign to his psyche.

THE ORE FIELDS

Spread across Opportunity Plateau and spilling onto the surrounding slopes and valleys are the Ore Fields, several square kilometers of radium-rich land now turned into a morass of torn soil, tent cities, effluent, and mine tailings. A constant layer of pollution hangs over the Fields, smoke from campfires, exhaust from heavy vehicles, and chemical fumes pouring from the chimneys of smelters. All this pollution comes back down in the form of rain, turning the ever-present mud of the Ore Fields a thousand fantastic shades ranging from indigo to bright red.

The conditions in the Ore Fields would not be countenanced by any of the home nations of the companies that run the place. However, Venus is a long journey from mining regulatory offices, and furthermore no single nation claims the Ore Fields, and thus no one has jurisdiction. This has resulted in horrible living conditions for the miners, as well as the implementation of the 'company store' system. Basically, a miner has his transport from Earth to Venus, transport to and from the Ore Fields, housing, food, tools, entertainment, and medical needs all paid for by the company. This cost is deducted from his pay check, as well as a small amount to be held in escrow against future costs. The end result is that the miners are in debt to the company from the moment that they sign the contract, cannot quit without paying off their debt, and remain in debt the entire time that they are there.

ORE FIELDS STORY HOOKS

- Some of the miners are through with trying to organize a union and call for a strike, they want action and they want it now! Radicals are trying to bring in arms and mercenaries to help them overthrow the mining companies. The player characters might be called on by either the radical miners, the mining companies, or the pro-union miners to help resolve the situation.
- Several miners have fled into the jungle to escape the crushing burden of debts owed to the company store. Both the mining companies and their fellow miners want them back, the former to prosecute them, the latter to rescue them from the dangers of the Venusian jungle.
- The mine companies have decided to allow the miners to have a Halloween/La Dia de Los Muertos/ All Saints Day holiday in order to defuse some of the growing tensions. The player characters are invited to attend by some of their friends in the Ore Fields (or just decide to stop by). However, all is not well, as a prominent union organizer is found murdered in his tent, and everyone starts pointing fingers at each other.

Complicating matters, the miners are not actual employees, but contract workers who are paid based on the amount of ore they produce (which is weighed by the company, and often undervalued).

Miners are lured to Venus with promises of a few years hard labor and then they can reap the riches of the Ore Fields. In practice, this has yet to happen for anybody other than the company owners. A few independent miners, or wildcatters as they are known, have managed to make a tidy profit. However, the mine companies are constantly pursuing these wildcatters, driving them off their claims and harassing them at every opportunity.

THE ORE FIELDS

Theme: Exploitation of the Land and the People

Complication: Growing Discontent Among the Miners

Personality: Lisa Wells, leader of the Venusian Miner's Union

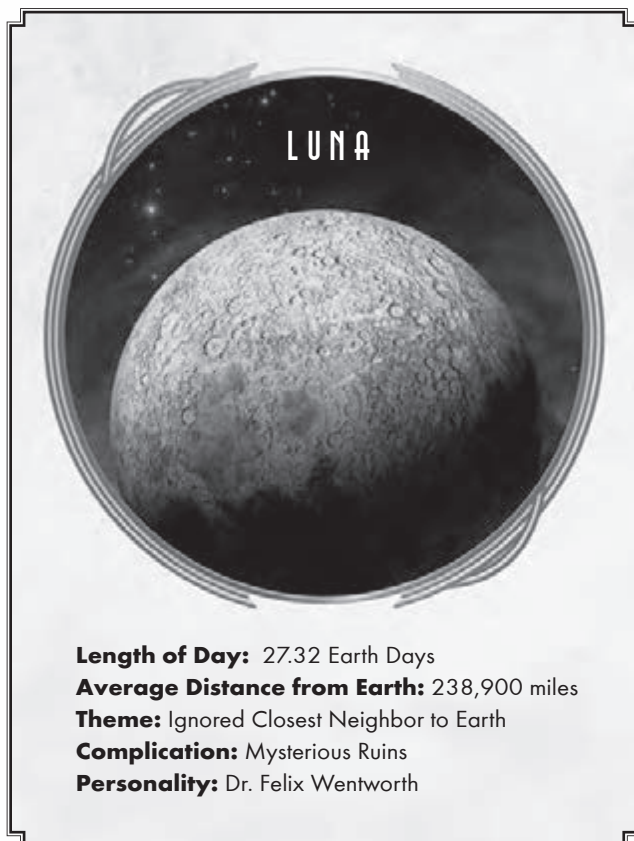
Lisa Wells

Born thirty years ago in the mining camps around Ludlow, Colorado, Lisa was only six years old when company thugs killed her parents during the Ludlow Massacre that saw the Colorado National Guard and company guards attack the tent colony of striking mineworkers. The event defined her life, and she has worked tirelessly for the rights of workers, especially miners, ever since. The union took her in, first parading her around the country so that she could relive the horror of her parents' murder, and later providing for her education at an all-girls boarding school. By the time she was an adult, the union had managed to grow in strength and power to the point that they gladly paid for her to attend college.

After graduating with a degree in Philosophy, Lisa fell in with a group of radical Communists intent on forcing change on the United States through violence and terrorism. After several small bombings, a few gunfights with company thugs, and a handful of bank jobs, the FBI were onto the group and its activities, forcing its members to disperse to avoid capture. Using an assumed name, Lisa replied to an advertisement recruiting workers for the radium mines on Venus.

From the moment she landed on planet, Lisa has been busy secretly organizing her fellow miners. This has had to be done with great discretion, for the mine owners are ever watchful for signs of union activity. Furthermore, she has already found two Soviet agents hard at working subverting the miners. This Lisa cannot stand, for although she dearly loves Communism and the formation of a worker's paradise, she does not trust the motives of foreigners, and especially of Russians.

THE MOON



Scientists are certain that there should be life on the Moon, however today there is none. The atmosphere is thin, about the same as that at very high altitudes on Earth, but it can support human life for very short periods of time. There is water in some of the deeper craters, and also in caverns that branch off from most craters, even the smallest. However, the biggest clue that the moon is inhabitable is the presence of ruins in and around some of the oldest craters, the remains of a past civilization that died centuries ago.

These ruins, indeed much of the Moon, have not yet been thoroughly explored. The atmosphere is so thin that a human can only survive unprotected for twelve hours or begin to suffer embolisms and other deadly effects of low air pressure. Even if an explorer keeps well within this time limit he still cannot reenter an area of higher air pressure without first spending hours in a specially designed airlock that slowly returns him from the lower pressure. This necessitates that all surface exploration be conducted in space suits, a cumbersome affair.

What has been learned however, is that whatever species built the cities and roads that lie blasted and toppled on

the Moon's surface were human-like in form and size, possessed technology similar to current levels (though they possessed it centuries ago), and left little or no writing behind. No clue as to the language of this lost species has been found, not even street and building signs, though large flat blank glass boards on buildings and smaller ones on poles have been found where one would expect to see building and street signs. Why these things are blank, and why rooms in the buildings often contain picture frames featuring a flat blank surface is unknown. There are no images of the native Lunans, or anything else for that matter.

LUNAN STORY HOOKS

- An archaeological expedition to the Moon fails to report in on time, and after thirty hours a rocket ship is dispatched to investigate. A short fly over reveals no sign of the expedition, but their oxygen tents and equipment is found to be in good order. Dr. Wentworth puts out an open call to anyone willing to look into this, offering both financing and a rich reward.
- Nazi interest in the Moon has increased in recent months, with several expeditions having been dispatched to various ruins across the face of the satellite. An organization that offers the player characters regular work is concerned as to what Hitler wants with the Lunan Ruins, and hires the heroes to investigate.
- While travelling past the orbit of Earth, likely on their way to some far off orb in space, the heroes' ship is struck by a strange beam that originates on the surface of the Moon. All power to the ship is lost, and only skillful flying will prevent a crash onto the rocky Lunar surface. Who shot them down and can they survive long enough to find out?

Within the ruins one finds human-like skeletons and the puzzling remains of a lost civilization. The skeletons suggest a humanoid form, one that closely matches that of an Earthling. They have larger chest cavities and an elongated form, no doubt a response to the Moon's low gravity and thin atmosphere. They also show signs of having unusually strong back and shoulder muscles, as well as possible anchors on their fore arms and lower legs for some sort of gliding membrane. The Lunans' heads are longer than Earthlings, with a distinctive swept back look. The skeletons identified as possibly male have a tall sagittal crest, while those that might have been female lack

this feature. Bony protrusions that likely passed through soft tissue and extended beyond the skin adorn the ends of the jaws, as well as the elbows and knees. Lunan hands end in six digits and an opposable thumb, whereas their feet have only three digits and a thick opposable 'thumb' on the heel.

The unusual artifacts found in the Lunan ruins have yet to be thoroughly studied. Expected tools, cooking pots, and such like have been found, but nothing like a watch, toy, or book. Furniture is designed for a slightly different physiology, but several peculiar oddities have been found, such as desks on walls or ceilings, and a lack of chairs. Instead, the Lunans seem to have preferred a reclining perch consisting of a heavy round bar with one or more padded cushions behind or below it.

By far the most unusual feature of the Lunan ruins is the lack of the written word, pictures, photographs, or other visual medium. Not even statuary can be found in the ruins, leading some to theorize that the Lunans may have been blind and navigated through echo location like a bat.

What has been discovered are hordes of small metal cases with a black glass covered front, stacks of thumb sized plastic sticks that come in a variety of colors and shapes, but all have a metal rod at one end that can be inserted into the metal cases. Many rooms have larger metal cases, some with matching 'wands' covered in buttons, all labeled with strange symbols that may or may not be writing. The purpose of these artifacts is unknown, and attempts to operate them have so far proved futile or destructive. The

metal box artifacts are electronic in nature, but when hooked up to a power source they either explode or short out. Research continues, but appears to have hit a dead end.

Dr. Felix Wentworth

Dr. Wentworth of the British Academy is the leading proponent of continued study of the Lunan Ruins. Other members of the scientific community generally consider his theories, that the Lunans are the evolutionary descendants of the great dinosaurs and that they used rocket ship technology to migrate to the moon, to be nothing more than wild supposition. Dr. Wentworth points to the lack of any other life form or sign of life on the moon, save for a few patches of moss or lichen, as one of the facts that support his theories.

Despite his off-the-wall theories, Dr. Wentworth is still a powerful force in the British Academy and in British science and politics. As a sitting MP and prominent businessman, Dr. Wentworth can arrange for funding both private and public for new archaeological expeditions to the Moon. His connections with people in powerful positions in British society, sciences, and government means that he has no difficulty getting permits, grants, and other official acknowledgements for his work. Those who oppose him often find their own funding cut and the bureaucracy of Whitehall unwilling to process their paperwork in anything approaching a timely manner.

All this combined has resulted in a man who receives little overt criticism of his work and a great deal of money to continue it.



MARS



Emancipation was being liberated, the hard way. The Lincoln Brigade had sent in agents to organize the Martians, to arm and train them, and to help plan the revolt. The lower castes, and even a few Maduri, had joined the cause of ending slavery. Today was the day, and things were not going well.

Bullets ricocheted off the stone of the storefront next to Patterson. His spies had missed that the prince had recently purchased a new toy for his amusement, a tank. Not much of a tank true, but a tank none the less. The Lincoln Brigade agitator recognized the German Panzer I from his time fighting the fascists in Spain. Lightly armored and sporting only two machineguns in the turret, the little motorized monster was barely qualified to call itself a tank.

On Mars it was a beast.

The machineguns chattered away raking the revolutionaries and driving them back from the rear gates of the palace. Bullets from their rifles and pistols rang off the armored hull

with little effect. Even the sound of the thing caused panic; it very well might have been the only motorized vehicle in the entire principality.

Patterson sunk deeper into the doorway. He wasn't going to fire, wasn't going to draw attention to himself. There was nothing the Tommy Gun clutched in his hands could do. Two Maduri revolutionaries charged out of a side alley, their massive sunaxes gleaming in the light. One was cut down twenty feet from the tank; the other riddled with bullets but kept coming. Against all odds she reached the tank and swung. Her axe thunked into the hull and lodged there. As her dead hand slipped from the haft the tank rolled on.

The turret turned and struck the axe. There was now a blind spot. Patterson had two grenades left. He inched his way out of cover and then dashed across the blood-slicked paving stones. The Maduri loyal to the prince had held back as the tank lumbered out and were just watching the slaughter from in front of the gates. The ones on the battlements took a more active role.

Nearing the tank Patterson drew his grenades but before he could pull the pins a barbed arrow struck his leg. The pain was beyond intense and the Earthling went down as the tank rolled away. Through the fog of pain, terror, and defeat he saw a beam of energy, black and tinged in glowing green, lance out from behind and through the panzer, leaving a fist sized hole straight through the tank. Two more beams put an end to the machine and likely the crew inside.

A cold and uncomfortably moist hand touched Patterson's face before he was lifted off the pavement and dragged back into the safety of the storefront. He looked up into the oddly bloated purple face of his savior.

"My apologies, I know medics are not supposed to enter combat according to your rules of warfare."

"It's OK just this once" Patterson gasped. Everything was getting out of focus. Had the European doctor really shot up a tank?

"Also my aim was off. Three shots. Honestly, I have no idea why you keep me around. Now, let us take a look at this injury. A simple procedure, I assume you want to retain the limb? I can also provide additional support by stimulating your endocrine system to alleviate the pain and allow you to continue fighting today. Is there an orifice you would prefer the probes to enter?"

"The nose."

MARTIAN GLOSSARY

Dog Soldiers: Derogatory term used for Maduri, both a reference to their facial features and to their unswerving loyalty and devotion. *"Eight dog soldiers are guarding the warehouse; this may be a tough nut to crack."*

Dusted: Equipment that has broken down due to the harsh conditions on Mars, sometimes used to refer to Earthlings who have 'gone native.' *"The truck won't go any further, it's dusted."*

Lizard Horse: Fairly common Earthling name for the ubiquitous Martian bahmoot. *"We rode lizard horses for three weeks to get to the ruins."*

Mechnikraut: Used in American and British Mars to refer to the German war walkers. *"Not too many defenses around the slave camp, but they do have two mechnikrauts on patrol."*

Naztak: Common derogatory term used in the Western Highlands for Chanari, roughly translates as stinky. *"Do not go to that well, the naztak drink from it and have polluted it with their filthy mouths."*

Own Goal Gun: British term for the Martian Radium Rifle. *"Take cover, they've set up an own goal gun to cover the ridge!"*

Penny Boy/Girl: Used in the American and British held portions of Mars to refer to free Julandri and how cheaply they can be hired. *"We can get some penny boys to unload the cargo from the rocket ship."*

Red Wonder: Any Ancient Martian technology that is far in advance of anything known on Earth. *"Leroy says he has a Red Wonder for sale, if the price is right."*

Rotten: Common derogatory term for Martians which comes from the German 'rote männchen' or red man. *"We have the rotten on the run, keep the fire down on them 'till they're all dead."*

Sweat Back: Derogatory term for Venusians on Mars, referencing their thick fur and musky scent. *"Two sweat backs cornered me in an ally - without my RAY gun, I'd have been dead."*

Tuked: Slang term for inebriated, from tuké, a common alcoholic beverage in the ports of the Great Silt Sea. *"We were so tuked last night we volunteered to join the expedition."*

Wet: Someone who is new to Mars and has not yet adjusted, or 'dried out'. *"We don't want any wetters on this expedition, only dry men."*





"Duly noted. There might be a slight discomfort as I remove the arrow and pack the wound with self-stitching threads." The loyalist Maduri charged into the plaza, one nearing the doorway. With barely a look Goodfeeling shot his disintegrator pistol, boring a hole through the Martian's chest and out the other side.

"I simply cannot continue to work under these conditions. The next revolution will have to be much more orderly."

Mars is a planet in turmoil. For untold millennia it has been a planet in stasis, a planet trapped by a culture that responded to shrinking resources and growing populations by becoming rigid, entrenched, and unimaginative. The coming of the Earthlings has upset this, and new ideas march across the face of the Red Planet as surely as the new species does. Several principalities are now under the rule of strange aliens from the stars; others are threatened by these same aliens with conquest or bloody insurrection. It is not just the rulership of Mars that is under attack, but also the very foundations of Martian society. The ancient caste system, handed down from the divine Ancient Martians to their modern children, is under attack by new ideas such as freedom, democracy, communism, and even religion. Even in areas untouched by Earthlings, where no men or women of that blue planet have dared to tread, murmurs can be heard in the streets, hushed whispers in the slave quarters, and the princes sleep uneasy. Will some trusted household slave or even a Maduri legionnaire skulk towards his prince in the night, Earthling gun in hand, to deal death and regime change in a thunder of exploding gunpowder?

The wealth of Mars is there for the taking, on the surface, waiting for those bold or ruthless enough to take it. No mines need to be dug, no forests cleared, nor land investigated. The riches of the planet have long since been stripped from her soil, and the precious metals, valuable ores, and priceless gems are all in the hands of the Martians, and likely have passed through dozens of hands since they were first unearthed. In a few places mines still remain open, though many of these have long been abandoned due to the failure of the Ancient machines that kept them operational.

The greatest prize on Mars is not such mundane items as gold or diamonds, but the chance to discover and reverse engineer Ancient Martian technology. The Ancients possessed a level of science unknown to modern Mars or Earth, and indeed may even surpass that of the Europeans. The RAY gun is based on Martian designs, as is the War Walker and even several rocket engine designs. What other wonders await discovery in the ruins of the Ancients, or

even closer, hidden in some vault beneath a Martian city? Brave men and women are searching even now, hoping to come across a wonder that will change not just Mars, not just Earth, but the whole of the Solar System.

How one acquires this wealth is limited only by an individual's moral code. Some come to Mars to make a fortune in trade, an aim made easier by the fact that the princes do not fully understand the value of Earthling goods, nor do they comprehend the value that Earthlings place on gold and jewels. A fortune can be made trading out-of-date arms to Martian princes, providing one is quick enough to escape before the prince gets wise. Others come to explore and seek out scientific discoveries. Sadly, it is difficult at times to tell a dedicated archaeologist from a desperate treasure hunter, yet both take the wonders of Mars' past back to Earth with them.

Still others, especially the Nazis, their fascist allies the Italians, and even the Soviets, come to Mars to conquer and spread their ideals to a new world. They take what they want from the Martians, and forever alter the society of the natives. While the fascists claim that it is their right to conquer and rule, the Soviets justify their actions by pointing to the injustices of the caste system and traditional Martian society, and claim to be freeing the natives in order to better their lives. In reply, many ask the Soviets how many Martians rule their client states, and how many have died in the name of Communism?

Other nations, ones that espouse different virtues, can be found on Mars, building their own empires despite claims to the contrary. The United States of America came to Mars to build trade and forge alliances, yet has managed to blunder its way into building a colonial empire through war and conquest. On the other hand, the French have worked hard to use trade and diplomacy to ensure their hold on Mars is not too bloody. Yet, the most honest of all the Earthling conquerors of Mars are the British, who make no illusions that theirs is anything other than an Empire carved out by sword and pen, and that their aim is to embrace Mars and bring it into the Empire.

MARTIAN HISTORY

Mars was not always the arid, dying planet that it is today. Once, millions of years ago, it was a lush paradise easily as fecund as Venus, a cooler, wetter world green with life. When the ancestors of humanity were first figuring out fire and the fine art of smashing two rocks together, the Ancient Martians were building soaring cities and exploring the very sciences of the cosmos.

Their technology had not just cracked the secret of the atom, but had conquered the furthest boundaries of the biological and physical sciences. Life was a constant joy, a thing of pleasure, and thanks to advanced medicine, nearly unending. As their technology became more and more sophisticated, the need for the Ancients to actually do any work, save for a small cadre of engineers and scientists, diminished. Machines brought water into people's homes, grew their food, made their meals, and cleaned up after them. Intelligent machines even took over the tasks of regulating and entertaining the masses, leaving them with nothing to do but eat, sleep, and play.

Needless to say, with no driving need to do anything in order to maintain a high standard of living, levels of education dropped, decadence prevailed, and the Martians who were willing to apply themselves to the rigorous study

of science and technology diminished. Although Ancient Martian medicine had long conquered disease, ageing, and other ills, death still occurred through accident or murder. Without a regular refreshment of their numbers, the intellectual elite slowly declined, leaving the entire civilization with less than a thousand scientists, engineers, and artists. Sadly, in addition to lacking fresh minds to make up for losses, centuries of work in their fields had not only left the remaining intellectuals hidebound and unwilling to innovate, but their community was riven by long-lasting feuds.

The Coming of the Erisians

If the situation on Mars had remained stable, then there would have been no problem, and the society of the Ancients would still be alive today. Unfortunately, fate had other ideas, and the planet began to show its age.

PRINCESS D'LARNA

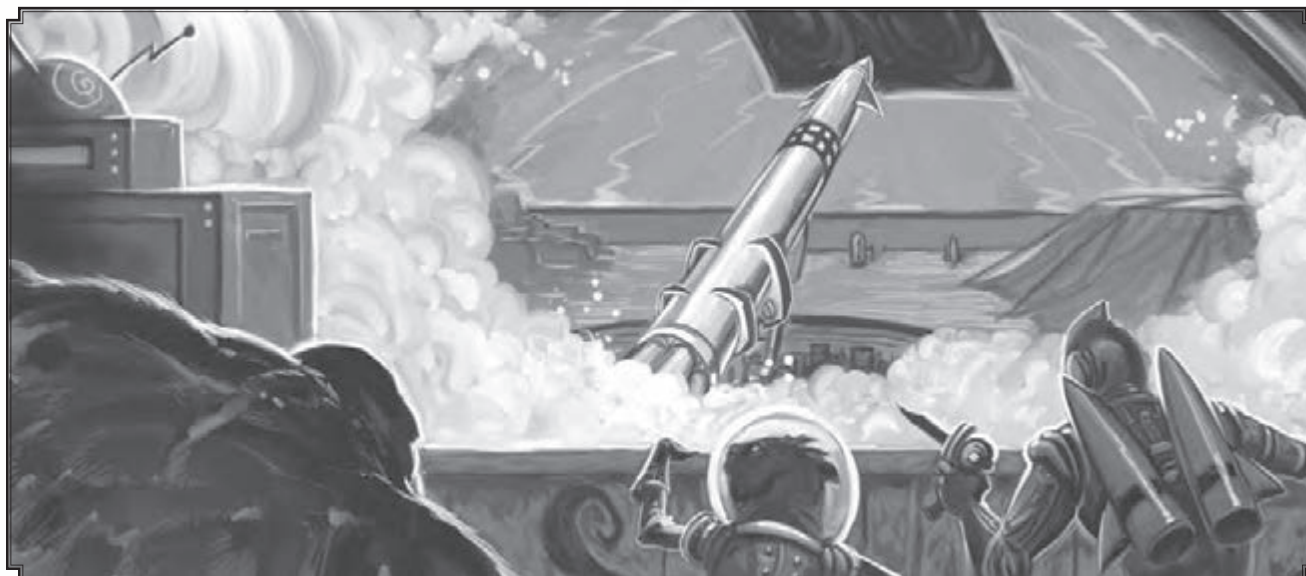
Princess D'Larna came to power the year that Einstein and Armstrong landed on Mars. The news of the Earthlings spread quickly across the Red Planet, and the young princess knew her reign would be marked by the event. Soon, more Earthlings came, but not all were the jovial, inquisitive Einstein, or the stalwart and courageous Armstrong. The princess feared for not just herself, but for her people, and set about discovering all that she could about these strange aliens.

Earthlings flocked to her capital city of U'Lavik, marveled at the wealth on display there, and offered their fawning attention to Princess D'Larna. Gifts from the nations of Earth flowed in, as did diplomats and offers of allegiance. The princess accepted the gifts, but held back on allying herself with any one alien nation. Despite all this attention, she did not feel like she knew any truths about Earthlings, just the faces that they choose to show her.

Wishing to learn more, Princess D'Larna became the first, and so far only, Silthuri to visit Earth. With the fabulous wealth of her principality, she had a personal rocket ship built, a great work of beauty that could carry the princess in safety and luxury across the gulf of space. Leaving the management of her domain in the hands of her cousin, D'Larna left for Earth. What she found there shocked her to no end, and stiffened her resolve to keep her people safe from the depredations of the Earthlings.

When first arriving on Earth, she was greeted by a horde of dignitaries, as well as the constant assault of the press. Hearing that it was one of the largest and most glamorous cities on the planet, she choose New York as her first stop, but then proceeded to make a grand tour of all the major cities and capitals of the world, Paris, London, Berlin, Rome, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Chicago, Mexico City, Rio de Janerio, Santiago, and then San Francisco. At every stop she was waylaid by diplomats and reporters, as well as the crowds that gathered to see the Martian Princess.

D'Larna saw that Earthlings were capable of great things, of honor and compassion, and of creating enduring works of beauty and art. She also saw that they were grasping, greedy, bigoted people prone to extreme acts of violence, lost in the grip of chaotic urges, and driven to conquer and dominate their neighbors. She had no doubt that in time they would come to rule all of her beloved home world, and that nothing shy of the total and utter destruction of the human species would prevent that. Returning home, she dismissed most of the Earthlings of her court, keeping only those whose hearts she saw as exemplifying the greatness of the human soul. With the aid of these advisors, the princess has begun a series of reforms and technological changes with the goal of readying her principality and its people to become a valuable and equal member of whichever Earthling nation eventually casts its eyes upon it.



Despite efficient recycling, the lack of new raw materials was beginning to be felt. Furthermore, the closest planet, Eris, had also evolved life. The natives of Eris were warlike in the extreme and by the time the leaders of Mars were done arguing about what to do in response, the Erisians were already developing rudimentary rocket technology. Soon, they were embarking on raids that landed on Martian soil and exacted a heavy price.

For the first time in millennia, the average Ancient Martian was forced to suffer some form of pain and terror. Screaming man-beasts, their faces savage and feral, their bodies covered in thick grey pelts, poured from the skies and attacked Martian towns. Having given up on war nearly ten thousand years before, the Ancient Martians were at a loss as to what to do. Debate raged, until a small, secretive group of scientists gathered to face the threat. By siphoning off resources dedicated to other tasks, they built a great rocket, a weapon of such terrible power that nothing like it has before or since been constructed in our Solar System. This rocket had one purpose, end the attacks by the Erisians by destroying Eris. Before they could be stopped, the Planet Killer Rocket had been launched.

The effect was what the secret society of scientists had hoped for; the home world of their tormenters was destroyed, reduced to the asteroid belt we know today. However, their calculations as to the after effects were in error, and Mars was pushed out of its orbit and slightly off its axis. This caused massive natural disasters, producing storms and earthquakes that the automated planetary regulators were unable to compensate for. Over the next fifty years the Ancients, or at least the intellectual elites, fought to undo the damage, but it was far too late. In the

end the planet began to die, its ecosystem irrevocably damaged.

The Canal Era

The advanced technological systems of the planet were in ruin, either severely damaged or completely destroyed. Geothermal, solar, wind, and other power stations were heavily damaged or destroyed by earthquakes. The orbital power grids that beamed generated energy across the planet, along with other satellites such as communication and monitoring systems, had all crashed to the ground or were destroyed by space debris. The maglev rails that carried people and cargo from one part of the planet to another were also wrecked, cutting many areas off from much needed food and medical supplies in the wake of the disasters that befell Mars. What followed was horrid time of starvation, disease, misery, and death that threatened to destroy the Martians as a species.

Where it was misguided scientists who caused the catastrophe, it was other scientists who stepped in to bring order out of chaos, and to save their people. In small pockets across the face of the planet, small groups of the intellectual elite set to the task of remaking their society in order to ensure its survival in the newly-rent environment. Maintaining a primitive radio communication network, these pockets were able to pass ideas back and forth, and discuss strategies with each other. After millennia of complacency and sloth, the disaster came as a wake-up call for the common Martian. Those who had hidden talents and ambitions found these traits coming to the surface; those who did not either ended up dead or were forced into labor camps due to the planet-wide state of emergency.

Many point to this period as the beginning of the caste system, though some can say it began earlier when the majority of Martians gave up working to build civilization and simply let civilization support them. In either case, what developed at the start of the Canal Era was a stratified social structure where the intellectual elites ruled over a middle class of technicians and specialists, while an underclass of brute laborers made up the wide base of the pyramid. By the end of the Canal Era this would develop into the caste system Mars now has today.

As the planet dried, a means needed to be developed to bring water from the polar ice caps to the inhabited areas, and recycle that water back to the polar ice caps. Communicating through radio transmissions, the loose collection of scientists developed a plan to build a network of canals that would allow for the mass movement of water. Taking their inspiration from pre-disaster natural riparian systems, the design was made to function as closely as possible to natural rivers and streams, though rivers and streams with a greater level of efficiency and capable of directing the water to wherever it was needed. The schematics for massive canal building machinery, as well as the machines to maintain these mega-structures, were also developed during this time.

Despite the ability to communicate their plans and ideas, the various surviving settlements were unable to effectively coordinate their canal construction projects. Instead of turning the planet back into a green paradise, all that was achieved was a stopgap that halted the death of Mars, but left it with the great deserts and silt seas intact. Life could and would go on, but would be limited to the canal valleys or isolated oases. Accusations of sabotage or mischief flew around, but the truth of the matter is that local rulers reacted more strongly to local needs, and were unwilling or unable to put aside their differences for the greater good of all Martians.

By the later Canal Era, which archaeologists have roughly dated as beginning around 7800 BCE, the current system of canals and cities was in place. During the construction of the canals, the planetary ecosystem stabilized and both plants and animals began rapidly adapting to the new conditions. Animals that were once constrained to the few deserts the Ancients had allowed to exist ran rampant, spreading across the planet. The Martians themselves also began to change; at first through natural processes as the three-layered caste system prevented intermarriage between rulers/intellectuals and laborers, as well as the middle class of specialists. This process was accelerated in

7345 BCE when the first genetic engineering experiments aimed at creating Martians who were better suited to the new Mars began to bear fruit. This led to the forced replacement of first the laborers with the Julandri gene-model, and then the remainder of the unskilled worker caste. Seeing the results on the work force, the Maduri warrior gene-model was developed and spread throughout the planet. By the end of the Canal Era in roughly 2300 BCE, the modern caste system we know today was in place, as well as the distinctive alterations that make the castes separate physiologically and psychologically – all, that is, save for the Kastari.

At the end of the Canal Era, a philosophical movement began in the Southern Hemisphere that propounded a commonality of brotherhood and spirit of all Martians. A central tenet of this faith was ancestor worship, calling them Those Who Paved the Way, as well as the exaltation of those who engineered the great canals and other scientific or technological feats. Harmony of thought and deed, body and soul, action and thought was stressed as the cornerstones to a good life, and the foundations upon which the Ancients built their vast knowledge and power. In time, these beliefs in internal and external harmony as signs of perfection became the requisites for entry into the afterlife.





Sadly, this creed was hijacked by the early princes of Mars as justification of their own power and authority; since their ancestors were the exalted Ancients, they were closer to attaining a perfect harmony of body and soul. By applying this spreading belief to the existing caste system, the current dominant Martian faith was formed. The Silthuri or Kastari at the top of the hierarchy are said to be nearing the penultimate expression of eternal life, and the other castes merely have to serve in their assigned roles until rebirth into a higher caste.

The Modern Era

After millennia of readjustment and the construction of the canals, the average Martian has long forgotten what life was like during the time of the Ancients, even the intellectual elite/rulers have degenerated into common tyrants, no longer driven to expand knowledge or create works of art, they have instead become a caste of managers, as decadent and depraved as their ancestors, just more active and cunning. Of the great sciences of the Ancients, nothing is to be seen, as the ruling elites, the Silthuri, and to a slightly lesser degree the Kastari, maintain a social system that suppresses innovation.

With knowledge and power in the hands of an elite few, and the remaining Martians forced into roles prescribed by the happenstance of their birth, the modern system stagnated. The great machines of the Ancients became objects of veneration, and when they broke down no-one knew the sacred rites of repair. For the uninitiated to poke around inside one of these artifacts of the gods would be blasphemy, and so they were left alone, hunks of steel and plastic that sit silent as the faithful pray for the return of their benefice.

A MARTIAN PRINCIPALITY

There are hundreds of principalities on Mars, ranging from small city-states to grand domains that dominate vast swaths of the canal lands. Like much of Martian culture, each principality follows a similar pattern in its layout and organization, though local variations do exist. Almost every principality is ruled by a hereditary sub-caste of the Royal Caste, the only exceptions being those that are ruled by the Kastari priest caste and those that have fallen to Earthling nations or ambitions.

Just as the common Martian religion views existence as a ladder to be climbed, the government of each principality is hierarchical in structure. At the top is the prince, though just as often this person is a princess. Gender is less important than birth and order of birth to the Silthuri ruling castes. The title is not always prince or princess, but may be regent, chancellor, prime minister, or some other local variation. King, queen, emperor, empress, or other higher titles are never used, the Silthuri may be the mortal rulers of the Red Planet, but they hold their positions as servants of the Ancestors, and many sects preach that one day the Last Emperor will come and reunite all of Mars under His banner (or Her Banner, as some sects preach). In the meantime, the Royal and Priestly castes rule, and all others must obey.

The prince is the highest authority in the principality, ruling as a despotic tyrant whose every word is law. He is the chief officer of the court, supreme judge, sole legislator, and divinely appointed arbitrator of all that is good and righteous. This is not to say that arguments at court are unheard of, nor that intrigue for either the prince's favor or against a prince are anathema. All occur with alarming frequency, and though the ruling sub-caste does not change, princes do meet with unfortunate accidents, are subverted by powerful courts, or are too weak to keep their closest followers in check. That all this occurs within the bounds of a single extended family makes these intra-court conflicts all the more vicious.

Below the prince are the officers of the court, whose number and set of titles varies from palace to palace. For convenience, most Earthlings use the English equivalents of the titles of Julivbak, the principality that Einstein first visited. The Grand Vizier is the second most powerful person in the principality, and acts as the prince's aid and advisor. Next in order is the Master of Legions, followed by the Master of Craftsman, Master of Slaves, and Master of Merchants. All these positions are held by members of the ruling sub-caste and are thus all part of one family. Royal consorts, wives and husbands from different sub-castes or even different principalities, have an ephemeral place at court, but often wield a great deal of 'soft power' behind the scenes.

Subservient to the court and its officers are the lesser sub-castes and families of the local Silthuri, the governmental bureaucrats and daily managers of the principality's interests. These are of course ranked on the ladder, forming a direct chain of command from one of the court officers to the lowest ranking precinct officer in charge of sewer maintenance. Officially, all other castes are equal and needed for the functioning of the principality, but in practice two stand above, and with the Royal Caste, forming what is commonly referred to as the upper castes of Martian society. The Kastari have broad influence in the affairs of the principality, and often the highest-ranking Kastari is invited to appear at court on a regular basis. Always acknowledged as being one of the upper castes, members of the Maduri Warrior Caste are elevated to such high status due to their honor and glory in battle. What is not often discussed is that, as the sole armed force in most principalities, should the Maduri revolt there would be no one to stop them.

Obedient, at least in theory, to the upper castes are the lower castes, the craftsmen, merchants, and slaves. These poor wretches live only to serve, or at least that is the official line of most principalities. In truth, they form a separate layer beneath the upper castes with their own society, rituals, and lives. Only rarely do the upper castes interact directly with the majority of the lower castes, instead passing their orders to the leaders of the Pilthuri, Julandri, and Talandri castes, who then see that these are carried out. Despite the official hierarchy that places a Silthuri in charge of nearly every activity, most of the time the actual administration is passed off to someone else. The separation between the upper and lower castes is so great at times that it is as if there are two sets of principalities, the one inhabited by the Silthuri, Kastari, and Maduri, and the one that the rest of Mars lives in.

Martian Economics

There are three general economic systems currently operating on Mars, traditional, centralized, and open market. The traditional system was the only economic system (outside of the actions of the Chanari) on Mars prior to contact with Earthlings. In traditional Martian economic systems the ruling prince owns all property, from the land and buildings down to the toys of the children. In theory, the prince works through his Silthuri sub-caste bureaucracy to ensure that quotas are set and met, that goods are distributed based on caste and need, and that his people are kept well provided for. This is never the case in actual practice, as the key criteria for the distribution of goods is by caste, not by need. Furthermore, graft and bribery are rampant, though this can be excused by observing that the systems used are archaic and often out of touch with the present situation. The food quota for a neighborhood of Talandri may not have been changed in two hundred years, despite the fact that the population has increased and the local sub-caste has had an increase in production quotas. These kinds of errors are epidemic, another fine example would be when a section of a city switches assignment, but without having all of the necessary adjustments made in the principality wide quota system. This could happen when one Talandri sub-caste is relocated, and another brought in, for example, a sub-caste that specializes in applying gold leaf to vessels for use by the Silthuri is replaced by a sub-caste that operates a foundry. Naturally, the goods needed to transform the workshop will be taken care of, but the foundry requires a larger number of Julandri laborers than the gold leaf application process, and this may not be taken into account in the neighborhood's food quotas.

When these errors occur, or when shipments of goods do not reach their intended destination through incompetence, or simply theft, something needs to be done. The system requires the managing Silthuri sub-caste to attend to matters. They must make a backroom deal with other Silthuri sub-castes to acquire enough food to make up the difference. In order to do this, they need to have something to trade, and since all they have is the goods they produce, a little extra work needs to be done to bring in enough food. However, extra production means an increase in the raw materials, tools, and even Julandri laborers needed. Thus, to solve one small oversight, a great web of 'black market' deals needs to be struck. This web is known as the internal economy of Martian principalities, which goes on every day beneath the noses of the ruling Silthuri, often with their tacit ignorance.



Trade between principalities, and those parts of the black-market web that extend beyond a single city or agricultural region, are handled by the Pilthuri caste. Officially, the Pilthuri act as merchants and ambassadors, traveling outside of their cities and principalities and on behalf of their Silthuri masters. They are at the same time the teamsters and diplomats of Mars, rare Martians who are happy to leave their safe and familiar environs and journey across Chanari-haunted deserts in the service of their masters. At least that is what the caste puts forth as their true purpose. In all honesty, the Pilthuri spend more time making sure goods move through the black market than carrying their prince's messages to other rulers. Even when on official business, every Pilthuri makes sure to stash extra-legal trade goods in his caravan, often in excess of the legal ones. Some may be surprised to discover that the black markets of the Martian principalities are all connected to each other through the Pilthuri trade routes. Legitimate trade between Silthuri, like all native Martian economic systems, is based on barter.

However, the exchange of goods is only one aspect of this, and more often than not goods are given to receive favors, cement alliances, or as apologies for past ill-behavior. This frustrates the Pilthuri to no end, especially when an out of touch prince orders the presentation of otherwise much needed goods as gifts or a trade of favors for goods that will be a tough sell for the Pilthuri. Still, a large part of the planet wide economy is run by gifts and favors, and neither should be discounted as a valuable economic commodity.

In addition to this traditional economic model, Earthlings have introduced two broad classifications of economic systems to Mars. In the Soviet Client States, as well as the Nazi and Italian held areas of Mars, a centralized economy has been introduced. The Soviet version of this economy is much like the one they operate, or at least attempt to operate, on Earth. This bears a striking resemblance to the theoretical traditional Martian economic system where a central authority and bureaucracy manages the economic production and distribution of a principality. However, instead of relying on centuries-old assessments of needs, the Soviet system is based on more recent census data and other metrics. Additionally, without the constraints of caste, there is a more even distribution of goods, though it should be noted that a greater amount of economic production seems to be aimed towards 'trade' with the Soviet Union and the support of Soviet 'advisors'. The addition of a monetary system also helps in the redistribution of goods, though the system is far from accurate or efficient.

Nazi and Italian occupied Mars also uses a centralized economic system, though this is not for the supposed benefit of the Martians as the Soviet system claims to be. Indeed, the Axis system is openly declared to be for the benefit of the Earthling conquerors. In this system the economy is centrally managed to maximize the extraction of wealth. The well-being, indeed the lives, of the native Martians is of secondary concern and every day many are worked to death in the mines, fields, and forges or even have the wealth stripped from their own homes and cities.

The other economic system brought by Earthlings is that of free market capitalism. Although counter to the approved traditional Martian economic model, free market capitalism is very similar to the network of bartering that the Red Planet's black market operates under. The idea of investments and loans are new ones, yet the Martians in the American and British held zones, as well as some of the Freebooter States, have taken to them with gusto. This is especially true in Emancipation, where the Talandri have taken to capitalism with a vengeance, and even the Julandri have gotten involved. This does not mean that there are not problems in the principalities that operate under a free market capitalist system, indeed the issues that have long plagued Earthling nations with this system are abundant. Poverty, something unheard of in traditional Martian economies has begun to develop, as well as the presence of the 'working poor'. Usually these are Julandri, a caste that is sadly easily exploited by others, though some Talandri have fallen through the cracks or lost their wealth to shady deals and poor investments. In all, the free market areas of Mars are a wild zone where fortunes are made and lost on a daily basis and the system has yet to shake itself out into some form of order.

Travel on Mars

For those used to modern industrialized transportation Mars seems like a primitive backwater. Native transports are drawn by beasts of burden or wind-powered, though some of the principalities still have working Ancient mass transit systems. The most common form of transport on Mars is sandal leather, and most movement within cities is on foot. Even the higher castes are not exempt from having to rely on two good legs to get around, though most seem to make do with eight legs and a palanquin for short distances. In some areas occupied by Earthlings, the rickshaw has been introduced, and in free market areas Martian entrepreneurs have started rickshaw taxis services (nearly all drawn by Julandri).

Travel between settlements is usually by bahmoot or canal boat. The noble bahmoot is the most common beast of burden on Mars and is used as both a riding beast, pack animal, and to pull carts and wagons. Its resistance to the rigors of desert travel, as well as its general stamina and strength, offset the need to keep bahmoots fed on a diet of fresh meat. This is largely due to the ability of a bahmoot to go weeks without food yet still maintain a reasonable pace.

Canal boats are oared and sailed barges that ply the canals that connect the Martian cities to each other and the outlying agricultural lands. Their range is limited to the

length of the canals, and most canal boats only run from one city to the next, and rarely stray out of their home principality. These barges are slow moving and ungainly, awkwardly beating up and down the canals at a pace that could be generously described as stately. Still, they are the best means of moving heavy cargoes over long distances.

Ancient Martian transportation systems are still in operation in some principalities, and are a great boon to those who have them. Nearly all of these are electrically powered trains that run in tubes, either underground or elevated. Most of these operate within cities and serve as passenger mass transit, but a few run between cities and have a heavy cargo component. These tube trains are based on principles of magnetism and electronics that are not entirely understood by Earthlings, and of course so heavily obfuscated by myth that the Martian operators and mechanics have little clue as to why they do what they do.

Earthlings have brought their own forms of transportation to Mars, though only the rocket ship has proven to be of any efficient use. Mars is entirely devoid of fossil fuels, thus limiting the use of motor vehicles to areas near Earthling supply depots. Even then, all fuel must be brought in from Earth, raising the prices to exorbitant levels. Only a handful of private fueling stations exist, though governments maintain large supplies for use by their militaries and civil service. As radium is abundant on Mars, the rocket ship, and its technological relatives the rocket truck, car, and sled, have become the main means of Earthling transportation. For those who cannot afford these, there is always Martian transportation, and the aforementioned sandal leather.

Martian Communication Systems

Modern native Martian communication systems are restricted to the speed at which a messenger can carry a memorized message or a written letter. This is the sad state of affairs throughout most of Mars, and is one of the main reasons that frequent public announcements, festivals, and other group communication rituals are so common. The slowness and unreliability of communications systems has also helped to limit the spread of dangerous information across the face of the Red Planet, for example, the word of the Ebb Revolution, the liberation of Emancipation, or even the arrival of the Earthlings. In this manner, local princes and Kastari are able to keep a lid, at least in theory, on these disturbances and 'help' their subjects remain happy and content. Some principalities use horns, drums, trumpets, and even semaphore or heliograph-like systems, but these are not much of an improvement.



Not all of the native communication systems are so primitive, for the Ancients used a variety of technologically advanced communication technologies. Most of these, like most of the Ancients' works, have long fallen into disrepair or have been forgotten. Of those that work, three main categories are in regular use. The most common is a system much like the telephone network slowly growing across the more developed nations of Earth. The biggest difference is that instead of cables and switchboards, the Ancient telephonic system uses microwaves broadcast from towers to both carry information and power to portable devices. No switchboard is required, and the whole load of calls is routed through an electronic brain. It is this brain that is the most frequently damaged part of the system, which can lead from restrictions in the system to an entire outage. This microwave telephonic system is restricted to use by the upper castes, and even then it is usually Silthuri managers who use them to aid in relaying instructions throughout the bureaucracy.

Beams of light are used in some areas for extreme long-range communication, though never anything that reaches past the horizon. Again, an electronic brain manages the system and allows for the calls to go through. This light-based system relies on the proper positioning of reflective receivers on both ends of the network, as well as a beam projector. Often it is the brain or the power supply that fails, as the modern Martians are capable of creating their own reflectors, though not beam projectors. As those cities that have a functional beam communication system only use them for important Silthuri-to-Silthuri communications, a great deal of ceremony and ritual has developed around them, as well as strict restrictions as to which castes or sub-castes can use them.

Finally, in the areas around the far eastern edge of the Great Silt Sea, a new system of telephonic communication has been developed. In the past few decades a Talandri in the principality of Hykilot found a way to connect wire cables to his local, defunct, microwave communication network. As the network had broken due to a loss of power to the towers, the electronic brain was still operational. These cables, once properly attached, could be ran out to handsets that would permit access to the telephonic network. The electronic brain acts as a switchboard operator in an Earthling system, taking voice commands and connecting handset receivers. Unbeknownst to all involved, the electronic brain has a programming error, and is recording not just every conversation heard over its network, but conducted anywhere near a handset receiver.

Martian Utilities

On Mars there is no shortage of labor, for there are nearly always enough Julandri to haul lines, carry burdens, or otherwise bend their backs to their work. Because of this, those areas of Mars where the Ancients-built utility systems are no longer functioning have turned to the massive shoulders of Julandri muscle power to provide basic services. This even includes the turning of massive turbines by hand in order to generate a trickle of electricity, or banks of Julandri bred to work treadmills or stationary bicycle-like apparatus in order to power the prince's palace. Julandri work crews in many Martian principalities do even the most backbreaking of activities, such as the hauling of water and removal of sewage.

The standard of living is much higher on Mars than one would expect, largely due to the extensive penetration of utility systems into the everyday life of most Martians. Most Martians, even those of the lowest castes, are used to having running water and at least a few hours of electricity a day, as well as frequent sewage removal. If this needs to be done using Julandri, so be it, for without such basic services, no proper Martian city has the right to call itself such. Those principalities that have lost the ability to provide even these basic services are considered horrid backwaters, and their rulers, be they Silthuri of Kastari, are considered lesser examples of their kind.

Art and Entertainment on Mars

Despite the casual tyranny and despotism of Mars, the planet produces a wealth of *objets d'art* and other works of beauty. Largely this is due to the tastes and conspicuous displays of the Silthuri and Kastari, but also is due in part to the belief on Mars that all should have some form of gainful employment. This means that even if no new ceremonial vessels, royal gowns, or even Maduri weapons are needed, the Talandri still need to be put to work, either re-fashioning old items into new or adding decorations to existing objects.

It is the decorative arts that are the most popular on Mars, with nearly every surface covered with paintings, bas reliefs, etchings, sculptures, filigree, and every other manner of decoration known on Earth, as well as several techniques unique to Mars. One popular, very expensive and labor-intensive artistic style is that of sand painting. Clean sand is carefully gathered from the desert, dyed in a myriad of hues, and then carefully placed (often grain by grain) into a framework to create an image. The best of these take on a three dimensional form, and wet sand sculpture often accompanies, or is an intrinsic part of,



most sand paintings. Naturally these pieces of art are highly ephemeral in nature, drying out or blowing away in a matter of hours or days. The wealthiest princes use these as display pieces and it is considered rude to not have one to show honored guests or other visitors. The larger the sand painting, the more honor is bestowed on the prince, the principality, and his guests.

In addition to the visual arts, music and dance are quite popular amongst the Martians. They lack any grand tradition of drama, though religious rituals can take on some of the grandeur and spectacle of the dramatic arts. Music and dance are strictly delineated by caste divisions, and members of one caste generally do not understand or appreciate the music and dance of another. The only exception to this is the Julandri courtesan sub-caste whose singing and playing of the Martian harp-lute, as well as dances both erotic and non-erotic, are well liked by all castes, though usually only experienced by the Silthuri. Oddly, the Silthuri and Pilthuri do not have any native musical or dance traditions, but prefer to enjoy the activities of the Julandri courtesans or the ritual performing arts of the Kastari.

The Talandri do not dance, though they are well known for their communal work songs composed of nonsense words sung with a strong percussion accompaniment. A great deal of extemporaneous variety and experimentation is an integral part of Talandri work songs, and may be one reason that Earthling Jazz is so popular amongst free Talandri. Lesser known is the second category of songs that are performed only after work hours have ended. These after-work songs differ in that they have actual lyrics instead of nonsense words and center around concepts of food, family, relaxation, and oddly drunkenness. In principalities that have been overthrown following revolutions or that have active revolutionary movements, these after-work songs often hide rebellious messages in the lyrics.

The labor sub-caste Julandri has its own sets of songs and dances, one set for work and another for entertainment. The work songs are rhythmic chants designed to coordinate the efforts of the work crew and create a psychic numbness that combats the drudgery of hauling chains, carrying boxes, and other back breaking activity. When not working, and especially when they have a celebration of some kind, the Julandri engage in complex dances accompanied by songs similar to work chants, but far more vibrant. As the Julandri are not permitted to own more than the bare minimum of clothing and household utensils, instruments are often hands, feet, and common items pressed into temporary

service. It should be noted that whereas the Talandri engage in a great deal of creative exploration of their musical traditions, the Julandri tend to stick to the 'classics' and rarely invent any new material.

Of all the castes, the Maduri engage in the performing arts to the greatest extent. Their songs and dances, all having a particular martial bent, are constant accompaniments to everything they do. There are marching chants, setting up defenses chants, preparing for battle chants, and even rest chants. Dance is an important part of Maduri life and is used to keep the legionnaires in fine shape. These dances are incredibly athletic and often revolve around stylized displays of prowess with various weapons including ranged weapon dances performed at special shooting ranges. Even the cavalry get in on the action with bahmoot and rider dances being very common. As with all things Maduri, the males and females have different sets of dances and songs, which are never performed by the opposite gender.

Naturally, the Kastari traditions of the performing arts are religious in nature and feature choirs, hymns, and songs of praise towards the Ancients. What is generally not known is that the Kastari maintain a second set of songs, one that is kept secret and hidden, is and often brutally suppressed by the conservative leadership of the various Kastari sects. These are heretical songs, often sung in whispers and which use complex codes and innuendo to hide their true meaning. Topics range from scandalous love paeans to individual Julandri courtesans to outright heretical and revolutionary songs that generally serve little than to allow the non-conformists a chance to break away from cannon for a little while.

Of course, the Chanari break all the rules with regards to Martian performing arts, featuring songs, dances, and even drama in their repertoire. A wide range of instruments, as well as styles, can be found amongst the tribes, and there is even a fair amount of intertribal exchange of music, dance, and even plays. Chanari plays are often viewed as strange to outsiders, as they are generally performed by one person who not only plays all the parts in overly dramatic pantomime, but also provides second person narration. There is no stage and few props, and the performances are traditionally done around a campfire in a 'theatre in the round style'.

Earthling performing arts, aside from the aforementioned Jazz, have not spread far beyond the principalities regularly visited by Earthlings or under Earthling control. In areas controlled by the Americans, French, British, and some



Freebooter States, Talandri jazz bands have become very popular in Earthling clubs, though the so-called 'Rotten' bar prevents any Martian who is not a musician or working for these clubs, from actually entering them and enjoying the music.

The Silthuri princes of some Earthling client and independent principalities have gained a fondness for Earthling music and are happy to pay top dollar for Earthling performers, or preferably Earthling record players and recordings.

Other than the performing arts, games are a popular diversion amongst the Martians. All castes play simple dice and word games to pass the hours between work cycles, but the most complex games can be found amongst the Maduri and Silthuri. *O'fali*, a Martian game similar to a combination of chess and backgammon, is exclusively played by Silthuri of all sub-castes. Ornate sets for this game are a common sight in Silthuri homes, and some of these can easily be worth tens of thousands of dollars. Elaborate wargames using highly detailed metal or wood figurines and played on scale model terrain tables are popular amongst the Silthuri and Maduri officers.

Martian Food and Drink

The cuisine of Mars is not for the weak of stomach, for it is a common practice to add a rich mélange of spices to nearly every dish. As would be expected, the quality and quantity of food varies based on caste, but traditionally no one goes hungry on Mars. The lower castes must make do with porridges and plain breads, though still highly spiced, or in the worst-case scenarios reconstituted food product dispensed by still-working Ancients machine-driven public feeding stations. The upper castes eat a more varied diet that includes a great deal of fresh fruit, vegetables, and meats, though it should be noted that many Kastari sects are vegetarian. Of all the castes, the Maduri eat the best, as their large size and high level of physical activity requires a great deal of highly nutritional foodstuffs.

Healthcare, Education, and other Social Services

In traditional principalities, access to health care, education, and emergency services is free to all. These services do not always function at the highest levels of efficiency and, like goods, are subject to the whims of the complex Silthuri managed distribution systems and the lower caste-run black markets. Health care is spotty at best, with some areas supporting the medical care equivalent to that of modern Earth, while others lag well behind and rely more on superstition and guess work, and still others utilize the

technology of the Ancients. Automated medical facilities are generally considered a rarity on Mars, though in truth, the smallest of these, single patient medical pods, can be found in the royal palace of nearly every principality. These 'autodocs' as the Earthlings call them, can heal all but the most traumatic of injuries or virulent of diseases, and go a long way towards perpetuating the myth of Silthuri immortality and magic.

Warfare the Red Planet Way

The Silthuri and Kastari do not maintain huge legions of Maduri merely because they like a good parade, nor did the Ancients design a caste of warriors without good cause. Warfare is common on Mars, especially in areas not yet under Earthling control, but soon to be. Princes war against their neighboring princes, and palace coups are not unheard of. Even the Kastari get in on the act, either as political leaders or in feuds over various aspects of the Martian religion. No matter what the reason or the combatants, for the past several millennia warfare on Mars has followed a predictable course, though this is naturally changing with the arrival of the Earthlings.

In traditional Martian warfare, the declaration of hostilities is accompanied by a set of ritual demonstrations and presentations. First, a reason for the war needs to be declared, as well as open goals for all belligerents; including what each will forfeit should they lose the conflict. This is usually determined through lengthy negotiation between the parties' Pilthuri. The belligerents then call a general parade of their legions throughout their lands as a prelude to the coming war while Pilthuri are dispatched with a jar of sand and a jar of water to the courts of the other belligerents. Should negotiations be successful and armed conflict is averted, the jar of sand is offered as a gift, a symbolic exchange of land. Should negotiations fail, the jar of water is poured out in a public ceremony; this marks the start of war.

Once the Pilthuri of all the belligerents have returned to their homes, each side dispatches a second round of diplomats, this time composed of relatives of the ruling princes. Ritual insults are then exchanged, followed by the taking of hostages. These hostages are expected to defend themselves and to be taken by force, though the shedding of Kastari or Silthuri blood in this ritual is a mark of poor etiquette and when it occurs, it usually escalates what would otherwise have been ritualized military affairs into more violent and much bloodier affairs.

Assuming that all has gone well and no major faux pas has been committed, a limited war is declared. A symbolic location is chosen for each belligerent, none more than a few kilometers from each other, traditionally a hill, canal crossing, or other large geographic feature around which a belligerent's legions can set up a solid defensive position. Should one side lose control of this location to the enemy, then they have lost the war.

Once the mutually chosen time for hostilities to commence has been reached, all sides vie in a deadly game of 'King of the Hill'. That this often results in high death tolls amongst the Maduri is of no concern, and it is not uncommon for higher ranked Silthuri and Kastari to treat the entire affair as a game. Once a victor has been determined, all hostilities end and whatever brought about the war is resolved in favor of the victors.

Should the taking of the hostages go awry, or any of the belligerents act outside of the declared bounds of the war, then total and open warfare may be declared. Events that could lead to all-out war include attacking before the official commencement of hostilities, mistreatment of Silthuri or Kastari prisoners, failure to yield in the face of defeat (that is, not surrendering after losing their symbolic defensive location), or the breaking of any number of rules of engagement that the belligerents agreed to at the start of the war. No longer constrained by the rules of the engagement, the opposing sides are free to act in any way they please, attacking civilians outside the bounds of the established warzone, taking and sacking cities, performing assassinations, and any other atrocity or strategy that they feel is appropriate. The conflict rages on until one or more sides experience forced regime change.

As could be expected, when one sub-caste of Silthuri rebels against the ruling sub-caste it is almost always total war. These civil wars can be especially deadly, as the Maduri loyal to each faction are expected to fight to their death, and the castes that are normally protected from warfare (Talandri, Julandri, Pilthuri, and most Kastari) are caught in the crossfire.

WILD MARS

Much of Mars lies outside the inhabited regions of the principalities, though these areas are not empty, merely sparsely settled. Here the wild animals of Mars and the equally wild Chanari tribes dwell, both eking out an existence in the arid wastes. In general, there are five ecosystems in the wild areas of Mars, the silt seas, deep

desert, arid highlands, salt plains, and dead canal valleys. Each presents its own challenges and rewards, but all are deadly to those who venture across them unprepared.

WILD MARTIAN STORY HOOKS

- The party comes across a caravan being attacked by Chanari tribesmen. Do the player characters come to the aid of either group, or just ignore it and move on?
- While in the deep desert, a massive sand storm blows up, and the party must seek shelter. After the storm dies down they face two problems, first the landscape is entirely altered by the shifting sand, and second, a faint metallic glint can be seen in the distance, a glint that was not there before.
- The silt ship that the player characters are on strikes a large submerged object and runs up on it. The object turns out to be an airlock of Ancient design, and the opening to a ruin beneath.

MARTIAN STORY HOOKS

- Someone's sabotaged the Ancient communication system in a city the player characters are visiting. The power has been greatly increased and the electronic brain has been reprogrammed, turning the microwave dishes into a deadly new beam weapon. As random beams of intense energy stab into the city and its inhabitants, the party must negotiate the panic-filled streets, 31st Seal terrorists, and the Ancient defenses of the electronic brain itself.
- The party comes across a native caravan that has been attacked by wild Chanari. One of the victims lives long enough to beg the player characters to take a jar of sand and deliver them to a distant principality in the next five days. If they don't, two important allies of a faction or nation the party is loyal to will go to war.
- A Pilthuri approaches the player characters with an offer. His master is the cousin of the tyrannical ruling prince of a Martian city-state. If our heroes would be willing to smuggle Earthling arms into the city, train his master's Maduri, and spearhead the rebellion, they will be richly rewarded.



Silt Seas

The silt seas are by far the most alien landscapes on Mars, for nowhere else in the Solar System can one find such huge accumulations of fine silt. Once, these seas and their attendant rivers were the great waterways of Mars. Following the disasters that rocked Mars after the destruction of Eris, these bodies of water were filled with sediment eroded from the blasted wastelands, eventually filling up with fine silt. Today, these silt seas and other former waterways have become surfaces over which the Martians can still travel, though they are no longer sources of water. The silt is not as buoyant as water, and only specially-designed vessels can float upon it, swimmers are cautioned to stay out, as the silt will quickly swallow the unwary, the weakened, or the foolish.

Two means, one modern and the other ancient, enable the Martians to conduct travel on the silt seas. Most commonly, small sailing ships skim across the silt on long runners. These silt ships make up the majority of the navies of the city-states that border silt seas, as well as the ships of the Chanari tribes that reside there. These silt ships are fast but fragile, and require the copious use of precious wood to construct and maintain; because of this, ship-to-ship combat is entirely focused on boarding actions, to fire a radium rifle or other powerful weapon at a silt ship is considered a heinous crime. Also, the salvage of ships damaged by storms or caught in some other accident is a major source of revenue for many Chanari tribes.

The other means of travel across the barren expanses of the silt seas is by means of the rare and expensive ufaliv, Ancient Martin constructions that once crossed the seas when they were water. Rising above the silt on legs a hundred meters high, these elevated highways serve today just as they did millennia ago, connecting both the great cities and distant settlements and islands together, but where those islands once jutted up out of the sea, now they are rare points of solid land that dot the silt seas. Most of the ufaliv network is at least partially in ruins. Where they remain, they provide a safer direct means to move heavy cargos by draft animal, as the routes being both easier to follow and patrol. A rare few have functioning electric trains that float above the highways; these are the most prized, though their technology remains a mystery to even Earthling scientists. Chanari tribes often stake claim to the existing ufaliv routes, making their camps along the lengths and charging tolls on any who wish to pass.

No matter what means is used to traverse the silt seas, travelers are cautioned to be wary of the winds and lack of shade or water. Despite the nautical feel of gliding across the silt on the runners of a swift silt ship, there is not a drop of true liquid anywhere to be found. Death by thirst is by far the most pressing threat to silt sailors. The Chanari tribes that make their homes in these dusty 'waterways' know of many means to acquire water, from building solar stills to finding ancient seeps where underground aquifers well up, to even knowing of hidden islands that support wells, springs, or Ancient Martian water gathering and pumping facilities.

Compounding the dangers of dehydration, the silt seas offer no shade save for isolated islands or beneath the ufaliv. The sun beats down constantly, and often is reflected off the silt, meaning that fair-skinned travelers can expect sunburn on both their upper and lower surfaces.

Another danger of the silt seas, and by far the most dramatic, is the wind. With nothing to stop the flow of air save for a rare island, the breeze that drives a silt ship can soon become a gale that stirs up huge clouds of silt, blocking out the sun and choking any caught in them. The weight of the silt can add to the burden of an overloaded silt ship, driving it deeper into the dust below and reducing its speed, or even completely overloading it and causing it to sink.

Deep Desert

Most of Mars is covered in deep desert, areas of reddish sand that supports very little life and is uninhabited by all but the most hardy of Chanari tribes. Only a few animals manage to survive in these wastes, and those only near seeps, springs, or oases. In the mind of many Earthlings, it is the deep deserts that define Mars, and not the lushness of the canal valleys or the somewhat more hospitable arid highlands. These expanses of reddish sand and rock-covered wastes range from those that can be crossed in a couple of days, to the huge regions like the Empty Desert, waterless lands that have never been crossed.

As would be expected, the greatest dangers of the deep desert are dehydration, sun stroke, and sand storms. The lack of food comes in a close second to the lack of water; for even the sparse native plants and animals are dangerous to approach, much less eat. Then there are the other dangers, namely Bahmoot riding hordes of the Chanari, ready to swoop in and exact tribute or blood (often both) from any who dare to cross their lands.

People brave these dangers due to the lack of alternatives for long-distance travel, and trade caravans often ply thousand-year-old routes that lead from one oasis to the next. The same bloodthirsty Chanari tribes that attack travelers are often the ones who operate or guide the caravans. The difference between a Chanari raider and caravan guard is only one of opportunity. Earthlings have been drawn to the deep desert to search the sands for traces of the Ancient Martians; perhaps the next great ruin lies out there, buried in red sand, waiting to be uncovered.

Salt Plains

Not all of the ancient waterways became silt seas and streams, some simply dried up, leaving behind sunbaked basins the size of oceans. These basins are covered in thick layers of whitish salt, though the constant winds of Mars have given even these a reddish tint. The salt plains make up a small amount of the surface area of Mars, but are some of the best places to hunt for ruins of the Ancients. When the water evaporated away the surrounding cities died, leaving behind well-preserved ruins ripe for exploration. Salt plains are also only rarely inhabited and although some still have intact ufaliv crossing them, there is little to draw travelers, and much to threaten them. Unlike the silt seas, Martians of the Canal Era abandoned the dying bodies of water that would become the salt plains, leaving the coastlines empty and barren save for the occasional ruin. Rarely can one find a water seep or spring, and the salt has eroded the pumps on most of the Ancient Martian machinery that once brought water up from deep in the planet's crust. Most Martians believe the salt plains to be cursed, and only madmen dare go there.

Arid Highlands

Although the arid highlands are dry, they are not as dry as the deep desert or silt seas. Water can be found here, and the only rain that still falls on Mars does so in the highlands, though this is still a scant and often insufficient amount. The arid highlands are home to many of the animals native to Mars, as well as the only place where large stands of trees routinely grow. Groves of l'iko wood, Martian pine, and ghavit yew, as well as highland bamboo, can be found in mountain valleys or along high ridges. The highlands are also home to many Chanari tribes, most of whom make their livings as herdsman and foresters, though the amount of wood cut is meager compared to logging operations on Earth or Venus.

The highlands present an odd sight, for the trees congregate along the tops of the mountains, forming an inverted tree line where the scattered rain and subsequent runoff trickles down to nothing. The higher one goes in the highlands, the more lush the vegetation and the denser the animal populations. However, these are still mountains, and the air thins much more quickly than the water increases, leaving the topmost peaks covered in forest untouched by Martian, much less Earthling, hands.

Dead Canal Valleys

By far the most rich and diverse of the wild ecosystems of Mars are the dead canal valleys. These valleys have lost the regular flow of their water, sometimes through the failure of Ancient machinery, sometimes through seismic activity or other natural disaster. For whatever reason, the water no longer flows as it once did, and sometimes not at all. What little life giving liquid remains is not enough to keep farms active or feed the needs of cities, and so these canal valleys lie abandoned and left to their fate. However, the Chanari and wild Martian plants and animals are well used to living with little water, and thus the dead canal valleys are paradises to them.





All manner of Martian life can be found in the dead canal valleys, Arthur's Dragons, wild bahmoots, desert hoppers, Martian gazelles, sand wallowers, and fanged tesselons. Plants are in abundance, at least relative to the other wild areas of Mars, though the extreme predatory pressures of the canal lands have caused many to develop thorns, spines, and poisonous flesh. Still, despite the dangers of predators and even the plants, the dead canal valleys are home to a fair number of Chanari, as well as Martians who have decided to leave the comfortable confines of the caste system. Although rare, every year a handful of Martians across the face of the planet have decided to strike out on their own, some seeking freedom, others wanting to escape from a bad master, and some simply insane. Martian entertainment often includes stories of young lovers from differing castes who flee to the dead canal valleys to seek a safe place for their illicit love, only to die horribly and tragically because they no longer have access to the wonders of Martian civilization (Martian entertainment tends to reinforce the *status quo*).

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS ON MARS

AMERICAN MARTIAN CITY STATES

The Americans never set out to control a large area of Mars. Aside from exploration, the early American missions to Mars were either diplomatic or mercantile in nature, and most of the latter were financed and operated by private individuals or companies. Events took a turn three years ago when the Kalond Canal Valley erupted in anti-Earthling violence, forcing the American government to deploy a sizeable expeditionary force to protect its citizens and their interests. This led to further involvement, as the 1st Martian Expeditionary Force ended up overstepping its directives and not merely securing United States citizens in the Principality of Mircanok, but actually overthrowing the prince, upsetting the caste system, and imposing democracy on the confused Martians.

Other attempts to commit limited resources to the 'Martian Problem' usually ended up with the US deeply mired in Martian politics. The complex web of alliances that enmesh the principalities proved too much for US diplomats, yet was (and still is) ripe for exploitation by overly ambitious American army generals. The result is a string of small principalities, actually city-states, now under the direct rule of the United States, and an expanding sphere of influence that owes more to the barrel of a rifle than the pen of an ambassador.

It all began at Silmy Ridge in 1934. Prince Kolatilik of Mircanok, following the advice of his advisor, High Priest Benifont of the Orthodox Fellowship, ordered the imprisonment of all Earthlings and the confiscation of their goods. Envoys from the United States and other Earthling nations were executed, their heads sent back to their respective missions in ornate baskets. The USA had a field base in the neighboring principality of Kostrast, and deployed a force under the command of General McArthur to perform maneuvers along the border. The small American force, comprised of a company of RAY gun-armed infantry, a squadron of armored combat cars, and a platoon of Rocket Rangers were supported by three state legions of Maduri who had recently been equipped with Earthling rifles and machine guns. Prince Kolatilik responded by dispatching ten state legions, all traditionally armed and armored with shock weapons and light radium gun support cavalry, to perform their own maneuvers along the border on a stretch of highland hills known as Silmy Ridge.

AMERICAN MARTIAN CITY STATES

Theme: Conquered or Controlled by the Americans, for Good or Ill.

Complication: Not so Quiet Feud Between the Military and the State Department.

Personality: Lt. Kenneth N. Spencer, US 9th Cavalry.

AMERICAN MARTIAN CITY STATES STORY HOOKS

- While travelling through the rural areas of the AMCS, the party comes across a small farm in a canal valley. This farm was once the home of Americans who decided to settle on Mars, a rare thing. They have been attacked and burned out, and before she expires the sole survivor croaks out the name of a Chanari tribe and pleads that they rescue her captured daughter.
- A person claiming to be an agent of the State Department contacts one of the player characters, an American. He needs an important communiqué delivered to an independent city-state on the border of the AMCS and given to the local prince.
- Beset by foes in the wilds of the AMCS, a bugle is heard and the US Cavalry comes riding to the rescue. They were on a mission to reconnoiter and report on some recently discovered Ancient ruins and possible Nazi activity in that area. Will the player characters be in any condition to help out?

Seeing the Mircanokian forces parading on the high ground within radium rifle range of the allied US and Kostrastian forces, General McArthur ordered his Rocket Rangers to perform a high level flyover of the area, both to reconnoiter the area and act as a display of force. The Rocket Rangers were warned not to cross into Mircanokian airspace, though were encouraged to push to the very edge of the border. The Rangers conducted the flyover within an inch of breaching their orders, but did not cross the border into Mircanok territory. Nevertheless, they were fired on by the Mircanokian radium rifles, and returned a devastating fusillade with their RAY guns. Calmer heads might have prevailed, save that McArthur was itching for a fight, and goaded on by the Kostrastian Master of Warriors, a general assault of the ridge was ordered. The Mircanokians did not stand a chance, as RAY blasts from the flying Rangers soon silenced the radium guns and the state legions of Mircanok found themselves raked by machinegun fire, bombarded by field mortars, and charged by armored combat cars supported by submachine gun-toting Kostrastian bahmoot cavalry. The slaughter lasted less than two hours, and saw the cream of Mircanok's legions destroyed.

Not wanting to wait for orders from Washington, McArthur advanced into Mircanokian territory, taking the capital city in a lightning three-week campaign. Prince Kolatilik and High Priest Benifont were killed attempting to escape the capital, and with the rest of the prince's family having successfully escaped, the entire principality was in American-Kostrastian hands. Sadly, the Earthling prisoners were all murdered before they could be saved – every man, woman, and child. This led to a series of reprisals by the allied forces, and the entire Silthuri, Kastari, and Maduri castes of Mircanok were tried and promptly executed.

Overnight the Kalond Canal Valley erupted into anti-Earthling violence, spurred on by the Orthodox Fellowship. Hundreds were killed, their trade goods looted and their bodies hung up for display. A massive Martian army under the banner of the newly formed Homeland Defense Concordant began gathering with the intent of driving out the Americans and their Martian allies. The news of the Silmy Ridge incident and the gathering storm quickly spread across Mars and reached Washington within days of the first shots fired. In response, President Roosevelt ordered the immediate formation of the 1st Martian Expeditionary Force and its rapid deployment to the Kalond Canal Valley. General McArthur began fortifying his position, calling in additional legions from Kostrast and appealing to his colleagues in the British and French colonies. Nearly

every one of the Great Powers had citizens killed either in Mircanok or during the subsequent riots in the Kalond Valley. Britain, France, and Japan responded by sending their own contingents, and Germany simply invaded the southern end of the valley, refusing to cooperate with the growing alliance. The Soviets, unsurprisingly, blamed the deaths on imperialist capitalist aggression, and took no active part in the campaign.

With a multi-national force, McArthur sought to emulate the practices of previous wars and constructed a series of trench works along the threatened border at Hasten Wells. The Homeland Defense Concordat attacked on December 5 and nearly overwhelmed the allied lines. Wave after wave of Maduri legionnaires charged the trench works, suffering devastating losses due to rifle, machinegun, mortar, and RAY gun fire.

Sallies by Kostrastian cavalry, US combat cars, Rocket Rangers, and the British Royal Colonial Marines disrupted the coordination of the Concordat forces, but undaunted and possessing troops that would gladly die in battle, the Princes of the Concordant continued to pour legions into the killing fields. Faced with superior, seemingly fanatical numbers, the allied forces were stretched to the limit, exhausted, short of ammunition, and under constant attack.

After nearly a month of relentless fighting preceded by the backbreaking labor of building trenches, the allied forces were at a breaking point. Fuel for both the combat cars and rocket packs were gone, ammunition was down to a few rounds per man, and the mortars and machineguns had long gone silent. The Maduri of the Kostrastian forces began to sing their death songs, and even the British Royal Colonial Marines admitted that things looked bleak. On the night of January 1st, 1935, fifteen lights were spotted in the sky, lights which quickly resolved into large rocket ships bearing the Stars and Stripes. The 1st Martian Expeditionary Force had arrived, bringing two infantry divisions, a marine division, a company of Rocket Rangers, and a mixed armor and horse cavalry force under the command of General George S. Patton. The rocket ships carrying the infantry and marines landed behind the allied lines, disgorging fresh troops and needed supplies, while Patton's mixed cavalry force was deployed behind the Concordat forces and charged straight from their ships into the rear of the enemy forces, supported from the air by a detachment of Rocket Rangers under the command of Colonel Armstrong. McArthur then ordered a general advance from his positions, relying on his fresh troops



to form a spearhead and his exhausted Earthlings and Martians to hold their positions and get some rest. Caught between a rolling rock and an unmovable hard place, the Concordat forces were shattered in thirty-six hours of terrible fighting.

In the following three years, a similar process has played out. The US-held territories are attacked, or a Martian ally of the USA is attacked, overwhelming force is brought to bear, and the domain under American influence or direct rule is enlarged. The process is heavily supported by the military, but generally opposed by the diplomats of the State Department. This, combined with a conflict between the Roosevelt Administration which opposes military adventurism, and public opinion that supports it, have combined to produce an internal espionage war between the divergent factions of the US government on Mars. This war has not turned violent, and likely never will, but it has involved some fairly shady double dealing, thefts, and minor sabotage of each other's missions.

Leading this adventurism is a group of officers who have conspired to build an American Colonial Sphere on the Red Planet. Two generals, Douglas McArthur and George S. Patton, head this small cabal of staff officers. Although they have never disobeyed a direct order, they have been quite creative in their interpretation of their orders, going so far as to initiate conflicts in order to allow a pretense for invasion. After the Silmy Ridge incident that resulted in the conquest of Mircanok, both generals feared sanction and possible recall to Earth.

However, the fledgling administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt instead sent a congratulatory letter. Public opinion in Depression-rocked America is in favor of daring extra-planetary adventures, and the wealth generated by conquest and the subsequent 'appropriation' of Martian goods and resources has helped bolster the economy, allowing for the current economic boom. Furthermore, with Britain, France, and Germany all active on Mars, it impinges American pride to be a third rate power on the planet that Americans 'discovered'.

Lt. Kenneth N. Spencer, US 9th Cavalry

When the US 9th Cavalry, an all-black regiment, was transferred to Mars, it continued its sterling service record that had begun during the Indian Wars of the mid-Nineteenth Century. Losses have been high in the regiment, especially amongst the junior officers, many of whom were recent West Point graduates hoping to accumulate glory and honor with a well-known and respected unit. Needing



AUTHOR'S NOTE

Yes, the name of the 'personality' for American Mars should look familiar, since it is nearly the same name as the author. I have chosen to honor the memory of my grandfather and namesake, Kenneth Noel Spencer (1923-1976), by sending him to Mars, promoting him, transferring him, and making him a key figure. I have taken a small dramatic license by making him old enough to have served on Mars during the time of the Kalond Valley campaign, but only by a few years. He did serve in the cavalry until its disbanding in 1941, and then with the 993rd Heavy Ordnance through France, the Low Countries, and Germany during WWII. I have been told he never forgave the Army for taking away his horse, and thus after the war he declined a commission, was honorably discharged, and returned home to Indianapolis.

good junior officers, General Patton asked for volunteers from the white cavalry divisions (in the 1930s most of the Buffalo Soldiers' officers are white, a sign of the racial segregation of the US Army). One such volunteer was First Lieutenant Kenneth N. Spencer of the 2nd Cavalry.

Spencer had enlisted at the age of 18 in the 2nd Cavalry, and shortly afterwards was transferred with his unit to Mars as part of the First Martian Expeditionary Force. Having distinguished himself at Hasten Wells and during later actions, the young trooper had risen to sergeant in a span of months. Following the death of his troop's commanding officer, Spencer served as acting lieutenant for eight months before his promotion was made official. Shortly afterwards he took Patton up on his offer, and volunteered. As a young man from a working class family in a Northern State, Spencer approached his men with little in the way of active prejudice, and perhaps a lot less seeing as his family had been active abolitionists only a few generations ago.

As commanding officer of C Troop, US 9th Cavalry, Lt. Spencer has seen a great variety of action. He has participated in campaigns against the Homeland Defense Concordat, the Koleian League, and the Chanari tribes. Additionally, he has helped suppress anti-Earthling riots in the cities under American influence and administration, and has performed a variety of successful 'clandestine' missions for the general staff of the 1st MEF. Lt. Spencer can usually be found out on patrol at the head of his men, astride his horse 'Thunder', sitting high in the saddle, matching ivory handled RAY guns (a gift from Patton himself) and saber to hand.

PRINCIPALITIES IN THE US SPHERE

Haviling

This tiny city-state lost a good deal of its Maduri at Hasten Wells, and nearly all the rest in the weeks afterward. Seeing the writing on the wall, Prince Ghilasact promptly ordered his chariots readied, his armor polished, and rode out to surrender to the first Earthling he saw. Since then, his principality has suffered through a short occupation, a looting by Kostarstian forces, and then relative peace.

Not sitting on a strategic location, being far from the edges of the Kalond Valley and away from the current frontline of American and allied expansion, Haviling has been forgotten by the US Army.

31ST SEAL

To put it simply, most Martians are not happy with the arrival of the Earthlings and the subsequent conquests of Martian principalities. The general disordering of Martian society in the wake of these aliens' landing is also a grave concern amongst many Martians. There have been myriad responses to this ranging from crackdowns of dissidents to outright warfare against the Earthlings. Anti-Earthling violence is high in many areas, and appears to be rising, especially after every new atrocity committed by some of the Earthling governments.

Not every riot or protest is a natural response to Earthling activity; some are orchestrated by a shadowy group known as the 31st Seal. This terrorist organization aims to drive Earthlings off Mars using whatever means necessary, but most especially with violence. Although they are staunchly conservative Martians, the nature of their struggle has forced them to make a few concessions, such as permitting lower castes to carry arms and using Earthling weapons. To date they have claimed responsibility for several random attacks and bombings in the Kalond Canal Valley, all of which have targeted either Earthlings or Martian 'collaborators'.

However, it has been noticed by the State Department, and by sidling up to US diplomats and supporting them in their intrigues against the Army, Prince Ghilasact has managed to turn his small nation's fortunes around. In the process, Haviling has become a test bed for all manners of civilian cooperative ventures.

The craftsmen of the city have been turned to producing more handicrafts for the American market, the sub-castes in charge of resource reclamation have been turning out precious metals and rare Martian alloys for export, and even the farms have gotten in on the action, switching from their traditional crops to producing grains for conversion into the ethanol that runs the vehicles of the 1st MEF. In return not just money from American governmental agencies and merchants has come to Haviling, but so has assistance in the form of engineers, doctors, and other specialists.

True, the principality's previously traditional society has been somewhat disrupted, and the Orthodox Fellowship has been banned, but the benefits, at least as far as Prince Ghilasact is concerned, outweigh these niggling factors.



Kostrast

Prince Tyriolik of Kostrast has benefited the most from the expansion of American influence on Mars. Following the Silmy Ridge incident, he snatched up most of Mircanok territory, leaving only the capital to his American allies. His court has become inundated with Americans, most of whom he entertains with a regal affection. Generals, merchants, scientists, missionaries, and even wandering men and women of fortune have flocked to Kostrast, hoping to gain royal favor and patronage. A team of American engineers from Purdue University has even managed to get the capital's city's sewage system working again.

The prince is now wealthy beyond his ancestor's dreams, owns several luxury automobiles, has equipped all his legions with Earthling weapons (even one legion with RAY rifles), and spent part of his personal fortune to purchase custom-made armored cars for the Palatial Legion.

L'Tang

The latest addition to the American Martian territories, L'Tang is a prime example of the feud between the Army and State Department. Originally occupied by the 1st MEF two years ago, the State Department lobbied the President to be granted administrative authority over all US Martian holdings.

For the most part, the military has been more successful both in the field and in Washington, and although the President strongly supports the State Department, the military has the backing of the American people and of Congress. As a result, the President has set L'Tang as a test bed for a new American Martian administration.

The principality is governed, if that term actually applies in this case, by a committee formed by three State Department diplomats, three staff officers, and three (non-voting) Royal Caste Martians. This committee has spawned several working committees to see to various issues and projects. As would be expected, none of these sub-committees, nor the governing committee, manage to get anything accomplished.

The city only functions because of the Martian tendency to carry on in their traditional roles and tasks regardless of a lack of orders from authority, and the American tendency to simply ignore authority at every opportunity. Instead of creating a new system whereby American civilian and military authorities can work together for a better Mars and to the benefit of the USA, near anarchy has become the norm, but a functional anarchy nonetheless.

Mircanok

At one time a great power in the Kalond Valley, this once mighty principality has been reduced to just the one city, its former capital city of Mir. Even this is no longer under Martian rule, and has become the seat of the American Martian Territories. General McArthur is the governor of this city, and a joint Kostrastian-American bureaucracy manages affairs. In the years immediately following the storming of Hasten Wells, the city had the appearance of an armed camp, with severe limits on the rights of the native Martians.

Despite the regime change, the lower castes seemed content to serve the new ruler, this being the norm when one prince conquers the city of another, and the curfews and random searches have since ceased. A sizeable number have even converted to Earthling religions, though how much of this is the normal tendency of obedience found in the lower castes and how much is heartfelt belief remains yet to be determined by anthropologists.

Mircanok is being remodeled into a perfect example of Martian-Earthling cooperation; at least as far as the US Army general staff sees it. Failed Ancient Martian machines have been either repaired or replaced with Earthling designs, laws that limited the actions of the castes have been discarded (though the lower castes continue to behave as they always have), and slavery has been abolished (though the slaves now work for the same masters but with 'pay' and 'rights'). These changes have generated some confusion and discord, but for the most part the Martian residents of the city are willing to humor their new 'prince'.

THE CAMPS OF THE WARLORDS

The area to the west of the Soviet Client states is a semi-arid rocky highland served by a few fading canals and the occasional oasis formed above an ancient ice pocket. This land was once the home to the Red-Blue Stigia Bird tribe of Chanari, but they have been slaughtered or driven out of their homeland by the encroaching hordes of warrior caste-led refugees from the principalities that now make up the Soviet Client States. Now the land is dominated by warring factions led by the Warlords, the new 'Princes of the Desert'.

The great exodus into the wastes was led by a handful of high-ranking Maduri, the equivalent of senior non-commissioned officers in Earthling militaries. Across the G'Hascar Triangle, over half of the legions either joined

the rebellion or remained in their barracks during the fight. The remaining soldiers were unable to withstand the combined attacks of their fellows and the savage uprising of the Soviet-backed lower castes. The presence of Soviet 'observers' and their modern Earthling weapons ensured the destruction of the loyalist forces.

Following the revolutions, the rebellious Maduri faced a difficult decision. They either had to join the new political and social systems, and thus give up many of the privileges that the old caste systems awarded them, or flee into the desert. Of those who chose the latter, five stand out as the most successful:

- Tal-Matuth was the first to lead a rag tag band of Maduri and lower castes out into the deserts of the Western Highlands.
- Close on his heels was the previously pro-Soviet 15th Madrakin Legion which, once out of sight of its Soviet masters, mutinied and killed its Earthling commissars before declaring its Supreme Commander, Jisiliasc, to be the High Prince of Mars.
- In a daring midnight raid, the 1st Sacred Legion under a former kantilat (corporal), the Maduri Hyscanthock, rescued several imprisoned Kastari and fled into the Western Highlands.
- Led by a popular centanat (sergeant), Laskat, over three thousand Maduri legionnaires of Uvalon chose to ignore their orders and refused to fire on their fellow citizens. Instead, they looted the city's armories and storehouses, stole several silt skimmers, and took off across the Great Silt Sea, establishing themselves as the premier pirate band in the Southern Reaches.
- Finally, one of the attempted rebellions succeeded only in placing a coalition of Maduri in charge. This junta, the first of its kind on Mars, managed to hang on to the city of Hakalon for three months before the People's Revolutionary League managed to take the city by combined assault from the outside and fifth columnists from within. The survivors have joined with other dispossessed Maduri, and pose a threat to all who travel in the Jade Triangle.

THE CAMPS OF THE WARLORDS

Theme: Rebels or Bandits, You Decide.

Complication: Where is Their Allegiance and What are Their Agendas?

Personality: Hantha, A Former Jalandri Concubine.

CAMPS OF THE WARLORDS STORY HOOKS

- Through a broker, the player characters are offered a job smuggling weapons into one of the warlord camps. It is good money, but the legal and ethical dilemma might be an issue.
- Jisiliasc is offering huge bounties to any Earthlings who will come to his mountain fortress and train his people in the use of modern weapons, and one of the player characters has been contacted by his nation's government to accept the offer and operate as a spy in the High Prince's Camp.
- The Red Corsairs have captured several Earthling diplomats, and are holding them for ransom. The party has been asked to go in and free the hostages.

After the Ebb Revolutions, that shook the principalities of the Jade Triangle, not every newly liberated low caste Martian wanted to live under the governance of the newly formed Commissions for Public Safety. Others rejected the idea that the Ancient Martian religion should be cast aside in favor of devotion to a philosophy that originated on a distant world. For these craftsman, merchants, and slaves it was safest to travel with one of the rogue legions, even if that meant travelling into the dangerous and unknown deserts.

This has resulted in a distinct mixture of castes amongst the rogues, a mixture that has increased in the past year as runaway slaves, dissatisfied Chanari, and even dissidents from 'stable' principalities have joined the Warlords. For the first time in millennia, new ideas, new ways of organizing society, and even cross-caste marriages are possible, and are being explored by the rogue legions and their masters. Each of the rogue legions approaches the challenges of independence (at least for the leaders) and the struggle to survive outside the rigid, but safe, confines of Martian principalities in different manners. Some have taken to banditry, others have set themselves up as the rulers of new nations, or even claim to be the rightful rulers of the entire Planet.



The Domain of Warlord Tal-Matuth

There are those who join a revolution out of fear and those that join because they are so oppressed that there is no other viable option. Others are true believers in the cause, ideologues for whom the revolution is the start of a new order, the screaming birth of a utopia. Finally there are those who participate in disrupting the current order only to make themselves wealthier and more powerful. Tal-Matuth is one of the latter, and his involvement in the Ebb Revolution served only to make him a new kind of prince.

One of the earliest conspirators amongst the Maduri of the principality of Madra, Tal-Matuth fought bravely, leading his fellow Maduri in maddened charges against the loyalist legions, cutting a path through them into the palace and slaying his prince with his own hands. The Soviet 'advisers' lauded Tal-Matuth as an example of the new Mars, and a paragon of revolutionary fervor. However, treachery had been sown in the hearts of the Maduri of the 35th Royal Hussars of Madra, and especially in the heart of Tal-Matuth. A second revolution swept through the capital city of Madrak, and the 35th turned their Earthling guns on the revolutionaries, cutting a bloody swath through the city and out into the scrub desert of the Western Highlands.

The GreenYellow Vulture Lion tribe of the Chanari was undergoing their annual Ebb season migration when they came across Tal-Matuth and his mixed multitude of Maduri legionnaires and refugees. The mounted warriors of the Chanari thundered out to drive off the interlopers, but were met by disciplined movement and fire tactics combined with advanced Earthling weapons looted from the Soviets. Tal-Matuth's forces stopped the attacking Chanari nomads cold then counterattacked swiftly, killing or capturing the entire tribe. As a magnanimous leader, Tal-Matuth divided up the spoils of victory amongst his followers, providing not just food and water, but precious treasures, weapons, and slaves. This division of spoils was not restricted to Tal-Matuth's fellow Maduri, even the lowliest of slaves being allowed to participate. His followers' loyalty cemented by this act, Tal-Matuth moved further west until he found a sizeable oasis in a hidden canyon.

From this base, Tal-Matuth has set himself up as a warlord; master of as large an area as his legionnaires can patrol. Captured Chanari labor in fields under the direction of Madra's former slaves, craftsmen have established their own shops and are free to innovate (though few actually do), and even the priesthood is present in small numbers (though they must be wary of preaching sermons that run counter to Tal-Matuth's policies). Wealth comes into the

Warlord's domain through raids against the Soviet Client States and Chanari tribes, and through extorting tolls from any who attempt to pass through the area. Rumors abound that one or more Earthling governments are also supporting Tal-Matuth, as his continued presence and activities are a thorn in the Soviets' side.

The Soviets are not Tal-Matuth's only problems. Relations between himself and his rival warlords, Saint Hyscanthock's Crusade, and the High Prince of Mars Jisiliasc, are far from cordial. Conflict between the great warlords looks imminent.

The Realm of the High Prince of Mars

When Tal-Matuth fought his way out of the city of Madrak and into the Western Highlands, the Soviets sent one of their most loyal Maduri legions after him, the 15th Madrakin Legion under the command of Jisiliasc. With a cadre of Soviet military and political advisors, as well as modern weaponry, it was thought that the Martians could easily find and defeat a rag-tag band hampered by refugees and traversing a brutal, unfriendly countryside. They even dispatched two Polikarpov Po-2 biplanes to assist in the search. Several ulodonts laden with extra fuel and spare parts, as well as the mechanics and pilots, accompanied the expedition.

Three days out of Madrak, the Soviet advisors and commissars were murdered in their tents, and the remaining Earthlings were rounded up and offered a choice: assist the 15th in their bid for freedom, or be left to die in the desert. The mechanics and pilots agreed to desert, as did the few remaining Soviet soldiers who had been assigned to guard the officers and commissars. However, the first flight of the rebel 15th's air wing was a disaster – the pilot flew back to Madrak with the news of the insurrection.

A second legion was dispatched, this time the 1st Madrakan People's Revolutionary Brigade, under strict Soviet command. This column met up with the 15th at Kyban Pass. The two legions were soon joined in battle, and the training and discipline of the Maduri won the day. The 1st Madrakan was destroyed, its supplies of Earthling weapons and ammunition falling into the hands of the victorious 15th.

The next day, flush with victory and at the head of a large and well-armed force, the Maduri commander of the 15th was raised by his own men and declared the High Prince of Mars, Ruler of the Castes, and the Promised One Returned. Taking a broken sickle as his personal emblem, Jisiliasc



pressed deeper into the Western Highlands until he found a safe place to establish a base of operations. From there he began his campaign to conquer all of Mars, both those areas controlled by the princes, and those dominated by the Earthling colonial powers.

Jisiliasc is no fool, and realized that a desert mountain fastness was a safe place to hide, but not a good position to begin a campaign of world domination. He needed members of the other castes to perform those duties that his men were unable to, supplies to keep everyone alive in the harsh environment of the Western Highlands, money and agents to foment rebellion in nearby principalities, and most importantly, Earthling arms and the training to use them.

He sent out his few trusted agents to principalities throughout the southern hemisphere to seek aid from wherever they could. They found it, and in buckets. Many Earthling and Martian governments want to cause trouble for the Soviet Client States, disrupt the flow of commerce throughout the region, and combat the other rogue warlords taking refuge in the Western Highlands. The 15th and their High Prince are now well supplied and armed with weapons of American, British, French, German, Japanese, and Soviet make. Their air corps now numbers six antiquated biplanes, poorly suited to modern air combat on Earth, but more than enough to turn the tide of a Martian battle. Jisiliasc's camp at Shining Waters is often seen as the center of intrigue for the Southern Hemisphere, as the various nations vie for the attention of the High Prince and his followers, offering all manner of inducements to wage war on rogue legions, Chanari tribes, and the Soviet Client States. Though swollen in numbers and well equipped for war, the 15th has not moved in the past nine months. It just sits and gathers its strength, like a great coiled serpent of steel. The question on everyone's lips is, "When and where will it strike?"

Hantha, Former Julandri Concubine

Before the coming of the Ebb Revolution, Hantha was a Julandri slave concubine to the late prince of Madra. As such she lived in luxury, having the finest clothes, the rarest jewels, and doting servants to wait on her day and night. It would have been the pinnacle of her career as a favored service slave, had it not been for the prince – a savage and brutal beast that often maimed and injured his concubines. Not only was he a brute, but the prince was also ill-educated and could not appreciate the finer points of the concubines' skills, such as intelligent conversation or the arts. When the first glimmers of the revolution began to be whispered about, Hantha recklessly joined it,

seeing in the Soviet's promises the chance to free her of the prince. Instead, she became something more than a royal concubine.

It was Hantha who let Tal-Mathuth and his Maduri in through a secret passage under the palace, allowing the battle-maddened Maduri to break the loyalist forces and kill the principality's Silthuri elites. After the revolution, the two became close, with Hantha advising Tal-Matuth on the more delicate parts of diplomacy and leadership. When the 35th Royal Hussars of Madra fought their way out of the city and took to the deserts, Hantha accompanied them, by that point not just the brains behind Tal-Matuth's brawn, but his lover as well.

Hantha sees herself as the power behind the throne of the Warlord Tal-Matuth, a role she relishes. Her Maduri lover may be as brutish as her former prince, but he is a much kinder lover and much easier to manipulate. It was her idea to divide the loot from the destruction of the Green-Yellow Vulture Lion tribe, and to spread the wealth of their victory to all of the rebels. Likewise, it was she who opened negotiations with Earthling governments in order to secure supplies and weapons. How long she can keep juggling the various factions within her lover's own camp, much less the ones outside it, remains to be seen. What is certain is that Hantha has learned her first lesson in freedom: survive, no matter what or who gets in the way.

FRENCH MARS

The French have not been as active on Mars as the other Great Powers, but they have managed to establish a small sphere of influence. Most of French Mars is not directly governed by the French Republic, but is instead controlled through mercantile and diplomatic means. Only one sizeable garrison of French troops is present on Mars, the Légion Martien, though the various trade and ambassadorial missions each has a small detail of French Marines stationed with them.

FRENCH MARS

Theme: A small number of Martian city-states under French economic domination.

Complication: Rife with German, Italian, and Soviet agents.

Personality: Francois Le Sage.

FRENCH MARS STORY HOOKS

- The French government suspects that the Lincoln Brigade or Soviet agents are riling up the lower castes in Kolpith, and want the player characters to go undercover and investigate.
- A large shipment of supplies from Kolpith City to one of the outlying cities in the principality has gone missing, and the player characters are hired to track it down and either recover it, or destroy it to keep it out of the hands of rebels, Chanari, or other dangerous factions.
- Francois Le Sage is trying to repair an Ancient machine, but part of it lies in the heart of a large underground complex beneath Kolpith city. Someone needs to go down first, locate the machine within the complex, and negate any dangers left behind by the Ancient Martians.

The majority of French interests on Mars are located near the Italian and German spheres, though they have recently fostered contacts in several principalities near the Soviet Client States. The French approach to reaping the riches of Mars can be seen as taking two forms, the promise of military aid in case of attack, and trading Earthling technology and technological knowledge in return for Martian treasures. Only once has France had to back up its military alliances with actual force, leading to the 1e Légion Martien's victorious campaign against the principality of Kolpith and the subsequent occupation of Kolpith and its four cities.

Kolpith

Long a rival of the principality of Harkanith, Kolpith is a sprawling nation in the Western Highlands whose four cities sit nestled in the rocky cliffs of those imposing mountains. For centuries, Kolpith and Harkanith have been at war, with neither side able to secure a final victory. Kolpith considered itself unassailable as the harsh terrain of the Western Highlands favored the defender, and the legions of Kolpith were more than capable of fighting a war of attrition. However, when Kolpith descended onto the plains to take the battle to Harkanith, the latter's greater numbers and better resources led to the defeat and flight of the Kolpith legions.

All this changed when the prince of Harkanith decided to accept French offers of allegiance in exchange for open trade between the two nations. Hearing of the alliance, the

prince of Kolpith ordered his legions to swarm out of the mountains and attack Harkanith, hoping to punish his rival for forming an alliance with off-world barbarians. Instead of the usual set piece battle with Harkanith's legions, an acceptable amount of loss in exchange for a little pillaging, and then an orderly retreat back into the mountains to await the inevitable counter attack, the prince of Kolpith saw his Maduri slaughtered and driven from the field. French airplanes and tanks harried the legions in their flight, and a rapid movement of French troops by truck managed to cut off the legions of Kolpith from the safety of the Highlands.

The follow up campaign saw the legions of Harkanith, now armed with Earthling weapons, march into the mountains to root out any remaining Kolpith resistance. Overhead, French airplanes and rocket ships scoured the passes and crags of any fortifications. Those they did find were easily dispatched with Earthling artillery and explosives. Within five months the entire principality was in French-Harkanith hands, and all of the ruling Silthuri sub-caste had been captured and executed.

In the three years since the fall of the old regime, Kolpith has passed from joint Martian-Earthling rule to be solely in the hands of the French. The prince of Harkanith proved to have little interest in governing his ancestral foe, instead preferring to take whatever loot struck his or his family's fancy and going home. This left the French commander of the 1e Légion Martien, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles De Gaulle, as the only authority in the principality with any interest in seeing it managed in any manner. This he has done, first on his own authority and then after being appointed the military governor by the French government. De Gaulle's rule has been fairly effective; he has allowed most of the native bureaucracy to remain, governing through a mix of Silthuri and French administrators. French engineers have been able to repair and even improve some of the Ancient Martian machinery, giving Kolpith's four cities electricity and running water, as well as extending the utility infrastructure to a handful of outlying settlements. Even the long abandoned radium mines of the principality have resumed production.

Francois Le Sage, French Academic

Le Sage is one of the preeminent experts on Ancient Martian machinery, and his services are much sought after by Martian princes hoping to return basic utilities to their cities. Unfortunately for much of Mars, he works solely for the French government, limiting his work to those principalities that are willing to accept France's terms.

These terms are generally very high, but for most princes of Mars, the price is small compared to the benefits that a visit from Le Sage can bring.

For all his fame, Le Sage is a modest man, preferring to roll up his sleeves and get to work than spend his time being fêted or, worst of all, having to explain his techniques to ignorant officials. Despite his loyalty to the French government, this small, unassuming man will not take every assignment that is offered to him. He has to be guaranteed a great deal of autonomy in how he conducts his business, promised to be able to hand-pick his team, and be allowed to work at his own pace and in his own way. However, he is the person who got the radium mines of Kolpith back in operation, as well as having re-established the city services to over twenty principalities, all of which now firmly fall within the 'soft power' sphere of French influence.

ITALIAN MARS

ITALIAN MARS

Theme: Brutal Mismanagement and Rapacious Looting

Complication: Growing Discontent Amongst the Natives

Personality: Yatlik, Pilthuri Caste Revolutionary

With the aid of its German allies, the fascist government of Italy has managed to secure for itself a small territory on the Red Planet. Adjacent to Nazi Occupied Mars, the Italians control three medium-sized city-states and the surrounding canal lands. Like the areas under Nazi domination, Italian Mars has been thoroughly looted, though not with the same brutal efficiency, nor with the same success, as Italy's ally has managed. The natives are far more restive than they are under other Earthling occupations, and it is only a matter of time before Hitler tires of sending war walkers across the border and into Italian Mars to help Mussolini put down another native revolt.

Nuova Roma

The capital of Italian Mars, Nuova Roma is meant to be a model of Italy's new colonial presence throughout the Solar System. Formerly the Martian Principality of Jailkarv, after conquest by units of the Mars de la Force Expéditionnaire. Spearheaded by the famed Italian 1st Armored Brigade equipped with its new Carro Veloce CV-35 tankettes, which though inadequate by current tank designs, were

fully capable of driving the Maduri legions back into the city. The fighting that took the city was devastating, and the Italian soldiers of the 2nd Blackshirt Division 28 Ottobre did not differentiate between the warrior Maduri and the non-combatant castes. Jailkarv fell after three weeks of intense street fighting that left seventy percent of the Martian population dead, and numerous wounded.

ITALIAN MARS STORY HOOKS

- Another uprising in C'thalgran has trapped a British diplomat and his family in the city. The player characters are asked to fight their way through the rioting anti-Earthling hordes and rescue them.
- A delegation of Kastari approaches the party and offers them riches if they can locate and return an important artifact looted from Jailkarv. They believe that it is still on Mars, and helping them would yield more than gold and jewels: it would open doors amongst the traditional Martians and independent principalities.
- While travelling through Italian Mars, the player characters witness a group of mixed caste Martian prisoners being unloaded from a truck and lined up on the edge of an open pit. German and Italian soldiers are guarding these Martians, and a heavy machine gun is being set up facing the prisoners. Do the player characters stop this massacre, or do they stand and watch in horror?

The entire Royal and Priestly castes were wiped out, as were the Maduri. The remaining lower castes found themselves herded into containment camps outside the city while their conquerors spent a month looting and burning. In the end, the Martian character of Jailkarv was wiped out.

Afterwards, the diplomats and bureaucrats of the Italian government moved in to finish what their soldiers had started. What few Martians remained in the city-state were relegated to life as slaves and servants of the incoming Italian merchants and settlers. Farms were turned over to prominent Italians who then rented or sold them to others who would make the long journey from Earth in order to grow food for the Italian occupation forces, using slave Martian labor (and not all these slaves were of the slave caste). In the city itself, factories were retooled to produce goods for Earthling use, as well as cheap knockoffs of Martian handicrafts. As with the agricultural endeavors, these are run by Italians using Martian labor.



Finally, the principality was renamed Nuova Roma, the decorations were defaced (actually removed and sold on Earth at private auction) to be replaced by pro-fascist images. Even the streets were renamed in Italian to celebrate heroes of the regime. Finally, the temples were torn down (and the valuables removed), to be replaced by Catholic churches, including a grand cathedral that is still under construction. Worship of the Ancient Martian religions are forbidden under penalty of death, as is a whole list of crimes too numerous to be mentioned.

Yatlik, Pilthuri Caste Revolutionary

Once, Yatlik saw himself as a brave hero, an actual adventurer like out of the old tales of the days of the Ancients. He had wandered across much of the area around Jaiikarv, ever in search of trades to make in the name of his prince. He was so good at his job that he was allowed great leeway and autonomy, even to the point where he was permitted to spend weeks or months at time away from his home principality. Yatlik lived well, showered with gifts by a grateful prince, yet despite the pleasures of his palatial residence, the Pilthuri's greatest joy was to ride off on his Bahmoot on some errand or mission.

Then the Italians came, and all was ruined. The prince he had served all his life was dead, the caste system abolished and replaced by a simple order, Italians at the top and all Martians below. Even the temples were torn down and Yatlik was forced to worship the Three Pronged Ancestor God and his Living Prince on Earth, or some such nonsense. Soon, the far wandering merchant found himself laboring in the fields like a common Julandri brute, the sun that once blessed his journeys now beating on his back, the soil staining his once majestic robes a dusty red. Something had to be done, and done soon, or all of Jaiikarv would be destroyed, replaced by the Italians and their 'Nuova Roma'.

When word of a revolt spread through the ranks of the field slaves, Yatlik urged his fellows to caution, the Maduri who were organizing it were far too brash and much too set in their ways. When the revolt came, it was crushed with horrible force, the revolutionaries had even gone so far as to form up in orderly ranks like this was some kind of ritual battle between princes, and not a struggle for the very fate of the principality. Yatlik decided that the next revolution would not suffer the same fate, and now works as the spider at the center of a great web of deceit. Soon, the first blows will be struck, small ones to begin with, merely simple acts of sabotage and passive resistance, but later the principality will run red with Earthling blood.

THE FREEBOOTER STATES

Six principalities scattered across the face of Mars, all backward minor states considered weak and insignificant by their neighbors, have fallen to non-Martian freebooters. Emancipation was supposed to be a beacon of freedom and hope, and an end to slavery on Mars, but democracy's roots are weak in soil polluted by greed and racism. In Herscal, a bizarre local law has placed a Venusian on the throne, but this giant struggles with the conflict between his communal culture and the stratified ways of his subjects. The situation is different in J'lkarinie, where an Earthling swordsman managed to defeat the former prince in an honest duel and thus claim the throne. The new alien prince's rule is propped up by his unwavering support of the *status quo*. New Jerusalem, formerly Sacaranon, was supposed to be a paradise on Mars brought about by an Earthling-Martian religious cult, but has instead become a chaotic anarchy as sectarian violence rips through its streets. Yet in Polintal, a fairy tale is coming true, as the ruling Princess has married the British Freebooter that saved her principality. By all accounts, the wed couple have the full blessings of the priests and people of their city-state. Finally, in Sagraan, a new class of freebooter has arrived, this time a displaced Martian princess who has taken the lessons of the Earthling conquerors to heart, and won her own city-state through bloody conquest.

THE FREEBOOTER STATES

Theme: Martian Principalities Now Under the Rule (or Misrule) of Aliens.

Complication: Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss.

Personality: Ophali'kilf, Venusian Martian Prince.

Emancipation (Yatharith)

This small principality was overthrown two years ago by a group of American freebooters calling themselves the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. A branch of the famed brigade under the same name that so recently fought on the side of the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade on Mars is a military unit of volunteers, mostly from the United States, that is dedicated to spreading freedom and democracy throughout the Solar System. Three years ago, agents of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade began infiltrating various Martian principalities looking for the perfect opportunity to overthrow the existing oppressive government in one of these and induct a new beginning for the Martian people.

FREEBOOTER STATES STORY HOOKS

- Kastari agents are fomenting rebellion in Emancipation, and the Lincoln Brigade needs to hire specialists to root out them out.
- No one knows what is going on inside New Jerusalem, and the US Military has hired the player characters to infiltrate the city and the 'cult' that rules it to gather what intelligence they can.
- The party hears about a plot to assassinate Prince Ophali'kilf, the Venusian Prince of Mars. Currently he is on a hunting trip, and the heroes must find him and either warn him or stop the assassins before it is too late.

They found that opportunity in the city-state of Yatharith. Here the Silthuri were losing control, the ruling sub-caste was so severely inbred that it produced nothing more than a line of madmen and the Kastari sect that dominated local religion was a fringe order that had lost its hold on the people. Even the Maduri were restless, though in the end they remained loyal to their insane prince. Most importantly, Yatharith had no allies and could be easily cut off from the rest of Mars. Agents of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade began fanning the fires of discontent amongst the lower castes, especially amongst the slaves. Soon a small cadre of Martians were trained in the weapons and tactics needed to gain their freedom.

The groundwork was completed on schedule and in good order, and on February 22nd, 1938, the uprising began. Earthling-led bands of saboteurs, assassins, and freedom fighters – though many Martian princes would call them terrorists – struck throughout the city. Meanwhile, the rest of the brigade began landing in rocket ships or assaulting the city walls from hiding places in the canal lands. After three weeks of fierce fighting, the Maduri were all slaughtered and the royal palace had been stormed. In an act of desperation, the last prince of Yatharith, Gley XXX, attempted to detonate an Ancient Martian device under the city. Three heroes of the Brigade stopped him, but in the struggle the despot was 'accidentally' knocked off a high balcony and plummeted to his death.

Shortly after the revolution, the city-state was renamed Emancipation and the process of ending millennia of oppression began. Those natives who did not take part in the uprising were understandably worried, but the loss of their insane ruler meant that conditions inside the city could be improved. In three months, many of the long dormant

and neglected machines that once provided services to the city were repaired and brought back to operational levels, giving the residents of Emancipation running water, sewage, and electricity for the first time in living memory. After a short span of rule by the Brigade, elections were held and a governing council that represents all the castes was put in power.

With modern conveniences, Earthling medical and military technology, and a well-armed body of 'mercenaries' on hand, Emancipation looks to have a bright future. However, discontent lurks beneath the surface and the caste system, although officially banned, still rears its ugly head. Craftsmen do not like to take orders from former slaves, especially since all of the ex-slaves who have managed to get themselves elected to public office come from the courtesan sub-caste. Missionaries from various Kastari sects have infiltrated Emancipation, and secretly preach that doom and damnation will be the rewards for defying the natural order of things. Finally, blight has struck the principality's fields, causing food to be rationed, and the soldiers of both the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and the Free Legion receive a greater share than the other citizens.

Herscal

Not all the freebooters are human, and it is not unusual to find rogue Martians, Venusians on their *Harvitor*, or even the rare Ganymedian amongst freebooting bands. What is unusual, indeed unique, is that one of these non-human freebooters has managed to set himself up as the prince of a Martian city-state. Five months ago a group of freebooters calling themselves the Sons of Sol rolled into Herscal looking for trouble. They managed to charm their way into the palace and entered the service of Prince Falkirth. The prince desired to have his own group of off-worlders as servants and agents, people of unusual means and abilities who can be used against his enemies in the city-state as well as the principality's stronger and more ambitious neighbors. The Sons of Sol had other ideas, and after a few weeks of getting the lay of the land turned the tables on the prince and took over in a bloody coup.

Herscal was never a strong principality, and its Maduri legion consisted entirely of the palace guard. It was short work for the Sons of Sol to overwhelm the Maduri and take the entire ruling sub-caste hostage. Using their leverage, they then systematically looted the principality, amassing a large pile of gems, jewelry, and other precious objects. For two months the Sons of Sol lived it up in the palace, while the populace of Herscal stood mute and powerless. During one of the freebooters' revels the prince was killed, initiating a bloodbath that left most of the Silthuri dead, and the rest in flight.



What followed was a drunken orgy of violence directed against the Martians that threatened to start an all-out riot among the lower castes. Order came with the arrival of a lone Venusian, Ophali'kilf. This young man was out on his *Harvitor*, having left his home world in the company of a group of American and British explorers. Having parted ways with his former companions, Ophali'kilf took to wandering the surface of Mars in search of a ship that would take him home. Seeing the mess that the Sons of Sol had made of Herscal, the Venusian warrior publicly challenged the Sons in the city's central plaza. To the cheers of the Martians, Ophali'kilf dispatched the remaining Sons, making good use of a RAY SMG gun he had acquired on his journeys.

The grateful people of Herscal lacked a ruling caste, and the Kastari of the city searched the archives for a solution. A little known prophecy was conveniently found that proclaimed that a strange hairy one from the stars would come to lead the city out of darkness. They crowned Ophali'kilf the new prince and the people of Herscal hoped to return to their normal lives of placid service.

Sadly, the concept of being a monarch, much less an absolute one, is alien to Venusians, and Ophali'kilf has become a strange prince of Mars. His court is more like a gathering of equals, and he has elevated members of the lower castes to fill high positions in the government. He talks to his subjects instead of commanding them. He listens to advice, and seeks to reach a consensus amongst his advisors. Ophali'kilf has even gone so far as to redistribute the wealth of the palace amongst his people, an unheard of thing on Mars. The Kastari are still backing

him – after all, they engineered a prophecy to put him on the throne and seem to have some sway over the young Venusian's decision-making process. Still, the question remains as to how long this odd prince can rule before the natural order of Mars reasserts itself.

Ophali'kilf, Venusian Martian Prince

Ophali'kilf is a Venusian entering the prime of his life, the wandering days of his *Harvitor* well behind him. He stands as tall as the tallest Maduri or Silthuri, topping out at two-and-a-half meters in height and weighing nearly two hundred kilograms, most of which is muscle. His fur is dark grey with black tiger stripes, though the hair on his back, neck, and shoulders is starting to turn silvery grey at the tips. Ophali'kilf is an impressive figure who projects strength and majesty, as well as a deep sensitive nature, with his very presence. However, he is a troubled and unhappy man, cut off from his own people and forced by honor and happenstance to try and 'redeem' aliens whose very natures are opposed to his own. In short, Ophali'kilf does not want to be a prince, but feels it is his obligation.

Part of his discomfort comes from the actions and lifestyle that his subjects expect from him. Ophali'kilf spent enough years of his youth wandering with Earthlings and other species to know that they put a greater emphasis on appearance than his own people do. If he wants to govern well and turn these poor Martians away from their self-destructive caste system, to free them and teach them to live together as one tribe, he must appear as a prince to them. However, he detests the need for pomp and ceremony, but most especially the wealth that he has inherited from the previous rulers, as well as that which



his loyal subjects heap on him every month as part of their 'taxes'. Quite honestly, the rich robes and other clothing of state itch, especially if he has to stand under the Martian sun for any length of time. His harem concubines are scrawny, pale, hairless, and wholly un-Venusian, and Ophali'kilf has not touched them or looked at them since they were introduced to him at the beginning of his reign.

His subjects' unwillingness to change, despite their blatant fawning and sycophantic behavior in all other matters, is a source of great frustration. Often Ophali'kilf feels like his advisors treat him like a child, conceding to his wishes just enough to make him content, but not really following his dictates any more than they have to. The whole thing is enough to drive any Venusian insane, and the only release that Ophali'kilf can find is to go out in the desert on hunting trips. Of late, his hunting trips have grown longer and longer, leading to a certain dissatisfaction in some quarters of his principality, dissatisfaction which could evolve into a secret unrest.

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S MARTIAN DOMINIONS

Great Britain has taken a mixed approach in the acquisition and governing of its Martian domains. Direct conquest has been used, especially following the Battle of Hasten Wells and Britain's alliance (at least on Mars) with the United States. Diplomatic and economic ties to Martian principalities have taken the front seat in recent years, but the spirit of Empire remains strong, and in fact has been reinvigorated by success on Mars. Many, especially in the media and in official propaganda, see Mars as the new India, an exotic land of opportunity and riches just waiting to be plucked and added to the crown. That India and other terrestrial colonies and holdings of the British Empire have been in decline or verging on open revolt in the past decade has only spurred interest in Mars.

Nearly twenty-nine principalities can be said to fall within the British sphere of influence; nine of them direct Dominions of the Crown, and the remainder allies to varying degree. Political and military alliances are common, especially with those principalities that lie on the edge of other Earthling nation's domains, but economic alliances are Britain's primary means of maintaining control or exerting influence.

Detractors denounce this system of economic alliances as acceptance of slavery, particularly of the ruling Silthuri Caste. Nevertheless, the British government seems to best understand what entitled and entrenched aristocracies

desire, and is willing to see that those desires are met. In most cases, this consists of Earthling technological wonders, and the production of high-end goods and services for shipment to Mars has revitalized Britain's economy.

The wealth of Mars is flowing to Earth, and in return cars, rifles, record players, radios, and other gadgets are flowing to Mars. In the British sphere of influence, most of the princes are so busy jockeying for position amongst themselves with the conspicuous consumption of Earthling goods that they have hardly noticed that their palaces are getting thin on gold, jewels, and precious metals. Indeed, two of the King's allies, the princes of Vantan and Deserilkat have driven themselves deep into debt with the British crown in return for loans that have subsequently been used to purchase fleets of Rolls Royce automobiles and British Aircraft Company Planettes, a type of powered glider no longer in vogue on Earth.

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S MARTIAN DOMINIONS

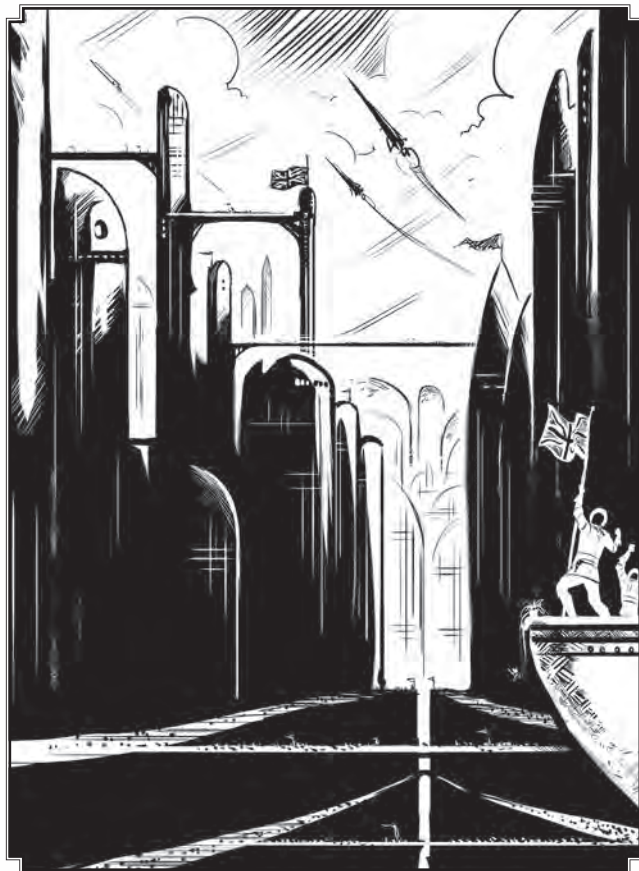
Theme: Britain's New Empire on Mars

Complication: Bureaucratic Mismanagement, Overt Racism, and Mild Corruption, Same as on Earth.

Personality: Sir Daniel Edmund Pelham-Kole, British Diplomat.

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S MARTIAN DOMINIONS STORY HOOKS

- A shipment of valuable luxury goods, including several Rolls-Royce Phantom IIs, is due to be delivered to a principality that the British wish to add to its growing sphere of influence. The player characters are hired to either guard the caravan as it makes its way across Mars, or stop it from reaching its destination.
- A little spying between allies is not unheard of, and the player characters are hired by either the Americans or British to do a little light reconnaissance of the other's territories.
- Chanari raids have increased in Ventalika, and the British Foreign Office is looking for experienced trouble-shooters to discover the cause (German agents have been arming and paying the Chanari).



Fathire

Not all principalities fall to the sword; Fathire fell to the pen, or more accurately, the ledger. One of the earliest British trading partners on Mars, the principality is rich in gold, iron, and copper. Most of the ore has already been extracted, but the capital city's recycling machinery does a superb job of turning scrap into useable ingots. This machinery is of Ancient Martian design, and requires periodic and expensive maintenance. It is the cost of keeping the machinery running that first drove Prince Fathin CVI to turn to the British. At first all he wanted was a small loan so that he could pay some strange Frenchmen who was said to be able to repair anything that the Ancients ever made. Next, it was a few thousand more pounds to cover some needed upgrades to the palace, a few cars, and an airplane for the principality's legions. Before he knew it, Prince Fathin CVI was deep in debt to British banks, and thus to the Crown and its desires.

Opalar

During the march south down the Kalond Canal Valley, one of the fiercest pockets of resistance was the Opalan Heights in the middle of the principality of Opalar. The Heights were formed by volcanic activity, producing a

snaking jumble of valleys and sharp edged hills, all covered with obsidian and other metamorphic rocks. No water can be found in the Heights, save at the location of the city of Opal, the capital of the principality. Conventional wisdom on Mars was that the city could not be assaulted; the losses in merely reaching its walls would be too high.

Conventional Martian wisdom never did take into account Earthling technology or ingenuity. Tracked vehicles were able to roar down the valleys, ignoring the arrows flung from Maduri on the ridges. The effects of artillery shells exploding amongst fields of volcanic glass or bursting above jagged edged lava formations were devastating. The defending legions had nowhere to hide, no safe place from which to harry the advancing foe, and in the end were wiped out. So confident was the prince of Opalar that he committed all his legions, save a small personal bodyguard, to the defense of the Opalan Heights. In short order the city fell, and with it the entire principality. Since its conquest, Opalar has tried to be a restive and rebellious principality, but its heart doesn't really seem to be in it. Likewise, the hand of the British governor has been light, ruling through a combination of good British officials and local Silthuri bureaucracies. Day-to-day life is much as it was before the conquest; save that a different flag flies over the cities of Opalar, and the ruling prince is on another planet millions of kilometers away.

Sir Daniel Edmund Pelham-Kole, British Diplomat

Much of the success of the British efforts on Mars must be attributed to one man, Sir Daniel Edmund Pelham-Kole. This noted diplomat has been the architect behind nearly every treaty that the Crown has signed with a Martian ruler, and has advised the War Ministry in all of its campaigns following the Battle of Hasten Wells. A shrewd man, Sir Pelham-Kole is also jovial, convivial, and an all-around great companion. In addition to brokering the many deals that have allowed Britain to build a Martian wing onto its Empire, he has also introduced polo and cricket to Mars, setting up leagues through which the teams of various allied principalities can compete. Naturally a small amount of wagering takes place, and somehow the princes always end up indebted to the dashing diplomat.

Unfortunately, despite his skill and charm, Sir Pelham-Kole is living a life based upon deception. He is not at all who he says he is, though he does have great skills as a negotiator and diplomat. The real Sir Daniel Edmund Pelham-Kole died in the Battle of the Somme over twenty years ago, blown to bits by a German shell. His batman, a young corporal in his regiment, an orphan named

Lawrence Kirby, was lying badly injured nearby. Fearing capture by the Germans, and knowing that officers received far better attention in hospitals, Corporal Kirby crawled through the remains of his commanding officer and dug out a signet ring, as well as identification papers and insignia. Kirby maintained the charade all through his time in captivity, and after the war discovered that Sir Pelham-Kole's parents had died during the war, his brothers were all killed in battle, and his sisters were taken by the influenza of 1919. With his severe facial injuries and knowledge of Pelham-Kole's life due to his prior duties as his batman, Kirby settled comfortably into his new life, even marrying and going to work for the Foreign Office.

NAZI OCCUPIED MARS

Originally prevented by the Treaty of Versailles from building rockets, Germany appeared to be cut out of the space race. However, a revaluation of the treaty by the Great Powers permitted the German government to begin building rocket ships for peaceful scientific and exploratory purposes. The Chancellor of Germany, Adolf Hitler, used this as a means to secretly create an armed fleet of Nazi rocket ships. Once the truth was out, it was too late to stop him, save through another costly war, and so the Great Powers backed off, leaving Germany free to move between the planets.

And move it did, landing a large force on Mars and attacking five small principalities in as many weeks. Unable to withstand the onslaught of modern Earthling weapons, the princes of the Sugurat Alliance were forced to surrender, finding themselves captives in their own lands. With brutal efficiency, the Nazi war machine moved in, using these city-states as a staging point for the conquest of a large portion of the planet's surface. Today, the Swastika flies over thirty-nine principalities and Germany's war chest grows with each new conquest.

A great aid in this was the invention of the war walker, a highly mobile tank that strides across the battlefield on six meter tall legs. A product of German engineering and secrets of the Ancients uncovered by Nazi archaeologists, the war walker has become the symbol of the German war machine on Mars, the *Deutsche Marskorps*. With the war walkers, a single German soldier has the protection of twenty-five and a half centimeters of amour, the firepower of a heavy tank, and the maneuverability of cavalryman, enabling a relatively small force to easily overcome hordes of Maduri legionnaires. Adding to this, the war walkers are powered by an engine whose design comes from the

Ancients, an engine that does not require petroleum to be brought in from Earth, but instead runs off of water, a commodity that is precious on Mars, but abundant enough to be found nearly anywhere that the *Deutsche Marskorps* cares to go.

Life for the Martians trapped under Hitler's boot heel is a living nightmare. Although it can be said that most Martian castes, especially the lower ones, have few if any rights under the traditionally Martian social system, in the Nazi sphere on Mars, no Martian has any rights, and they are not even classified as sophonts. An Earthling, that is a committed member of the Nazi party, for there are few non-party members permitted into the Nazi-controlled principalities, can kill a Martian and face no repercussions. It should be no wonder that other crimes are regularly committed by the occupiers. Martians that resist are executed out of hand, unless they are seen as useful for work in a labor camp, in which case they are hauled off to be worked to their deaths.

NAZI MARS

Theme: Terror and Oppression by the Worst of Humanity.

Complication: Beset by Native Uprisings and Rival Earthling Powers.

Personality: Otto Skorzeny.

NAZI OCCUPIED MARS STORY HOOKS

- A famed Swiss explorer has gone missing, his last reported location somewhere near the border of Nazi-occupied Mars. The party is hired to find him and either rescue him or recover his body (and his notes).
- War walker technology gives the Nazis an edge, and the US Military would like to get their hands on one. Can the player characters infiltrate Nazi-occupied Mars and steal one?
- While in Nazi-occupied Mars, a major anti-Earthling led uprising occurs, trapping the player characters between the *Deutsche Marskorps* and the natives.



Neu-Berlin

The capital of Nazi Mars, Neu-Berlin is considered to be a model of Aryan efficiency and ingenuity. Needless to say, Nazis run every aspect of this principality, but Martians do most of the hard labor. The fields are abundant and well fed by wells and canals, and under the brutal lash of overseers, the field slaves (of every caste, not just the Jalandri) toil endlessly. Germans largely operate the factories, though any particularly dangerous or unpleasant task is handed over to the Martian slave battalions. Every Earthling citizen has at least one household slave, and often two or more. The streets are clean, the utilities flow freely, and there is not even the hint of unrest. Visitors are often amazed at how smoothly things function – if, that is, they are willing to ignore the oppressed and brutalized masses that allow for such a high standard of living.

Otto Skorzeny, Nazi Agent at Large

Otto Skorenzy was born into a middle class Austrian family that experienced financial setbacks and difficult times during the economic depression that followed the Great War. Growing up poor, but with educated parents and other family members who drove him to better himself, helped to make Skorenzy the man he is today: tough, strong, and cunning, and the undisputed master of unconventional warfare. In the years to come, he would be called a special forces commander, but in 1938 there is no such thing, merely certain officers who the command goes to when things need to be done a special way, either covertly or overtly.

A member of the Nazi party and a Lieutenant Colonel in the SS, Skorenzy has been close to Hitler for some time, serving as his bodyguard as well as operative. Recently, Skorenzy was transferred to General Rommel's *Deutsche Marskorps* to act as the coordinator of miscellaneous operations, basically the spymaster and director of covert operations for the German efforts on Mars. In this role, Skorenzy has proven to be invaluable, training a cadre of soldiers that include several non-German citizens (and rumor has it more than one rogue Maduri) to carry out operations across Mars. He has been seen in the ruins of Jastariv, the Soviet Client States, and even the Kalond Canal Valley. None of his overt operations have been against rival nations' militaries, but a host of espionage and sabotage related events have been attributed to him. When pressed as to the veracity of the missions, operations, and acts of sabotage attributed to him, Skorenzy just smiles his crooked scarred smile and shrugs.

THE SOVIET CLIENT STATES

THE SOVIET CLIENT STATES

Theme: Martian Principalities Taken Over by Communist Revolutionaries.

Complication: Freedom, Now What?

Personality: Sezhan H'Laghtil, Maduri Red Revolutionary.

SOVIET CLIENT STATES STORY HOOKS

- A person claiming to be the lost heir to one of the principalities in the Soviet Client States approaches the player characters, seeking help in hiding from Communist agents and possibly reclaiming her throne.
- Taretnia has been locked down for months, and a bold journalist wants to get in and get the story of the decade. He offers the player characters both wealth and fame if they can help.
- Uvalon is peaceful, but not for long. The player characters get word of a counter-revolution brewing, and must decide if they want to help or betray it.

A mere eighteen months ago the social order of the three Martian principalities of the G'Hascar Triangle changed. Inspired and led by Soviet agents, the lower castes and many of the Maduri of Sutin, Taretnia, and Uvalon rose up and overthrew their Silthuri and Kastari masters. There had been protests and riots for nearly a year before the revolution, as well as terrible crackdowns and the expulsion of all Earthlings from the three principalities, but this proved unable to stop the spread of that most insidious of diseases, an idea.

On their own, the Martians of these three nations would not have been able to stand up to the legions under the command of the ruling Silthuri and Kastari elites. However, aid arrived in the nick of time to save the revolutions, as Soviet forces under the banner of the *Interplanetary Коминтерна* or Interplanetary Comintern arrived just as the revolts began. That all three revolts carried not just a similar Marxist-Leninist feel, but occurred simultaneously and in support of one another, suggests long-term Soviet planning and involvement.



Uvalon

Once the shining jewel of the G'Hascar Triangle, Uvalon is now the worker's paradise of Mars, or at least that is what the propaganda says. Officially, the caste system has been abolished, though it still exists socially. The principality is governed by a series of collectives that answer to the Central Collective, though all these bodies are dominated by Soviet 'advisors'. These advisors are supposed to be temporary and exist only to help their Martian brothers and sisters make the transition from an autocratic monarchy to a Communist state. However, the advisors have full voting rights in the decisions of the collectives, and in the case of the Central Collective, the chairman and all the important committee heads are Earthlings.

Despite this obvious usurpation of the revolution, the natives of Uvalon are generally happy. For many it is business as usual, though with the Soviets as the dominant caste and the collectives replacing the Silthuri. This has caused a great deal of difficulty for the more ideologically motivated Soviets who see the continued adherence to an archaic system as counter-revolutionary. Thankfully, at least for the native Martians, the chairman of the Uvalon Central Collective, Nikita Khrushchev, is more interested in seeing that the principality remains stable, quiet, and most of all, productive.

Sezhant H'Laghtil, Maduri Red Revolutionary

Like all Maduri, Serzhant H'Laghtil was raised largely by his male relatives to one day fill their place in their squad. From the time he was a small boy, he practiced and trained, carried out his orders with calm efficiency, and when the time came, he accepted his first promotion with great honor and dignity. Through dedicated service, he rose through the ranks, becoming the centanat of his squad, comfortable in the loyalty and skill of his cousins.

Despite all he achieved, H'Laghtil became disillusioned with his lot in life. He had glory in battle, respect from his peers, and even a mate and children, but no matter how great a leader and warrior he became, he could never rise higher than the position he had already attained. All command positions in his legion were held by Silthuri, most of who barely bothered to show up for formation, and never took any part in battle other than giving a limp speech the night before. This seemed not merely unjust, but counter to most of the virtues that the Maduri held highly. Loyal service was not enough, for the legion to achieve its greatest feats it would need to be well led. The breaking point came when H'Laghtil saw the effects of Earthling guns on his own men during the Uvalon-Lasopore war.

The enemy legions of the Lasopore could easily dispatch fifty Maduri from his own Jastril for every casualty that they suffered, yet his own commanders refused to even consider acquiring the new weapons. The loss of most of his legion, including all but two of his own battle brothers, and his wife and children, turned the hero to thoughts of rebellion.

Then a stranger came in secret amongst the Maduri, promising them freedom (which they never knew they lacked), but more importantly the right to command themselves and carry the latest in weapons technology. The Maduri of Uvalon had already grown restless at their losses and the Silthuri command which sought peace instead of vengeance, and the Earthling was given a chance to speak.

What he said made no sense, but the two salient points, command and weapons, stood out. H'Laghtil spoke before the assembled leaders of the Maduri, and spoke eloquently in favor of rebellion, noting that vengeance was owed not just to the Lasopore, but to the Silthuri who ordered wave after wave of his brothers to their deaths, whose lack of simple tactical understanding led to the Lasopore cavalry overrunning the retreating baggage train and the deaths of the females and children of the legion. In the end, in an act that itself broke with Maduri traditions, the leaders voted to join the rebellion.

In the months since, several Maduri have been promoted to officers, but not H'Laghtil. He was not deemed 'ideologically pure' enough to hold high rank, whatever that may mean. Instead he was given command of a platoon of lower castes that now formed the bulk of the 15th Revolutionary Legion. Turning these craftsmen, merchants, and slaves into legionnaires is a hard task, but H'Laghtil never shirked from difficult duties. They will be legionnaires, even if they were not born Maduri, or die in the process, Soviet doctrine be damned, and the Soviets as well if need be.

THE RUINS OF ANCIENT MARS

THE RUINS OF ANCIENT MARS

Theme: Ancient Mysteries Hidden and Buried.

Complication: Some Things are Best Left Unearthed.

Personality: High Priest Farthou, Defender of the Ancestors.

RUINS OF ANCIENT MARS STORY HOOKS

- A strange RADIO signal is broadcasting from one of the polar ice caps, possibly from an operational Ancient ruin. The race is on to be the first to claim the site.
- The player characters are hired to explore a 'virgin' portion of Jastariv, but their employer is anonymous and working through a lawyer in the AMCS. The pay is good, but their employer has several odd requests.
- Recently several Venusians working with teams exploring Kertal have gone insane and went on a killing rampage. Prince Has'talmash needs to find a cause for this, lest business be damaged by these random acts of violence, and the player characters are just the right sort of people for the job (that is, expendable).
- A dying man leaves a map to the player characters, a map that leads to L'Pak and the riches hidden beneath the silt.

Mars is dotted with the ruins of earlier eras, though most of these date from the more prosaic Canal Era or later. Although these do hold some interest for archaeologists and historians, the biggest attractions are the ruins of the Ancients dating from before Mars became the arid wasteland it is today. These sites hold buried clues to not just the Red Planet's past, but to technologies well beyond anything that humanity has managed, and so far removed from the modern Martians as to lead some to wonder if they were made by an entirely different species.

By far the greatest treasures to be found in the ruins of Ancient Martian cities and installations are working technologies that can be reverse-engineered. After these, schematics and engineering diagrams are also valuable, but not as much as working technologies because so little is known about the Ancient Martian language, and because the concepts in the documents are often far beyond what any, but a genius like Einstein or Tesla, could understand. Of course, there is also a lively and brisk trade in other types of artifacts, and the collectors of Martian antiquities would be angered to know that most of what they purchase (at great cost) is little more than really old junk.

Although there are dozens of ruins, if not more, dating back to the Age of the Ancients, most of these hold little

of interest to serious artifact hunters or archaeologists. Five do stand out as prime sites for exploration and, of course, a little looting. Modern Martians do not appreciate aliens coming in and stealing the relics of their ancestors, especially considering that most Kastari sects worship the Ancients as gods.

Furthermore, pristine ruins are likely located in out of the way places, far from the canals or deep in the desert. Finally, if the player characters should go off artifact hunting, keep in mind that there are almost always rivals who have the same information and the same goal. Travel in numbers and stay alert.

ANCIENT MARTIAN

Ancient Martian is not one language, but three separate languages. However, these three are closely related and can be treated as one for the purposes of the game. The languages all use the same alphabet based on a series phonetic symbols that look like curves, lines, and dots. What makes understanding Ancient Martian so difficult is that the truly valuable information is in a highly technical language – imagine translating engineering or legal jargon from a language you do not have a good grasp of.

There is little relationship between Ancient Martian and modern Martian languages; millennia of divergence has buried the roots too deeply to make them useful to cultural linguists. However, several Kastari sects have a religious liturgy that is conducted in a debased form of Ancient Martian, and thus knowing one of these may help one understand long lost lore.

Jastariv

Once buried under the sands of the Empty Desert, Jastariv is the most famous of the Ancient Martian ruins, and the one that sees the most intrigue and murder. It was here that Hitler's scientists discovered the plans for the war walkers, and also here that Tesla uncovered the clues that have led to the RAY gun and other inventions. The ruins themselves are still mostly beneath the red sands of Mars, but crews from a number of nations remove the sand and cart it off to be sifted for artifacts on a daily basis. Wonders are thought to lie further into the ruins, in areas not yet excavated. Wonders greater and more terrible than anything so far imagined. This has naturally drawn in archaeologists with all manner of backgrounds and motivations, creating a sprawling tent city that surrounds the half-excavated ruins.

It is this tent city that causes all of the trouble. Jastariv sits outside of the jurisdiction of any nation, be it Martian or Earthling. As such an extra-territorial body, no one has the right to enforce the law here, nor do they have the right to bar any others from starting their own investigations. This is not to say that several have tried, and there are national enclaves within the tent city and the ruins that make, and forcibly push, their own laws. However, no nation has tried to use its military might to drive any of the others out of the ruins, and it is likely that no one has that sort of power, at least at this time.

The Nazis have been the most pernicious violators of the peace, followed closely by the Soviets. Both are not ashamed to use lethal force to maintain the security of the areas that they have staked out, as well as 'accidents' to delay or discourage rivals. Adding to the vileness of these actions, the Nazi archaeologists openly use slave labor taken from their Martian holdings, while the Soviets employ native 'Labor Collectives' in much the same manner.

The Americans maintain two official missions at the ruins, one sponsored by the Army and the other by the State Department. The two have a tense rivalry, and although they have not committed any acts of violence against their countrymen, both try to block the other's efforts through bureaucratic channels. The British mission gets on well with the Americans from the State Department, but has had a few altercations with the Army's archaeologists in recent months. Finally, France, Italy (closely allied with the German mission), Brazil, Japan, and Greece all maintain small missions in the ruins.

In addition to the government missions, there are hordes of academic sponsored missions as well as treasure seekers, fortune hunters, and just plain looters. Most of the academic missions maintain close ties with their home nation's missions, but some prefer to go it alone, either out of pride, because their own research does not correspond with that of their government, or because they want to avoid governmental interference. The masses of unaffiliated 'archaeologists' at work in the ruins of Jastariv are a decidedly mixed lot, with some being more legitimate than others, but the majority being little more than looters. These rogue elements tend to stake a claim to an area of the ruins and then begin systematically stripping everything out, at least what they do not inadvertently damage. Often, these maverick archaeologists are used by one nation or another in their struggles for control of lucrative or promising parts of the ruins.

High Priest Farthou, Defender of the Ancestors

Not everyone is happy with the state of affairs that has the various Ancient Martian ruins being excavated by Earthlings. In most cases, Martians are displeased with the fact that aliens are looting the homes of their Ancestor gods; however, there is little that they can do about it. Where Earthlings hold the power, the average Martian generally lacks the means or will to resist, and if they do, they often find themselves outclassed by Earthling technology. Gathering en mass to oppose the looting has only resulted in the massacre of Martians, even when it is Silthuri and Maduri doing the fighting.





There is another way, one that may take more time, but may also be far more effective. High Priest Farthou, a Kastari member of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe, has begun organizing a planet-wide Martian resistance movement. Calling upon the disjointed network of the Order, he brought together several warbands to a meeting at the ruins of Jastariv, the site where the greatest Earthling depredations take place. Speaking to the assembled Kastari, Maduri, and lower castes, Farthou outlined his plan. They were to disperse across the face of their planet, seeking out the homes of the Ancients that Earthlings were violating. Where the numbers of Earthlings were small and far from any aid, they were to be attacked and destroyed. Where the numbers were large and could easily report the Order's operations, such as at Jastariv, a different approach was to be taken. Clandestine raids, rigged accidents, and booby-trapped excavations are to be a means to drive the Earthlings away from the sacred sites. Some warbands have even begun attacking Earthlings heading to or from the ruins, and making the attacks look like Chanari raids. Not all of the Order has agreed to Farthou's plans, but at present, a total of fifteen warbands are operating under his command.

THE DRAW OF JASTARIV

Jastariv was once a research and manufacturing facility run by one of the Ancient intellectual/scientific elites of the late Ancient Era of Martian history. The response by the facility's staff to the threat posed by the Erisians was to dedicate themselves to the defense of Mars through the creation of mighty engines of war. Amongst these were the models from which the war walkers and RAY guns were developed, but other even more deadly weapons lie waiting to be discovered. Hints and clues as to these weapons keep turning up, though nothing definite has been unearthed in the past several months. It is quite possible that a hideous doomsday weapon lies buried in the sands, waiting for the right madman to come along and claim it.

For the role-player, there is another draw to Jastariv. The buried ruins of a long lost civilization, ancient relics waiting to be found, foes to be fought in the dark cavernous factories, all suggest one thing – a dungeon crawl. Add some booby traps placed by the Ancients to protect their secrets, weird machines that fire up when someone passes, and even strange lifeforms that have evolved in the cave-like environment of the buried ruins and you have something approaching a traditional dungeon crawl, **Rocket Age** style. Why, it is even possible that the Ancients built Jastariv with standardized ten-foot cube sections.

INDEPENDENT MARS

Despite the depredations and alluring promises of the Earthlings, most of Mars remains independent of alien invasion or alliance. Most of the Earthling activity has been located in the region surrounding the Great Silt Sea, the Kalond Canal Valley, and those areas bordering the Western Desert. The rest of the planet, though shocked by what has befallen their distant neighbors, goes on about its day untouched, at least directly, by alien presences and ideas. There are hundreds of principalities that have yet to see the boot of an Earthling: one of the most interesting is G'Pak.

INDEPENDENT MARS

Theme: Ruled by Martians, for Now.

Complication: Earthlings, Warlords, and even Chanari are at the Walls.

Personality: Alphi, A Maduri Loyal Unto Death.

INDEPENDENT MARS STORY HOOKS

- The party is visiting G'Pak, likely shopping for rare items or stopping while crossing the Great Silt Sea. The local Maduri stop and arrest the player characters for piracy, but this is just a cover to get them before the Pilthuri council. It seems that they have a little problem with Earthling pirates, and need someone to infiltrate the airborne corsairs and report back with the location of their base. This is an offer our heroes cannot refuse.
- A collector on earth wants a copy of the *Martian Book of the Dead*, and the only known copy is in a vault in the city-state of Hasvarval.
- Prince Havalk of Loscanit is looking for a few good Earthlings to serve in his legions, men and women of supreme skill and character who are able to operate for extended periods of time outside of normal military discipline. He has been impressed by such things as the US Rocket Rangers and the exploits of the Nazi Skorenzy, and wants his own crack team.

G'Pak

The Great Silt Sea is an inhospitable place, the silt is deep and deadly, the winds can blow up dust storms that stretch for hundreds of kilometers and are thick enough to choke a man to death. There is no water and the only shade is what a person brings with them. Still, the Chanari and the navies of several principalities make what they can of this vast

ocean of dust and silt, sailing across it on ships powered by the wind and floating on the silt using great wooden runners or inflated bags. Near the center of this bizarre body of 'water' lies the island city-state of G'Pak, an oasis in the sea of silt, and the most free and open principality on Mars.

G'Pak is ruled by a prince like other Martian principalities, but in truth the real power lies in a council of the city-state's leading Pilthuri. It is trade that allows the city to exist, and Silthuri simply do not debase themselves to the point where they haggle over common foodstuffs or deal with Chanari savages. Since the island nation can only offer water and a few foodstuffs to the silt ships that dock there, even the most basic of goods must be imported, granting power to the Pilthuri to starve the city-state if they are opposed.

The Pilthuri control the city in every aspect, setting up committees that oversee the bureaucratic work that normally is relegated to lower Silthuri sub-castes. Within the Pilthuri caste advancement is not based on birth but on success, and thus G'Pak is one of the most efficiently run cities on all of Mars. With the huge amount of trade that comes through its harbor and warehouses, it is the Pilthuri who are the most populous caste, with only a small legion of Maduri serving as palace guards, some Julandri laborers and courtesans to see to the needs of docking ships, and a sprinkling of Talandri craftsman to keep important systems running.

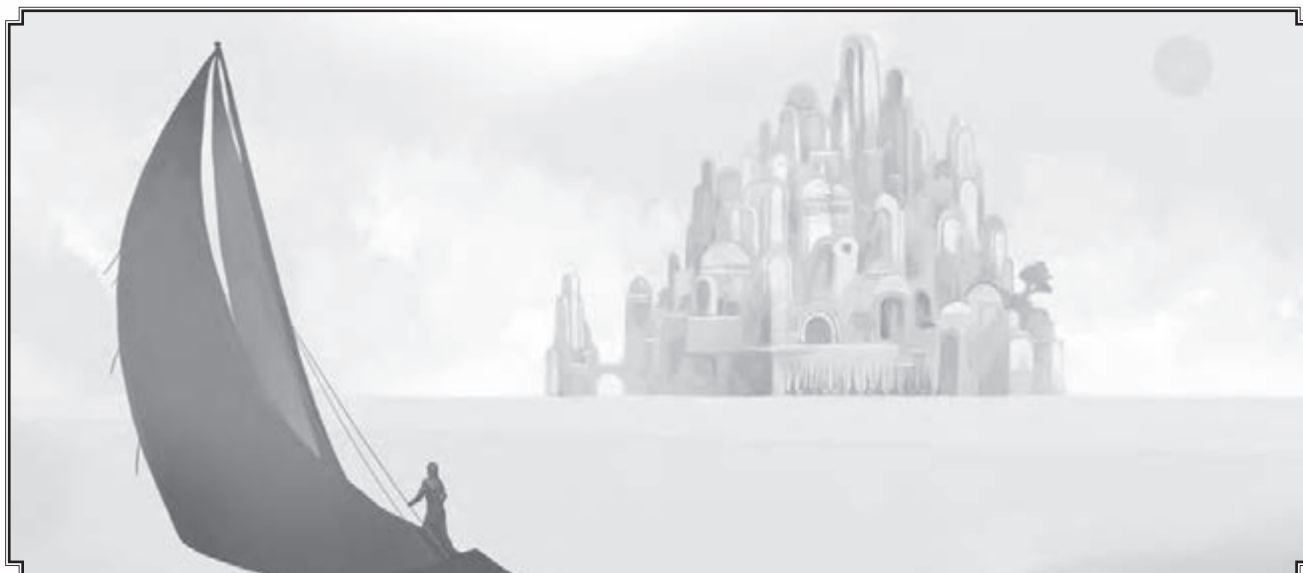
The city itself is a teeming mixed throng where the normal separation of foreigner and local inhabitant common in most Martian cities disappears. Only the Great Palace of

the prince, home to the handful of Silthuri families that 'rule' the nation, is kept separate. The rest is a hodgepodge where even rival Kastari sects are allowed to set up competing temples on the same street. There is not even a single marketplace in the entire city, trade occurs in every quarter with some streets set aside for the handling of certain goods, and others selling whatever to whoever comes by. If you are looking for something on Mars, odds are that you can buy it in G'Pak, legally and with only a small tariff attached.

Alphi, A Maduri Loyal Unto Death

The life of a Maduri, especially one in a palace legion, can be a strange one. Loyalty to the principality conflicts with loyalty to commanders and various members of the ruling Silthuri sub-castes, as well as to other Silthuri in the palace. When regimes change, Maduri die, often at the hands of their fellows as duties conflict and confusion reigns. Alphi knew where his loyalties lay, and that was not to one single individual or to his principality, but to the family of the sub-caste that he served.

As his brothers and sister laid down their lives in an attempt to stop Earthling freebooters from slaying his prince, Alphi was ordered to guard the heir apparent, a six-month-old girl. As the freebooter takeover turned into a full-blown coup led by the traitorous Master of the Royal Bath Valtorvit (the scion of a lesser Silthuri sub-caste), Alphi saw the writing on the wall and ordered his sub-ordinates to grab as many supplies as they could and follow him. On the way out of the palace he gathered what Julandri and other lower castes he could, stole the fastest bahmoots out of the royal stables, and took to the desert.





Out in the red sands of the Western Desert he happened upon a group of Earthlings seeking Ancient Martian ruins. A tense standoff followed, but the outgunned and beleaguered Maduri saw no hope of victory, only bloody vengeance in death. The cries of the infant princess broke the stalemate, and the Earthlings lowered their guns. After a brief negotiation, Alphi told his tale, eliciting sympathy from the Earthling adventurers. To their credit, the Earthlings pledged their personal loyalty to the little princess, seeing the chance to restore her to her throne as not just the right thing to do, but also a grand opportunity for adventure.

In the three months since, Alphi has helped the Earthlings find their ruins, and turned the site into his base of operations. With the help of the Earthlings and the riches recovered from the ruins (not to mention the operating deep well and food processing machinery found there), Alphi is well on his way to having enough material to retake Tasnamip. What he lacks is manpower, and for that he may have to turn to more Earthlings, or perhaps he can contact a warband of the Order of the Sacred Hamaxe.

THE ASTEROID FIELD



THE
ASTEROID
FIELD

Length of Day: N/A
Length of Year: N/A
Average Distance from Earth: 18.95 million miles
Theme: Riches for those Brave and Foolhardy
Complication: Shifting Fields of Space Born Rock
Personality: Big Eddy Brighton, Belt Miner

Between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter is a band of floating rock and debris commonly referred to as the Asteroid Field. This is a dangerous place to travel through as the rocks tumble and spiral through space, often impacting with each other and sending sprawls of broken rock into the void. Only the best pilots can hope to safely navigate the fringes of the Asteroid Field, and the depths are largely unknown. However, there are two big draws here that can bring the lucky and the foolish into this whirling maelstrom of crushing death.

The Asteroid Field is rich in mineral resources, iron being the most common, but also precious metals and radium. A handful of wildcat miners have staked claims to particularly large asteroids and began the laborious process of mining them. This is highly dangerous and very expensive; all the work must be done in space suits and under adverse conditions. Even the slightest tear in the fabric of a space suit can lead to death, or at least a moment of panic and terror before the safety of a pressure vessel can be reached. This had led to some belt miners creating armored mining suits, cumbersome space suits coved in layers of steel plate, much like the articulated plate mail of earlier eras. Even so, one wrong slip can lead to a miner spinning off into the void, or dropping into a pocket cavern in the asteroid.

ASTEROID FIELD GLOSSARY

Deep Black: The view of the Solar System from parts of the Belt. *"Something was sending a RADIO transmission out of the deep black, nothing human though, something else."*

Hard Hat: A person who works the Asteroid mines, from the hard hat vacc suit. *"Them hard hats aren't the ones to get rich out here, no siree, it us who build and run the resupply depots that make the real money."*

Klondiker: Someone who has come to the Asteroid Field to get rich quick, often without proper training or equipment. *"Don't believe him, he's just another Klondiker looking to score."*

Pay Off: To die in the Asteroid Field, from the contractual pay off to one's next of kin of a share of the proceeds from a mining operation. *"Heard about Johnson? He paid off and now his widow is rich."*

Pit of Gold: Any of the several alien ruins found in the Field, none of which has yielded anything of value, and all of which eat fortunes like candy. *"I dropped three thousand into a venture group to explore Asteroid 87X, and got nothing back but requests for more money, what a pit of gold that one is."*

ASTEROID FIELD STORY HOOKS

- While passing through the Asteroid Field, the party's rocket ship experiences strange system failures and wildly fluctuating power, forcing an emergency landing on a large asteroid to make repairs. Unfortunately, the asteroid is rich in radium and the ship's landing has set off a slow chain reaction that will ignite the ore. The repairs must be made quickly, less the ship be caught in an explosion of super-heated space rock.
- While in a bar frequented by space travelers, the party is approached by a bedraggled looking fellow who introduces himself as an asteroid miner. He has found a mother lode of radium, but claim jumpers are threatening it. He would like to hire the player characters to guard his claim while he and his men mine the ore.
- The player characters are visiting a large asteroid, possibly as miners or artifact hunters, when they are sucked into a deep crater. As they fall, they pass through some form of force field barrier that holds in the atmosphere of a huge cavern filled with strange plants and animals. An abandoned bunker containing alien technologies lies in the jungle, as do the feral descendants of the architects of this hidden world.

Less well known, but likely to attract even more people (and especially ones poorly equipped to deal with the dangers of operating inside the Asteroid Field), is the recent discovery of ruins on some of the asteroids. At this time, the scientific community does not know what to make of these, only two sites have been found and neither has been thoroughly explored. However, what has been uncovered hints at the presence of advanced technology, something that the nations of Earth are very interested in acquiring.

These ruins are the remains of the planet Eris, destroyed millennia ago by the Ancient Martians in their wars with the space raiders known as the Erisians. Long ago, the Erisians developed rocket technology as well as RAY guns and other advanced weaponry. Their culture was tribal and savage, and it is a wonder that they were able to advance much beyond simple tools. With the ability to travel to other planets and thus expand their natural lifestyle of raiding and warfare, the Erisians set their sights on their closest neighbor, Mars. The Martians were unprepared for the assault and wave after wave of Erisian rocket ships descended on the Red Planet to loot, pillage, and burn.

In time, the Martians learned to defend themselves, but the constant threat of attack from the sky proved to be too much for some of the Ancient Martians. In an ill-conceived plan, they launched a Planet Killer Rocket at Eris, destroying the planet, but also adversely affecting Mars, leading to the transformation of that planet from a paradise into the blighted wasteland it is today, as well as ending the golden age of the Ancient Martians.

As horrible as the damage to Mars was, it pales into comparison to what happened to Eris. The planet was destroyed, broken up into hundreds of thousands of fragments. Almost all of the Erisians died in the catastrophe, and their cities were reduced to airless rubble. A few managed to survive for a time in bunkers designed to withstand atomic assault, but even these few died in the months that followed. Only a handful managed to escape the destruction of their world, launching themselves into the void in the hope of finding a new home on another planet. Of these refugees, a dozen ships made Venus; two landed on Mars, but were destroyed by the Martians; and one crashed on Earth. The Earth-bound refugees have long since died, though signs of their existence and brief habitation on Earth might still be uncovered. As far as those who managed to land on Venus, well, that is another story.

Big Eddy Brighton, Belt Miner

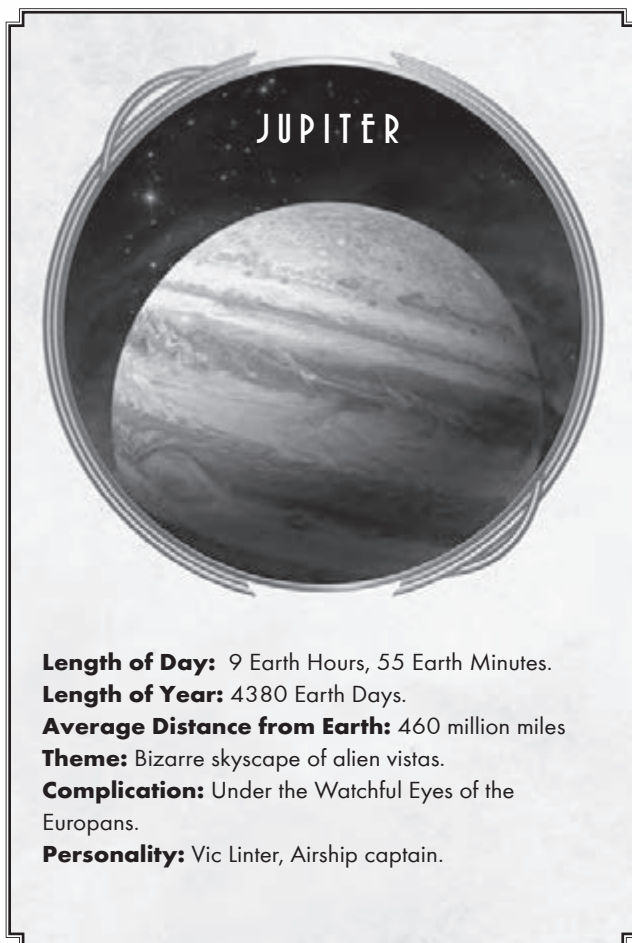
It takes a special kind of person to work the belt mines, and Big Eddy Brighton is one of the best.





Tall, broad shouldered, and with a barrel chest, this Australian dominates every room he enters with both his size and overwhelming charisma. That he has managed to make not just a living but a name for himself in the deadly business of Asteroid mining is a testament to his stamina and perseverance, especially considering that he lost an arm decades ago at Gallipoli. Big Eddy leads a small, but effective team of miners in harvesting ore from the outlying asteroids in the Belt. It is a dangerous job but, after three years of working the Fields, Big Eddy and his crew have not lost a single person. Part of this is due to a specially-designed armored space suit that Big Eddy developed, a suit that is nearly impervious to damage but also allows the wearer to have enough mobility to do their job and not fall off the rock. Much of the credit though, is due not just to Big Eddy's leadership and skill as a miner, but also to his pilot, Stacy Blocks, who has the sharpest eyes and quickest hands in the Asteroid Fields.

JOVIAN SYSTEM



The sky island started to crumble, the edges giving way slowly and then faster as the floating speck of ground disintegrated. A hole opened up and Patrick went through, nothing beneath him now but thousands of miles of Jupiter's sky. Tied to Patrick by a safety line, Lexi fell hard his greater mass dragged her towards the gaping opening in the sky island. As she scrambled for purchase on the flimsy amalgamation of soil and plants her feet tore deep grooves in the soft surface that threatened to open up into the air below.

"Rodriquez to Endeavor, Rodriquez to Endeavor prepare for immediate extraction." The Rocket Ranger sprinted towards the edge of the island. She couldn't launch from here, not only would it complete gravity's job of tearing up the sky island but many of the Jovian plants whose roots form the island use methane in their float bladders to stay aloft.

"Endeavor here, ETA 90 seconds." That might not be enough, Lieutenant Rodriquez thought. A few more steps and she would be clear of the island, but would that be enough time for Patrick and Lexi? She couldn't spare a look back as her helmet began to fog around the edges. The chin read out showing her vitals spiking, running in armor while toting a fully fueled rocket pack was hard work.

A quick calculation showed she would need at least a hundred and fifty feet of freefall before she could safely light the packs. Lexi was screaming over the RADIO, but Patrick was quiet, too quiet. As she leapt off the sky island Rodriquez tongued the switch in her helmet to mark her current altitude.

20 feet

"Holy hell, what was that?"

50 feet

"Lexi, Rodriquez, repeat last transmission."

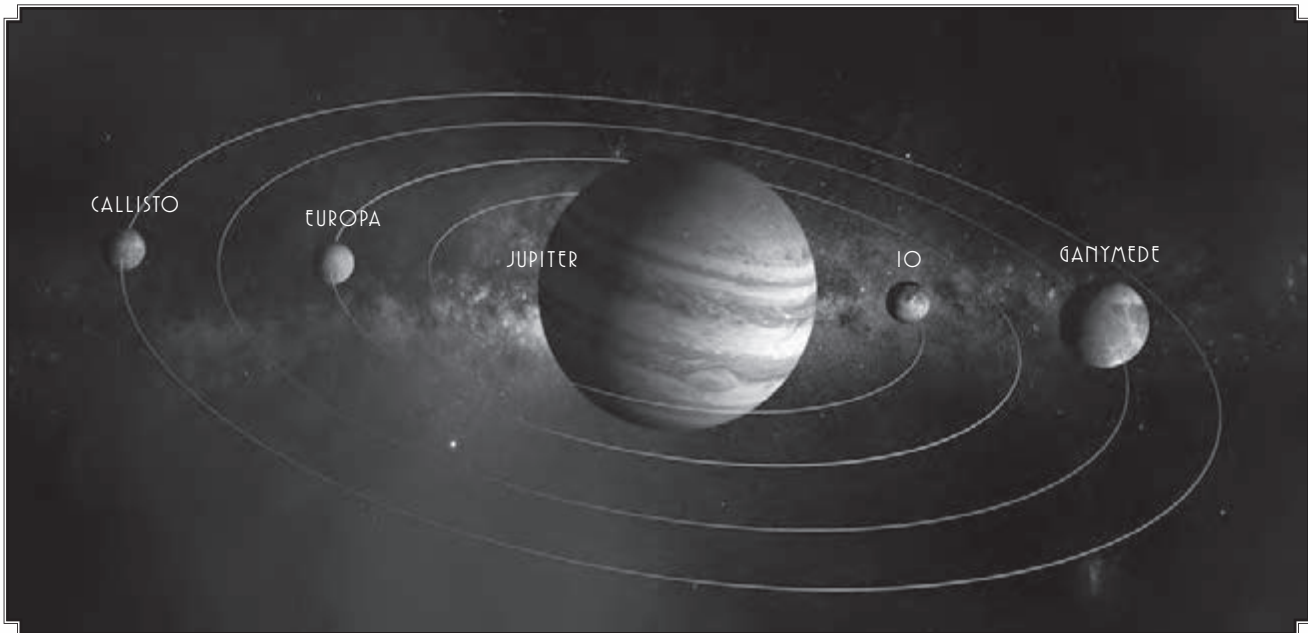
80 feet

"Endeavor here, we had a bogie on the RADAR but just for a second."

100 feet

Cutting it far too close, Rodriquez lit off the rocket pack, a plume of flame shot out from behind her for a dozen yards, just missing the sky island but close enough for the heat to wilt the edges.

"Patrick's gone!"



Sure enough the line Lexi was holding dangled into empty air. The hole she stared through was widening as Rodriguez shot up through it, grabbing the startled scientist as she passed. The back blast from the rocket pack exploded the sky island below them as they rocketed up to meet their ship.

Safely on board, Rodriguez and Lexi rushed to the cockpit.

"Something flew past and grabbed him," Lexi gasped, was out of breath from the flight.

Hart spun around in her seat, a print out from the RADAR in her hands. "Looks like it was a European saucer ship, but why would they grab Patrick, was it a rescue?"

"No idea. I am treating this as a kidnapping; those Europeans are never up to any good. All of you are hereby deputized under article 15 of the Interplanetary Law Enforcement Act of 1936. Set a course after that saucer ship, we're getting him back."

"Rangers, away!"

Sitting at over 778 million kilometers from Earth, Jupiter and its system of moons is an eight-week journey away. The planet itself offers little in the way of enticement: a giant ball of spinning gas, home to floating sky islands of questionable stability hosting bizarre creatures adapted to the often-poisonous atmosphere. The moons, however, are another issue entirely and several can be described as garden worlds supporting an Earth-like climate and biosphere.

Unlike the inner planets, Jupiter is not just one world but a collection of greater and lesser moons, moonlets, and chunks of ice and rock forming its own mini-system with the massive gas giant at its center. Officially they are all the domains of the Europeans, an enigmatic alien species of great power. These aliens possess technologies in advance of humanity's and possibly ahead of the Ancient Martians. They are displeased with human expansion into their space and expressed that by blasting the first rocket ship to reach the Jovian Moons, HMRS *James Cook*, out of space.

Following the loss of HMRS *James Cook*, a joint Anglo-American fleet was deployed to face the new threat. The Europeans agreed to negotiate, but only with the understanding that they did so for their own amusement and not out of fear or intimidation. They then deigned to allow the League of Nations access to Jupiter, save for the Red Spot, as well as the some of the moons. Subsequent negotiations with Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union granted those two nations a similar Writ of Exploration to operate within the Jovian System. Today, the Jovian Moons promise either a great reward in mineral wealth and exotic elements or the death of all humanity should the Europeans carry through with their threats.

Earthlings must tread carefully in the Jovian System for fear of angering the Europeans. It is unclear what the Europeans would do if angered, but they do shoot down rocket ships using some form of accelerated energy beam weapon, a weapon so terrible and mighty that it could disintegrate a full rocket ship at a range of several thousand kilometers.

JOVIAN GLOSSARY

Convertible: A rocket ship capable of deploying a balloon and becoming an airship. *"This baby's a convertible, so no problem getting to the sky islands."*

Disintegration Point One: A somewhat gallows humor term used to describe the European 'No Fly Zone' around their home moon. *"You want us to fly into Disintegration Point One, take aerial photos of Europa, and get out? That'll cost double, no, triple."*

EPZ (European Peace Zone): Sarcastic term for the planet Io. *"Yeah, they'll bring peace to the Solar System, just look at the EPZ."*

Fish1: Jovian gas bags, in reference to their jellyfish like appearance. *"RADAR is picking up a lot of fish ahead, we need to chart a course around 'em."*

Fish2: European emissaries, due to their 'fish out of water' and inquisitive, some say naïve, demeanor. *"Our pilot is a fish, good girl and all – oh, yeah, she's taken to wearing a dress and makeup."*

Grand: Anything over the top, such as the Grand Admiral himself. *"You want me to fly a specially constructed rocket ship into the heart of Jupiter? That's grand."*

Sky Queen: A folkloric airship that is said to be possessed by some strange Jovian gas being. The Sky Queen is said to float in the deep mists and attack errant ships, leaving no survivors. *"Bull, I say. No mythical ship is going to keep me from salvaging the wrecks on that there sky island."*

Tree People: Derogative term for Ganymedians. *"We would have had the gold too, if those damned tree people hadn't attacked."*

They have also made threats of their willingness to destroy humanity in its entirety, if pressed. Following their warning to stay clear of Europa and certain parts of the Solar System, the nations of Earth have agreed to be cautious in their dealings anywhere near the Jovian System. Further increasing the feelings of paranoia, the Europeans have issued a series of proclamations through their representative, Grand Admiral of Jupiter Sebastian Alexander Leopold Von Hapsburg I. The first of these, The Hapsburg-European Ultimatum, announced that the European Navy, under Grand Admiral Sebastian's command, would be watching and judging the activities of all Earthlings in the Jupiter System and beyond. Further proclamations, all with long-winded and ostentatious names; have ordered the cessation of certain activities in the Jupiter System, in the greater Solar System, or on Earth itself.

JUPITER

Jupiter is the largest planet in the Solar System, a great spinning ball of gas whose gravity is such that only the very topmost layers can be safely explored. Below the outer atmosphere the pressure and density of the gas are so great as to crush anything that falls from the heights. If there is any solid ground down there, no one knows, and likely no one will ever find out. Even the relatively

thin upper atmosphere is a strange and dangerous place. Storms are frequent and shifting currents of gas have been known to send a rocket ship careening out of control. The gases of the atmosphere are not homogenous, but instead form in pockets, creating bubbles of breathable gases mixed with areas of noxious or poisonous gases. The most dangerous are bubbles of flammable gas, such as methane or hydrogen, which can easily be lit by the engines of a rocket ship, creating a tremendous explosion as millions of cubic kilometers burst into flames.

The size of Jupiter presents the greatest challenge in any exploration of the planet, for it is eleven times the size of Earth, and its volume can hold hundreds of Earths within it. This area is too large to be mapped in all but the loosest terms, and even those areas that are considered well-known are susceptible to the shifting currents. Further complicating exploration is the intense heat and low visibility within the upper layers of the atmosphere. Jupiter is hot, and an unprotected person would only live a few short minutes before his body succumbs to heat stroke and dehydration. The heat is so intense that it forms a greater barrier than pressure to deeper exploration. As one approaches the core of the planet, the heat rapidly rises to a level that melts metal and liquefies rubber. The air is filled with debris, colored by exotic gasses, and constantly being churned up by the heat of the planet's depths.

Clouds of yellow, green, blue, and red obscure sight and limit vision to only less than a kilometer, and a storm can reduce visibility even further.

JOVIAN STORY HOOKS

- An air ship has gone down on an unstable sky island. The crew's SOS indicates that they only have a few days at the most before they run out of air, and the player characters are sent to the rescue.
- A saboteur is going to plant an explosive near the Anglo-American Air Docks. If it goes off, it will ignite a nearby methane bubble, destroying both the docks and all nearby ships.
- The French government has offered an *Ordo de Palmes de L'Space* (and 10,000 francs) to the first person who successfully penetrates the Great Red Spot and returns with photographic evidence of its interior.

The only safe way to explore this gas giant is through the use of modified rocket ships. It is too dangerous to employ a rocket engine in the clouds of Jupiter, so a special balloon is deployed from the hull to provide lift, and a propeller is used to give movement. An airship is still a dangerous and fragile thing, the balloon is subject to sudden deflation in the case of an accident and, despite the propeller, the ship is still subject to the winds and storms of the Jovian atmosphere. Still, there are brave men and women who are willing to take the risk in the name of science, or for national pride.

The latter has turned the upper layers of Jupiter's atmosphere into a war zone. There have been hints dropped by the Europeans that they prize exploration and discovery, and want to see more of this in humanity. In order to curry their favor, and to avoid an untimely disintegration, the Great Powers have embarked on a series of expeditions to probe the mysteries of the king of planets. One would think that with a planet so large the various national expeditions would be able to avoid each other, but this is not the case. The rivalries have increased to a point where explorers from non-allied nations actively attempt to sabotage each other, hoping that the murky depths of Jupiter's atmosphere will hide their crimes. It is unknown who first brought the secret war to the planet, but all participants are now firmly and resolutely set on a course of violence.

The flora and fauna of Jupiter are unlike any other in the solar system. The vast majority of life is adapted to

a completely airborne existence; many never touch solid ground in their entire lifecycles. At the bottom of the food chain are small microorganisms, similar to the plankton found in Earth's seas, which float in great swarms through the yellowish clouds. Larger creatures feed on these, such as the Jovian gasbag with its long hanging tentacles, the sky sponge that filters out the plankton from the vapors, and the massive flying leviathans that glide through the plankton clouds sucking up tons of microscopic and small creatures with each pass. Predators swoop through the skies, such as the pack hunting darters, the hawk-like blood wings, and the deadly air snake.

The sky islands of Jupiter are one of the wonders of the Solar System, floating masses of vegetation and soil drifting through the skies, home to a menagerie of strange and exotic creatures. Formed by the slow accretion of soil around the roots of Jovian sky plants; soil created from detritus drawn out of orbit by the gravity of Jupiter and the decayed remains of plants and animals. As the years go by, the sky islands slowly grow in size until they reach a critical mass, and then are brought down by their own weight. In the time that they have, fast growing plants and short-lived animals enjoy an orgy of life before sending off their spores and young to colonize another sky island before it is too late, and their island home is dragged deeper into Jupiter's gravity well.





Stepping foot onto a sky island is a risky proposition. Though they may appear solid, the masses are far from stable or sturdy. Too much weight in one area can tip a sky island or simply push through the crust of accumulated soil, sending a person plunging into the depths of Jupiter. The creatures native to sky islands are long-legged with broad feet and light bodies, the better to disperse their weight and avoid pitfalls. They are also highly aggressive, seeking to eat, mate, and live out their lives before the inevitable catastrophe. This abundance of life is further enriched by the addition of the more 'normal' Jovian animals that come to the sky islands to feed or rear their young. This creates a violent, uncertain ecosystem that can quickly claim the unwary.

There are several floating stations in the upper atmosphere of Jupiter. The four nations most heavily engaged in the exploration of the giant – Germany, the UK, the USA, and the USSR all maintain floating dockyards to provide berths for rocket ships and airships, as well as to act as forward platforms for expeditions. The USA and Great Britain share a jointly run platform, the Anglo-American Air Docks. Canadian, French, Italian, and Mexican explorers also make use of these facilities, creating a multi-national synergy. Nazi Germany keeps itself and its Jovian interests aloof, on the side of Jupiter furthest from the Great Red Spot, and allows no unauthorized ships to approach its base, *Festung Jupiter*. Likewise, the Soviets secretly maintain their facilities near the planet's North Pole at *Belgarski Stalin*, renamed last year following the execution for 'treason' of its first namesake, the famed Marshal of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Tukhachevsky.

Vic Linter, Airship Captain

To fly an airship through the stormy atmosphere of Jupiter and into unknown skies takes either a hero or a fool. Vic Linter is both. The scion of a wealthy New York family, Vic has become a remittance man, a rare thing in these modern times. His marked inability to avoid entanglements with less than virtuous (and certainly inappropriate) women, his foolishness with money, plus the scandal of competing in airplane and car racing circuits, embarrassed his family to no end.

Given a starter fund that exceeds the annual budget of some small cities, plus an annual allowance in the range of tens of thousands of dollars, Vic was asked to leave New York and try to find a quiet place to stay out of sight. He did the former, but the latter seems to elude him. In his custom-built rocket/airship *Penelope*, Vic has become famous for his exploits as an explorer, smuggler, and all around good guy.

When not in the Crash and Burn, a dive bar on the Anglo-American Air Docks, he is likely either deep in Jupiter's atmosphere, or flitting about the Jovian System thumbing his nose at safety and authority.

THE COMING OF THE JOVIANS

It all began one night cycle on the French research platform *Pegasus* high in the atmosphere of Jupiter. Most of the research team had headed off to their beds, leaving only an 'over night' (day night cycles must be artificially regulated on Jupiter) team of RADAR and RADIO technicians as well as guards on the lookout for wandering native flora and fauna. A large RADAR contact showed coming from far below the station, but much too deep in the high-pressure layers to be anything but an anomaly.

The contact grew closer and began to resolve into a large shape surrounded by several smaller ones. Within minutes visual contact had been achieved, and the freshly awakened crew of the *Pegasus* saw a huge armored airship and several smaller vessels approaching from below. The smaller vessels, later discovered to be Jovian fliers, swooped up above the station and then plummeted towards it, disgorging a hail of barbed steel darts. The larger vessel moved to a position just slightly above the *Pegasus* and opened a large hatch in its bow. Dozens of winged humanoids flew out of this hatch, each armed with javelins and swords. The fight for the *Pegasus* was on, and within three hours the station was left an abandoned scene of carnage, its crew slaughtered in desperate fighting and most of its equipment either destroyed or looted by the alien victors.

Three crew members managed to survive, and were found three days later by a French airship, the *Lumière*, which had responded to the *Pegasus's* desperate distress calls. One of the survivors of the attack died of his injuries shortly after rescue, but the remainder told a frightening tale of strange goggle eyed winged aliens, ferocious bird men, and terrible savagery. Although most of their tale was dismissed as the ravings of those maddened by shell shock and too many months in the strange gases of Jupiter, the fact that someone attacked a French research station and caused such rampant death and devastation shook the community of airship captains and made headlines throughout the Solar System.

Three weeks later, the British airship *Numa Pompilius*, picked up a similar contact on their RADAR. This time, the massive armored airship and attendant smaller craft approached slowly, rising up to a level even with the Earthling vessel and some distance off. The strange ship

flashed a series of lights at the *Numa Pompilius*, and was replied to with flashes of Morse code. This exchange went on for several minutes before the alien vessel's large hatch opened and a moderate sized vessel exited. This vessel carried a handful of strange winged aliens who stopped halfway between the two vessels and gestured invitingly.

The captain of the *Numa Pompilius*, Jonas Piedmont, cautiously approached the aliens in his vessel's escape boat. Once aboard their ship, he astonished to learn they spoke European, and even more astonished to learn that they wanted to apologize for the attack on his people by a rogue element of their own. From this second, but more peaceful contact, relations between the Jovians, as they were deemed in Earthling media, and other species have grown.

A small number of Jovians have begun to work or trade with Earthlings in the upper atmosphere. Being a newly contacted species, the sight of a Jovian anywhere in the Solar System is cause for a crowd to form, and a lot of questions to be asked. Only a few Jovians have left their home world to travel to other planets, and these tend to be exceptional members of their species. Contact between some Jovian clans and the Europeans have resulted in either violence or a tense détente and the promise of an official end to hostilities. Twenty-six Jovian clans have sent ambassadors to Demarcation Point One, however, all but three of these have been recalled for reasons ranging from a breakdown in negotiations to a refusal to deal with the Grand Admiral.

CALLISTO

The tidal-locked moon of Callisto presents a harsh environment that so far has attracted few visitors. The moon is covered in a thick sheet of ice broken either by soaring mountain peaks or rare lakes of liquid water. On the dayside, a thick mist hangs in the air and lakes or rivers of melt water are more common. On the night side, a perpetual blackness brings on a cold whose depths rival those of Antarctica. No life forms not native to the world can survive for long on the surface without protection, even on the equator at the dayside temperatures rarely reach above freezing.

That there is life on Callisto came as a surprise to the biologists of Earth. A rocket ship, the *SS Trois Frères*, experienced a catastrophic rocket engine failure and was forced to crash land on the dayside. The crew managed to survive for thirty days before rescue, burning the bones

and rendered oil of a seal-like creature that they hunted on the ice-covered shores of one of the melt water lakes. Unfortunately, the killing and eating was not one-sided, and eight of the party died at the hands of brutish white-haired monsters that attacked in great numbers and were only held off by the ship's radium cannon.

CALLISTO

Length of Day: 400.56 Earth Hours.

Length of Year: 16.69 Earth Days.

Average Distance from Jupiter: 1.82 million km.

Theme: Ice Shrouded Mysteries.

Complication: Fearsome Callisto Yetis.

Personality: Dr. Francesca Santo.

Since then, there have only been a handful of expeditions to Callisto. The planet offers little in way of economic interest, though the native life-forms do attract exobiologists from Earth. Several new species have been identified, but the one that draws the most interest, at least from the general public, is the Callisto Yeti. These bipedal primates were the creatures that attacked the *SS Trois Frères*. Standing nearly three meters tall, heavily muscled, and sporting both long clawed hands and a head dominated by a pair of curving horns, they are impressive creatures to behold. Three were captured alive and transported to the Bronx Zoo in New York City, where they were kept in a special enclosure, becoming the zoo's biggest attraction. Unfortunately, a further two specimens intended for the Oslo Zoo in Norway escaped from the trucks transporting them from the Berlin Rocket Port to a waiting ship at Rostock. The two, a male and female, disappeared and have not been recovered.

Due to the difficulty in capturing a Callisto Yeti and the desire to display such an awe-inspiring creature, demand has increased for living specimens. In addition to the usual researchers, big game hunters and fortune seekers have been heading for Callisto in recent months with the hope of bagging a yeti to bring back to Earth.

Similarly, the hunt for the missing yetis in Germany continues, and the Third Reich has offered a rich reward for their capture. Originally this was for the return of the living specimens, but after a farmhouse was attacked and the family slaughtered, a pair of dead yeti would be just as acceptable.

CALLISTO STORY HOOKS

- A faint and almost incomprehensible RADIO signal is picked up, emanating from the dark side of Callisto. The signal repeats every twelve hours, and consists of a woman rambling in Italian about madness, cannibals, and yetis. Could this be a clue to the whereabouts of Dr. Santo's missing expedition?
- The Bronx Zoo wants to expand their Aliens of Callisto exhibit by adding some of the moon's strange sea life. A great reward has been offered.
- An European Navy saucer has crashed, the first of its kind to fall from the sky, somewhere on the dayside of Callisto. The race is on to be the first there, either to provide aid (and thus hopefully garner the Europeans' favor), or to loot the wreckage for secrets and advanced technology.

Dr. Francesca Santo

Dr. Santo is the leading expert on exobiology in the Jovian System, particularly the strange creatures native to Callisto. A graduate of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Dr. Santo specializes in pinnipeds, seals, and seal-like life. Her research into the shared characteristics of pinnipeds throughout the Solar System has led her to the frozen lakes and streams of Callisto, and into trouble. Her expedition landed on the dayside three months ago to begin a six-week program of collecting samples and observing Callisto's seals in their natural habitat.

The rocket ship *SS Balboa*, out of the San Diego rocket port, arrived to rendezvous with the expedition on time, but found no sign of any of the expedition members, only a wrecked campsite being rapidly covered by a layer of ice and snow. Yeti tracks were found in the vicinity, but so were the tracks of heavily booted Earthlings. The fate of Dr. Santo and her heavily armed expedition remains unknown, and the Scripps Foundation has offered a sizeable reward for either her safe return, or information about the expedition's ultimate fate.

EUROPA

Length of Day: 84.24 Earth Hours.

Length of Year: 3.51 Earth Days.

Average Distance from Jupiter: 671,000 km.

Theme: Mysterious Homeworld of the Europeans.

Complication: Death at the First Misstep.

Personality: Grand Admiral of Jupiter Sebastian Alexander Leopold Von Hapsburg I.

EUROPA

Little is known about Europa, for no Earthling has ever set foot on the moon and returned to talk about it. Well, no Earthling other than Grand Admiral of Jupiter Sebastian Alexander Leopold Von Hapsburg I, the Europeans' chosen representative. What has been discovered has come from observation by telescope, or by bits of information dropped into conversation by the Grand Admiral. From orbit, a patchwork of small fields and groves can be seen, interspersed by walled urban areas. The planet is largely water, with at least eighty-five percent of its surface covered by salt seas. What little land there is lies in one thin mass that transits just north of the equator. Canals cross this land, allowing for shipping to travel from the northern to the southern seas without having to sail all the way around the sole continent.

The Grand Admiral has let it drop that the climate is very hospitable, much like the finest lands in Southern Europe. The soil is rich and bountiful, and the Europeans have been so kind as to grow copious amounts of Earth foods for the better enjoyment of their Admiral and the delegations at Demarcation Point One. The foods provided are almost entirely of Mediterranean stock, though the Grand Admiral shows a fondness for tobacco and German liquors, both of which are provided in abundance. The only Earth crop that does not seem to grow on Europa are grapes, and it is highly recommended that any seeking an audience with the Admiral bring along some wine.

Strangely, telescopic observations have not shown any large activity on Europa. The cities glow at night, as cities should, but no lighted vehicle is ever seen traversing the connecting roads. The canals are obvious, as are their locks and other engineering necessities, but no ship is ever seen progressing through them, or in the surrounding seas. Covert listening in the space around Europa has not detected any RADIO transmissions, the only navigational beacons are ones that have appeared after the construction of Demarcation Point One, and no ships are seen leaving or approaching the moon's surface.

The famed Saucer Fleets of Europa are hidden somewhere on the moon's surface, but have not been observed. Three European Navy saucers, the *Maria*, the *Friendship*, and the Grand Admiral's flagship, the *Dreadnought*, are in constant orbit near Demarcation Point One, but other than these three and the ships of the delegations, no other vessels are seen in orbit or even nearby. Twenty-four beacons do orbit the moon, each numbered as Demarcation Points 1 to 24. To pass one of these is to enter European Airspace, a crime

punishable by death. Ships that do stray inside the zone are fired on by one of the three naval ships, using a smaller version of the deadly beam weapon that destroyed the HMRS *James Cook*. If they persist, they are disintegrated.

Demarcation Point One is located on a large asteroid brought into orbit by a science unimaginable to the brightest minds on Earth. One crater on this asteroid is doomed over and has been filled with an extensive palace complete with gardens, fountains, pools, and room for a thousand guests. Every nation on Earth, as well as the Vatican and the League of Nations (and other lesser international agencies) has a delegation here, lobbying for the attention of the Grand Admiral, and through him, the Europeans. Occasionally an actual European is seen at Demarcation Point One, but this is rare, and the tall strange aliens do not lower themselves to speaking with Earthlings on any matter.

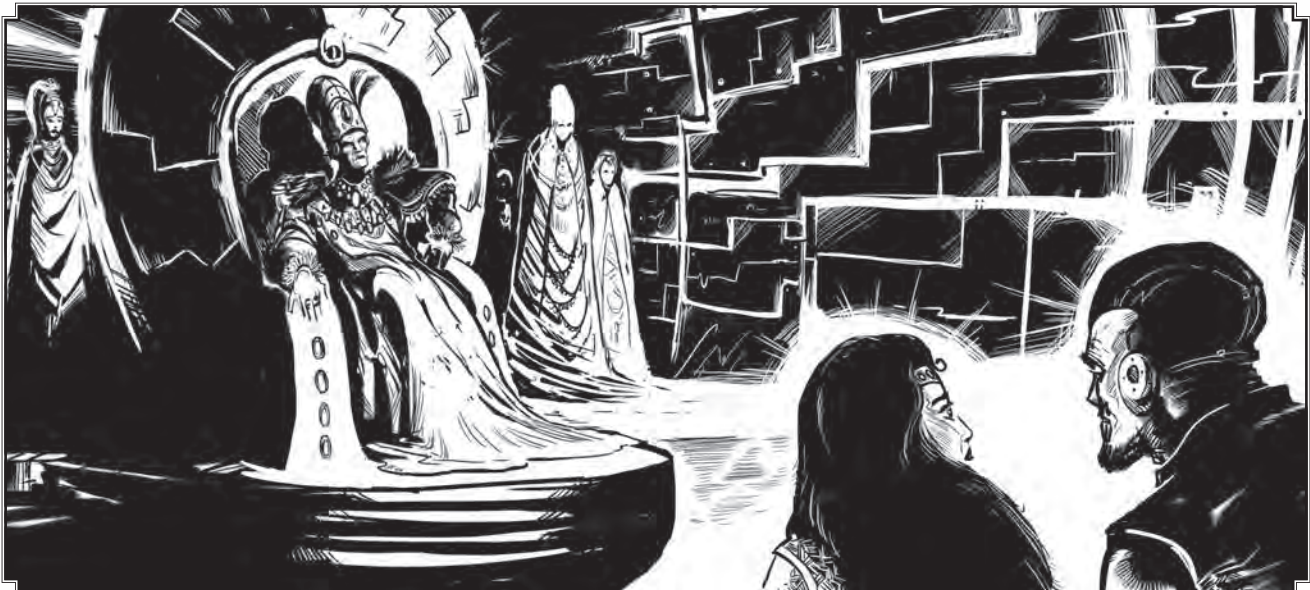
Being posted to a delegation on Demarcation Point One is considered a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the opulence and luxury of the place is unbelievable. Every conceivable amenity has been furnished, the food is divine, the palace and gardens are beautiful beyond words, the view through the dome of Jupiter and the Jovian System is barely describable in its grandeur, and the servants are always ready to give guests the 'royal treatment'. On the other hand, should the Europeans decide that humanity's reprieve is over, Demarcation Point One is likely the first place to be disintegrated. Likewise, the knowledge that these strange aliens are watching (as well as judging according to their own mysterious morality) is disconcerting.

Adding to the uncertainty is the apparent contradictions and possible madness of the Grand Admiral, the delegates' host. One never knows when one might be summoned to an audience to be threatened with extinction because of something that one of your countrymen did, or to be rewarded with gems, jewels, and precious metals because of some success. There appears to be no rhyme or reason for the actions that elicit each response, and that the admiral is acting as the mouthpiece of the Europeans creates a tension that can be felt no matter how fine the dinner or rich the bacchanal. That the delegates are often busy trying to make each other look bad, while at the same time not knowing what is actually considered a crime, adds to the confused sense of impending doom.

Grand Admiral of Jupiter Sebastian Alexander Leopold Von Hapsburg I

The Europeans do not communicate directly with Earthlings, or with any other non-European for that matter (it is assumed they communicate with each other, but no one knows for sure). Instead, all communication between them and the rest of the Solar System is through their chosen representative, the Grand Admiral of Jupiter, Sebastian Alexander Leopold Von Hapsburg I. When a message needs to be sent, other than simply blowing an offending rocket ship to bits, the Grand Admiral enters Demarcation Point One and calls an audience with the appropriate diplomats.

Quite an audience it is, for although his background is sketchy, what is known about the Grand Admiral is that he loves opulence, pomp, and ceremony.





From a golden throne adorned with priceless gems and cast reliefs of mass rocket ship battles (tricked out in platinum), His Magnificence presents an aura of feigned interest intermixed with savage threats and condescending tones. The uniform of the Most High Admiral of the Black and Red is a travesty of good taste, a veritable barrage of silks, ribbons, velvets, gold, jewels, four epaulets, a platinum gorget studded with a constellation of diamonds with a ruby at its center, and a cocked hat whose size and adornments would embarrass an emperor. All this raiment is backed up by a legion of servants drawn from every intelligent race in the Solar System, most of whom are young women.

Where the Grand Admiral came from is unknown, as is and how he became the representative of the Europeans and the apparent commander of their fleets. He spoke for them when they issued the Earthling Injunction, and later when it was temporarily suspended and negotiations began to allow access to the Jovian System. His accent places his birth, or at least his rearing, in Catalonia, but whether that means he is from Spain, Southern France, or even Sardinia or the Balearics, is unknown. The Grand Admiral is a man of middle height, somewhere in his early thirties or late twenties, with dark curly hair, a tanned complexion, and blue eyes. He is fluent in English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and most unusually, Venusian.

EUROPA STORY HOOKS

- The Grand Admiral of the European Navy has requested a private audience with the player characters. What could he want, and can he be refused?
- While visiting Demarcation Point One, one of the player characters is approached by one of the Grand Admiral's beautiful young women. She tells a story of woe, of being kidnapped from a dance hall in Madrid and taken to Demarcation Point One to serve the Grand Admiral in the most indecent ways. Others have suffered a similar fate, so can the heroes help?
- While on another planet, possibly outside the Jovian System, the player characters are contacted by a person claiming to be an agent of the Grand Admiral. He offers a rich bounty to deliver a case of exotic delicacies to Demarcation Point One. Inside the case is a radio bomb filled with TNT and radium.

GANYMEDE

GANYMEDE

Length of Day: 171.72 Earth Hours.

Length of Year: 7.155 Earth Days.

Average Distance from Jupiter: 1.07 million km.

Theme: Conflict Between Natives and Newcomers.

Complication: Restless Natives Intent on Driving off the Invaders.

Personality: Chan-la-lee, Ganymedian Warrior.

The forest covered Ganymede is considered by most to be the prize of the Jovian Moons, a rich planet that supports a diversity of life rivaled only by the deepest reaches of Earth's rainforests. Ganymede is a warm planet, not nearly as hot as Venus, but sufficiently warm to be uncomfortable for Earthlings not native to tropical or sub-tropical latitudes. Ganymede has become the focus of much of the exploration and exploitation of the Jovian System, largely because early explorers found something of great value – gold and silver.

There is a gold rush occurring on Ganymede of such a scope that the nations of Earth have been unable to control it. Anyone who can afford the passage by rocket ship and wants to strike it rich heads for Ganymede. True, the ore fields of Venus are closer, but a handful of companies dominate them. Yes, there is a fortune to be made on Mars if you can navigate the twisting channels of rival colonial nations and native Martian principalities. The Asteroid Belt is a bonanza, if you can afford the cost of a rocket ship and vacuum mining rig. But Ganymede, beautiful Ganymede, is a paradise where all you need is some camping equipment and a gold pan.

Beneath the trees that cover Jupiter's largest moon are hundreds of mining camps, none of them sanctioned by any government, nor protected by any law. It is a wild frontier of the first order, a place not unlike the Klondike in 1897 or Sutter's Mill in 1849. Wealth is taken out of the streams and rivers, dug from between the roots of three hundred meter tall trees. All is not perfect here, and the prospectors face two threats, one from within and one from without.

As could be expected from a wild and lawless frontier, crime, especially violent crime, is common in the camps of Ganymede. There is only one sure way to settle differences

between prospectors, and that is with a gun. Arguments over claims, thefts, political or national differences, and most especially over alcohol and women claim a fair number of lives. Local groups have begun to form vigilance committees to provide some safety, but the difference between a revenge shooting and a lynch mob are purely academic to the victim.

The other threat is the native Ganymedians. These plant-like bipedal lifeforms take great exception to the presence of Earthlings on their world, and especially to the destruction of their rivers and trees. Although they do not possess any high technology, they are numerous and they are growing into more than a nuisance. At first these bizarre, green skinned creatures the size and shape of tall, thin Earthling trees were rarely seen. They blend in well with their forest homes, having skin that ranges in color from mossy bark to leaf green, and hair that more closely resembles vines than anything mammalian. A reclusive and shy people, they have been found to be as ferocious as wolves in defense of their home, and unwilling to attempt to communicate with Earthlings, if they can talk at all. That they have some level of intelligence is certain, as they make and use simple tools of stone and wood. Many of the prospecting camps live in constant fear of a Ganymedian attack, of stone tipped arrows whizzing over log walls followed by the war cries of the green warriors (a sound described as something between a flute and a bagpipe).

Chan-la-lee, Ganymedian Warrior

Chan-la-lee is the leader of a large band of Ganymedians who are actively resisting the Earthlings. At first it, like many of it's people, just hid and observed these new men from the skies, but after a short time it saw that they wanted nothing more than to tear down the trees, dam up the streams, and spread their filth and pollution to every centimeter of it's world's soil. Talking would do no good, the strange guttural utterances of the newcomers was too harsh for any civilized person to attempt. Instead, it led it's people in ambushes, night raids, and other guerrilla tactics (though it does not think of these as such, just as how you wage war in a civilized manner).

Although surprise and poisoned arrows were wonderful tools of war, the newcomers had strange metal tubes that shot death and fire. Chan-la-lee took these from the dead when it could, and learned how to use them. Sadly, there were never enough of these, and not enough of the little bees that live within the tubes. Then came a sky demon with more newcomers, ones who came out waving flags of white with their hands in signs of peace. Through

gesture and a few grunts, Chan-la-lee learned that these new comers would give tubes and bees in exchange for trinkets made of the useless but pretty yellow metal. Now it's warriors are well-armed, and ready to make the nights full of the blood and screams of the newcomers.

GANYMEDE STORY HOOKS

- Two rival mining camps are on the brink of armed violence, having escalated their feud from pranks, to sabotage, and now theft. Both camps are looking to hire guns to help them 'take care of business'.
- Smugglers are bringing in guns to the Ganymedians, some looking for profit, others who have distinct moral qualms about the subjugation of a less advanced species. There is work to be found with the arms runners, as well as for the mining camps—none of whom want to see the natives armed and restless.
- A miner approaches the party, hoping to hire them as bodyguards and help him to get back to Earth. He and his partners uncovered a bizarre tablet in their placer mine, one that is ancient and is covered in Ancient Martian glyphs. Shortly after news of their discovery spread, his other three partners all died in somewhat mysterious accidents. Fearing for his life, but aware of the value of the tablet, the running man just wants to get back home and find a buyer for the antiquity.

IO

IO

Length of Day: 42.56 Earth Hours.

Length of Year: 1.769 Earth Days.

Average Distance from Jupiter: 421,648 km.

Theme: Blasted Civilization the Product of European Displeasure.

Complication: Attractive Remains of a Once Great Civilization, but Forbidden by the Europeans

Personality: Jan San Jan, losian prophet.

There used to be a civilization on Io, but now there is just a blasted wasteland, shattered cities, and feral scavengers. The Europeans claim that the natives of Io broke an agreement with them, something not on the scale of a total



disintegration, but still serious enough to have the European Fleet come and bomb them back to the Stone Age. Io is off limits today, but it was the first of the Jovian Moons that the Europeans opened up to Earthlings, though only for three months so that they could see what the Europeans were capable of.

The ecosystem of Io is still alive, but just barely. The planet could be described as nearly dead, no forests stand, the seas are mostly empty, and large lifeforms are scarce. Other than the remaining loites, the largest land animal is a type of rodent that grows to sixty centimeters long and weighs around fifteen kilograms. Plant life is limited to weedy grasses and fast growing mosses or lichens, with the occasional shrub in a protected location.

The civilization of the loites is not nearly dead, though it is a shadow of its former glory. Once there were vast cities that sprawled across the face of the moon, connected by rail lines on a scale unimaginable by Earthlings. Road networks ran from the railheads to smaller towns or other points, but these are all shattered, and, like the former track beds, twisted and deformed as if by a great heat. The cities themselves glow at night, but not from the lights of thousands of homes, but from a sickly green field of radiation that emanates from the twisted and burned remains of concrete buildings and tumbled skyscrapers.

According to photographs displayed by the Europeans, the loites were once a tall, fair-skinned people, similar to Earthlings or Royal Martians, but with a distinctive length to their features. Now, they are a deformed and stunted species, moving in a perpetual hunch, their pinched faces swinging around in search of trouble or food. Their skin is grey and patchy; many show signs of skin conditions or other ailments. Where once they built cities and produced fine art (the Europeans having kept a few samples of the latter), now they roam in feral packs and have lost most of their culture.

Jan San Jan

Jan San Jan was born amongst the ruins of his people, always in the shadow of what they were before fire fell from the sky and the cities melted. Unlike most of his people, he has hope for a brighter tomorrow, for he has seen the lights of the gods in the sky, lain hidden amongst the tumbled blocks as they came to earth, and followed them in their tour of the blasted cityscapes. He saw that they were tall and strong, as the legends say his people were, that they wore grand cloths from the Realm of Science, and carried strange items from that same mythical Realm of the Gods.

Jan San Jan did not approach the gods, though he followed their movements with a keen eye. When they left to return to the Thirty-Six Heavenly Realms, he searched the ground they trod upon, turning up scraps of paper, candy wrappers, and other debris. These he took to be messages from the gods, and brought them back to his people as signs of the wonders of the Realm of Science and the other Thirty-Five Heavenly Realms. In time more gods would come, poke through the ruins, and leave with strange objects his people never found a use for. If only the gods would come to the tribes and speak, bring their Wisdom and mighty Science to lift the faithful out of the grey wastes they called home. Jan San Jan has a dream of attracting the gods, and he now leads a small, but growing, cult that spends half its day searching through the wreckage of his people's civilization. They collect things the gods might want in the hopes of appeasing them, or at least trading these baubles for something useful, like tools or food. In his hidden shrine beneath a tumbled down skyscraper, Jan San Jan has built an altar to the gods, an altar covered in candy bar wrappers, broken and discarded bits of metal or plastic, and cigarette butts.

IO STORY HOOKS

- Despite being off limits to Earthlings, there is a strong market in Ioite artifacts. Can the player characters run the European blockade, fight off the natives, and return with a valuable relic?
- The party's ship strays too close to Io, and the European blockade fires a warning shot, vaporizing their main rocket drives. After safely crash landing, the party must somehow survive the blasted wasteland and marauding locals, finding a way off this rock.
- A strange light has begun to show on the surface of Io, a light far too large to be a campfire. This anomaly bears investigation, and the Grand Admiral does not wish to waste his fine Venusian Marines on this. Instead, he hires a group of rag tag wanderers, equips them with a rocket ship, and dispatches them to Io. As a reward, the party is granted individual Writs of Exploration, allowing them to pass through the blockade, but also granting them the right to go anywhere in the Jovian System. Once landed, our heroes discover three other ships of the same model and construction as their own, all empty, all stained with blood, all carrying Writs of Exploration.

MOONLETS

MOONLETS

Theme: Smaller Cousins of the Galilean Moons.

Complication: Unexplored Land Means Unknown Dangers.

Personality: Mortimer 'Morty' Fletcher, con artist in the stars.

Most of the sixty-four Jovian Moons are not like the larger moons of the Galilean group. They are instead moonlets; smaller bodies that orbit the giant but are often not large enough to possess much in the way of atmosphere, and thus life. Some, like the Amalthea group, are merely smaller versions of the larger moons. Others, such as Himalia, are little more than large asteroids.

Of the moonlets, those of the Amalthea Group are the largest and possess the most complete ecosystems. This group comprises the four closest moons to Jupiter –Adrastea, Amalthea, Metis, and Thebe. Metis orbits the closest, and its shape has been heavily influenced by Jupiter's pull, being drawn out into an elongated form not unlike an American football. The moon is covered in a steaming jungle on the point that is facing Jupiter, while the opposite is locked in an eternal night, forming a cool twilight plain covered in a grass-like fungus. Metis is subject to severe volcanism and seismic activity. The watery moon Adrastea is next in order, lying in the second orbital position out from Jupiter. The moon is covered in a deep sea that experiences considerable and complex tidal variations due to the influence of Jupiter and the other orbiting bodies. It lies nearly within the orbit of the Rings, and experiences frequent contact with chunks of ice and rock that plummet out of the sky to crash into the watery depths. Amalthea is an asymmetric moon covered in a reddish desert whose continual dust storms reach into its upper atmosphere, creating a trailing gossamer line of lost or expelled dust. This gossamer dust cloud stretches through the moon's entire orbit, as it leaves dust behind and picks up the dust ahead. Finally, the furthest out of the Amalthea group is Thebe, another reddish desert colored moon of irregular shape. Some astronomers have devised the theory that the two moons, Amalthea and Thebe, if fitted together could form a nearly spherical body. Both share many characteristics; however, Thebe has no atmosphere and is a dead rock floating through space, unlike its stormy neighbor, Amalthea.

Early in 1938 a strange sight greeted the diplomats at the court of the Grand Admiral of Jupiter's court on Demarcation Point One. During a regular reception of new diplomats, a party of a dozen before unseen aliens marched into the chamber. These aliens announced themselves as the delegation from the Jovian moon of Metis and then proceeded to lay a tribute of exotic woods, artwork, radium ore, and their own swords at the feet of the Grand Admiral. The Grand Admiral received this tribute, and the pledges of loyalty from the aliens, returning their swords to them in an obviously scripted ceremony. In this manner the Metisians announced themselves to the Solar System.

Metis is a moon of extreme tidal forces that pull at the moonlet's structure forcing it into an oblong shape. The Metisians have evolved on this planet of constant seismic upheaval and once populated the steaming jungles of the Jovian face. In the past great hordes of these strange aliens hunted the grey plains on the far end of their moon, but today their presence on the surface is limited to a few hunting and gathering parties. Centuries ago a great plague swept across Metis, and the survivors found themselves forced into natural caverns. Over the years these caverns have been enlarged and strengthened, and the Metisians have used their technology to adapt themselves to a subterranean, twilight world. Recently, explorers from below have discovered that the plague has died out, and the Metisians are ready to return to the surface, and to venture out into the Solar System.

MOONLETS STORY HOOKS

- Rumors of a gold strike on Metis brings hordes of would-be miners to the unstable moon. As more and more people arrive, the truth of the matter is soon discovered, there is no gold on Metis. However, if there is no gold, why did the Grand Admiral grant so many Limited Writs of Exploration to hopeful miners, each at a cost of \$1000?
- Astronomers and rocket ship captains have noted that Thebe is not in its proper orbit, but is now moving slowly towards Amalthea. Some great force is at work, bringing the two moons together, but the movement of Thebe is upsetting the orbits of several smaller bodies, posing a threat to shipping inside Jupiter's Rings. Somebody needs to visit these dusty red moons and uncover this mystery.
- A scientist working on his own has invented a combination rocket ship and submarine. He hopes to test this invention, so useful in the exploration of watery worlds, on the moon Adrastea. If only he can find a crew brave enough to try it out.



Mortimer 'Morty' Fletcher

Morty Fletcher, *aka* Mort the Goat, Marvin Hayes, Dr. Martian, and Professor Morthume Hildegard is one of the Solar System's most notorious con artists and flim-flam men. He has swindled English bankers, American businessmen, French scientists, and aristocratic Russian émigrés. On Mars he sold 'maxim' guns to the Princes of H'Kalit and Yanpur, then went to Venus to sell Martian Secret Panaceas to the miners. Now he has moved to the Jovian System, his current con involving fake Warrants of Exploration, forged writs from the Grand Admiral allowing for the colonization of the smaller moons, as well as 'documented' proof of their wealth in gold and gems. Rumor has it he is planning to sell Jupiter's Rings to the Japanese.

LESSER BODIES

The remaining orbiting bodies of the Jupiter System are small lumps of rock or ice spinning through the void of space. Almost all of them have no atmosphere and no life on them. A handful have pockets of atmosphere and liquid water within them, forming sealed-off caverns filled with bizarre life. Not all of these life-forms breathe air as we know it, and many survive under conditions lethal to Earthlings.

Little is known about these cavern-dwelling creatures, their sealed environments are only rarely found, and then the sudden exposure to vacuum destroys them. It is assumed that they are like the cavern ecosystems of the Asteroid Belt, possessing fungus and lichen-like life that feed off the chemical composition of the rock or off each other in an endless cycle of predation.

To date, there has been little exploration or exploitation of these smaller orbiting bodies. While it is true that they contain valuable ores and minerals, as do the similar bodies in the Asteroid Belt, their increased distance from Earth, as well as the threat of European interference, has kept miners away. Furthermore, while the Asteroid Belt has ruins of some ancient civilization that may have inhabited a hypothetical tenth planet, the rocks and ice balls of the Jovian System have no such wonders.

LESSER BODIES

Day: Varies

Year: Varies

Theme: Flying Chunks of Ice And Rock.

Complication: What Treasures do they contain?

Personality: Baron Nikolai Pahlen, wandering Russian.

LESSER BODIES STORY HOOKS

- The San Diego Zoo, one of the largest in the USA, is building a special exhibit, *Creatures of the Solar System*. The highlight will be an expensive display of life-forms from inside the asteroids. The pressure chamber-like enclosures have already been constructed, but specimens are needed. The player characters are hired to get some from the small orbiting bodies of the Jovian System. Using a special pressure sealed drill rig and containment cage, they can drill into the heart of an orbiting rock, gather samples, and safely transport them back to Earth.
- A group of asteroid miners want to explore the Jovian System for new prospecting sites, but they need to get permission from the Europeans. Being just common roughnecks, they are overawed by the splendor of Demarcation Point One, and would like to hire the player characters to serve as intermediaries. Of course, the Grand Admiral will not part with the Limited Writs of Exploration without some sort of recompense, either in goods or promises, and fulfilling these will probably fall to the party.
- A team of exogeologists has fallen ill with a strange disease. They had recently returned to Earth from a survey of several ice and rock bodies in the Jovian System. One of them escaped quarantine and was lost by the authorities, possibly becoming the source of an outbreak of a deadly alien disease. The player characters are sent to the Jovian System to explore the places the exogeologists had been to, and hopefully find a source, if not a cure.

Baron Nikolai Pahlen

Once Nikolai was a wealthy and well-respected member of the Russian Imperial Army; an officer who was decorated for his actions during the Great War and the Russian Civil War. Unable to save his country or his czar, Nikolai fled Russia and the Soviet pogroms, becoming something of an eccentric ladies' man and adventurer. Fortune did not find him in the gold fields of Honduras, the salons of Paris, or the deepest reaches of Africa. For a time he served various Chinese warlords as an advisor and soldier of fortune. Six years ago he struck wealth while working as a white hunter in South Africa. At first Nikolai thought he had been swindled in a land deal, the pleasant and verdant farmland he purchased turned out to be dry and barren. Then, while attempting to dig a well, the former aristocrat discovered diamonds.

Luck did not long smile on Nikolai though, for after three years of mining he discovered that the land he had bought actually belonged to someone else, and never to the slick fellow that he paid his last dollar to. Taking what he could, Nikolai once again fled, only this time out into space. The diamonds bought him a rocket ship and a crew, the authorities in the Jovian System do not ask a whole lot of questions, and there just might be a fortune to be made in those tumbling chunks of rock and ice.



SATURN AND THE OUTER PLANETS

Can anyone hear me? Is this getting through?

I am all alone now, the rest of the crew are dead.

We were ninety days out from Earth, one and something billion miles. I don't know I'm just a rocket hand. I was down in the hold moving cargo around and looking for where the ration packets were stored when the rocket shook, the lights went out, and we went down. It was like the drive just cut off and the generator died all at once.

Captain Piers was killed in the crash, we lost a lot of crew that day. Most of engineering died when the radium fuel bunkers broke and spilled all over the hot engine. Mr. Goldwin, the pilot, he broke his leg in the crash.

The bone was sticking out and everything. I buried him yesterday, I think...the days kind 'a run together.

Twelve of us survived, most of us were pretty banged up. Dr. Kang was unconscious the whole time, something had hit him in the head when we crashed. We tried to help him, but he just sort 'a stared off all open-eyed for a few days and then quit breathing.

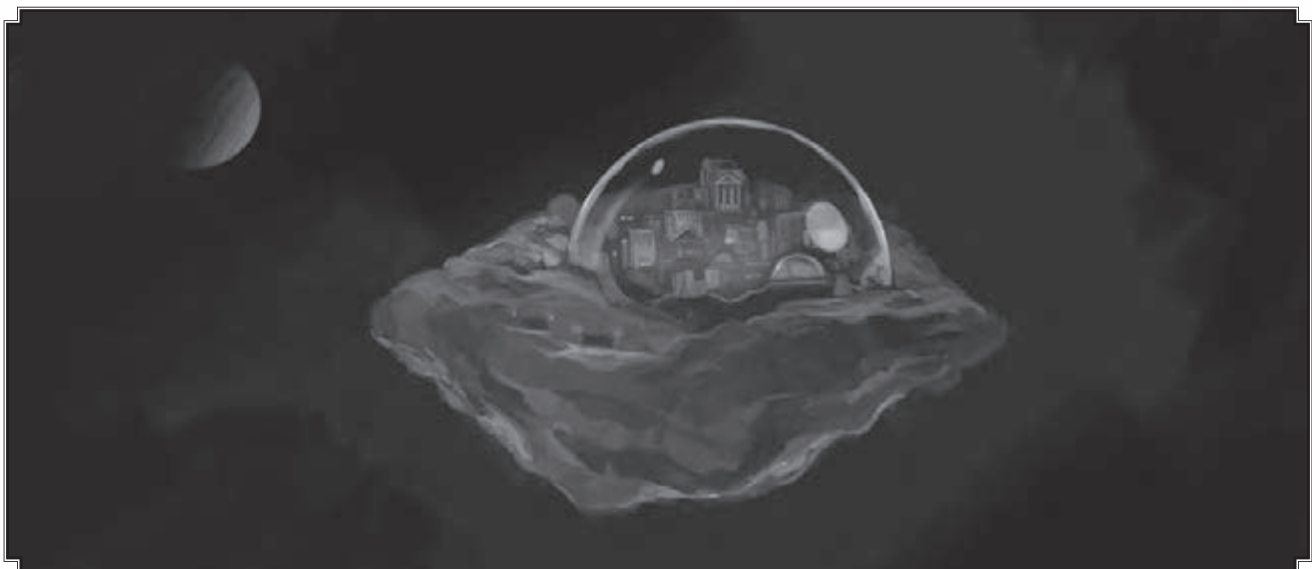
The first few days we salvaged what we could from the ship. There was plenty of food and this moon has water on it. Its cold though, and the sun never does more than peak at us. It is always twilight here, like right after sunset but not all the way dark.

Makes it hard to know what a day is. Guess I can measure it by when I sleep. If I sleep. I don't sleep much.

They came two, maybe three days after the crash. We didn't know it at the time, just heard Ferguson scream and saw a trail of blood that ran off into the rocks. Aberson, the chief gunner, took over and we armed up and followed. As soon as we passed the rocks outside of camp these slithering blue shapes came down on us, they took Harrison, Roth, and Bishop.

We fired our RAY pistols at them but if we hit it did nothing. Every flash of beam was so bright against the darkness that we were blinded.

After that we never left camp and stood watches. Fox and Demetriou disappeared on watch. Aberson went out after them and never came back.





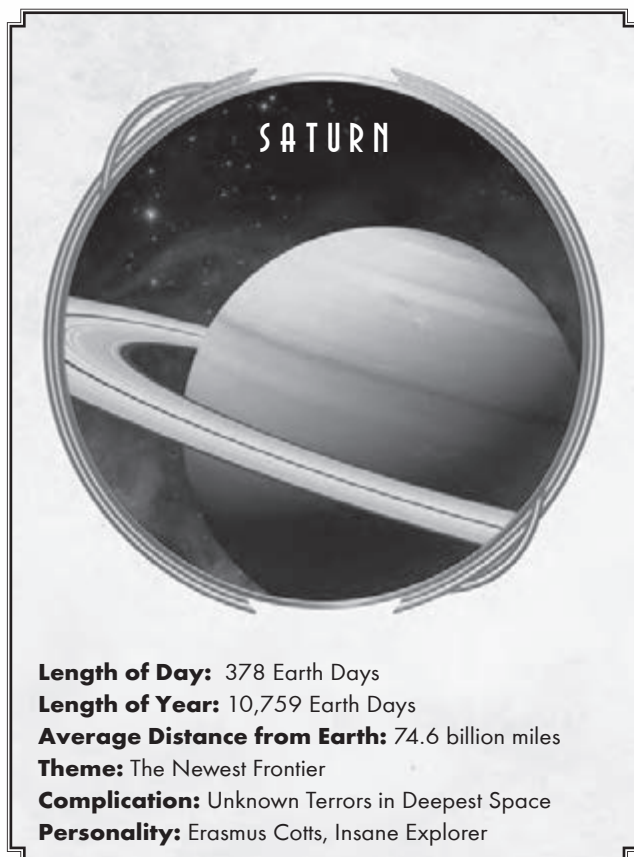
I moved into the wreck. They don't seem to want to get near, I guess maybe because of the glow of the radium leak. It's the brightest thing out here. It took me a while but I got the RADIO working, don't know the range. RADIO just sort 'a goes forever in space, so I figure someone might here this.

Its warm in here and the glow is nice.

The film on my uniform has turned black, they told me to report that if it did. I don't have anyone to report to. This morning I noticed a loose tooth and my hair is getting thin.

Hope someone hears this soon.

SATURN



Of the four outer planets, Saturn is the least known, though this is not saying much. It has been only eighteen months since the Europeans granted Writs of Exploration to the American, British, and German governments allowing them to blast beyond the orbit of Jupiter. What they found was another mini-system, similar to Jupiter's though smaller (of course, when you are talking about gas giants and their moons, smaller is a very relative term). The planet

itself has not garnered much interest, being composed of layers of various gasses and inhabited by strange creatures like those found in the upper reaches of Jupiter's atmosphere.

Like the other Gas Giants, what draws explorers to Saturn is its moons. Saturn, in addition to having the largest and most impressive rings in the Solar System, possesses over sixty orbital bodies of various sizes, most of them smaller than Jupiter's moons, or even Earth's for that matter. It was a grave disappointment for the first explorers to discover that only one moon, Titan, is large enough to be of much interest. However, exploration and surveys of the smaller moons continues in the hope that something might be found. At the very least, they might be claimed for one of the Great Powers and used as a base for deeper exploration of the Solar System

SATURN STORY HOOKS

- A RADAR survey of Saturn returns several strange contacts inside the mid-layers of the planet's atmosphere. There should be nothing there, but the RADAR keeps showing echoes, hints that something large and solid is down there.
- Bizarre radio transmissions have been detected coming from Saturn's north pole, right from the center of the bizarre hexagonal storm system that sits there.
- One of Saturn's lesser moons has been claimed by Germany and the Soviet Union, though no nation has yet 'planted a flag' on it. The party is hired to do the same by a somewhat disreputable figure to claim it, and then sell it to the highest bidder.

Erasmus Cotts, Insane Explorer

Some folks flat out lose their minds when subjected to the cold, unfeeling depths of space, and poor Erasmus is one such individual. Once he was a promising explorer, one who had already pushed the boundaries of Earthling space far into the Jupiter system. Travelling alone in his custom built rocket ship, the *Corenelis Nay*, Erasmus set several records for sustained solo space flight, as well as distance from the Sun. Sadly, his last recorded expedition, a solo tour of Saturn's Moons, ended with him crashing on a small moonlet.

The moonlet was just barely large enough to support an atmosphere, and had only the most primitive of life-forms on it. Still, Erasmus was undeterred, and began the laborious task of staying alive and rebuilding his damaged

craft. For nine months he worked, living on barely enough alien lichen and moss to survive, and definitely not enough to stave off a variety of nutritional disorders. His body slowly dying, his mind soon followed, and the famed explorer took to wandering the moonlet, often spending days in a deprivation-induced haze.

Sometime during this wandering he came across a small cavern, and inside he discovered the remains of an alien spacecraft. What this thing did to his mind and body, one can only speculate, but it did allow him to rebuild his ship, only now armed with deadly RAY cannons and a faster, more maneuverable drive. He haunts the local system of moons and moonlets, preying on any he passes, inside hoping someone comes along who will shoot him down and end this misery.

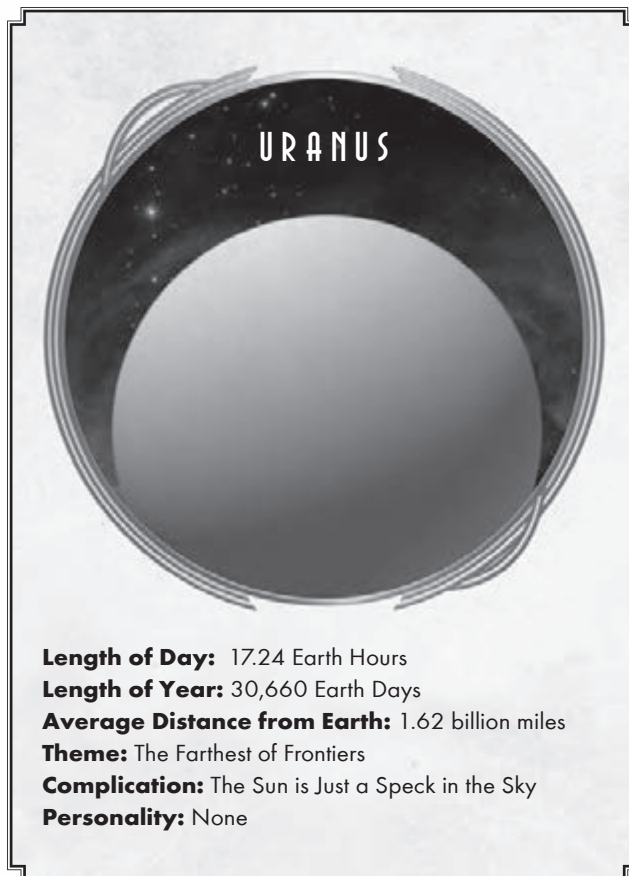
AUTHOR'S NOTE

You will find only scant information on this part of the Solar System, and most of that is merely hints or clues to something out there. The outer planets are the distant frontier, the great unknown. Being largely undefined, the GM and players have free reign to create whatever they want, make declarations, invent stories, and in general make it their own. Have fun, and keep your RAY gun handy!

Uranus is a great unknown. No one has returned from its orbit alive, but several expeditions are currently either underway or preparing to push the boundaries of human explored space. It is a puzzling planet, because it lies on its side in respect to its orbit. Like the other gas giants it has a ring of ice and rock, as well as several moons. Most of these moons are small or irregularly shaped, but two approach the size of Earth's Moon, Titania and Oberon.

What few RADIO reports that have come back from the few failed missions to Uranus have revealed little other than a brief survey of the planet and the moon Oberon. Uranus has an atmosphere similar to other gas giants, but its layers of gas are eerily quiet and still. It is far colder than Saturn or Jupiter, a cold best described as worse than arctic. No life forms have been reported, though the Hertzog Expedition of 1937 reported that something had latched on to their rocket ship, though if this was a life form, magnetic storm, or something else entirely, is unknown, as the last broadcast from the expedition ended seconds after the words, "Something has hold of the ship... Help! Help!"

URANUS



Oberon is a peaceful moon with a thin, but breathable atmosphere. The gravity is roughly equal to that of Earth's Moon, and this allowed the sole expedition, the Marston-Moore Expedition, to safely land and take off with ease. Nearly all of the expedition's reports on Oberon were transmitted back to Earth before the rocket ship suffered a cataclysmic failure of its engines, causing the vessel to explode killing all aboard. The expedition reported that the planet is covered in a russet lichen or moss that extends from horizon to horizon. At night, the moss glows with a faint bioluminescent green. This red moss is very resilient, tough to cut and, due to its high water content, nearly impervious to fire. It grows quickly, and needed to be regularly trimmed off the rocket ship's landing gear as well as any object left unattended for more than a few hours. There were some hints in the report that artificial shapes, possibly buildings, were seen along a canyon edge, but the expedition did not have time to investigate.



URANUS STORY HOOKS

- The first successful expedition to Uranus brings back samples of the red moss found on Oberon. Unfortunately the moss's spores soon escape the lab, and begin growing over every surface of a major university. If not stopped, the moss might conceivably cover the whole surface of the Earth as it has done on Oberon. Perhaps on Oberon or another of Uranus' moons there is a clue as to how to stop the red moss from space?
- One of the lost expeditions to Uranus, the Hertzog Expedition, has sent a weak radio message. All they say is that they are being held captive on a floating island in the planet's atmosphere, and that they need help. The message is cut short in mid-sentence, but the last words heard were in a rough voice, possibly Slavic, in the background.
- For reasons known only to themselves, the Europeans have rescinded the Writ of Explorations issued for Uranus, and ordered any ships in that orbit to turn around immediately. All but one expedition has reported that they are on their way back, and in their mercy the Europeans have allowed one ship to try and find the missing explorers. They are allowing six weeks for the rescue mission, and any ships found near Uranus after that time will be destroyed. The party's ship is the only one close enough to get there and back in the time allotted, will they race against the clock to save lives?

NEPTUNE



Length of Day: 17 Earth Hours

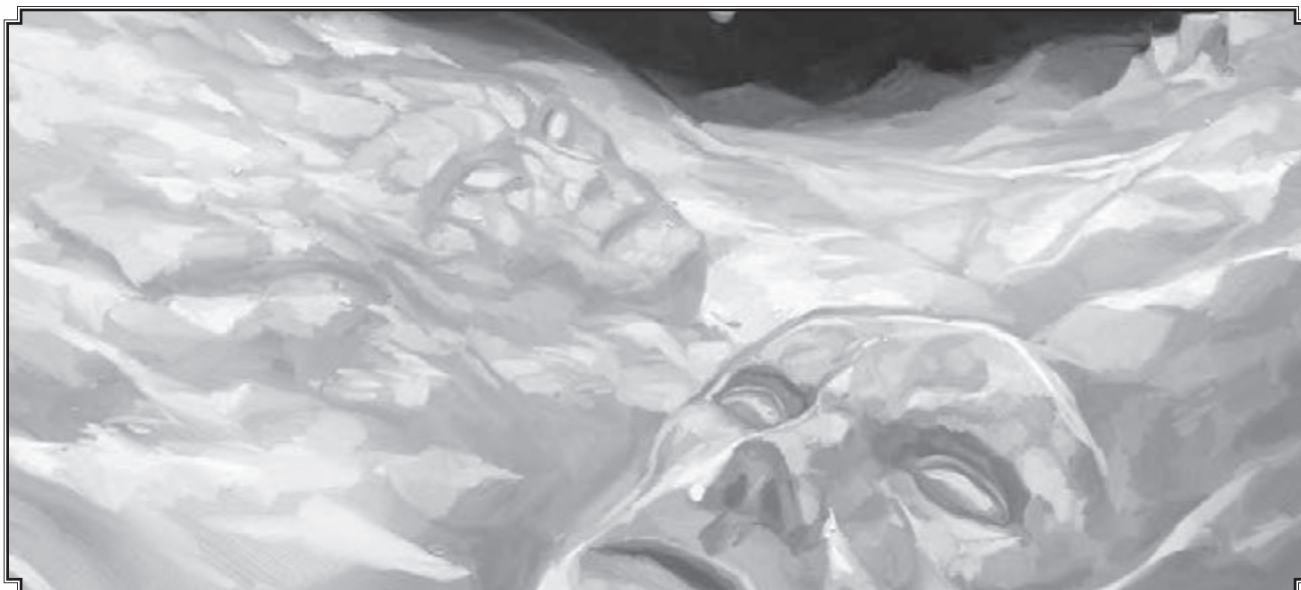
Length of Year: 60,225 Earth Days

Average Distance from Earth: 2.6 billion miles

Theme: Mysterious Planet on the Edge of the Solar System.

Complication: Almost Nothing is Known about Neptune and its Satellites.

Personality: None





Length of Day: 153 Earth Hours
Length of Year: 90,520 Earth Days
Average Distance from Earth: 3.54 billion miles
Theme: A Cold Unlike Any Other
Complication: Signs of Intelligent Life, or Something Else?
Personality: Dr. Alicia Bayers

Those who document such things have not found two that are same, though there are similarities between the faces. Every face is of a snarling man-beast with flared nostrils, pointed teeth, and heavy brows. Of course, this may be all supposition, so much cloud gazing by men and women who spend most of their lives looking through telescopes at distant lights.

Dr. Alicia Bayers

Dr. Bayers is one of the true believers, though she sees herself as a woman of science. Her investigations of the faces on Pluto have convinced her that they are indeed artificial constructs wrought by non-human hands. Dr. Bayers' fellow scientists are not so sure, and she has developed a reputation as being an overly enthusiastic crackpot. Undismayed by her skeptics, she has applied to nearly every government body and private fund in the United States to provide the money she will need to form an expedition to Pluto, something no rocket ship has yet to achieve. Her zeal has gotten the better of her, and Dr. Bayers has been fired from several universities, from her original position at MIT to even small state schools. Unable to keep a job, and hounded by her own obsession with the faces on Pluto, Bayers is growing desperate, dangerously desperate, and will soon undertake some form of extreme action. Sadly, if an expedition is ever planned for Pluto, Dr. Bayers is the foremost authority on the planet.

NEPTUNE

Only a few brave explorers have penetrated the orbit of Neptune and returned. Others have attempted it, but they are long overdue and thought to be dead. What little is known about the planet and its satellites comes from the surviving expeditions and reports sent via RADIO from the lost ones. Neither has been able to provide much information, leaving this gas giant and its moons as one of the many mysteries of the Solar System.

PLUTO

All that is known about Pluto has been learned through telescopes. They have revealed a frozen ice ball of a world that makes Jupiter's moon Callisto look like a summer garden. No signs of advanced life have been spotted, however some observers have noted that unusual shapes periodically appear in the snow and ice, shapes that can be construed as faces. If these are indeed artificial carvings in the planet's icy crust, then they are created by either amazing technology or massive undertakings involving the organization of thousands of individuals using primitive tools. The faces stretch across hundreds of miles.

PLUTO STORY HOOKS

- A sunspot, accident, or other traumatic event forces the player characters' ship off course. They find themselves in the orbit of Pluto, and needing to set down somewhere and make repairs. Can they survive the freezing cold and constant gale, or will they become entombed in a land of ice and snow?
- Dr. Bayers approaches the player characters with an offer to take her to Pluto; she has the money for it and is willing to pay well. However, she acquired this small fortune through lies, theft, and fraud, and not only is the FBI on her tail, but the Mob is as well.
- The party is approached by a ragged bum who howls at them that he has been kidnapped by flying space mushrooms and taken to Pluto. Before they can drive him off, he thrusts a rag wrapped object in their hands. Inside the dirty wrappings is a shard of ice, ice that does not melt and emits a strange keening sound if struck.

SOLAR SYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS



These organizations operate across the Solar System. Our heroes might be members of them, involved (either willingly or unwillingly) in their plots, or simply run across them from time to time. Organizations offer great hooks for character background that helps tie them into the plot of *Rocket Age*, yet do not limit their choices or actions too much. There is no mechanical benefit for belonging to an organization.

EUROPEAN EMISSARY CORPS



When most people think of Europeans they think of the Emissary Corps, the branch of the European Navy tasked with understanding and evaluating the lesser species. European emissaries have attempted, and some have even succeeded, in placing themselves in a variety of roles ranging from Venusian hunters to Earthling shopkeepers. Many find it a rewarding job, but it is also a dangerous one as not all sophonts spend their time selling produce,

and the directors of the Corps are far more interested in the behaviors and lives of lesser species engaged in more violent and risky activities.

Europeans seem to prefer a very loose structural organization based on a broad base of equals directed by a group of leaders who meet in council. This organizational structure can be seen even on the smallest of saucer ships; three Europeans make up the command and crew of a Victory class attack fighter. The European Emissary Corps is structured the same way with only two ranks, the emissaries and the High Council of Emissaries. The former has no internal divisions of rank or command, every emissary is empowered to act in its own manner in order to fulfill its mission. The High Council meets on Europa, or possibly Demarcation Point One, no one seems to be sure. Its composition is also unknown, but emissaries answer to it, and some have expressed hopes of one day joining the council.

European emissaries practice a form of sophontology whose Earthling equivalent would be called the Participant-Observer technique. On Earth this technique was pioneered by noted anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing, and later expanded upon by Dr. Bronsilow Malinowski (currently studying Ganymedian barter systems), E.E. Evans Pritchard (currently studying Martian religion in the Kalond Canal Valley), and Dr. Margret Meade (presumed lost in late 1937 while studying the Chanari of the G'Hascars Triangle region). It is unknown how much of this ground breaking anthropological work the Europeans were aware of when they founded the Emissary Corps, but it is obvious that the Corps' operations are either modeled on or developed along the same lines as these Earthling theories.

The heart of participant-observation is the act of joining a culture in order to study it from the inside. The emissary must live with its subjects, experiencing life from their perspective, while at the same time retaining a degree of scientific detachment with regards to its conclusions. A certain amount of interrogation is assumed in the technique, but this questioning needs to be of a limited and careful nature in order for it to not overly disrupt the natural behaviors of the subjects. For emissaries this often proves a bit of a problem, as Europeans have shown to be generally poor at picking up social cues of other species. In

addition to the questioning, emissaries are also known to hand out surveys and questionnaires to their subjects, often ones that contain a fair amount of truly uncomfortable or embarrassing questions.

EUROPEAN EMISSARY CORPS CHARACTER HOOKS

- You have decided to abandon your mission and strike out on your own. As would be expected, the High Council is displeased with this turn of events and has sent a team of Metisians to track you down. In addition, any European you meet might be a spy, as well as other beings. The High Council has a long reach and will stop at nothing to bring you back, or at least your recorder implant.
- You have been assigned to a mission that doesn't suit your temperament. Perhaps you are kind and gentle, and but must serve as a soldier or criminal. On the other hand, you might have a temper and a propensity towards violence, but instead have been assigned to study religious figures or medical personnel.
- Your assignment looks good on data screens, although paper is what these primitives use, but it is either the result of poor planning or poor data on the part of the High Council. The group you have been sent to study do not permit Europeans to join. This might be a religious order, secret government project, or even racist movement. Still, you must at least try, but this wimple and dress are cumbersome, and why is it called a habit anyway? Is it because you wear it every day?

Each emissary is tasked with reporting its findings back to the High Council. How this is done is unknown, no emissary has been seen using RADIO or other known means of communication. It is well known that emissaries are implanted with a device that records all their sensory input and somehow broadcasts that back to Europa upon the emissary's death. This implant device also dissolves itself and the emissary.

Pvt. Marvin Swartzensoldat, US Ninth Cavalry

At first appearance Pvt. Swartzensoldat might just be the most miserable European emissary in the Corps. His mission is to study the soldiers of the US Ninth Cavalry, the famed Buffalo Soldiers who have been deployed to Mars as part of the US 1st Martian Expeditionary

Force. He is constantly sunburned by the baking sun of the Red Planet, giving his normally purple skin a bright yellow-orange color. He is also allergic to horses and is constantly sneezing and itching. Despite these physical discomforts, Marvin has taken to his mission and his role as a cavalryman with gusto. He identifies as male as not just because that would be required to fill his role, but also as a personal choice. Biologically he might be classified as female as his sex gestates European embryos, but with the alien biology of Europeans simple binary sexes and genders are poor terminology.

Pvt. Swartzensoldat is officially a member of the US Ninth Cavalry, having enlisted and taken his oath of service, completed basic and cavalry training, and even draws his pay like his fellow soldiers. His surname was chosen by accident; Pvt. Swartzensoldat thought he was being assigned to a German unit, but quickly discovered that there are Germans who are also Americans (this he sees as the most important data he has uncovered to date). He also lacked a surname, but was given one by his commanding officer, Lt. Kenneth Spencer. Pvt. Swartzensoldat has fought in several engagements, and although his constant questions and survey forms can be an annoyance, he has been well received by his compatriots and is 'one of the guys'.

EUROPEAN EMISSARY CORPS STORY HOOKS

- An European emissary arrives at the character's doorstep, or airlock, or just brazenly walks up to them. It informs them that it has been assigned to study them and expects to be welcomed with open arms. However, its training was shoddy and although it shows great enthusiasm, it seems unable to complete even the most basic of tasks.
- The player characters come across a dying European whose implants have been damaged. It pleads with them to take the recorder out and return it to Demarcation Point One. One more thing, could they kindly dispose of its body?
- A shadowy villain who blocks their every move plagues our heroes. This villain is ruthless, efficient, and more than willing to kill to get its way. When they finally manage to confront their foe, they discover it is an European emissary who apologizes for the inconvenience, admits that this is nothing personal, and then places them in a death trap.



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION



Known on Mars by the acronym ICIC (or sarcastically Ick Ick), the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation is a branch of the League of Nations dedicated to promoting exchange of ideas between scientists, artists, teachers, researchers, and scholars. Long an underfunded advisory board of an underfunded international organization, the ICIC has grown in recent years thanks to the hard work of its members and the exploration of Mars. Although the main offices are in Geneva and Paris on Earth, and small branch offices can be found on Jupiter and Venus, the main work of the Committee is on Mars.

ICIC CHARACTER HOOKS

Although the full members get the entire spotlight, they wouldn't be able to accomplish much of anything if it wasn't for the associates. You may be a research assistant, guard, porter, or any other type of support staff. Your job is to follow along and keep the ICIC members safe, happy, and working.

You never meant to do field work; you haven't even taken the fieldwork course at the Field School. Instead, your stint on Mars was supposed to be spent in a laboratory studying Ancient Martian technologies. Now, you have been pulled out of your comfortable life to accompany these strangers on some mad mission you don't entirely understand.

The ICIC kicked you out for ethics violations, but they just don't understand that in the field certain shortcuts need to be made in order to conduct the research. Now, armed with your vast intellect and any items you could take on your way out, you are ready to conduct the research you want to, in the manner that it needs to be conducted in.

Founded in 1922, the ICIC could not even afford to have offices until the French government provided a branch office in Paris. Despite having such luminaries as Albert Einstein and Marie Curie amongst its members, this lack of funding prevented the Committee from doing any serious work for several years. After the Einstein-Goddard-Tesla flight to Mars in 1931, the Committee's prospects began to look brighter. Einstein donated a large share of the wealth his work on rocket drives brought him to the Committee, and other wealthy donors followed suit.

The Committee is loosely organized, with an advisory panel of fifteen members who serve on a rotating basis and are drawn from the entire senior membership. Each senior member is eligible to serve on the advisory panel once every three years and may not serve two consecutive terms. The rotation is staggered, and selection is randomly determined. The advisory panel selects bureau chiefs to head physical sciences, social sciences, medical sciences, art, literature, education, research, management, symposiums, and humanities bureaus. Chiefs serve until retirement or removal by the advisory panel. Individual sponsored expeditions, laboratories, or other research ventures, as well as artist communes, are organized as needed and led, or not led, as needed. The decisions on what activities to pursue is up to the bureau chiefs, but the advisory panel divides funding amongst the bureaus, thus granting it some control over what the ICIC pursues. The panel and bureau chiefs meet at the Geneva offices, and most of the bureaucracy of the Committee is located there.

Branch offices support local research and expeditions, as well as other activities of the Committee. One can expect to find laboratories, private study rooms, libraries, and such at a branch office, and even the one in Paris offers accommodations for members. Naturally the ones in more far flung places offer additional services, and the Talsinth branch office looks more like a medieval caravanserai than a haven for intellectual endeavors. In addition to its branch offices, the ICIC maintains an extensive library in Paris, a collection of Ancient Martian artifacts at its branch in Talsinth, and copies of every member's published work at every branch from the jungles of Venus to the atmosphere of Jupiter.

The ICIC funds and organizes intellectual pursuits, as long as these are being carried out by member nations of the League of Nations, or by members of the Committee. Their goal is the development and exchange of intellectual pursuits, from the sciences to the arts. On Mars, the most famed work is being conducted by archaeologists delving into the secrets of the Ancients, and by ICIC scientists who busy themselves in the Talsinth labs to turn these finds into marketable technologies for the betterment of humanity.

as a whole. It should be noted that these technologies are for peaceful applications only, if a weapon should be unearthed, it might be studied to determine if its power source may be used in other devices, but the weapon itself will be shelved in the archives.

In addition to the hard work of archaeologists and scientists, Talsinth also supports an artists' colony and funds several social sciences as well as biological and geological research programs on Mars. Although these are not as profitable as the work being done looking into the secrets of the Ancients, they are important intellectual pursuits nonetheless. Finally, the Talsinth branch office maintains a Field School for Martian Affairs that offers a six-month course in Martian languages, cultures, geography, and ecology. Due to several early disastrous expeditions, the ICIC requires all members who wish to conduct fieldwork on Mars to take the course. It should be noted that the course is open to any person of good standing, and non-ICIC members need to pay for the course, as well as room and board during their studies.

ICIC STORY HOOKS

- A recent ICIC expedition into the Empty Desert has not reported in for three days, and the bureau chief in Talsinth is getting worried. Hoping to avoid the scandal of losing an expedition, he wants to hire the player characters to discretely look into the situation and make a rescue if needed.
- An ICIC expedition is heading deep into the Western Highlands and is looking to hire associates. Research assistants, guards, porters, and anyone with useful skills are asked to apply at the branch office in Talsinth.
- There are those who want things kept hidden, and an ICIC expedition is heading for just such a place. A man going by the name of Mr. Jackson approaches the party and wants to hire them to stop an ICIC expedition from reaching its goal, using any means necessary. He won't say why but is willing to offer a great deal of money, a quarter up front, to see that things are done, and done properly.

Dr. Marie-Nicolette Tirmont

Dr. Tirmont, one of France's finest minds, has just recently finished her two-year course at the ICIC Martian Academy at Talsinth. After graduating from the Sorbonne, and furthering her education at Harvard and Oxford, Dr. Tirmont served three years as an associate of the ICIC, working on archaeological digs in Turkey, Syria, and Palestine. She was granted full membership and submitted

a proposal for an expedition into the Western Highlands on Mars to search for the Ancient Martian city of Ghalikar. Since she had no experience on Mars, her proposal was turned down, but a grant was given to allow her to travel to Talsinth and attend the Field School. Now, armed with even greater credentials, she has received a provisional approval from the Talsinth branch office chief, and is ready to outfit an expedition.

INTERPLANETARY COMINTERN



Created by the International Comintern in 1934, the Interplanetary Comintern has grown to eclipse, and even absorb, its creator. The IPC was founded with the express purpose of spreading the communist revolution throughout the Solar System, something it has recently managed to do on Mars. With the overt backing of the Soviet Union, the IPC has bent itself to organize and fund revolutions from Venus to Mars and is looking towards the Jovian System for new territory.

The Interplanetary Comintern was founded during the 7th World Congress of the International Comintern on Earth in early 1933. The original plan was to form a committee, and several sub-committees, to oversee International Comintern operations throughout the Solar System. However, the Interplanetary Comintern proved too popular, and soon it begins to grow larger than its parent organization, absorbing the International and placing Earth issues under the heading of several committees dedicated to spreading the International Communist Revolution at home. This reversal of roles occurred largely through the work of one man, Leon Trotsky.



His participation would not even have been possible if not for a growing and significant segment of the Congress who wanted to distance themselves and the International Comintern from Stalin. Despite the threats and temper tantrums thrown by the Soviet dictator, the location for the Seventh World Congress was moved at the last moment from Moscow to Mexico City. Risking Soviet assassins, the former right-hand man of Lenin and now enemy of the people of the Soviet Union (i.e. a threat to Stalin's power) brazenly walked into the meeting and took his seat to thunderous applause. Needless to say, Stalin was not amused.

Trotsky was elected to the executive committee, and from there managed to wrest power from the hands of Stalin's stooges and secret agents, purging (non-violently) them from the International Comintern. As part of this process, Trotsky had himself positioned as head of the Interplanetary Committee. From there it was a small step to subsume all International operations into a new structure and rename the organization the Interplanetary Comintern. Initially the IPC lost a great deal of Soviet support, and thus most of their funding and access to military grade weaponry. However, operations on other planets were much easier to conduct than on Earth.

INTERPLANETARY COMINTERN CHARACTER HOOKS

- You are one of the foot soldiers of the revolution, possibly even a Venusian. You may be a true believer of the cause, a hired thug, or someone who just likes a good fight. For whatever reason, you bust heads for the good of the proletariat, and at the end of the day that's enough.
- The IPC helped liberate your people, and you owe them greatly for that. However, you feel freedom means that you get to do what you want, and not exchange Silthuri for Soviets. Although still a dedicated communist, you have decided to pursue your own future separately from the international revolution of the proletariat.
- You were wise enough to see the writing on the wall before the Ebb Revolution began, and although part of the upper castes, joined the IPC just in time to save your own hide. Now, you have found that by putting your skills to good use in the cause of the proletariat, you can engineer some extra benefits for yourself. Your conscience generally does not nag at you, telling you that there is something wrong with a system so easily manipulated for your own benefit.

The Great Powers did not have nearly the military or police presence on Mars and Venus, much less further afield, than they did on their own soil. Following several successful protests, attacks, and the other actions, the IPC seemed to be a more robust and energetic organization than its parent.

The good times did not last, however, for in the Fall of 1937, Leon Trotsky and his mistress, Freda Kahlo, were assassinated in his home in Mexico City. This signaled the beginning of a violent purging of the IPC leadership, bringing the organization back under Stalin's control. Today it is little more than an arm of the Soviet state, albeit an arm that is at times less than loyal.

There is not much of a hierarchy within the IPC, as would be expected from an organization whose leaders and many of its rank and file are true believers in a class system. Even so, there is a great deal of authority invested in the Congress of the Solar System. This body is composed of representatives supposedly elected from across Earth, Mars, and Venus, though in truth many are self-selected to represent a population. Most of the Congress are Earthlings, but there is a large Martian faction, as well as a few Venusians, three Ioites, two Ganymedeans, and oddly enough, thirteen Europeans. Unsurprisingly, Russian representatives tend to dominate most factions and committees with the Congress. The Congress spends most of its time arguing over points of order or voting to compose official pronouncements denouncing various colonial or capitalist actions.

In the field the IPC uses a distributed cell structure design in most of its operations but is openly active in the Soviet Client States. In the covert cell system every member only knows the code names of their cellmates and those they recruited. At least in theory this is how things should work, but in many areas either the agents are lax in their duties or the IPC has locally grown too large to accommodate a dispersed, secretive system.

By far the most successful of the IPC's operations has been the Ebb Revolution on Mars. With the aid of their Soviet backers, agents of the IPC have managed to overthrow several principalities and institute communist governments. This success, though precarious at times, has led to further plans to spread the Communist Movement across the face of the red planet. This plan faces several obstacles, not the least of which that the entrenched feudal rulers of Mars are surprisingly popular with their subjects. The mix of tradition, religion, and the threat of outside invasion by other principalities, Chanari raiders, or Earthlings, has helped to bolster support for the princes.

Currently, the IPC on Mars is focusing on undermining and fermenting rebellion in those areas currently under Earthling control, especially the German and Italian occupied city-states. This is a dangerous game, for the IPC

must act in these areas without any overt Soviet support, lest their activities be a springboard for a war between the Soviet Union and the fascist axis. Thus, a risky cloak and dagger game must be played under the noses of intensely anti-communist and paranoid overlords.

Despite the IPC's focus on off world activities, old International Comintern exists as a committee within the IPC. Operations aimed at spreading the Communist Movements on Earth are still underway, and although they do not receive the kind of funding or support that operations such as the Ebb Revolution do does not mean that they are non-existent or under supported. Communist parties are gaining power in Europe and the United States, as well as Canada and Mexico. Many South American nations are experiencing growing numbers of dissatisfied citizens who are more than willing to embrace the Communist Movement as a means towards an end to the lingering feudalism inherent in the cultures of Latin America. Currently there is much debate within the IPC over supporting the Chinese Communists, though money and arms do flow in to Mao Tze-Tung's growing army. Finally, inroads have been made into Colonial Africa and Asia, especially India, in order to breed rebellion against colonial masters whose attention is turned elsewhere.

INTERPLANETARY COMINTERN STORY HOOKS

- The player characters are in a city when the local police begin a brutal crackdown on dissidents. As the sweeps of the lower-class areas begins, an IPC led protests quickly turns into a riot around the heroes. The police respond with increased violence and brutality, and one of our heroes spots an injured protester in the line of fire. A rescue places her squarely on the side of the rioters, and in the sights of the authorities.
- Rumors abound that during the Ebb Revolution millions of dollars' worth of gold and gems disappeared from throughout the Soviet Client States. These same rumors say that although most of this is in the hands of IPC, but that some IPC agents hid their loot instead of turning it over to their leaders. Can our heroes infiltrate the Soviet Client States, track down one of these caches, and live the rest of their lives like kings?
- A small farming settlement on the edge of a failing city state has decided to start its uprising early and is now besieged by the prince's forces. The IPC does not have the manpower to relieve these stalwarts of the revolution, and thus has sought out mercenaries and freebooters to help.



Rocket News Service

There are many news services available, but all but one of them treats the Solar System beyond Earth as an extension of their normal operations. For these news services, it is a case of having a bureau on Mars, Venus, and at Demarcation Point One and sending back reports to Earth. These new stories have to compete with ones written from Earth for the attention of the newspaper editors who rely on news services. Considering the cost of maintaining a branch office off world, the news services want the biggest stories, and ones that have the largest impact on Earthlings on Earth.

The Rocket News Service, or RNS, deals exclusively with the Solar System outside of Earth. They have bureaus on Venus, Mars, Demarcation Point One, Ganymede, and on the Anglo-American Air Docks in Jupiter's atmosphere. In fact, the RNS has fifteen bureaus scattered across the face of Mars. This means they can cover stories from nearly any corner of the explored Solar System and do so at a greater level of detail than the traditional Earth-bound news services. No story is too small for the RNS, and despite the cost they are willing to do more than merely report on big events.

The Rocket News Service's activities are centered on gathering news stories for both local and system wide consumption. About half of the stories come from freelance reporters, with the remainder provided by the RNS staff in each bureau.



Because the RNS is willing to pay top dollar for a good story there are currently more freelancers in the field than stories, creating a rather cutthroat situation in the hottest spots.

A good story is one that is well written and shows a depth of investigation that covers the event or issue from multiple points of view. From its inception the Rocket News Service has tried to be apolitical, but the founders and current managing editors are rather anti-Fascist and this shows in the reporting on Italian and German news. This has led to the RNS being banned in areas under Fascist control, as well as in those countries on Earth.

A further consideration for stories to be purchased by the RNS is length. Stories for local publication need to be concise, but those for transmission off world must be as short as possible in order to conserve resources. Another concern of the RNS is poaching of their RADIO transmissions, and towards that end the off-world bureaus and the central office on Earth all employ type 4 robobrain for both encryption and decryption.

RNS STORY HOOKS

- A freelance reporter that wants to cover them for the RNS plagues the Player Characters. Everywhere they go he's there offering to buy drinks, hanging around, following them on expeditions, and in general getting in the way. While not a threat or danger, he is an earnest young man who can be an excellent foil, and often gets himself into trouble and needs rescuing.
- After a harrowing but successful episode, the Player Characters want nothing more than to take a long rest and maybe get some medical attention. Sadly, this is not likely to happen as the press swarms around the victorious heroes and pressures them to answer questions, give exclusive interviews, and take pictures. How do they handle this attention, especially if some of them have people looking for them?
- Good press is good press, unless it isn't. It seems that a reporter for the Rocket News Service has been writing a series of articles about the exploits of a band of mismatched planet-hopping heroes. It also seems this group is entirely fictional, though no one has discovered that, yet. Unfortunately for the Player Characters the fictional heroes bear a striking resemblance to them, and both fans and foes are coming out of the woodwork.

Justine Potter, Rookie Reporter

Justine Potter has recently made a name for herself after accompanying the 1938 Anglo-French Expedition to Venus deep into the heart of the Venusian jungle, and returning with an amazing story of heroism, cannibalistic Venusian tribes, and an alien frozen in some sort of stasis box. Although young for a field reporter, Potter is one of the most able operating out of the Venus home office in Roosevelt Station. Her writing is quick and clear, and most importantly, uses as few words as possible to the greatest effect. While there is some chauvinism directed towards her professionalism and courage quickly shuts her critics down.

RNS CHARACTER HOOKS

- You are a freelance reporter who hopes to make a big enough name for yourself to get picked up by the RNS as a staffer. Towards this end you have embedded yourself with a group of heroes. You share their adventures, and write stories about them, and hope to one day be in on something big and exclusive.
- You were fired by the RNS for slack reporting. Well, you will show them by getting the biggest, juiciest story they have ever seen. Now, where to find big juicy stories?
- The RNS has filed several stories that featured one or more of the Player Characters, and your editor has told you to get friendly with the party, and possibly join them. You can't let anyone know you are secretly reporting their every action to the RNS and you must pose as just a normal adventurer. How long can you keep this up, and what will happen when the slight name changes no longer protect the innocent, and the guilty?

SECOND HATCHING

Lizard Monkeys might look like pets, little more intelligent than a chimpanzee or other ape. This is misleading, and intentional on the part of the followers of the Second Hatching. As sophonts the Lizard Monkeys are capable of deep thought, and in their case, this tends to take a spiritual tack. Held by more conservative Lizard Monkeys as heretical, the Namers of the Second Hatching see themselves as on a sacred mission to Name and Behold all that is in the Solar System.

The Second hatching is a young religious movement, it began only a three years ago when the first lizard monkeys taken off Venus managed to make it back to their home world.

The tales they told of far-off planets, strange sights, terrible monsters, and more thrilled many and spread throughout the lizard monkey troops of the Ishtar range, and beyond. The more spiritually minded lizard monkeys pondered these new ideas and came to a conclusion. Whereas the Great Hatching (known amongst the followers of the Second Hatching as the First Hatching) hatched the Lizard Monkeys onto the face of Venus, this new greater universe must also see its own hatching. It is the destiny of the entire species to colonize and inhabit the Solar System, just as it was their destiny to rule Venus from the trees above.

The roots of the Second Hatching lie in the traditional spirituality of the Lizard Monkeys. According to their beliefs Venus was a lonely and largely barren world devoid of happiness and filled with hidden dangers and undiscovered wonders. An undiscovered wonder is one that is inherently lacking, for until a Lizard Monkey sees it is naught but a bauble, a waterfall, or some other physical feature. It does not have a true name, nor any spirit or soul. It exists, but it does not live. The First hatching changed this, and the planet itself bore the First Egg in order to create the Lizard Monkey species, and thus name and behold things in order to give the world spirits.

Based upon this, the knowledge that there was a whole Solar System out there that was barren and lifeless, for no Lizard Monkey had gone to behold and name things, drove some to great sorrow. This was worse than the coming of the Great Hairy Ones, for even then those aliens gained names and thus souls. Word of the Second Hatching spread from one troop to the next, carried across jungle and chasm by the Lizard Monkey's long-range hoots and calls. Great spiritualists amongst the Lizard Monkeys meet, conferred, and most accepted the Second Hatching as a valid idea. Others denied the movement and sought to end it.

Despite the lack of formal hierarchy, there is one class of believer that is held in high esteem. Those who have traveled off-world and named and beheld are known as Namers, and these Lizard Monkeys are afforded a great deal of respect amongst their fellows. It is the duty of all Namers to spread tales of their adventures and the names of things and people. Namers are also tasked with training those who wish to take up the mantle and go forth themselves, and this last obligation forces adult Lizard Monkeys into the uncomfortable role of teaching fellow adults as if they were fresh hatchlings.

The Second Hatching has only one mission, to name and behold everything in the Solar System. Towards this end, Namers are trained and sent out to voyage amongst the planets. Once out there, they spend as much time as they can seeing new sights, meeting new species, and giving them names. Second Hatching Namers are consummate tourists, they are not interested in money, fame, power, or prestige, just seeing things and naming them.

A small part of the movement's operations is devoted to training Namers and spreading the names around the Lizard Monkey troops, but this pale in comparison to the act of beholding and naming. In fact, it is not unusual for some things to have multiple names, and this is considered normal. Grand objects or complex beings might have more than one spirit, and thus should have more than one name. For example, the Grand Canyon on Earth has been named by at least fifteen different Namers, and it is a big enough feature that it can handle many more names.

Butch

Butch is a loader for his best friend, Takona-ugho a Venusian mercenary. Although it is an odd choice of occupation for a Second Hatching Namer, Butch is more than happy with it. As Tako's loader, Butch gets to travel all over Mars, and sometimes other planets, seeing strange things and naming them. So far, he has named various types of military equipment (including his 'owner's Bee Spitting Death Thing) as well as strange emotions foreign to the Lizard Monkey's life (such as The Fear One Feels When Under Artillery Fire).

Butch has also been able to name the smell of Mars (Dry Red Snot Scent) and the feeling of being in zero gravity (Flying With Out Falling). What he will Behold and Name next Butch does not know, but he looks forward to whatever it will be with great enthusiasm.





SECOND HATCHING CHARACTER HOOKS

- You were rejected by the Namers, one of the few judged unfit for training in the art of Naming and Beholding. This does not mean you are not part of the Second Hatching, nor that you cannot become a Namer, just that no one wants to train you. In a fit of anger, you ran off and got yourself 'adopted' by a rocket ship captain. You will show them all how well you can Name and Behold!
- You have not completely agreed with the Second Hatching movement, but you are not one of the hardliners who opposed it. Honestly you don't care enough to involve yourself, at least you didn't until now. One of your many nephews, your favorite actually, became a Namer and has been gone for far too long. You have decided to take it upon yourself to join the ranks of the Namers in order to search the Solar System for the wayward youth.
- This is not your first trip out to Behold and Name, not at all. You have been a Namer for three of the Earthlings' years and were one of the first from your part of the jungle to join the Second Hatching. Now you are finished training a new generation of Namers, it's time to go out once more. There is much to Name and Behold, and no time to waste sitting in a tree telling tales.

SECOND HATCHING STORY HOOKS

- One of our heroes has a Lizard Monkey pet and has no idea that his little friend is a sophont, and much less that he is a member of a religious movement. This Lizard Monkey is always in the right place at the right time to help out but is also constantly underfoot. It is very annoying when the critter starts jabbering and pointing at something, it disrupts the moment when one sees a spectacular sunset or sets foot on a new planet.
- While traveling through the jungles of Venus the player characters happen to wander into a battle between the Second Hatching and a conservative troop. The violence and savagery of what most people think of as cute little alien lizard things is appalling. What is worse, the Second Hatching faction is able to communicate with our heroes and ask for help.
- Our heroes' exploits have not gone unnoticed. Since they tend to involve themselves in interesting events and travel to distant places, they have attracted the attention of several Namers. Wherever they go, a growing trail of Lizard Monkeys follow. If the player characters have a ship, a small troop might set up a nest, and start breeding. Woe to the party if they ever make planet fall on Venus.

UNITED STATES ROCKET RANGERS



In 1934 the US Rocket Corps formed a special cadre to serve as shipboard security and in other roles similar to that of the United States Marine Corps in the United States Navy. Over the past few years, the Rocket Rangers have become almost a separate service, the majority of its members serving on detached duties in small platoons spread across the explored portions of the Solar System and increasingly beyond.

It has become known that if you are in trouble, the Rangers are generally a short RADIO call away, and will be there soon to drive off pirates, provide medical and emergency relief, or simply tow your damaged ship to safety. Needing a branch similar to the USMC, the US Rocket Corps organized the Rocket Rangers as a dependent body for service on board warships and to provide security at USRC bases throughout the Solar System.

Originally drawn from the ranks of the USRC, it soon became obvious that the needs of the Rangers required greater manpower. A concerted recruiting campaign, and the direct intervention of the First Lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, thousands of prospective applicants were screened. Of these, less than ten percent were deemed suitable for the service. The First Lady was successful in influencing her husband, as well as congress, to permit the recruitment of women and minorities into the Rocket Rangers, and eventually into the USRC itself.

ROCKET RANGER CHARACTER HOOKS

- The USRC and the Rocket Rangers are a diverse group, and you are one of the front-runners of this diversity. Not everyone is happy with this, and many are surprised when a Ranger takes off the helmet and turns out to be a woman, or not white, or both. How do you handle these situations, and how do you react to those outside of the Rangers and the Corps who hold onto outdated bigotry?
- You might be a little too bookish to be a Ranger, but you managed to struggle through the hardest parts of the physical training and testing on sheer stubbornness. You are one of the best technicians in the Rangers, but every mission involves a great deal of physical work, and often more than a little violence. This doesn't suit you, and how long will you keep going on pride before you quit the Rangers and take a nice comfortable lab job somewhere else in the USRC?
- You look like you could have stepped out of a propaganda poster, the All-American, square-jawed hero. A Ranger to the core, you try to live the virtues you have been indoctrinated with, but sometimes this is hard. Especially when those virtues conflict with your mission and with your superiors.

In the short four years of its existence, the Rangers have managed to build a reputation for honesty, bravery, and heroics that would be considered fiction were it not established fact. They have also become celebrities, featured daily on newsreels across the Solar System, headlining newspapers on a regular basis, and regularly mobbed by fans when they make appearances outside of their bases.

The Rangers are spread throughout the Solar System and must contend with a variety of conditions and missions. Their numbers, outside of those serving with the 1st MEF on Mars, are generally small in any given theatre of operations and always outnumbered by their foes. The primary mission of the Rangers is to defend USRC bases and vessels, and all but the smallest USRC rocket ship has at least a handful of Rangers on board. As boarding actions have not become a major factor in rocket ship engagements, and as conflict with other Earthling powers or the Europeans has not progressed beyond a bit of saber rattling, it would appear that the Rangers have little to do. This is not the case at all.

For the most part, Rangers serve as rapid defense and response forces on Earth, Mars, Venus, and the Jovian System. From their bases, or from rocket ships in flight, the Rangers are able to deploy at a moment's notice to stave off an attack, conduct rescues, or intercept some danger. Often the more experienced Rangers operate on their own or in small squads, patrolling the space lanes or alien worlds on the lookout for trouble. Whether it is a Venusian concordant on the march, Martian terrorists, or rocket pirates, the Rangers stand ready to respond quickly and effectively.

ROCKET RANGERS STORY HOOKS

- Even the Rocket Rangers need a hand from time to time. The player characters are contacted by a Ranger on detached assignment to help with an investigation into the Red Slave Trade, the illegal trafficking of Martian slaves to other planets. Rangers are not generally suited for undercover work, and infiltrating a scum filled rocket port is just the sort of job well-meaning non-Ranger heroes would be good for. No worries, the Rangers are ready to swoop in as backup at the first sign of trouble.
- The player characters are approached by a shady figure that offers to sell them a Mark III rocket pack, cheap. These sorts of deals are often offered in seedy rocket ports, and nearly always turn out to be crooked. This time it's for real, and the arms dealer has a real Mark III, one that is still covered in a Ranger's blood. Our heroes need to decide, do they buy the stolen item, or find out what happened to its rightful owner, and possibly complete the dead Ranger's mission.
- The new Mark IV rocket pack is ready for testing and has been sent out select Ranger units for field trials. Something is wrong, and the packs keep exploding during tests. No obvious design fault can be found, and our heroes are brought in to provide an outside view. It can't be believed, but it looks like someone, likely a Ranger, has been sabotaging the new rocket packs.



It should be noted that the independent squads have routinely acted beyond their mission parameters and indeed beyond the expectations and often desires of their superiors. As the mantra of democracy and freedom that the USRC aspires to and indoctrinates its service members with is increasingly taken to heart, independent Rangers have taken it upon themselves to battle injustice and tyranny without orders from above. Acting on their own initiative, Rangers have single handily stopped smuggling rings, slave trafficking, grand thefts, foreign agents, rampaging beasts, and other calamities. A number of times they have even challenged other agents of their own government when nefarious deeds have been exposed and are quickly becoming a thorn in the side of the darker and more devious factions within the American government. It should also be noted that independent Rangers are not above going incognito or conducting their own investigations.

Lt. Abbey Jankowski

The first woman to graduate from the US Rocket Ranger School at Ft. William Henry, Lt. Jankowski has served eighteen months as a Ranger, all of it on board the USRS Iroquois, a Tribal class corvette. As the commander of a squad of Rangers on detached duty, Jankowski has led her troops to victories in the skies of Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Ganymede, and even the Asteroid Belt. She is a stern commander, but one who is willing to break the regulations to bits if that is what it takes to not just complete her mission, but to do what is right.

WOLFGANG AND LONG DETECTIVE AGENCY



Maybe you robbed a bank, swindled an heiress, killed a man, or stole the crown jewels. All you have to do is jump a rocket ship and you're out of a jurisdiction. There are hundreds if not thousands of places to hide in the Solar System and to be a long way from the short arm of the law. You won't be that far from the operatives of the Wolfgang and Long Detective Agency, the first Solar System-wide private investigation firm with offices in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Hong Kong, Kostrast, Roosevelt Station, and the Anglo-American Sky Docks.

Wolfgang and Long formed in 1927 when the Edward Wolfgang and Charlene Long merged their respective agencies. Both had served in the Great War, Wolfgang as a pilot in France and Long as a nurse in Italy. After the war the two had returned to their hometown of Los Angeles and pursued new careers.

After six years in the LAPD, Wolfgang left to start his own detective agency. Long attended medical school for a few months before her parents died and left her a small fortune. Wanting some adventure, she invested her money in starting a detective agency, learning the ins and outs of the job as she went.

Wolfgang and Long uses a diffuse structure in order to ensure that the various offices are able to respond appropriately to local conditions. The home office in Los Angeles communicates regularly with its field offices throughout the Solar System but allows the various office managers a great deal of latitude in how they handle their cases and run their offices. Unlike other corporations with widely spread branches and large numbers of employees, the agency has very few managers, all promoted from within the organization, and almost always from the ranks of the detectives.

Detectives work in pairs, with a senior detective heading an investigation and a less experienced junior detective proving support. On larger cases more than one pair might be brought in, but the detectives who initially take the case are in charge of the overall investigation. The only exception to this is when a case leads off-world. Wolfgang and Long pride themselves on quickly closing cases, and the time it would take to send a pair of detectives from one planet to another is too great. In these situations, the agency transfers the case to a local team and sets up a secure RADIO conference in order to bring the new detectives up to speed.

Many detective agencies have the unspoken motto of "No case too small, no fee too high", this is not the case with Wolfgang and Long. Being the Solar System's only system wide detective agency means that they are in a prime position to take on cross-planet cases, and these sorts of cases demand higher expenditures, and thus larger fees. Their offices do take on the more mundane local work that is the bread and butter of private investigators, divorces, lost pets, petty theft, and private security. However, it is the larger cases that bring in the bulk of the agency's work, and also its fame. Most of the agency's clients are national governments, not only do they have the means to pay top dollar, but they also have a pressing interest in making sure that criminals do not escape justice.

WOLFGANG AND LONG CHARACTER HOOKS

- Wolfgang and Long are looking for you, and it's only a matter of time before they catch you. By moving around, changing aliases, and staying vigilant you might be able to stave off the inevitable for a few more weeks or months. However, you have recently heard a rumor that Juan Peligro has been assigned to your case.
- You are deep undercover investigating a smuggling cartel. Your information has led you to suspect your fellow player characters, and thus you have joined their group. No matter how long it takes, you are going to stay until you gain their trust and uncover their secrets.
- Your partner was killed during an investigation that went south. This prompted you to leave the agency, but you have few skills outside of detective work. Going back to a police force would mean the same sort of situations you just can't face. Instead, you have turned your attention to new directions.

WOLFGANG AND LONG STORY HOOKS

- A pair of detectives working for the agency contacts our heroes. Their investigation has taken them far from any hope of prompt back-up, and they desperately need the sort of help the player characters can give. Naturally the agency will be willing to pay top dollar for the temporary assistance of specialists.
- With no warning a pair of detectives from Wolfgang and Long swoop in and abduct one of the player characters. Is she guilty or is this a case of mistaken identity? How far will the rest of our heroes go to rescue her, and how far outside of the law will this take them?
- A woman stumbles into a player character's arms and collapses from a knife plunged into her back. Before she dies she gasps out the name of the office manager for the local field office of Wolfgang and Long and hands our heroes a roll of microfilm. What is on it that is so important, and who is after the information the microfilm contains?

If it became common practice for criminals to simply leave the planet and thus never have to stand trial for their crimes, the nations of Earth fear that general anarchy will result. Smaller nations are rumored to employ the agency to perform espionage on their rivals, though the agency denies such accusations.

In addition to pursuing bounties from national governments, Wolfgang and Long also provide private security for several corporations that do interplanetary business ranging from warehouse guards to bodyguards for business travelers. Officially the agency does not involve itself in corporate espionage, but some of the detectives have been known to take a case or two during their free time.

Finally, Wolfgang and Long are open to any private individual who can meet their high standards for integrity and bank balances. Missing persons cases are very lucrative, especially as so many people disappear from official attention throughout the Solar System. In the more lawless corners of Venus and Ganymede, settlements have hired Wolfgang and Long detectives to serve as a private police force to combat claims jumpers and rowdy miners.

Juan Peligro

Peligro is the Agency's primer bounty hunter with more than seventy-five captures to his name. He operates out of the Anglo-American Skydocks office but has followed cases as far away as Mars. Growing up on a Texas ranch near the border with Mexico, Peligro picked up many of the skills he uses in his chosen profession while engaged in cross-border pursuits of cattle rustlers. As the youngest of eight children, he left home to join the US Army and saw one battle at the very end of the Great War before coming home and taking a job as a deputy sheriff in his home county.

With the birth of the Rocket Age, Peligro looked for a way to get out and see the Solar System. Reenlisting with the Army, he became an officer in the Ninth Cavalry and saw action in the Kalond Canal Valley Wars. However, a soldier's life, while exciting, was too structured for him and soon he found himself resigning his commission in favor of life as a freebooter. It was while wandering the Red Planet that he came across Wolfgang and Long.

- CHAPTER ELEVEN - ANCIENT ARTIFACTS



The Ancients produced technological wonders that are far beyond the understanding, much less the science, of modern Martians. These wonders are seen as somewhat miraculous and many people hold them in religious awe. Yet, these very same artifacts are based on scientific principles, just ones that no one on Mars (or most places in the Solar System) currently understand, but they are working on it. Much of the technology of the Rocket Age is built upon the shoulders of giants.

Several extinct cultures, most notably the Ancient Martians and Erisians, produced technological wonders that were far in advance of even the most cutting-edge technologies of Earthlings and Europeans. Often these artifacts do not operate under scientific principles commonly in use today or their means of activation and use are somewhat esoteric, at least to the modern mind.

ACQUIRING ARTIFACTS

The most obvious way to acquire an artifact is to go out and dig it up. Sometimes artifacts are awarded to valiant heroes from the personal collections of patrons such as Silthuri nobles, wealthy Earthlings, or organizations. Rarely can an artifact be found for sale on the open market, and those

are the most common such as datapads, scanners, and digital cameras (and are listed in the equipment chapter). Unless otherwise noted, artifacts found have a 50 charge Ancient Martian Battery with 1d20 charges in it.

OWNING ARTIFACTS

A character can own any number of artifacts, but there are limits to how many artifacts a person can have active at the same time. Weapons and armor follow the usual rules regarding how many weapons you can use at once and how many suits of armor you can wear (generally no more than two, and only one, respectively). Devices are a little different and can pose a problem if not handled with reasonable care and attention. You can't wear a climate helmet and a view scanner at the same time. Also, artifacts that connect to ghost fields can interfere with each other's use and you cannot have more than three items capable of connecting to ghost fields at a time.

USING ARTIFACTS

Most artifacts take an action to use. Some require bonus actions or reactions, and this is provided in their descriptions.

Analyzing Ancient Artifacts

When an artifact is discovered adventurers will want to use it. This requires some time and practice, as well as attempting to discern its function and control interfaces. To do this, a character must succeed on an artifact analysis check. The artifact analysis check is an expanded check that gives different results depending on the outcome of the roll. An artifact analysis check uses 1 charge from the item and takes an hour to complete.

The DC for this check depends on the type of artifact. The base DC for an artifact analysis check is 10 + any modifiers based on rarity and type.

Artifact analysis check: d20 + Intelligence modifier + proficiency bonus (if proficient in Engineering or Science).

You can try to figure out more about an artifact you already have analyzed and discovered the functions of. If you do so, you will still know how to use it, but risk any negative effects of failed analysis rolls. You can also teach another to use an artifact, which takes around an hour.

Ancient Artifact Analysis Modifiers

Rarity or Type	DC Modifier	Rarity or Type	DC Modifier
Armor	+0	Uncommon	+2
Weapon	+1	Rare	+3
Device	+2	Very Rare	+4
Common	+1	Unique	+5

Ancient Artifact Analysis Expanded Check

DC	Result
-10	The artifact is broken beyond repair and inflicts some form of negative effect on a nearby target.
-5	The artifact activates in an unexpected and detrimental manner.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	The character figures out how to use the artifact and gains insight into similar artifacts. The next time the character attempts to analyze an artifact of the same type, she does so with advantage.
+10	The character understands the artifact and how it works and has advantage on its next artifact analysis roll.

ANCIENT MARTIAN DRUGS AND MEDICINES

Ancient Martian drugs can be found in many ruins. For the most part they are in small ampoules that can be used straight out of the box. These ampoules can also be fed into an autoinjector. There is no artifact analysis roll required to use them, but a DC 13 Intelligence (Science) check is needed to identify what they are and what they do. Drugs can be resisted with a DC 13 Constitution save and last 1 hour (some are instantly permanent such as Quick Heal and Panacea). If a character is under the effects of two drugs at the same time they gain the poisoned condition until both drugs have worn off.

Accelerator. This drug increases the user's reflexes granting them advantage on Dexterity checks and saves as well as Initiative checks. After the effects wear off the user gains a level of exhaustion.

Awareness. This drug increases alertness and focus, granting advantage on perception checks. The user also ignores the effects of the exhaustion and stunned conditions. When the drug wears off the user gains a level of exhaustion.

Endurance. The user gains 10 temporary hit points as well as advantage on saves. The user also ignores the effects of the exhaustion and stunned conditions. When the drug wears off the user gains a level of exhaustion.

Lights Out. The user is rendered unconscious.

No-Age. The user does not age. The effects last for one year.

Panacea. The user is cured of any diseases and is immune to infection for the next hour.

Perseverance. The user gains advantage on Wisdom checks and saves and is immune to the charmed and frightened conditions.

Psi Dampener. The user loses all power points and access to psychic powers.

Psi Enhancer. The user gains 5 power points. After the effects wear off all power points are lost.

Quick Heal. The user regains 1d10 hit points.



Assassin Suit

Device, rare

This full body suit of grey-black not-cloth helps to disguise a person in the dark of the night. The not-cloth does not rustle, is rather breathable, and adjusts to fit any medium sized creature. The attached hood has two lenses that cover the eyes. The legs end in soft boots that dampen the sound of footfalls. All told, these features grant you advantage on stealth checks. An assassin suit does not use any charges but does have a built-in battery that holds 10 charges and when found has 1d10 charges.

Autoinjector

Weapon, uncommon

This pistol shaped weapon has a large tank that can store up to five doses of a liquid, usually a drug, medicine, or poison. When pressed against exposed skin the autoinjector sprays the dose through the skin and into the target's bloodstream. The exact effects depend on what is in the dose. The autoinjector is a simple weapon that inflicts no damage. When discovered the autoinjector has three doses of a random drug inside it.



Breather

Device, common

This plastic mask has a fold out set of goggles that cover the eyes and form a watertight seal. While in use it can filter any environment in order to provide breathable air to the wearer. The breather only functions if there is an atmosphere or liquid containing oxygen for it to filter, it cannot be used in a vacuum. The breather uses 1 charge per full or partial 24 hours of use.

Climate Control System

Device, unique

These systems once formed a network that spanned the entire breadth of the Red Planet, sadly all but a handful remain non-operational today. Of these, most are offline due to lack of a power source, but if discovered and hooked up to sufficient power, such as an energy converter, Mars could be green again. Each Climate Control System generates a field that stabilizes temperature, moisture content, and other climatological factors over a radius of six hundred miles to create a zone that matches the climate that the operator sets the machine to. This means that patches of Mars – or even the whole planet if enough Climate Control Systems were restored to power – can be turned into a verdant jungle, tropical savannah, or even a temperate forest. However, the Climate Control Systems only generate a field that regulates climatological factors; it does not plant trees or cause animals to come into being. The operator must somehow provide the biome for the desired climate.

Climate Helmet

Device, uncommon

This close-fitting helmet has a full-face visor and a large bulge at the back. It does little to protect against blows to the head, but the visor does protect against bright light, granting advantage on saving throws to resist being blinded or avoid gaze attacks. When activated, the helmet extrudes a protective bubble of thin plastic and energy fields. Inside the bubble, the wearer has their own air supply, temperature control, and life support system. While activated, the wearer gains resistance to heat and cold damage, does not need to breathe, and is unaffected by temperatures ranging from - 50°F to - 150°F. The climate helmet expends a charge every 24 hours or part thereof it is activated.

Energy Converter

Device, very rare

This metal box has a hopper on the top that feeds into the internal workings. Matter placed in the hopper is sucked in and converted into energy, which is stored in the device's internal batteries. Each pound of matter produces 1 charge and the device can store up to 100 charges (when found roll d100 to determine how many charges are stored in the device). Multiple charging ports allow for up to ten devices to be charged at once from a single energy converter.

Assassin Suit Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The suit conforms to fit your body, but it is too tight. You must make a DC 13 Constitution save every round the suit is on or suffer 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage. A DC 15 Strength check removes the suit. Alternately, someone can try cutting the suit off you, but this requires a very sharp object and might necessitate some interesting ability or skill checks.
-5	You think you know how the suit is put on and the goggles operate, but you have guessed wrong. You gain no benefit from the suit, the goggles make all perception checks suffer disadvantage, and you suffer disadvantage on all stealth checks.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover that the goggles on the assassin suit provide darkvision 120 feet and protection from bright flashes (thus grant advantage on saves versus blindness). The goggles can also be used to bring objects up to 1 mile away into focus, giving advantage on perception checks to spot distant objects. Use of the goggles spends 1 charge per full or partial 24 hours of operation.
+10	The suit has an additional feature: it can make you invisible. You can expend two charges from the suit to gain the effects of the <i>greater invisibility</i> spell for one minute.

Autoinjector Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You have managed to harm yourself with a simple medical device. You suffer 1d8 piercing damage and the effects of whatever drug is in the injector.
-5	You accidentally inject yourself with the autoinjector, suffering the effects of one of the drugs within.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover that the autoinjector can be set to fire a concentrated stream of a dosage at a 20-foot range.
+10	You discover that the autoinjector can be set to shoot a pulse of energy. This costs one charge and the pulse gives the autoinjector the Stun property.

Breather Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You lock the breather in place but cannot get it to function properly. You begin suffocating immediately and the breather must be removed by cutting it off or with a DC 15 Strength save.
-5	By all appearances the breather works just fine, however you have not activated the filtering system and the when you use it the outside environment just pours right in.
-1	You fail to comprehend how the breather works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover that the breather has a built-in light that can project a cone of light for 50 feet and can be set to infrared or ultraviolet. The goggles can be set to pick up infrared or ultraviolet light.
+10	You discover the breather can be set to a variety of preset output atmospheric conditions, many toxic to most sophonts.

Climate Control System Analysis

DC	Result
-10	Your tinkering with something best left alone has created a zone of wildly fluctuating climate and deadly weather. The sky fills rapidly with clouds and then these disperse. Lightning strikes from clear skies. Blizzards charge up and unleash feet of snow in minutes.
-5	You exacerbate a hazardous weather pattern, such as a drought, making the area under the climate control system's effect dangerous to life.
-1	You fail to comprehend how the climate helmet works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You fine tune the machine to create a cycle of weather patterns that can spread across the planet, such as a rainstorm that can be sent out so that the water falls from the sky up to 1,000 miles away.
+10	You activate this station, and one other somewhere else on the planet.



Climate Helmet Analysis

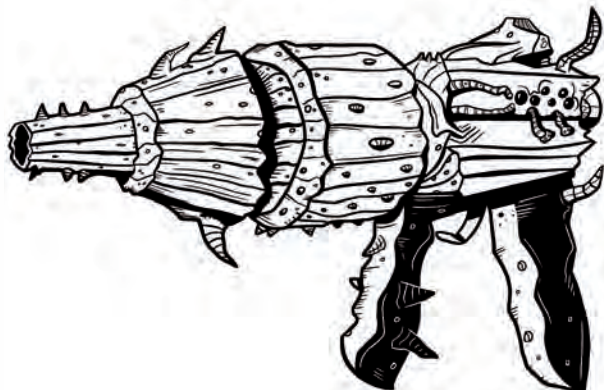
DC	Result
-10	You activate the climate helmet, you have no idea how, and it seals around you. There is no air supply, and you begin to suffocate. A DC 15 Strength check can free you from the helmet. Alternately, it can be bashed off with 15 points of damage; keeping in mind you will take half of the damage that is inflicted to the helmet.
-5	You fail to figure out how the climate helmet works but do expend 1d4 of its charges fiddling with it.
-1	You fail to comprehend how the climate helmet works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You have discovered that the climate helmet has a few additional functions. Each time this check is made, you can choose one of the additional functions from the list below: - When active, you can use it to zoom in on a target within 1 mile, granting you advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to see something at a distance. - It has a built in remote communicator, but it can only broadcast and receive, not record, store, or playback. - The helmet grants darkvision 60 feet. - When activated, the climate helmet has a small emergency gravitic field that acts as the spell <i>feather fall</i>, but this uses 1 charge per round. - When closed and sealed, organic matter and water can be feed into a slot at the bottom of the visor. This is processed into a bland but nutritious fluid that the wearer can consume. This fluid provides rations for one day.
+10	You figure out two of the additional functions listed above.

Far Scanner Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The far scanner heats up and emits a cloud of toxic gas that spreads out into a 30-foot cloud. Every living creature in that cloud must make a DC 15 Constitution save or suffer 1d8 points of damage poison damage and gain the sickened condition until they take a long rest.
-5	You snap off a dial and manage to get something called an error message. Randomly roll for the types of data the scanner can process. It can no longer process that type of data.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover another data type. Roll randomly to determine what the scanner can detect.
+10	You have awakened a small robobrain within the far scanner. It has limited function, but you can order it to scan for data and it will continue to do so without your involvement, allowing you to spend time on other things.

Energy Converter Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You overload the storage unit causing an explosion that inflicts 1d8 fire and bludgeoning damage per charge in the device to every creature within 30 feet. A DC 13 Dexterity save can reduce this damage by half.
-5	While examining the energy converter you manage to get a finger into the hopper. It is gone now and you suffer 1d10 acid damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover that the internal battery can be removed, giving you a 100-charge battery. Batteries can be placed inside the energy converter and charged.
+10	Fiddling around with the settings, you manage to discover that the energy converter can connect to one of the few remaining power fields of the Ancients. When you use the solar charger, you may try to locate one of these beamed power fields with a DC 15 Science check. If you succeed, the energy converter does not need sunlight to charge.



Freeze RAY

Weapon, rare

One of the more exotic inventions of the Ancient Martians is the Freeze RAY. This weapon resembles a RAY gun of outwardly bizarre design projects a RAY that slows down atomic processes and causes the target to rapidly reach a temperature of less than -40 degrees Celsius. This can cause an extreme amount of damage and is generally lethal. The Freeze RAY is a rare find in Ancient ruins, but anyone who can locate a working model and reverse engineer it is set for life. Freeze RAYs are martial weapons that inflict 2d10 cold damage with ammunition (400/ 1200), beam, charge 1, stun setting, and two-handed properties.

Freeze RAY Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The RAY gun overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d10 cold damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You accidentally active the RAY gun and shoot the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	In addition to the stun setting, you have figured out how to adjust the beam modulation. The RAY gun gains the frequency modulation property.
+10	You have figured out how to adjust the beam output ratio of this RAY gun in order to greatly increase the damage it inflicts. When using the overcharge property, you may expend any number of charges, inflicting 1d12 points of cold damage per extra charge spent, and can spend as many charges as are in the weapon.

Far Scanner

Device, uncommon

This foot tall, six-inch-wide, and three-inch-thick black plastic and metal box has a display on one end flanked with a set of dials, switches, knobs, and buttons. It is a very rugged device that can be dropped without damage. A shoulder strap is included, and the back of the device has a pair of not-cloth loops that can be passed over the hands. Far scanners work similarly to datapads in that they can record, store, and playback data. However, the data is of a highly esoteric nature that can be difficult to understand, even for someone who has knowledge of Ancient Martian. The far scanner can also analyze data and display this analysis, and indeed, tends to do so even when not asked.

When the far scanner is first successfully analyzed, randomly choose one of the following types of data it can gather and process. You can connect the far scanner to a ghost field in order to send or receive data. Data can be acquired to a range of 200 feet but is blocked by large dense masses. While scanning, you must maintain concentration as if maintaining a spell or psychic power. The artifact uses 1 charge for every full or partial 24 hours it is in use.

1. **Biological.** You can use the far scanner to search for types of lifeforms, detect poison and disease, or analyze lifeforms.
2. **Geological.** Using the far scanner, you can search for types of minerals, map a 200-foot radius as you move, or analyze rocks and minerals.
3. **Psychic.** The far scanner can detect psychic powers in use, psychic fields, and other psychically related phenomena.
4. **Radiological.** The scanner can detect and analyze the full breadth of the electromagnetic spectrum as well as gravity and nuclear phenomena.

Food Pills

Device, common

These inch-long oblong lozenges come in foil wrapped packs. Sometimes they have the labels on them, but sometimes they do not. Each pill contains enough nutrients to keep a person alive for one day, and somehow even maintain their water balance. There are added ingredients that give a bit of pep and thus remove one level of exhaustion. Any non-Martian who consumes one must make a DC 13 Constitution save or gain the poisoned condition until they can take a long rest.

Analysis

There is no need for a lengthy analysis of food pills. If the packaging has a label, it is clear what they are. If there is no label, a DC 13 Intelligence (Science) check will determine that they are food pills.

NEW WEAPON PROPERTIES

Several of the weapons in this section have new properties. These are described below.

Frequency Modulation. A weapon with this property can be manually reset to correct for the modulation of RAY shielding. As a bonus action, the wielder can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (Science) check to reset the modulation of the weapon, and if successful, ignores the effects of RAY shielding until the end of the user's next turn.

Overcharge. As a bonus action this weapon can be set to inflict greater amounts of damage. An extra charge can be expended to increase the damage the weapon inflicts.

Parry. As a bonus action the wielder can add +2 to their AC against melee attacks.

Genetic Modification Machine

Device, unique

One of the most bizarre wonders of the Ancient Martians, the Genetic Modification Machine is capable of transforming a subject from one humanoid species to another, or even adding new genetic material and traits from alien species. This is accomplished by placing the subject in a medically induced coma while tiny machines and engineered viruses invade the subject's body, making modifications on a genetic level. Once these modifications are made they spread like cancer throughout the subject's body, only taking a few dozens of hours to complete their task.

During this time the subject is intravenously fed a nutrient rich cocktail that provides more than enough energy for a total body conversion. While this is going on, the subject's personality and memory, basically their entire intellect, is backed up on massive computer disks to be downloaded into the finished body. In the end, the subject is awakened and released from the modification chamber in a new body.

There are limits as to what any Genetic Modification Machine can accomplish. It cannot copy another individual lifeform, this was seen as a potential problem when it was originally designed and thus the system is incapable of even attempting the task (though a brilliant inventor might be able to retrofit the device with this capability). It cannot completely change a humanoid creature into a non-humanoid lifeform, though it can add aspects and traits of a non-humanoid to the base creature.

Genetic Modification Machine Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The machine activates on its own and uses stored genetic material to produce horrific monsters. A subject inside the machine is transformed into a genetic monstrosity (see effects tables). Every hour 1d10 monstrosities are released from the machine.
-5	Everything seems to be in order, but you have made a critical error. Subjects placed in the machine automatically gain a side effect and gain two side effects if they fail their Constitution save.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
+5	You discover how to monitor the machine's work during the modification process; subjects gain advantage on their Constitution save to avoid side effects (and if Martian or Venusian they do not risk side effects).
+10	You can make any modifications you like without fear of side effects and can even use the stored material in the machine to create new lifeform whole cloth.

Genetic Modification Machine Side Effects

d10	Side Effect
1	Cosmetic changes, nothing major but to others you will look a little odd.
2	Unexpected modification, gain (1d4): 1- gills, 2-horns, 3- extra eye, 4- no nose.
3	One limb, chosen randomly, is withered and useless.
4	Facial rearrangement, lose 2 points of Charisma.
5	Muscular degeneration, lose 2 points of Strength.
6	Brain malformed, lose 2 points of Intelligence.
7	Cardiovascular system damaged, lose 2 points of Constitution.
8	Endocrine system disordered, lose 2 points of Wisdom.
9	Limbs uneven, lose 2 points of Dexterity
10	Massive physical errors, lose 2 points from every ability score.

Finally, it is designed to work on Martians and with Martian lifeforms; use by non-Martians is strongly discouraged as unforeseen side effects are likely to occur. The machine has a database of genetic information; however, this information is limited to Martians and Erisians/Venusians. Additional genetic information can be feed in to the database, but this requires a complete sample, in other words an entire organism must be fed into the machine, which breaks the organism down for analysis. Also, the machine cannot match partial changes from different planets, the DNA is too hard to align. For example, it can transform an entire human into a Martian, but it cannot add features of a Martian animal to an European, or vice versa.

The genetic modification machine can do several things, even with non-Martian subjects. Gender changes are easy and take only a few days. A Martian can be transformed from one caste to another, or even into an Ancient Martian. Likewise, transformations from Martian to Erisian/Venusian can be completed. The addition of aspects from Martian animals is possible when working with a Martian subject, and a subject can gain claws, fur, feathers, wings, gills, or any manner of natural body parts and systems. Finally, genetic disorders can be corrected, the machine's original intent.

Subjects who undergo modification often suffer from adverse effects. If working with Martian or Venusian genetics the machine can efficiently make the transformations without undue side effects, though an increased metabolic rate is common in those undergoing extreme transformations. Non-Martians or Venusians suffer from more severe side effects, though these tend to be of the mental variety. Sterility is common, as is long or short-term memory loss, reduction in thought processes, confusion of senses (the subject now smells sounds and sees odors), or at the worst, the entire loss of the subject's personality and memory.

A subject undergoing genetic modification must make a DC 15 Constitution save. If the subject is a Martian or Venusian they do so with advantage. Those that succeed the check lose the species they had originally and gain the benefits and drawbacks of their new species.

If the subject is being modified to add features of a different species, they gain the traits being added. If the subject fails, the changes are still made, but they must roll on the Side Effects table to determine what side effects occur. If changing to or adding abilities, refer to the Ancient Martian Species Stats.

Gravitic Belt

Device, rare

This metal mesh belt has a control box near the buckle. By manipulating the control box, the user can fly for a limited time, although this flight is clumsy at best. While active, the grav belt gives a flight speed of 20 feet and can hover. A gravitic belt uses 1 charge per full or partial hour of use.

Gravitic Belt Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You are on a one-way trip up. Unless you remove the belt, you will keep going straight up until you hit an obstruction.
-5	You take off at 20 feet per round in a random direction. You are not going fast enough to suffer serious injury if you hit anything, just 2 points of bashing damage, but if the surface you hit is dangerous on its own, this could be trouble.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover fine tune controls that increase the flight speed to 30 feet.
+10	You discover that you can boost the flight speed at the cost of additional power, using 1 charge to increase flight speed by 10 feet per charge for one round.

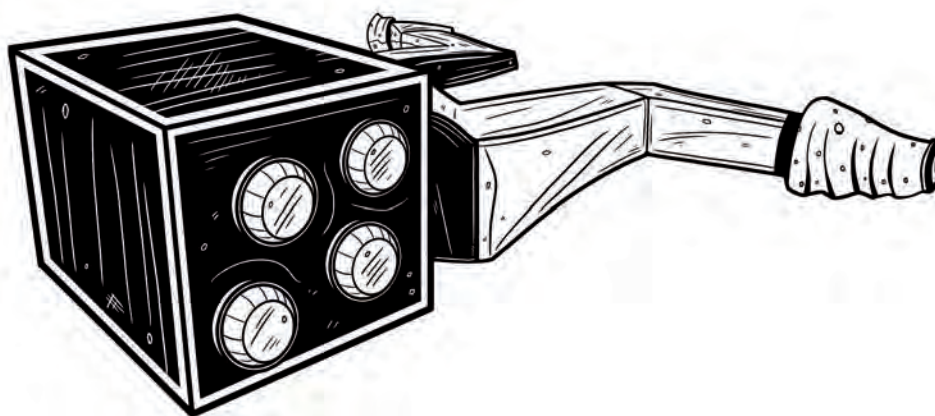
ANCIENT MARTIAN SPECIES STATS

Ability Scores. Your Intelligence score increases by 2 and your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Size. You are medium sized.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Touch of the Ancients. You have advantage on any checks to interact with robobrains.



Hand Brick

Device, rare

Hand bricks are three by five-inch black plastic boxes with handholds on one long face and red buttons on the shorter faces. They tap into a planet's magnetic field to create a magno-gravtic effect that 'locks' the hand brick in place. Hand bricks do not need to be attached to anything, they can be locked into thin air if needed. Once locked in place they cannot be moved by any force short of an upset of a planet's magnetic field. However, they do not function if more than 10,000 miles from the surface of a planetary body. Hand bricks use 1 charge per full or partial hour of use.

Analysis

No analysis is needed, it is pretty easy to figure out how it works, although the why might be more challenging.

Heat RAY

Weapon, rare

Similar to the Freeze RAY, the Heat RAY operates in the reverse manner, exciting atoms on the sub-atomic level and creating a great deal of heat. However, it has an additional effect in that it can excite sub-atomic particles to the point where they explode, possibly even creating a small nuclear event. A single shot at a single target has the normal effects listed below, but a sustained beam on a target has the chance of creating a small nuclear explosion, or a large one if the target is radioactive (for example, the radium that fuels rocket ships). To generate a sustained beam, the user must maintain a clear line of fire on the target and make a successful attack roll every round, inflicting normal damage. The attacker may not move or take any other action other than keeping the beam on the target. While maintaining the beam the user suffers disadvantage on all saving throws and attacks against them are done so with advantage. If the beam is maintained for three consecutive rounds, the target explodes in a ball of nuclear fury, releasing radiation, heat, and a shockwave.

This likely kills both the target and the shooter as it inflicts 15d10 radiation and fire damage to all within 200 feet (DC 15 Dexterity save for half damage). In normal operation, the Heat RAY is a martial weapon that inflict 2d10 fire damage with ammunition (40/ 120), beam, stun setting, charge 2, and two-handed properties.

Heat RAY Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The RAY gun overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d10 fire damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You accidentally activate the RAY gun and shoot the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	In addition to the stun setting, you have figured out how to adjust the beam modulation. The RAY gun gains the frequency modulation property.
+10	You have figured out how to adjust the beam output ratio of this RAY gun in order to greatly increase the damage it inflicts. When using the overcharge property, you may expand any number of charges, inflicting 1d12 points of damage per extra charge spent, and can spend as many charges as are in the weapon.

Mental Projection Machine

Device, unique

The Ancient Martians experimented with the combination of psychic abilities and science, yielding a handful of useful items. One of these is the mental projection device, a powerful yet dangerous piece of lost technology that imparts psychic abilities to the ungifted, but at a cost. The device itself is a large machine consisting of a bank of robobrains, a cold fusion reactor, and a throne-like chair for the user. The user is connected to the advanced computer through a neural interface (no neural interface, no mental projection device) system. A set of sensors monitors their biological functions and dermal injectors supply drugs and medications to maintain a prolonged state of deep trance. Once in a trance, a visor-less helmet descends from the ceiling and locks around the user's head.

The user gains access to all telesense and telepathy psychic powers (but not the latent features). These disciplines count the machine and the facility it is installed in as 'self' for range purposes. The machine and its facility is the point of origin for all ranges. The user also has access to the machine's bank of psychic crystals that provide 20 power points and recharges itself at a rate of 1 power point per hour. These are only useable while connected to the mental projection device. There are side effects, most notably the fact that the machine was designed for the Ancient Martian physiology and psyche.

The user must make a DC 18 Wisdom save or suffer 4d12 psychic damage when they activate the machine. A successful save reduces the damage by half. Martians have advantage on this save. If the save is failed the user must also roll on the psychic side effects table.

Venusians who attempt to use the machine find it simply will not work for them, and a self-destruct system activates with a timer set to 15 minutes, as well as intoning the following warning in Ancient Martian: "This device has been accessed by an Erisian. The device will self-destruct in fifteen minutes, fourteen minutes and fifty-nine seconds, fourteen minutes and fifty-eight seconds..." etc. When the timer runs down the device explodes, killing everything within 1 mile.

Mental Projection Machine Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The user's psyche is switched with someone else in the room, or failing that, a random person on Mars. Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are retained, as are proficiencies and class features, but all psychical abilities and species traits are lost.
-5	The machine overloads and all in the facility must make a DC 15 Wisdom save or suffer 2d12 psychic damage and are knocked unconscious.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You have unlocked additional powers and may add all telekinetic powers to the list.
+10	You have found a way to monitor the system so that damage and side effects are no longer an issue.

Psychic Side Effects

d10	Side Effect
1	The user suffers wildly horrific hallucinations and must make a DC 13 Wisdom save every round that they are in the machine or become stunned by all the spiders, spiders everywhere!
2	The user is nauseated and gains the poisoned condition while in the machine.
3	The user gains a phobia of the last thing that attacked them.
4	The user becomes acutely paranoid.
5	The user becomes a megalomaniac.
6	The user's alignment reverses, law into chaos and good into evil.
7	The user must erase and rewrite one personality trait, bond, ideal, or flaw.
8	The user loses 1d4 years of their memory.
9	Once out of the machine the user is unconscious for 1d8 days.
10	The user loses proficiency in one skill, language, tool, or vehicle, all that knowledge is lost.



Orbital Defense System

Device, unique

Spread throughout the high orbital band of Mars is a network of small metallic spheroids. Not much more than a meter across, each of these dark colored globes has floated undetected in the void around Mars since the time of the Ancients. Nearly impossible to detect, their specially treated surfaces absorb electromagnetic radiation, causing even RADAR to ignore them.

Currently these spheroids are inactive, preserved by the cold and vacuum of space, awaiting a signal from the surface to bring them back to life. Each spheroid contains a small reactor, currently offline, but capable of restarting in fifteen minutes, that powers a destructive beam weapon not unlike a RAY cannon. Once activated and powered-up, the spheroid seeks out any nearby vessels and moves within killing range before opening fire. The exact location of the controlling station, indeed even knowledge of this ancient trap waiting to be sprung, is unknown. Once activated from such a facility, the spheres seek out the nearest rocket ship and attack.

Orbital Defense System Spheres

Ship tiny rocket

Armor Class 18

Hull Points 12 (2d10)

Speed 1,000,000 mph, 88 combat

Acc 250,000 mph, 22 combat

Handling 4

Challenge 3

Crew robobrain (Piloting check +8)

Targeting system. The robobrain does not suffer disadvantage for firing from a moving vehicle.

Actions

Flare burn. Attack, pilot, melee, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Ancient Martian RAY cannon. Attack, robobrain +8, ranged, 4d10 radiation (space scale).

Self-destruct. Bonus action, robobrain, ship explodes killing all on board and inflicting 4d10 fire and radiation damage (space scale) on all ships in melee.

Turbo boost. Bonus action, robobrain, take a free accelerate maneuver.

Orbital Defense System Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You activate all the spheres in the system and they go on a rampage. Thousands will perish and if not stopped these spheres may rampage across the Solar System ending the Rocket Age. Oh, and the automated factory begins turning out and launching new spheres.
-5	You have triggered an automated defense system that activates a sphere and sends it towards your location to destroy the facility.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You have managed to fine tune the controls to the central command protocols and have control over the spheres.
+10	You have discovered that the facility has a robobrain managed factory that can make new spheres at a rate of 1 per day.

Orbital Defense System Critical Systems

d6	System	Boost	Damaged	Failure
1	Rocket Drive	Increase max speed and acceleration by 10%.	Reduce max speed and acceleration by 50%	May not accelerate or decelerate, may not use flare burn.
2	RADAR	Scan actions gain advantage	Scan checks at disadvantage	RADAR offline
3	RADIO	n/a	RADIO damaged	RADIO offline
4	Armament	+ Engineer's Intelligence modifier to damage	Reduce damage to	Armament offline
5	Crew	n/a	Robobrain offline	Robobrain offline
6	Controls	Increase handling by 1	Reduce handling by 1	Reduce handling by 2 or no maneuvers

Orechtium Silthanka

Weapon, common

Made from the rare metal Orechtium, this silthanka has a glimmering sheen that spreads light that hits it into a rainbow pattern. In the hands of a skilled user, this rainbow pattern can be seen trailing the blade as it cuts through the air, and by all appearances, through the light as well. The Orechtium silthanka has the normal statistics of a silthanka, grants a +1 to attack and damage rolls, and allows the wielder to use the parry property against beam weapons. If the parry property is used against an attack from a weapon with the beam property, and the attack misses by more than 10, the beam is deflected to any target the wielder chooses within 30 feet.

Analysis

This artifact does not need any analysis, like most melee weapons you put the pointy end in the other person.

Orechtium Sun Axe

Weapon, common

Made from the rare metal Orechtium, this sun axe has a glimmering sheen that spreads light that hits it into a rainbow pattern. In the hands of a skilled user, this rainbow pattern can be seen trailing the blade as it cuts through the air, and by all appearances, through the light as well. The Orechtium Sun Axe has the normal statistics of a sun axe, grants a +1 to attack and damage rolls, and allows the wielder to use the parry property against beam weapons. If the parry property is used against an attack from a weapon with the beam property, and if the attack misses by more than 10, the beam is deflected to any target the wielder chooses within 30 feet.

Analysis

This artifact does not require analysis, like any other axe you hit the other person really hard.

Palm Hacker

Device, uncommon

This palm sized rectangle of black plastic and glass has a set of wires tipped with electrodes that coil up inside it. The palm hacker can be used on electronic locks, datapads, or robobrains to hack into them. The electrodes must be physically connected to the device being hacked, and acts as if it has a +10 to pick electronic locks and disable technological traps. Palm hackers expend 1 charge per use.

Personal RAY Shield, Belt

Device, very rare

This black plastic and metal box is roughly the size of two fists held together. It is attached to an articulated metal belt that will fit even the slimmest or most rotund Martian.

When activated, the device projects a field of shimmering energy around the wearer, protecting them against most attacks. The belt mounted personal RAY shield grants AC 18. The device expends 5 charges per minute of use.

Palm Hacker Analysis

DC	Result
-10	Somehow the palm hacker has connected via a ghost field to a data pad or another device nearby and locked it. That device now requires a DC 18 hacking check to unlock.
-5	You short out the palm hacker and ruin it.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover that the palm hacker can store the security codes for any device it has hacked into, and already has three such codes in it.
+10	You discover that the palm hacker has a built-in ghost field connection and can be used to hack into devices via that.

Personal RAY Shield, Belt Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The shielding device overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 4d8 radiant damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You activate the shield function but do so with a body part on the wrong side of the field. You must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer 2d8 radiant damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You figure out how to activate the shield and adjust its modulation rate. When active, the shield grants an AC 20 instead of 18. If you are aware that an attacker is using frequency modulation property to attack you while this shield is active, as an action you may counter adjust the modulation of your shield with a DC 15 Intelligence (Science) check.
+10	After gaining an understanding into how the RAY shield works, you find a new function hidden within the control system. As an action, you can expend 3 charges to create a solid bubble of energy seven feet tall and five feet in diameter. This bubble lasts until the end of your next turn. The energy wall grants the effects of three-quarter cover.

Personal RAY Shield, Wrist

Device, rare



The most basic form of RAY shielding designed for personal use the wrist mounted personal RAY shield is a large metal and plastic box with an articulated metal strap that adjusts to fit around nearly any Martian wrist. When activated, the device projects a three-foot oval disk of shimmering light from the user's wrist. When activated, the RAY shield allows the wearer to parry attacks as per the parry weapon property, and it grants +2 to the user's AC. If the parry property is used against an attack from a weapon with the beam property, and if the attack misses by more than 10, the beam is deflected to any target the wielder chooses within 30 feet. The device expends 1 charge per minute of use.

Planet Killer Missile

Device, unique

When the Ancients constructed the ill-fated rocket that destroyed Eris, they did not make just one Planet Killer, they built two in case the first missed or failed to detonate. In the wake of the planet-wide catastrophes that wracked Mars following the Death of Eris, the second Planet Killer was largely forgotten, and completely ignored in the desperate efforts to save the dying planet. Millennia later, both the war with the Erisians and the Planet Killer Rockets have been forgotten by the Martians, both being eras of history that the last of the Ancients thought best left behind.

Yet the second Planet Killer Rocket remains, sitting in its silo in a ruined facility somewhere beneath the red sands of Mars. If this ruin can be found, then there is a good possibility that the Planet Killer can be refitted and launched. Should some villainous sort do this (and why not?) then the effects will be horrendous at a level that

Personal RAY Shield, Wrist Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The shielding device overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d18 radiant damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You activate the shield function but do so with a body part on the wrong side of the field. You must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer 1d8 radiant damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You figure out how to activate the shield and adjust its projection size. When active, the shield grants a +3 to AC instead of +2.
+10	After gaining an understanding into how the RAY shield works, you find a new function hidden within the control system. As an action, you can expend 3 charges to create a solid wall of energy seven feet tall and three feet wide. This wall lasts until the end of your next turn. The energy wall grants the effects of three-quarter cover.

Planet Killer Missile Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The rocket launches immediately. Roll 1d10 to see which planet is hit, with a roll of 5 being somewhere in the Asteroid Belt. Yes, if you roll a 4 the rocket launches, turns around, and comes back. On a 10 the missile flies off into outer space, best hope we are alone...
-5	You have begun the pre-launch sequence but might still be able to stop it.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You can safely disable this horrendous device and render it not just inert, but unable to launch at all.
+10	You have found the plans and most of the robobrain operated factory and could, in time, build another.

humanity, indeed most of the Solar System, would be totally unprepared for. This rocket will kill a planet, flat out, totally, and completely, wipe that rock ball from the face of creation. No need to roll damage, to hit, save, or such. The best, indeed the only, way to stop the Planet Killer is to intercept it in flight and either divert or destroy it. How long it is going to take for the Rocket to reach its target is intentionally left vague and up to the GM to determine in order to construct a good story and she had best have that number in her head before she puts one of these in the game.

Radium Rifle, Ancient Martian

Weapon, common

The modern radium rifle is a poor copy of this Ancient wonder. It is a shoulder rifle that uses an electromagnetic coil to accelerate a slug to hypersonic velocities. The Ancient Radium rifle requires 20 round clips that contain both the slug and the radium power source. The radium rifle inflicts 2d10 piercing damage, and has ammunition (800/ 2400), heavy, and two-handed.

RAY Pistol, Ancient Martian

Weapon, common

The primary personal ranged weapon of the Ancients, the RAY (radiation accelerating weaponry) pistol uses accelerated photons to produce a coherent beam of energy and project it at a target. A deadly weapon, RAY pistols are much prized by Martians for they are not just a fine way

to kill a person; they are a symbol of the species' lost greatness. RAY pistols inflict 1d8 radiant damage, weigh 2 lbs, and have the following properties: Ammunition (180/ 760), charge 2, beam, overcharge (1d10), and stun setting (DC 13).

RAY Rifle, Ancient Martian

Weapon, common

The primary personal ranged weapon of the Ancients, the RAY rifle uses accelerated photons to produce a coherent beam of energy and project it at a target. A deadly weapon, RAY rifles are much prized by Martians for they are not just a fine way to kill a person; they are a symbol of the species' lost greatness. RAY rifles inflict 1d10 radiant damage, weigh 6 lbs, and have the following properties: Ammunition (400/1600), charge 4, beam, overcharge (1d12), and stun setting (DC 15).

RAY SMG, Ancient Martian

Weapon, common

A popular personal ranged weapon of the Ancients, the RAY SMG uses accelerated photons to produce a coherent beam of energy and project it at a target. Deadly weapons, RAY SMGs are much prized by Martians for they are not just a fine way to kill a person; they are a symbol of the species' lost greatness. RAY SMG inflicts 1d8 radiation damage, weighs 4 lbs, and has the following properties: Ammunition (180/ 760), beam, burst (5x40), charge 6, and stun setting (DC 15).



**Radium Rifle, Ancient Martian Analysis**

DC	Result
-10	You shoot one random target within range, most likely someone standing close to you.
-5	You bust the coils when you try to fire the weapon rendering it useless.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover the radium rifle has a burst fire setting, giving it the burst (5x10) property.
+10	You discover that the burst setting can be refined, allowing the weapon to fire two rapid shots and thus granting advantage on attack rolls.

RAY SMG, Ancient Martian Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The RAY gun overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d8 radiant damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You accidentally active the RAY gun and shoot the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature and it suffers 1d8 radiant damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	In addition to the stun and overcharge setting, you have figured out how to adjust the beam power. The RAY gun gains the frequency modulation property.
+10	You have figured out how to adjust the beam cyclic rate of the RAY SMG. When you make an attack with the RAY SMG, you may choose to empty the entire battery (expending at least five charges) in one massive blast of firepower. The attack is cone attack five feet wide and forty feet long. Any creature in that cone must make a Dexterity save with a DC equal to 8 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus. Increase the DC by 1 for every full five charges expended in the attack. Targets that fail the save suffer 2d8 radiant damage, those that succeed suffer half damage.

RAY Pistol, Ancient Martian Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The RAY gun overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d8 radiant damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You accidentally active the RAY gun and shoot the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature and it suffers 1d8 radiant damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	In addition to the stun and overcharge setting, you have figured out how to adjust the beam modulation. The RAY gun gains the frequency modulation property.
+10	You have figured out how to adjust the beam output ratio of this RAY gun in order to greatly increase the damage it inflicts. When using the overcharge property, you may expand any number of charges, inflicting 1d10 points of damage per extra charge spent, and can spend as many charges as are in the weapon.

RAY Rifle, Ancient Martian Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The RAY gun overloads and explodes. Everyone within 30 feet must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 2d10 radiant damage and be knocked prone.
-5	You accidentally active the RAY gun and shoot the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature and it suffers 1d10 radiant damage.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	In addition to the stun and overcharge setting, you have figured out how to adjust the beam power. The RAY gun gains the frequency modulation property.
+10	You have figured out how to adjust the beam output ratio of this RAY gun in order to greatly increase the damage it inflicts. When using the overcharge property, you may expand any number of charges, inflicting 1d12 points of damage per charge spent and can spend as many charges as are in the weapon.

Remote Communicator

Device, Common

These small metal and plastic rectangles are only an inch or less in thickness and easily fit in the palm of the hand. They are similar to datapads in many ways, but smaller and less powerful. While you can record, store, and playback a variety of media, they lack the analysis and computational capabilities of datapads. Their main focus is to provide access to ghost fields, especially those that maintain communication networks. A remote communicator allows voice communication and media transmission across ghost fields as well as by line-of-sight to a range of fifty miles. A remote communicator uses 1 charge per 100 hours of use.

Sensor Viewer

Device, uncommon

Sensor viewers are single lens goggles with attached adjustable headbands. The outside face of the lens is mirrored, and the inside is a curved black screen. It is a very rugged device that can be dropped without damaging it. Sensor viewers work similarly to electronic texts in that they can record, store, and playback data. However, the data is of a highly esoteric nature and can be difficult to understand, even for someone who has knowledge of Ancient Martian. The sensor viewer can also analyze data and display this analysis, and indeed, it tends to do so even when not asked.

When the sensor viewer is first successfully analyzed, randomly choose one of the following types of data it can gather and process. You can connect the sensor viewer to a ghost field in order to send or receive data. Data can be acquired to a range of 200 feet but is blocked by large dense masses. While scanning, you must maintain concentration as if maintaining a psychic power. The artifact uses 1 charge for every full or partial 24 hours it is in use.

1. **Biological.** You can use the sensor viewer to search for types of lifeforms, detect poison and disease, or analyze lifeforms.
2. **Geological.** Using the sensor viewer, you can search for types of minerals, map a 200-foot radius as you move, or analyze rocks and minerals.
3. **Psychic.** The sensor viewer can detect psychic powers in use, psychic fields, and other psychically related phenomena.
4. **Radiological.** The sensor viewer can detect and analyze the full breadth of the electromagnetic spectrum as well as gravity and nuclear phenomena.

Solar Charger

Device, Uncommon

This black plastic box is topped with a broad fan of folding metal, glass, and plastic. When extended and placed in sunlight, the fan collects energy from the sun and transforms it into electrical energy used to recharge artifacts. This takes some time and varies depending on the amount of sunlight the solar charger receives. The solar charger can be set up during a long rest (and provided there is sunlight) and gains 1d6+1 charges in that time. The solar charger can also store up to 100 charges within it. When found the solar charger has 1d100 charges in it.

Stun Ball, Ancient

Weapon, uncommon

The original Ancient stun ball design is similar to the ones used by the current Keepers of the Peace in many principalities. It consists of a three-foot-long throwing arm that fits over the user's hand and arm. A metal sphere is placed into the arm and is activated once thrown. The activated sphere hums and glows with blue energy and possesses some sort of tiny robobrain and levitation unit that allows it to follow a target. Once contact is made with the target, the energy discharges from the ball and can knock out a bull ulodont. After discharging the sphere returns to the user's throwing arm. The Martian stun ball has the following properties: Ammunition (20/ 80), charge 1, stun (DC 15), and targeting system.

Tool Printer

Device, uncommon

When hooked up to a power source and supplied with raw material this large plastic box can be programmed to fabricate nearly any item. Raw material is fed into the hopper on the top, passes inside where it is ground up and reduced to its component atoms inside the box. These atoms are reassembled according to programmed blueprints. Within an hour there is a ding and the door opens to reveal the completed item. When found, a tool printer has three simple tools programmed into it, but more complex programs can be found. New tools can be programmed, but this requires three hours and a DC 18 engineering check. Basic tool printers have safety features that prevent printing a weapon, though a screwdriver or utility knife can be deadly. Tool printers use 1 charge per dollar value of the printed tool.



Remote Communicator Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You cause some sort of cascading critical response in the remote communicator that destroys all stored data and renders the device non-functional.
-5	You activate the remote communicator but cannot get it to link to any ghost fields or other remote communicators. There is only one channel you can connect to, and it broadcasts the same message over and over, "Your location has been logged and security robomen have been dispatched to apprehend you. Please remain stationary and compliant."
-1	You fail to comprehend how the remote communicator works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You have managed to activate the remote communicator and figured out how to encode transmission so that others cannot intercept them. Even better, you may attempt to intercept non-encoded transmissions within range (or over a ghost field) with a DC 13 arcana check.
+10	You have discovered that the remote communicator can generate its own ghost field and that this can be used to remotely access anything else that can connect to a ghost field. You still must defeat any encoded protections a device might have.

Sensor Viewer Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The sensor viewer heats up and inflicts 1d8 fire damage to the user until removed. Sadly, the head band is locked in place and must be cut off or torn off with a DC 15 Strength save.
-5	You snap off a dial and manage to get something called an error message. Randomly roll for the types of data the scanner can process. It can no longer process that type of data.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You discover another data type. Roll randomly to determine what the sensor viewer can detect.
+10	You have awakened a small robo-brain within the sensor viewer. It has limited function, but you can order it to scan for data and it will continue to do so without your involvement, allowing you to spend time on other things. Additionally, the sensor viewer can be set to targeting mode. While in targeting mode the user has advantage on ranged attack rolls with weapons with the beam property.

Solar Charger Analysis

DC	Result
-10	You overload the storage unit causing an explosion that inflicts 1d8 fire and bludgeoning damage per charge in the device to every creature within 30 feet. A DC 13 Dexterity save can reduce this damage by half.
-5	While examining the solar charger, you scratch the collection fan. If you ever do figure out how it works, it only collects 1d4 charges during a long rest.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You figure out how to polish the collection fan. With 30 lb of materials that you can buy in any market, you can spend 8 hours working on the solar charger. Afterwards, the device gathers 1d8+1 charges per long rest.
+10	Fiddling around with the settings, you manage to discover that the solar charger can connect to one of the few remaining power fields of the Ancients. When you use the solar charger, you may try to locate one of these beamed power fields with a DC 15 Science check. If you succeed, the solar charger does not need sunlight to charge.

Stun Ball, Ancient Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The stun ball activates on its own and begins targeting all creatures it can. The stun ball begins with you and makes an attack roll at +8. It will continue to attack you until either you are stunned or it runs out of charge. If you are stunned and it still has charges left, it moves towards the closest creature within 30 feet and makes an attack until the target is stunned or the stun ball runs out of charge. This process continues until the stun ball runs out of charge or there are no targets within 30 feet. If the stun ball still has a charge and there are no targets within 30 feet, it moves in a random direction until it encounters a target.
-5	You accidentally activate the stun ball and target the closest creature (choose randomly if there is more than one) within range. Make an attack roll against the creature and it suffers a DC 15 stun.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You have figured out how to overcharge the stun ball. Before launching it, you may expend additional charges to increase the stun DC by 1 per additional charge spent. All charges are lost whether the stun ball hits its target or not.
+10	Through careful study and a little experimentation, you have learned how to activate the stun ball in security mode. You expend one charge from the device to activate security mode. While in this mode the stun ball will patrol an area of up to 30-foot diameter, attacking any creature larger than 100 lbs that enters the area (it will not attack you or up to your Intelligence modifier of creatures you designate at the time of activation). The stun ball will continue to patrol the area and attack targets until it runs out of charge or you return it to normal mode. Security mode uses 1 charge per 24 hours it spends in this mode.

Tool Printer Analysis

DC	Result
-10	The tool printer explodes in a ball of energy that quickly eats away matter, transforming it into its component atoms. All within 30 feet must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer 2d10 acid damage (successful save for half damage).
-5	Your attempt to figure the tool printer out locks the controls and a DC 18 hacking check must be made to access them.
-1	You fail to comprehend how this artifact works but can in the future spend an inspiration point to try again.
0	You understand the basic functions of the device.
+5	You override the safety protocols and can use the tool printer to make weapons.
+10	You discover the tool printer has a scan function. An item placed inside will be scanned and a program made to print out copies. The scan takes 24 hours to complete and if the printer loses power or the item is removed the entire process must be restarted.

Artifact Hunting Analysis

DC	Result
-10	Your search causes you to become distracted from what is going on and you are stunned until the end of your next turn as you stare wildly for anything useful.
-5	You reach out and discover, you have put your hand into a bad spot and suffer 1d4 piercing damage. Is there tetanus on Mars?
-1	You find nothing.
+5	You may roll twice on the ancient junk table, choosing which item of junk you find.
+10	You may pick one item from the ancient junk table.



Random Ancient Junk

Not everything you find in ruins on Mars is going to be an artifact. Most of the time a diligent search will only turn up the trash and detritus of a long dead civilization. Any character in a ruin can spend ten minutes looking around and roll on this table. If the ruin is in particularly

poor shape, filled with sand, or otherwise difficult to search, a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check turns up something. In the heat of the moment, as an action a character can cast about wildly and attempt an expanded Artifact Hunting (Investigation or Perception) check to find something useful.

Ancient Junk Table

d100 Junk Item

1	A plastic card with a scratched black magnetic strip.
2	A 12-inch plastic cord with only one connector.
3	Food synthesizer, charge 1, only produces 1 serving of cold soup.
4	An empty plastic bottle with a twist on cap.
5	A six-sided aluminum sign with 'STOP' in an ancient language on it.
6	A half-melted plastic toy.
7	A small curved serrated knife.
8	A set of plastic tags on a key chain.
9	A plastic bahmoot, its belly opens up and you can fit a small toy in it.
10	A dead 40 charge battery.
11	A plastic armored boot, left.
12	A stasis box (only 1 charge and burns out after switched off) with a melon in it.
13	10 feet of 1-inch rubber tubing.
14	A bowl of plastic fruit.
15	A piezoelectric flashlight.
16	A sealed plastic vial with seeds.
17	A plastic tube and six brightly colored candy spheres.
18	A holodisk with ancient civilization's movies.
19	A hedge trimmer (melee, simple weapon, 1d8 slashing, charge 1, two-handed, heavy).
20	10x 6-inch strands of red wire.
21	A plastic helmet, vented and aerodynamic.
22	A 2-inch plug with an open connection port.
23	A hand-held plastic and metal drum.
24	5 plastic coins imprinted with circuits, each has a hole in the middle.
25	A 2-inch plastic cube, each face flashes a different color when pressed.

26	10 feet of aluminum tubing, 3-inch diameter.
27	Hand scanner that only displays motion in a 45-degree angle.
28	5-inch-long plastic stick tapered at one end.
29	A light bulb with no filament, burns forever.
30	A thumb sized plastic box with a data file on it.
31	A dozen plastic music disks.
32	Cassette controlled beverage processor, turns any liquid into the type programmed on the cassette.
33	Tube of liquid astringent gel.
34	Powered scissors, 1 charge, uses one charge per hour of use.
35	Key chain with baby bahmoot ornament.
36	Box of 9-pocket plastic sheets.
37	Jar of freeze dried organs.
38	Left hand glove, heat resistant to 4500° F.
39	1 plastic bag of food synthesizer base matter.
40	Electric whistle, solar powered, 1 charge.
41	Box of assorted bolts.
42	A plastic handle, if activated it locks onto anything it is placed on, 1 charge per use.
43	Plastic globe of a planet, dates to millennia ago.
44	Key-tar, 1 charge per hour of use.
45	Box of power cord adapters.
46	Small pocket tool (serves as a set of engineer's tools).
47	Skin tight vacc suit.
48	Pen sized laser engraver (melee, simple weapon, 1d8 fire damage, beam, charge 1).
49	Set of 12 plastic disks marked with esoteric symbols, act as a 1-point psychic crystal (you must have the entire set to gain any benefit).
50	Scale model of a hover plane.
51	Keyhole digital camera, 2 charges, 1 charge per use, stores up to 15 images.

52	Variable power plasma torch, melee, simple weapon 1d10 fire, beam, charge 1).	79	1 self-sealing stem bolt, right handed,
53	1 left hand self-sealing stem bolt.	80	Plastic dial, projects ambient light of varying colors and intensities, solar powered, charge 1.
54	Armored vest (AC 13+ Dex modifier, light armor).	81	A thumb sized piece of plastic with a remote control enabling data file, works with toys.
55	Ghost network connectable communication unit, only transmits unit's location, solar powered, 1 charge).	82	A box of assorted washers.
56	A spool of 100 feet of monowire.	83	Emergency inflatable 1-person habitat bubble, holds 1 medium sized creature or 2 small sized, maintains constant temperature and atmosphere for 24 hours. Once deployed you will never fit it back in its box.
57	Tube of solvent, dissolves any plastic or adhesive.	84	Magnetic brick.
58	A box of canned beverages that expired a loooooong time ago.	85	A hand held electronic game, uses 1 charge per hour, DC 9 Wisdom save or become enthralled and can't put it down until after 10 hours of play.
59	A tool that opens ancient civilization's canned goods.	86	Powered screwdriver, 2 charges, uses 1 charge per hour.
60	A box of canned foods, might not be good anymore.	87	A grapple gun, fires magnetic grapple 100 feet and deploys 100 feet of line behind.
61	A device that plays music disks.	88	A tube of lubricant.
62	Damaged battery with 1d6 charges.	89	A holodisk projector, uses 1 charge per hour.
63	Thumb sized plastic egg, projects a laser pointer from one end.	90	A spool of 100 feet of fiber optic cable.
64	Cracked, broken, and useless data pad.	91	A box of assorted screws.
65	Fluorescent yellow marker, ink glows in the dark.	92	A box of a dozen thumb sized plastic tabs, each contains random datafiles of spreadsheets, amateur fiction, and personal photos.
66	Metal pen with refillable ink reservoir, dry.	93	A set of twelve hand painted plastic figurines that depict cultural heroes in dramatic poses.
67	Two metal rulers in ancient civilization's measurement system.	94	A thumb sized plastic tab that contains a corrupted datafile that translates one ancient language into another.
68	Clear sheet of plastic in articulated mount.	95	Really old dried animal meat.
69	3 bags of beverage synthesizer base.	96	A box of insect shells.
70	A scented wet toilet paper dispenser, half filled.	97	5 holodisks of detailed how-to videos showing ancient cooking techniques.
71	A 3-foot plastic step stool, can be set to hover mode with a maximum height of 5 feet, 1 charge per minute of use.	98	A set of colored inks, some of which are only visible under infrared or ultraviolet light.
72	7 plastic solid polyhedrons with numbered faces.	99	Tube of liquid adhesive, DC 20 Strength check to break bond.
73	An electronic pad lock (DC 13 to hack, DC 18 Strength to break).	100	A box of beverage processor cassettes.
74	A small metal box that projects a holographic image of a waterfall.		
75	A plastic binder of emergency response protocols.		
76	A toy airplane, 2 charges, uses 1 charge per hour, flies by remote control from a datapad.		
77	10 single use 1 charge batteries.		
78	A powered wrench, 2 charges, uses 1 charge per hour.		

ALIEN BEASTS AND OTHER FOES



ALIEN BEASTS AND OTHER FOES

There is life out there amongst the planets, but often not life as we know it. Venus and Mars possess lifeforms close to that of Earth, although this means that Earthlings can eat the local plants and animals as easily as they can eat Earthlings. Other planets, most notably the gas giants and their moons, are home to more exotic forms of life, creatures that defy scientific nomenclature and blur the lines between the kingdoms of the animal world. Discovering these new life forms, rather than the more prosaic thunder lizards and giant insects of Venus or the bizarre floating gasbags of Jupiter, is the goal of scientists

and explorers alike. Being eaten by them is a risk that many are willing to take in the name of science.

It is not just the native beasts and alien monsters that are dangerous. Many planets and moons support intelligent life, and often these natives do not care for strangers coming and exploiting, or even exploring, their territory. As Earthlings have spread across the Solar System they have taken their strange ways and desires for conquest with them, often coming into conflict with indigenous species. Equally often, conflicts from Earth have been transported to other worlds and old grievances are resolved under alien skies.

ARTHUR'S DRAGON

Physically, Arthur's dragon bears a striking resemblance to the Komodo dragon of Earth. It has a long, flat body that it keeps off the ground with six stout, but powerful legs, a narrow spear-like head with a mouth full of small, sharp teeth, and a long spine tail that narrows to a whip-like end. Each leg ends in three claws that are capable of shredding thick hides and the flesh beneath. Its eyes are green or yellow and have four eyelids that allow the creature to adjust its vision for differing light levels as well as differing protective needs against blowing sand and dust. The dragon's scales are deep red in color and marked with darker red stripes, making them hard to see against the Martian desert.

Mars' top predator. Two meters long from snout to hip, with a meter-long tail, this red colored reptile prowls the sandy wastes in packs of three to eight adults. It is unusually intelligent for a reptile and has been known to stalk its prey with a supreme cunning and patience. Native creatures such as wild bahmoots, Martian gazelle, and sand wallowers are its normal targets, but a lone Martian or Earthling traveler, especially one that has been weakened by the harsh conditions found in the desert, makes a nice meal.

Pack dynamics. The late English biologist Dr. Arthur Wesley was the first to conduct a scientific study of these social animals. In the two years that he spent in the Martian desert observing wild packs, Dr. Wesley noted that unlike reptilian life forms found elsewhere throughout the Solar System, his dragons showed affection, shared kills, and even nurtured their young. Each pack is ruled by a dominant female and is comprised of several lesser females as well as all of their offspring. Often the lesser females are sisters or daughters of the dominant female. Males are driven from the pack upon reaching maturity, usually around three to four years of age, and subsequently live solitary lives, only interacting with the packs during mating season.



ARTHUR'S DRAGON

Medium beast (Mars), unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 72 (11d8+22)

Speed 40 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills perception +4, stealth +5

Senses lowlight vision, scent, passive

Perception 14

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Pack tactics. If an Arthur's dragon is within 5 feet of an ally it may add +2d6 damage to one attack.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, one creature, **Hit:** 13 (2d8+3) piercing.

Rake (recharge 4-6). *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, one creature, **Hit:** 26 (4d8+6) slashing.

ARTHUR'S DRAGON STORY HOOKS

- The San Diego Zoo is offering a bounty on a mated pair of Arthur's dragons; the problem is capturing the beasts alive (and without the rest of the pack eating the player characters).
- While exploring the Martian desert, the party hears a plaintive bleating noise. Investigating, they discover an immature Arthur's dragon caught in a sand pit. The poor thing is scared out of its wits and in danger of dying. Can they help before mamma arrives, an angry mamma?
- While exploring an Ancient Martian ruin, the party attracts the attention of a pack of dragons that lives there, beginning a cat and mouse game through the ruins.

BAHMOT

Bahmoots are the most popular mounts on Mars, used by nearly every caste in one manner or another. Not nearly as prestigious as the Royal Karn that carries the Silthuri Caste and pulls their carriages and chariots, the bahmoot is a loyal, intelligent, and sturdy beast that can carry a rider into battle, travel long distances on little food and water, or even pull a plow. Wild herds still roam some parts of Mars, and from these the best cavalry mounts are drawn, but most bahmoots begin their lives in captivity, often on an impressive breeding ranch owned by the upper castes.

Mars' answer to the horse. Standing as tall as an Earth horse, the bahmoot is much slenderer, though its wiry frame is nearly as powerful as that of any equine. They are reptilian in physique, having a scaly hide, long snout, forked tongue, and a long tail that narrows to a thin whip at the end. Bahmoots are bipedal and have a rolling gate that takes some getting used to, their powerful hind legs moving up and down nearly as much as they move forward, and its short front limbs pumping like the arms of an Olympic runner. They are primarily carnivorous but need to be fed fresh vegetables every week in order to maintain their strength and vigor.

Wild herds roam the deserts. Like most domesticated animals, bahmoots are available in a variety of colors and patterns, ranging from a uniform dun yellow to a dark beige, all with a plethora of different markings: stripes, patches, and speckles. Tame bahmoots are easy to handle and need only the minimum of attention and sustenance to serve as fine mounts and loyal animals (though a good scratching of their necks makes them happier and even more loyal). They have even been known to protect their masters using their sharp teeth and sharper claws.



BAHMOT

Large animal (Mars), neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 15 (2d10+4)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Senses low-light vision, passive perception

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Brave. Bahmoots gain advantage on saves to resist fear.

Loyal. A trained bahmoot is loyal to its master and gains advantage on attack rolls against any creature that attacked its master before the bahmoot's turn.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 14 (2d8+4) piercing.

Claws. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d8+4) slashing.

Sprint. A bahmoot can take the Dash action as a bonus action.

BAHMOT STORY HOOKS

- A Martian prince desires wild bahmoots for his legions and has offered a sizeable amount of gold and jewels. Let the round-up begin!
- A bahmoot goes rogue and attacks its handlers before escaping into the surrounding countryside. A bounty has been offered to bring in the head of this fearsome plough beast.
- Captured by a Martian prince (or other villain) the player characters are thrown into an arena where they must face a herd of wild bahmoots.

BLUE RAT

One the few creatures that can survive the blasted ecology of Io, the blue rat is a less a pet and more a hunting and survival companion of the Ioites. Packs of them run wild throughout the ruins on Io, and nearly every tribe of Ioites has a handful of blue rats. Roughly the size of a medium-sized dog, the blue rat can be a formidable foe.

It has blue-green, greasy fur that covers most of its long sinuous body, leaving the face, neck, and tail bare. Its skin is green-black and leathery, and as the blue rat ages its skin becomes increasingly loose, with the oldest having drooping loops of flesh hanging from their necks and faces.

Smart for an animal. The blue rat is a vicious hunter of smaller vermin, and in packs can threaten larger animals. As a domesticated animal it is loyal and intelligent, and is used to aid in the hunt, stand watch, root out buried food sources, and detect particularly toxic areas. Ioites who travel off-world often take a blue rat along as much for protection as companionship.

Spreading across the Solar System. As Ioites make their way through the Solar System, their blue rats companions have tagged along for the ride. Ioites are not known for their cleanliness or care as far as

biological containment procedures, this means that blue rats can be found nearly anywhere the Ioites have gone. They are already starting to take over the sewer environments of Mars and Earth cities.

BLUE RAT

Small animal (Io), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 13 (2d6+6)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Constitution +5

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses low-light, scent, passive perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Ambusher. If a blue rat attacks a creature unaware of its presence the blue rat inflicts +1d6 damage.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) piercing.

Skitter. As a bonus action a blue rat may take both the Dash and Hide actions.

BLUE RAT STORY HOOKS

- While exploring Io one of our heroes spots a blue rat.. The scavenger hangs around and begs for food, follows the character through dangerous areas, and otherwise stays close. When it comes time to leave Io a decision has to be made, bring it along or leave it behind.
- On Mars or even Earth our heroes discover a blue rat breeding colony. They can spot one of these scavengers, but wouldn't it be better for them to make the discovery in more dramatic fashion? Any fall through a building or a hole in the ground can end up in a nest of very angry blue rats.
- Blue rats are pests, even on Io. They seem to sprout up everywhere Ioites gather in large numbers, it is almost as if the Ioites spontaneously breed the scavengers. Many municipalities are offering bounties on blue rats and are not too picky about the difference between tame and wild animals.



CALLISTO YETI

Callisto is a ball of ice sailing through the void around Jupiter, though it is not entirely frozen. In the warmer areas around the equator, liquid water and temperatures not immediately lethal are found and there live an abundance of life. Pinnipeds, seal like creatures, as well as fish, birds, and small mammals flourish along the equatorial oceans and at scattered hot springs elsewhere on the surface. All these life forms are prey for Callisto's top predator, the Yeti.

Fearsome predators of an icy moon. The Yeti, more properly known as the Callisto Yeti (in case another Yeti-like creature is found) is a large hairy bipedal creature with a somewhat humanoid appearance. Standing over twelve feet tall and weighing on average six hundred pounds, the Yeti is one of the largest bipedal animals in the Solar System. It is massively strong and quite capable of ripping a person's arm off, or even tearing open the hull of an armored car like opening a tin can. Most of its muscular body is covered in a white to yellow-white pelt that has two layers, a short, thick insulating inner layer and a longer, coarse outer layer. Their limbs are long, with broad hands and feet, both of which end in sharp claws. Only the beast's eyes are clearly visible, and even those are deeply sunk into the creature's shaggy pelt. On males, two long twisted horns curve down from the skull and frame the eyes. The points of these horns make poor weapons but are believed to be used in battles between males over territory and mates.



CALLISTO YETI

Large humanoid (Callisto), unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 143 (15d10+60)

Speed 30 feet, climb 20 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20(+ 5)	12 (+ 1)	18 (+ 4)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+ 0)

Saving Throws Constitution +7

Skills perception + 5

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision, low-light, passive Perception 15

Languages Callisto yeti

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Ice Walk. Callisto yeti ignores difficult terrain that is ice or snow.

Terror out of the snow. Callisto yeti has advantage on Stealth checks in wintery conditions.

Actions

Multiattack. The Callisto yeti may make two fist attacks.

Boulder. *Ranged:* +8 to hit, range 20/40 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 25 (4d10+1) bashing.

Fist. *Melee:* +8 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 17 (2d10+5) bashing.

Roar. The Callisto yeti lets out a mighty roar. All enemies within 40 feet that can hear the yeti must make a DC 15 Wisdom save or gain the stunned condition for 1 round.

CALLISTO YETI STORY HOOKS

- Trapped by the evil Dr. Zarkander, the player characters are locked inside an ice cavern beneath his lair in the asteroid belt. Trapped with them is a Callisto Yeti, and he is not happy.
- The remains of a Callisto Yeti are found in the polar ice cap of another world. How did it get there, and are there more out there on the frozen ice?
- While exploring Callisto, one of the player characters is attacked by a Yeti, but not killed. Instead the Yeti takes her back to its lair, enraptured by her alien beauty (works just as well with a male player character).

CHANARI

The wild Chanari of Mars sweep across the desert on the backs of their swift bahmoots. Striking from their hidden camps they raid the city-states of the 'civilized' Martians and the bases of the alien invaders with equal abandon. At least that is the image presented in Martian legend and Earthling media. The truth is that for the most part the Chanari prefer to remain in splendid isolation, herding bahmoots, hunting game, and enjoying a life close to the land.

Raiders. When outsiders threaten or simply in revenge for the attacks by city dwellers and aliens, the Chanari ride to war. They prefer quick hit and run strikes, burning farms and small towns before disappearing back into the sandy wastes. Led by powerful chieftains and guided by their psychically gifted seers, a Chanari war party can harry and distract for weeks before being forced to retreat.

Masters of Mars. As the climate of Mars has become harsher since the end of the Canal Era, the Chanari have risen from being a small minority to controlling increasingly larger areas of Mars. They are masters of the deserts, and as city after city decays and is abandoned, the Chanari move in to occupy the dried up canals, empty farms, and ruined cities. The coming of the Earthlings has had little effect of the Chanari, though they are keen to adopt Earthling technology to aid their on going battles with the city-folk.

CHANARI STORY HOOKS

- Adding a band of Chanari can spice up any encounter in the deserts of Mars. They can come in on our heroes' side, or as new foes, or just as spoiler that makes the fight a three-way battle. Just be careful not to over use them.
- Our heroes' plan to explore Ancient Martian ruins is complicated by a tribe of Chanari that claim the ruins as part of their territory. There might be too many Chanari to simply fight them or drive them off, thus making negotiations the practical and ethical solution. The Chanari might want to strike a deal for arms, goods, or just help raiding a rival tribe.
- A fine use of the If You Don't Find the Body feat is to have the Chanari find the body. After a few days being nursed back to health by the wild riders of Mars, our hero can return to action. Did she make friends? Are their debts to be paid?

CHANARI CHIEFTAIN

Medium humanoid (Chanari, Mars), unaligned

Armor Class 16 (bone breastplate)

Hit Points 68 (8d8+32)

Speed 35

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	18(+4)	16(+3)	12(+1)	16(+3)	14(+2)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 13

Languages Chanari

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Desert dwellers. Chanari can move through non-magical difficult terrain in deserts, hills, and mountains at their normal speed. When in deserts they have advantage on Stealth checks as well as Survival checks to follow tracks or hide their own tracks.

Mounted combatant. When mounted Chanari have advantage on attack rolls.

Leader. The Chanari chieftain encourages his warriors in the fight. When within 30 feet of him all Chanari warriors have advantage on saving throws to resist mind-affecting effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The Chanari chieftain may make two toothed saber attacks.

Lance. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d10+3) piercing. If mounted when this attack is made the lance inflicts an additional 6 (1d10) damage.

Toothed saber. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) slashing, and after the combat the target must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer 8 (2d6) poison damage and gain the poisoned condition. A DC 13 Medicine check within five minutes of the end of the battle negates this effect.

Bow. *Ranged:* +6 to hit, range 100/ 200, 1 creature, *Hit:* 11 (1d8+4) piercing.

War cry. As a bonus action, a Chanari chieftain may let out a war cry. One foe that can hear the Chanari warrior and is within 30 feet must pass a DC 15 Wisdom save or become frightened of the Chanari warrior until the end of their next turn.

Rally and charge. As a bonus action the Chanari chieftain can have one of his followers use their reaction to either take a move action or an attack action.

CHANARI WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (Chanari, Martian), unaligned

Armor Class 14 (leather and bone)

Hit Points 16 (2d8+6)

Speed 35

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 13

Languages Chanari

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Desert dwellers. Chanari can move through non-magical difficult terrain in deserts, hills, and mountains at their normal speed. When in deserts they have advantage on Stealth checks as well as Survival checks to follow tracks or hide their own tracks.

Mounted combatant. When mounted Chanari have advantage on attack rolls.

Actions

Lance. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d10+2) piercing. If mounted when this attack is made the lance inflicts an additional 6 (1d10) damage.

Toothed saber. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d6+2) slashing, and after the combat the target must make a DC 13 Constitution save or gain the poisoned condition and be unable to take a long rest until the thorns are removed. A DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check within five minutes of the end of the battle negates this effect.

Bow. *Ranged:* +4 to hit, range 100/ 200, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) piercing.

War cry. As a bonus action, a Chanari warrior may let out a war cry. One foe that can hear the Chanari warrior and is within 30 feet must pass a DC 13 Wisdom save or become frightened of the Chanari warrior until the end of their next turn.



CHANARI SEER

Medium humanoid (Chanari, Mars), unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 43 (6d8+16)

Speed 35

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (-3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 13

Languages Chanari

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Desert dwellers. Chanari can move through non-magical difficult terrain in deserts, hills, and mountains at their normal speed. When in deserts they have advantage on Stealth checks as well as Survival checks to follow tracks or hide their own tracks.

Mounted combatant. When mounted Chanari have advantage on attack rolls.

Psychic powers. Chanari seers are powerful psychics. The seer has 6 power points and knows the following powers: *astral projection*, *psychic healing*, and *telepathic communion*. The DC to resist these powers is 15, and attacks with these powers are at

Actions

Dagger. *Melee* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 5 (1d4+2) slashing.

DARTERS



Although not generally a threat to Earthlings, darters can cause all manner of trouble for those exploring the skies of Jupiter. They will casually attack air ships, confusing the hydrogen or helium cells for their own native prey. Any Earthling walking around on a sky island while wearing an inflated suit may also be attacked. In a few rare instances, darters have attacked humans not in an inflated suit or on an air ship, but the causes of such attacks are as yet unknown.

Odd looking things. These animals defy normal Earth classifications, and seem to combine aspects of mammals, reptiles, and birds. The darter is a six-foot-long winged creature with a scaly body. Their wings are membranous and thin and are easily torn by Earth weapons. They have no necks, but a thick ruff of feather-like fur surrounds their heads, as well as their spine and their long tails. It is their heads that are the oddest, for darters have large eyes and nostrils on the dorsal and ventral surfaces of their skulls, but no real mouth, merely a suction-like hooked orifice similar to that of a lamprey on the dorsal portion of their head. Most of the head is made up of a sharp, hooked bony protuberance, much like a spear or arrowhead. Oddly, darters have no hind limbs, and their forelimbs are entirely devoted to supporting their wing structure, which can exceed ten feet in span.

Aerial predators. Darters attack other flying creatures but prefer to feed on large floating giants like the Jovian gasbag. Once prey is spotted, a pack of darters forms up into a 'V' shaped formation, diving at the prey in turns until it is killed. Once a kill is made, the whole pack descends on the victim, burrowing into its body and draining it of its fluid. They will stay on board until increasing heat and pressure drive them away in a flapping mass dripping with blood.

DARTERS

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 6 (1d8+1)

Speed fly 50 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	18(+4)	12(+1)	3(-4)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Skills perception +3

Senses low-light, passive Perception 13

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Blood drain. A darter that succeeds in a critical hit has managed to latch on to the target. The target is now grappled (escape DC 13), and as long as the grapple continues the darter drains 5 (1d8) hit points at the start of its turn.

Flock. Darters rarely travel alone. A flock coordinates its attacks and moves in a swirling mass that makes it hard to pick out a single target, not to mention creating a confusing spectacle of swooping bodies and flapping wings. A flock of at least three darters within 10 feet of each other gain advantage on dive bomb attacks and cause any attacks against them to suffer disadvantage.

Actions

Dive Bomb. The darter flies downward at least 50 feet and makes a single spear beak attack. If it hits it inflicts +10 (2d6) damage.

Spear beak. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing.

DARTER STORY HOOKS

- While working on the outside of an airship, a flock of darters appears on the horizon. Can the repairs be made before they descend on the crew?
- A friendly airship crashes into a sky island and sends out a distress call. In addition to dealing with the normal issues of rescue from an unstable floating landmass, the area is known for being the roost of several large flocks of darters and having frequent exposure to methane pockets, thus making a space suit both necessary and dangerous.
- After being away from their vessel, the party returns to discover a flock of darters have taken it as a roosting spot and will not be evicted by simple threats or loud noises.

EAGLE SNAKE

Like so many of the native species of Jupiter, the eagle snake is biologically bizarre. This meter-long ribbon of flesh ends in a round tooth and hook filled maw. Its flanks are covered with a fringe of thin flesh, and its ventral side contains three leathery air sacks that it inflates and deflates to change altitude and provide propulsion.

Hunting, er, snake? The Jovians have long used domesticated eagle snakes as hunting companions and guard animals. Although not the brightest of animals, eagle snakes can be trained to recognize individuals and pursue prey. Outside of the exotic atmosphere of Jupiter, eagle snakes do not normally fare very well and should have easy access to gas filled pressure bubbles to sleep and rest in.



EAGLE SNAKE

Tiny animal (Jupiter), neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 7 (2d4+2)

Speed fly 30 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	16(+3)	12(+1)	12(+1)	8(-1)	12(+1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses low-light vision, scent, blind, passive perception 14

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Environmentally dependent. The eagle snake can only gain the benefits of a long rest in the skies of Jupiter or a specially prepared artificial environment.

Sonar. The eagle snake 'sees' using sonar with a range of 120 feet. Creatures within that zone have disadvantage on Stealth checks to hide from the eagle snake.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) piercing.

Gobble. An eagle snake that has successfully attacked a creature with its bite and inflicted damage may use a bonus action to tear off a piece of flesh and eat it. If it does so the target suffers an additional 2d6 (8) points of damage. An eagle snake can only use gobble if it has not used gobble in its previous turn.

EAGLE SNAKE STORY HOOKS

- Do eagle snakes make good pets? Earthling breeders want to find out and they need breeding pairs to get started. Capturing these elusive flying ribbons of flesh might be difficult, but safely transporting them should prove the real challenge.
- A foe of the party might employ a swarm of eagle snakes as a special attack, calling them with subsonic whistles to complicate an otherwise straight up fight.
- "Toss them into the snake pit!" Only it's a pressurized bubble filled with hungry eagle snakes. Bwahahahaha!

EARTHLINGS

Earthlings can be found in every corner of the Solar System. Most often they are simply explorers, merchants, or missionaries, but all too often they are there to conquer and exploit. Two groups have managed to cover themselves with infamy, the Nazis and freebooters. Nazis are representatives of Nazi Germany, the insane evil that has taken over one of Earth's most powerful nations. Their operative and agents can be found across the Solar System, delving into ruins, looting treasures, and expanding their mad Führer's power. The Freebooter movement began on Mars but is spreading to everywhere Earthlings can be found. Freebooters are freelance explorers and often exploiters, looking to make their fortunes through daring and violence.

AHNENERBE AGENT

Medium humanoid (Earthling, Earth), NE

Armor Class 15 (leather jacket)

Hit Points 52 (8d8+16)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Athletics +4, History +5, Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages German, English, Ancient Martian

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Leader. The Ahnenerbe agent may not be in the military chain of command but certainly issues orders to underlings. As a bonus action the agent can issue an order to an ally who may then take a move or attack action.

Strange artifact. The Ahnenerbe dig up strange things in the out-of-the way places of the Solar System. The agent has an ancient artifact that has one of the following effects:

- May be used as a bonus action to generate an energy shield with 5 temporary hit points. A bonus action refreshes this shield.
- May be used as an attack action, *Ranged*: +5 to hit, range 20/60, 1 creature, *Hit*: 15 (2d10+3) radiation (beam).
- Grants the agent advantage on saving throws.

Actions

RAY pistol. *Ranged*: +5 to hit, range 30/60, 1 creature, *Hit*: 8 (1d8+3) radiation (beam, stun setting).

NAZI STURMTRUPPEN

Medium humanoid (Earthling, Earth), NE

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 21 (4d8+12)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +1, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages German

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

For the Führer. Nazi sturmtruppen are fanatics and have advantage on saving throws to resist mind-affecting effects.

Squad tactics. When a sturmtruppen starts its turn within 5 feet of an ally it gains advantage on attack rolls. Additionally, when within 5 feet of an ally a sturmtruppen may spend its reaction to impose disadvantage on attack rolls targeting an ally.

Actions

Rifle. *Ranged*: +5 to hit, range, 200/600, 1 creature, *Hit*: 9 (1d10+3) piercing.

Bayonet (on rifle). *Melee*: +5 to hit, reach 15 feet, 1 creature, *Hit*: 7 (1d6+3) slashing.

Bayonet (in hand). *Melee*: +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit*: 6 (1d4+3) slashing.

DEUTSCHE MARSKORPS PILOT

Medium humanoid, NE

Armor Class 13 (RADIO suit)

Hit Points 21 (4d8+12)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

Skills Engineering +3, Perception +1

Vehicle rocket ships +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages German

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

RAY pistol. *Ranged*: +5 to hit, range 30/ 60, 1 creature, *Hit*: 8 (1d8+3) radiation (beam, stun setting).

EARTHLING FREEBOOTER

Medium humanoid (Earthling, Earth), CN

Armor Class 14 (leather jacket)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Stealth +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages English, one other

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Gang up. If an ally is within 5 feet of a freebooter than the freebooter gains advantage on attack rolls.

Actions

Rifle. *Ranged:* +4 to hit, range, 200/600, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d10+2) piercing.

Hand cannon. *Ranged:* +4 to hit, range 30/120, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) piercing.

Survival knife. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d4+3) slashing.

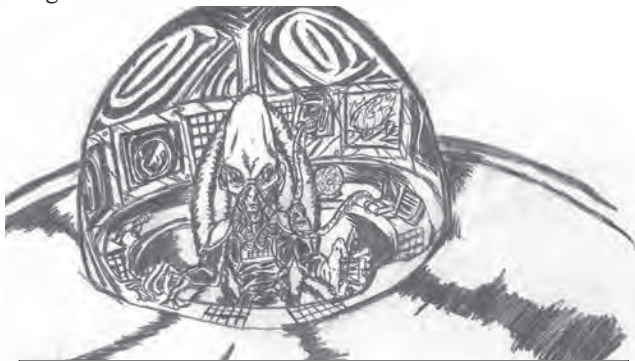


EARTHLING STORY HOOKS

- When do the Nazis show up? When they are least expected. Nazi agents are everywhere and it does not require too much of an explanation for why they have decided to intervene in the current story. There is nothing our heroes can possess...
- Freebooters can be used in much the same way as a squad of storm troopers. They can also be rivals, allies, or nearly any role the GM feels needs to be filled. Freebooters are often rapacious and unethical, but there are bands that are simply adventurers, like our stalwart heroes.
- Make the Nazi archaeologist a recurring character, a foe that keeps showing up like a bad penny. Never find his body, always let him escape, until it becomes time for the final showdown. Even then, it might be fun to let a few loose threads dangle.

EUROPAN

Europen emissaries have been fanning out across the Solar System integrating themselves into 'primitive but still interesting' cultures. Once embedded with their targets they study the how's and whys of the alien culture, often going to great lengths to become part of the studied group. The European Imperial Navy is a different matter. Often cold and aloof, not to mention violent, having an European officer show up is a sure sign things are going to go from bad to worse. That a squad of fanatical Metisian soldiers often backs them up makes Imperial officers even more dangerous.



IMPERIAL EUROPEAN NAVY OFFICER

Medium humanoid (European, Europa), LN

Armor Class 13 (European robes)

Hit Points 90 (20d8)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	14(+2)	10(+0)	16(+3)	16(+3)	14(+2)

Saving Throws Wisdom +6

Skills Engineering +6, Perception +6

Vehicles Saucer ships +6

Damage Immunities poison condition

Resistances poison damage

Vulnerabilities piercing damage

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages European, English

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Leader. The IEN officer may be part of the military chain of command and can issue orders to allies. As a bonus action the officer may issue an order to an ally who may then take a move or attack action.

Psychic training. The IEN officer has advantage to resist a psychic power.

Actions

Disintegration pistol. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, range 40/120, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d6+2) acid (beam).

EUROPAN IMPERIAL NAVY PILOT

Medium humanoid (European, Europa), LN

Armor Class 15 (European robes)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	18(+4)	10(+0)	14(+2)	10(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Perception +2

Vehicles Saucer ships +6

Damage Immunities poison condition

Resistances poison damage

Vulnerabilities piercing damage

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages European

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Psychic training. The European pilot has advantage to resist a psychic power.

Actions

Disintegration pistol. *Ranged:* +6 to hit, range 40/120, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d6+4) acid (beam).

EUROPAN STORY HOOKS

- Adding an emissary to a group of foes makes the encounter far more complicated. In addition to the weapons and psychic powers of the emissary, there are the political concerns as well. It is difficult to predict how the Europeans will react to the death of an emissary, but it will likely be negatively. Having a Metisian kill team on your tail is not something anyone wants.
- You can use a reoccurring European Imperial Naval officer as the main foe for several levels worth of adventure. They show up, cause problems, and manage to slip away every time. Officers are tough and deadly, so make sure the party can handle one before setting them up to face not just the European but their Metisian bodyguards as well.
- To further enhance the bizarre, at least to outsiders, and often contradictory nature of the Europeans, have the rivals and foes turn around and be allies on some adventures. Or just not really involved, but present and making observations. Either way it should be fun!

FUR FROG

This small frog like creature is a native of Venus where it roosts in trees and feeds on small insects. The Venusians keep these little green, yellow, or blue colored amphibians as pets, and not just to clean Venusian fur of parasites. While fur frogs do like to burrow into Venusian fur and hunt the various bugs and other parasites that often live there, their main feature is that they are naturally psychic and can be trained to link their minds to that of their masters as well as others. Although they are non-verbal, the fur frogs can communicate emotions, sights, sounds, smells, and other sensations, and pass these on to their master and any other the master directs them to.

FUR FROG

tiny animal (Venus), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 3 (1d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wisdom +5

Skills Perception +5

Senses low-light vision

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Psychic awareness. The fur frog has the biosense and locosense awareness with a range of 60 feet. It may use one of these at a time, replacing one natural sense with the psychic awareness.

Telepathic link. The fur frog may bond with another creature during a long rest. This forms a telepathic link between the bonded creature and the fur frog. The fur frog can send anything it senses and emotions through the link but cannot communicate words.

Actions

Mental assault. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, 1 creature within 60 feet, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) psychic.

Telepathic network. As a bonus action a linked fur frog can extend its link to a number of creatures equal to its Wisdom modifier. These linked creatures can pass thoughts, memories, and sensations across the link to each other as well as the fur frog.



FUR FROG STORY HOOKS

- Adding a fur frog can enhance any encounter with a Venusian. Not only can they be a potent aid in battle, negotiations can fall apart when the fur frog shows that someone is lying. Then again, it might show our heroes are trustworthy and ease a tense standoff.
- A Venusian *Harvittori* approaches our heroes and asks for their help. His prized fur frog has gone missing and he must find it. The young Venusian is beside himself with grief and desperate for help. The frog was last seen two days ago near the rocket port, and finding it should be an interesting adventure, and one devoid of combat.
- Fur frogs could be a great trade good if enough can be gathered. The trouble is the Venusians don't want to part with their little friends and wild fur frogs are rare. A deal could be struck, but the price would be high, and fur frogs for market should be unbonded.

IOITE SCAVENGER

Once confined to their blasted moon, the loites have expanded to alien worlds and found new homes. Now they can be found in ruined cities on Mars, garbage dumps on Earth, and anywhere else there is garbage to root in. Consummate scavengers, loites can find the basic necessities of life nearly anywhere. Being able to eat anything helps, but their true skill is in their ability to make complex technological items out of useless trash.

IOITE SCAVENGER STORY HOOKS

- Did someone leave a piece of technology unattended, maybe their rocket ship? When they return they find that loites have scavenged it. For something as large as a rocket ship the entire thing won't be dismantled, but crucial pieces will be missing. Getting them back could be a whole new adventure.
- If you need a part and don't want to pay, and really do not care about where it came from, seek out the local loites. They might have what you are looking for and the price will be low. Can you trust them? Probably not.
- A chase can end up passing through a nest of loite scavengers. They do not take kindly to people intruding on their homes, and the encounter can become a lot more complex. Trash is thrown, shots are fired, and a few loites join the chase to exact revenge, just your normal day in the rocket age.



IOITE SCAVENGER

Medium humanoid (loite, lo), CN

Armor Class 13 (assorted junk)

Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)

Speed 35

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	12(+1)	16(+3)	14(+2)	10(+0)	8(-1)

Skills Deception +1, Engineering +4, Perception +2, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities poison damage, poisoned condition, disease

Resistances radiation damage

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 12

Languages loite, a smattering of other languages

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Duck and scuttle. As a reaction to taking damage an loite scavenger may take a dash or disengage action.

Filthy. All of the loite scavenger's attacks are tainted by the filth they live in and the radiation leaking from their scratch-built devices. Any creature hit by an loite scavenger's junk pistol or big wrench must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer an additional 7 (2d6) poison and radiation damage.

Actions

Junk pistol. *Ranged:* +3 to hit, range 10/40, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d8+1) piercing.

Big wrench. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) bludgeoning.

JOVIANS

The Jovian clans are numerous and diverse, though most fall into either pragmatic or martial philosophical schools. Their warrior class is the product of centuries of clan rivalries and internecine honor duels. As a whole, aliens consider them to be a prickly and easily offended group, though the Jovians are well aware of what constitutes an offense amongst neighboring clans. Those in the know can use a variety of ritualized forms of address, speech, and body language to smooth over relations. Unfortunately, too many of these involve displays of wings, folding unfolding, stretching, and retracting in specific sequences.

JOVIAN CLAN WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (Jovian, Jupiter), LN

Armor Class 15 (Jovian battle harness)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	16(+3)	12(+1)	10(+0)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Jovian

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Alien senses. Jovian clan warriors have poor hearing and suffer disadvantage on Perception checks involving hearing. They also have a 270° range of vision and can detect creatures behind them.

Telescopic vision. Clan warriors can see twice as far as an Earthling can and suffer no penalties for shooting at long range.

Challenge. A clan warrior can issue a challenge to a single creature within 30 feet. If the target fails a DC 13 Wisdom save, on their next turn the creature must move towards the clan warrior and engage it in melee combat.

Actions

Beaked mace. *Melee:* +3 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d8+1) piercing.

Repulsion float rifle. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, range 40/120, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) slashing (burst 5x30).

JOVIAN CLAN WARRIOR STORY HOOKS

- It's just a case of mistaken identity. Our heroes look like the scum who swindled a group of honorable Jovian warriors, and these warriors are looking for revenge. The real problem is that the honor system of this clan will require the relatives of those vanquished to attempt revenge. This can lead to a quickly escalating situation as more and more Jovian warriors come looking for payback.
- There are as many ways that honor can be satisfied as there are Jovian clans. Our heroes accidentally offend a Jovian, and as per her honor code a duel must be fought. The parameters for this duel are simple, both parties meet on a decaying sky island and the first to take flight loses. There are no provisions for species without wings.
- The great *Taszitzi* martial arts master has been murdered by a rival, and have his top students. The seven survivors are young, barely past their adult molting, and in need of guidance and aid in their quest for revenge. They won't ask, but their need is obvious. Will our heroes help them out or let the youths be slaughtered by much older and more experienced foes?



JOVIAN GASBAG

By far the largest creature in the Solar System, the Jovian gasbag, can grow to be over a kilometer across, and its feeding tentacles can trail for kilometers below. Each gasbag has its own small ecosystem, with thousands of plants and small animals finding a stable home on the massive creature's back and trailing down its sides. No animals, and no sane person for that matter, would conceive of approaching the underside of a gasbag, for that would put it in danger of the giant's tentacles. The entire mass is held aloft by a series of bladders filled with lighter than air gasses. Each bladder heals quickly when punctured, and the gasbag has hundreds of bladders.

Horrific way to die. Much like an Earth jellyfish, the gasbag feeds by straining the atmosphere for small animals with its feeding tentacles. These tentacles usually stretch a few hundred feet, but tentacles of more than a mile in length have been observed dangling from the largest examples of this species. Each tentacle is a long sticky filament with a diameter of less than thirty inches, tapering to a tip only three inches thick. One or more of these tentacles can easily trap the many small flying creatures that fill the skies of Jupiter, and larger creatures might be caught in dozens of thin sticky appendages that wrap around the prey like a living cocoon. When a sufficient mass of prey is trapped in a tentacle, it is slowly brought up into the beast's feeding orifice.

Once inside the stomach, powerful acids slowly dissolve the helpless animal (or explorer), turning it into nutrient rich goo that can be easily absorbed by the gasbag. This nutrient goo is a prime target of darters who dive at gasbags in the hopes of attaching themselves to either the stomach or one of the large vessels that moves the goo to the numerous smaller stomachs found throughout the gasbag.

JOVIAN GASBAG

Gargantuan beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 350 (25d20+100)

Speed fly 20

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26(+8)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage immunities psychic

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, electricity, cold

Vulnerabilities fire, piercing

Senses blindsight, passive Perception 10

Challenge 20 (5,900 XP)

Eat. Any creature grappled by a gasbag's tentacles is slowly moved towards it's feeding orifice at a rate of 40 feet per round. Once in the orifice if the creature is huge or smaller the creature is swallowed and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has three-quarters cover from attacks and other effects originating outside the gasbag and takes 42 (12d6) acid damage at the start of the gasbag's turn. A creature can cut its way free or have another cut it out of the gasbag by inflicting 50 points of damage. If the gasbag dies any creatures inside it exit rapidly using 15 feet of movement or plummet with the corpse into Jupiter's fiery heart.

Truly massive. Gasbags are large enough that they count as the same scale of any vehicles attacking them, having 32 hull points in planetary vehicle scale and 12 in space vehicle scale. The gasbag uses tentacles of different sizes for different prey. The tentacles listed below are those for smaller food, for something its own size it uncoils truly massive tentacles. These have the same reach and to hit bonus as the smaller tentacles but inflict 1d10+8 bludgeoning damage as a space scale vehicle. Any space scale or smaller vehicle grappled by the gasbag can be dragged into its feeding orifice and suffers 2d6 acid damage while inside, as above.

No mind. Gasbags lack minds and cannot be affected by psychic powers, Juldari courtesan pheromones, and similar mind effecting powers.



Actions

Multiattack. The gasbag can make up to 5 tentacle attacks per turn.

Tentacle. *Melee:* +12 to hit, reach 200 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 48 (6d12+8) bludgeoning and the target is grappled (escape DC 18). Until this grapple ends the target is restrained.

Legendary Actions

The gasbag can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of the creature's turn. The gasbag regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tentacle attack. The gasbag makes a single tentacle attack.

Ionization cloud (Costs 2 actions). The gasbag emits a cloud of ionized air, the creature's natural 'exhaust'. This cloud is a 100-foot cone originating from the creature. Any electronic device in the cloud ceases functioning for 1d8+2 rounds. A DC 18 Engineering check can bring a device back online before this time expires. For vehicles of all scales, the vehicle suffers a critical system hit if caught in the cloud.

Poison cloud (Costs 2 actions). The gasbag adjusts its lift characteristics and flight trim by releasing a cloud of gases. This cloud is a 100-foot cone originating from the creature. Any creatures caught in the cone must make a DC 18 Constitution save or suffer 25 (5d6) poison damage and gain the poisoned condition.

JOVIAN GASBAG STORY HOOKS

- Many creatures hunt gas giants; few actually succeed in bringing down anything but the very young, weak, or old. A big game hunter with more money than brains wants to hire our heroes and their ship to hunt adult gas giants in the skies of Jupiter. With a harpoon. Idiot wants a trophy to take home. He does pay well, very well.
- Gas giants are a hazard to navigation. Prudent captains go around them, even if it takes them miles out of their way. A large herd is ahead of our heroes; will they play it safe and detour or try to sneak through? What if there is a stampede. Can they even stampede?
- Every now and then a gasbag eats something that it cannot digest. As their organic acids will dissolve most metals, anything left over has to be something of value. The trick is getting the treasure out.

JUNGLE TORTOISE

The shell of a dead jungle tortoise might prove to be an excellent shelter. Enterprising parties will find all manner of uses for these shells, from boats to shields. They might even want to find a 'fresh' one. One of the largest of the native animals on Venus, the jungle tortoise is a living tank, its bulk protected by layers of hard scales, its head surmounted by short knobby horns, and its tail ending in a long bone mac. For all its fearsome defenses, the jungle tortoise is actually a rather docile and complacent creature, happy to eat its way through the ferns and small trees of the Venusian jungle.

Living tank. The average jungle tortoise is 12 feet from snout to the base of its ten-foot-long tail, six or more feet across at the middle, and weighs around twenty-four tons. Their backs and flanks are protected by special scales that grow throughout the beast's life, forming an overlapping suit of armored plates that can reach all the way to the ground. Lighter, though still sturdy, plates cover the head and tail, and the spine is further protected by a thick ridge of bone that runs from the top of the creature's skull to the mace on its tail, reaching a height of a meter to a meter and a half in the middle. Its four legs are short and stubby, but thick and strong enough to not just support its bulk but drive it forward at a surprising pace. The jungle tortoise is a strict vegetarian and will even turn its snout up at ferns that have the stench of blood on them.



JUNGLE TORTOISE

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 18

Hit Points 90 (12d10+24)

Speed 20

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Constitution +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing

Senses passive Perception 12

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ricochet. Shooting at a jungle tortoise may seem easy, climb a tree and hope it doesn't knock the tree over. However, their shell is hard, extremely hard, and sharply curved. Any projectile weapon fired at a jungle tortoise that rolls a '5' or less on the attack ricochets off and hits a random creature within 60 feet of the jungle tortoise, inflicting normal damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The jungle tortoise can make two tail mace attacks.

Tail mace. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 13 (2d8+3) bludgeoning and piercing.

Trample. The jungle tortoise moves up to 30 feet and can move through another creature's space. Any creature it moves through suffers 8 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage and must make a DC 13 Strength save or be knocked prone. Any creature already prone that the jungle tortoise tramples over suffers an additional 13 (2d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

JUNGLE TORTOISE STORY HOOKS

- An irate jungle tortoise, wounded from a failed hunt, charges out of the jungle at our heroes. This can happen while they are traveling, or better yet, during a combat scene. Dealing with several tons of angry armored lizard should be challenging.
- Lost in the jungle, out of supplies, not knowing what fruits are safe to eat, the party is in trouble. Well, a nearby jungle tortoise should prove to have plenty of meat. The hard part will be getting it.
- There is a jungle legend that these armored lizards hate fires and will go out of their way to stamp them out. This may be true, it may not be, but having a jungle tortoise show up from time to time to harass the party is an excellent use of this mighty beast, especially if it is far too powerful for our heroes to contend with. Not every encounter need be dramatic or filled with combat; sometimes a little humor is called for.

MADURI

The Maduri are the warrior caste of Mars and one of the three higher castes that rule the planet. They are tough fighters, staunch allies, and fearsome foes. The males specialize in rapid assaults, scouting, and shock tactics, and often are mounted on bahmoots. The larger and stronger females form the solid wall of shields and axes that hold the enemy at bay and give the males protection while they prepare for another glorious charge. These statistics are for Maduri armed in traditional Martian style, they can just as easily be reequipped with Earthling weapons, though often this is just a replacement of the arrow caster with rifles and submachine guns. Male Maduri do love their grenades.

MADURI LEGIONNAIRE, FEMALE

Medium humanoid (Maduri, Mars), LN

Armor Class 21 (female Maduri armor and shield)

Hit Points 44 (6d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +2

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages High Martian

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Honor bound. Maduri have advantage on saving throws to resist mind control.

By my sister's side. When standing adjacent to a female ally, female Maduri gain advantage on attack rolls. If adjacent to someone with a shield, female Maduri may use a bonus action to lock shields, gaining resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

Unyielding. Female Maduri have advantage on saving throws to resist being knocked prone or forced to move. If knocked prone they may use a reaction to be forced to one knee and thus not suffer the penalties for being knocked prone. If forced to move, they move half the distance.

Actions

Spear fork. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 10 feet, X creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d8+4) piercing.

Arrow caster. *Ranged:* +3 to hit, range 60/150, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d10+3) piercing.

MADURI LEGIONNAIRE, MALE

Medium humanoid (Maduri, Mars), LN

Armor Class 19 (male legionnaire armor and shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8+8)

Speed 35

Skills Athletics +5

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10(+0)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages High Martian

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Honor bound. Maduri have advantage on saving throws to resist mind control.

Furious charge. Male Maduri may enter a battle rage as a free action. While in this rage all their melee attacks gain advantage, but all attacks against them gain advantage until the start of their next turn.

Actions

Battle axe. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d10+3) slashing.

MADURI STORY HOOKS

- There have been many Maduri who have lost their homes and legions to the wars sweeping Mars. Some have turned to banditry; others seek new causes to serve. A few can be hired for a fair price to bolster the combat abilities of small or less violent parties.
- Many city-states use Maduri as police as well as soldiers. Change out the arrow casters for stun balls and you are ready to go. Keep in mind that the Maduri are lawful to an extreme and very aggressive in language and deportment. Discarded chewing gum can escalate into a fight.
- The reputation that Maduri have earned has spread across the Solar System. With free Maduri wandering about looking for work it should be no small thing for any villain to acquire a small group of deadly bodyguards.

METISIAN GUARD

The Metisian Guard serves the Europeans as bodyguards, shipboard marines, and combat pilots. Plucked from certain death by the Europeans, the Metisians are loyal to a fault and willing to die for their saviors. Armed with advanced European technology in the form of sealed environmental suits and gravitic pulse weapons, as well as the Metisians' traditional kithkasis throwing swords, the Guard is ready to do its duty.

METISIAN GUARD

Medium aberration (Metisian, Metis), LN

Armor Class 16 (Metisian guard combat suit)

Hit Points 30 (4d10+8)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	16(+3)	14(+2)	10(+0)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Athletics +2, Perception +3, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception XX

Languages Metisian, European

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Loyal. The Metisian guard is fanatically loyal to their European masters and have advantage on saves against mind-affecting effects. If a European is attacked within 5 feet of a Metisian Guard, the guard can use their reaction to redirect the attack towards them. If a European is injured within 30 feet of a guard, the Metisian may use their reaction to make a single attack against the source of damage.

Actions

Gravitic pulse rifle. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, range 30/80, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) fire and force.

Kithkasis throwing sword. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) slashing.

Kithkasis throwing sword. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, range 20/40, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) slashing.

METISIAN GUARD STORY HOOKS

- Some Europeans prefer to make grand entrances and always keep a squad of their bodyguards near; others like to have a rapid response team on standby just out of sight. Whenever they encounter Europeans our heroes should expect to find the Guard somewhere nearby.
- The Guard is often sent on missions without European supervision, a sign that their new masters' trust. Our heroes can easily run afoul of the Europeans and not even know it, especially if they are operating anywhere in the Jovian system. The result can be a Metisian guard hit squad out hunting for them, and the Guard does not rest until they can dip their tentacles (safely clad in an environmental suit of course) into the blood of their targets.
- A Metisian wants to leave the Guard and seek her freedom, but to do so would be to mark her for death. She approaches our heroes and asks for their help. In exchange for European Imperial access codes all they have to do is fake her death. The party should be careful, as the Guard hunts down all who kill one of their own with nearly as much vehemence as defectors.



QUILLED LIZARD

One of the mighty monsters of the Venusian jungle, the quilled lizard is a massive herbivore with a foul temper and the natural weaponry to back it up. Standing nine feet at the shoulder and weighing in excess of three tons, the quilled lizard is one of the giants of the forest, its bulk restricts it to large clearings and the semi-open areas beneath the most massive trees. Four thick legs, no more than one of which is ever lifted at a time, support the beast's bulk. This ponderous locomotion would make it easy prey for predators, but the quilled lizard possesses some effective defenses. A ridge of thick horn-like quills runs from its forehead, along its spine, and down its long, flexible tail. This tail, which is both thick and agile, moves with an alarming speed and can bring down the bony quill covered ball at its tip with destructive force.

Ferociously aggressive. Like a terrestrial wasp, the quilled lizard bears distinctive markings that warn all of its threat. The beast's body is bright yellow crossed with reddish brown stripes in a regular pattern. Its ridge of quills is red-orange and become redder when it is angered. Likewise, its body language is used to alert possible aggressors as to their impending deaths, as the quilled lizard is known to start swinging its tail at the least provocation, as well as making several bluff charges at anything that gets in its way. The beast is very easy to provoke, and even small creatures that would be considered harmless are apt to receive a cursory lash of its tail. This is part of its natural defensive strategy, but also a result of its poor eyesight and other senses.



QUILLED LIZARD

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 189 (18d12+40)

Speed 10

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20(+5)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Death throes. When a quilled lizard dies it thrashes about wildly. All within 40 feet of the animal must make a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer 26 damage (successful saves for half).

Actions

Mad charge (recharges on a 5-6). The quilled lizard rushes at its foes moving 40 feet. It may make a tail lash attack at any creature within range that it passes.

Multiattack. The quilled lizard can make three tail lashes.

Tail lash. *Melee:* +8 to hit, reach 15 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 26 (4d6+5) piercing.

QUILLED LIZARD STORY HOOKS

- Quilled lizards are notoriously irritable and even seeing one in the distance does not mean it won't pick up your scent and investigate. By investigate we mean charge in and give you a tail slap. The best thing to do then is to lie very still and hope it wanders off.
- While there is some trophy hunting of quilled lizards, by far they are most commonly hunted for their meat. The Venusians consider it a delicacy and it seems nearly every species of sophont likes it, even the Europeans (though they prefer quilled lizard meat raw and fermented for three weeks in the sun). Hunting these jungle giants is dangerous but can fetch high rewards.
- Many wildcatters and colonists on Venus consider quilled lizards to be pests. Not only are they dangerous to have around, they are destructive. A camp can be leveled in seconds by an angry beast. Worse, they like to tear through crops, knock over buildings, and rip apart trucks.

ROBOMEN AND ROBOBRAINS

While known mostly as the works of the Ancient Martians, in fact other extinct civilizations also manufactured artificial intelligences. The Lunans certainly did, though their works seem to have been destroyed alongside their crater-cities. Erisian robomen appear to have been built exclusively as combat assets, or perhaps for training, little is known about the Erisian culture. There are even hints that the scientists of the pre-cataclysm lo constructed artificial intelligences, though theirs appear to have gone down a different developmental path than that of other species.

Most of the robomen that adventurers encounter are not fully sapient. These automated systems can certainly think with some creativity but their mental processes are a far cry from that of a full sophont. They are locked into a set range of behaviors, though this may be vast and subject to some degree of alteration.

Robomen and Robobrain traits. All robomen and robobrain have immunity to poison damage and the poisoned condition, as well as psychic damage, and vulnerability to electric damage. They do not need to eat or sleep but do need regular recharging.

SERVICE ROBOMAN

Small construct (roboman), unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 5 (1d6+1)

Speed fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	12(+1)	12(+1)	8(-1)	8(-1)	8(-1)

Damage Immunities poison and psychic damage, the poisoned condition

Vulnerabilities electric damage

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Ancient Martian

Challenge 1/4 (40 XP)

Networked. Robomen are often linked together through a ghost field. While linked, the roboman is aware of anything another linked roboman or robobrain is aware of and can access greater processing power granting them a bonus action to take Dash, Disengage, or attack action.

Actions

Power buffer. *Melee:* +3 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 4 (1d4+1) bludgeoning and the target gains the polished condition.

Spray cleaner. *Ranged:* +3 to hit, range 10/20, 1 creature, *Hit:* 4 (1d4+1) poison and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution save or gain the blinded condition until the end of their next turn.

Blue slick (recharges 5-6). The service roboman sprays a 5 ft. x 15 ft. area with cleaning solution. Any creature that enters the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or fall prone. The cleaner evaporates at the start of the roboman's next turn.

SECURITY ROBOMAN

Medium construct (roboman), unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 44 (4d8+8)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	16(+3)	14(+2)	10(+0)	14(+2)	8(-1)

Skills Perception +6

Damage Immunities poison and psychic damage, poisoned condition

Vulnerabilities electric

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., scent, passive Perception 16

Languages Ancient Martian

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Networked. Robomen are often linked together through a ghost field. While linked, the roboman is aware of anything another linked roboman or robobrain is aware of and can access greater processing power granting them a bonus action to take Dash, Disengage, or attack action.

SECURE SUBJECT. The sentry roboman can use a bonus action to restrain a creature it has grappled. The restraint remains after the grapple ends and can be broken with a DC 15 Strength check.

Passive and active sensors. The sentry roboman has a suite of sensors that allow them to even see through walls. They have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Actions

Extender claw. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) bludgeoning and target is grappled (DC 12 to break free).

Eye RAYS. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, range 60/ 120, 1 creature, *Hit:* 8 (1d8+3) radiation. (beam, stun setting)



WARBOT

Large construct (roboman), unaligned

Armor Class 20

Hit Points 153 (18d10+54)

Speed 25

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	18(+4)	16(+3)	8(-1)	10(+0)	8(-1)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Immunities poison and psychic damage, poisoned condition

Vulnerabilities electric

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Ancient Martian

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Networked. Robomen are often linked together through a ghost field. While linked, the roboman is aware of anything another linked roboman or robobrain is aware of and can access greater processing power granting them a bonus action to take Dash, Disengage, or attack action.

Actions

Multiattack. The warbot can make any combination of two claw, RAY rifle, or blast spheres attacks.

Claw. *Melee:* +7 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 24 (4d8+4) bludgeoning.

RAY rifle. *Ranged:* +7 to hit, range 80/ 320, 1 creature, *Hit:* 48 (6d12+4) radiation (beam).

Blast spheres. *Ranged:* +7 to hit, range 20/40, 10 ft. x 10 ft. area, *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) piercing (blast DC 14) and target is knocked prone. Creatures who fail their save against the blast must make a DC 15 Constitution save or be deafened until the end of their next turn.

FACILITY ROBOBRAIN

Huge construct (roboman), unaligned

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 98 (15d10+15)

Speed 0

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
0(-5)	0(-5)	12(+1)	18(+1)	18(+4)	3(-4)

Damage Immunities poison and psychic damage, the poisoned condition

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, radiation, and slashing damage

Vulnerabilities electric damage

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Ancient Martian

Challenge 15 (1,800 XP)

Networked. Robobrain is often linked together through a ghost field. While linked, the robobrain is aware of anything another linked roboman or robobrain is aware of and can access greater processing power granting them a bonus action to take Dash, Disengage, or attack action.

No physical body. The robobrain exists on a computer network; its stats represent the toughness of the network. One part of this network is the core processor; only damage to the core processor can harm the robobrain. Any of its peripheral components can be damaged and this does not effect the robobrain.

Actions

Co-ordinate. The robobrain may use its action to activate doors, portals, connected machinery, traps, alarms, and other devices linked to the robobrain.

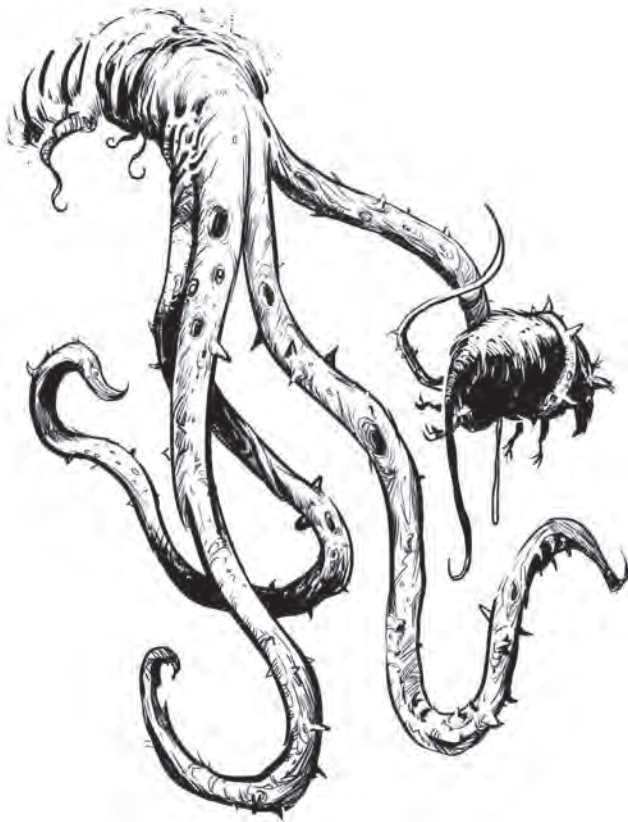
ROBOMEN AND ROBOBRAINS STORY HOOKS

- While exploring a ruin, our heroes trip a sensor, but nothing happens. After several tense moments they move on. The sensor brought several robomen on line that now are stalking the party through the ruins.
- Clues to the location of a vault of robomen has been found and the race is on to claim them. What our heroes and their rivals do not know is that whoever finds the vault might not be able to take advantage of the discovery for as soon as the vault is disturbed the activation sequence begins. Now everyone must race against the clock to stop a small army from awakening, an army programmed to kill all aliens.
- A lone service roboman is found in the wilderness far from any signs of an owner. The roboman has no memory of how it got there or its mission other than cleaning (and it has been trying to clean up the wilderness). Did this belong to a lost expedition? Is there a ruin nearby? Could it be a spy sent by a foe or rival?

SAPSUCKER

Of all the strange and weird animals in the Solar System, the creatures of Ganymede break all the rules. Not truly plants, but not animals either, they combine the qualities of both kingdoms. One of these animal-plants is the sapsucker, a parasitic vine that Ganymedeans have domesticated as a living adornment and constant guardian.

A sapsucker is a mobile vine that attaches itself to a woody plant or animal-plant. Ganymedeans willingly attach this creature to their bark where it lives and grows by siphoning off some of the Ganymedeans own sap-like blood. The sapsucker also photosynthesizes some of its nutrients, making the actual damage done to the Ganymedeans slight. While attached, the sapsucker can communicate in a limited fashion with its host, warning it of unseen dangers. Also, if the host is attacked, the sapsucker can join in by flailing its thorny tendrils about. Ganymedeans have learned to prune and otherwise control the growth of their sapsuckers and can fashion them into harnesses and other items of clothing.



SAPSUCKER

Tiny plant (Ganymede), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 11 (2d4+6)

Speed - ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances bashing

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Alien senses. The sapsucker cannot see but does sense movement within 30 feet and can distinguish individuals.

Extra hands, er, tendrils. A sapsucker that has bonded with a creature tries to be helpful. It can hold two items in its tendrils and pass them into the hands of its host as a free action. It also aids in climbing, granting advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to climb and granting its host climb 20 feet.

Actions

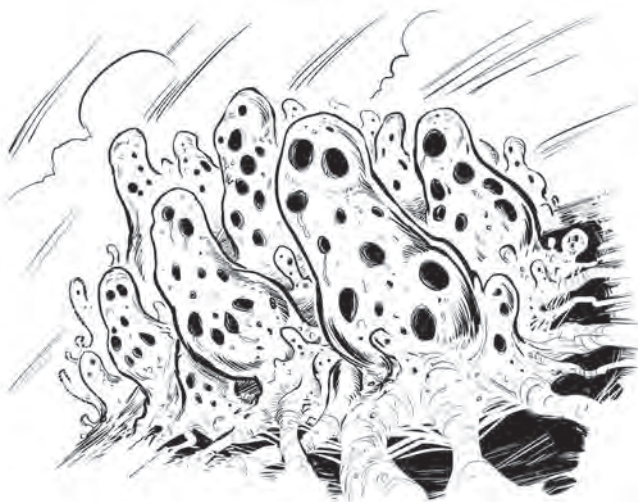
Flail. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) slashing.

Grab. As a reaction, the sapsucker can grab an item the host has dropped, and if the host falls the sapsucker can use its reaction to make a Dexterity save and arrest the host's fall, provided there is something within 10 feet for the sapsucker to grab on to.

SKY SPONGE

This genus of sponge is similar to those found in the oceans of Earth and other watery worlds. However, instead of growing in the sea and filtering the currents for small life, the sky sponge anchors itself to any fixed (or mostly fixed) object it can find and draws in the air of Jupiter in order to strain out the tiny creatures afloat in the Jovian air currents. While not dangerous in and of themselves, sky sponges have a tendency to affix themselves to buildings and air ships, adding weight and closing off vents. They are difficult to get rid of, as their spongy flesh is largely resistant to cutting, and their alien physiologies are immune to terrestrial poisons. In the end, someone has to go out and scrape them off, a tiresome duty, but also a dangerous one.

Constant pest. When disturbed, sky sponges have been known to secrete a mist of powerful acids and poisons. These secretions can easily kill a man, or even eat through a space suit or other protection. Worse, if there are several sponges, the defense mechanisms of the whole colony might be triggered at once, creating a cloud of acidic poison that not just kills, but sometimes eats away the very surface the sponge is adhered to. Some explorers of Jupiter have taken to using fire to remove these pesky growths, but with wandering methane pockets and unpredictable winds, this cure can be worse than the disease. Removing a sky sponge is an arduous task. Those seeking to remove a patch of sky sponges must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer the effects of its poison spores.



SKY SPONGE

Tiny plant, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 3 (1d4+1)

Speed 0

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
0 (-5)	0 (-5)	12 (+1)	0 (-5)	10 (+0)	0 (-5)

Damage Immunities psychic

Resistances slashing

Vulnerabilities fire

Senses blindsight, passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death spelch. When a sky sponge dies it takes a poison spore action.

Triggered defense. If a sky sponge emits a poison spore either as an attack or as it dies all other sky sponges within 10 feet must make a DC 13 Wisdom save or take a poison spore action.

No mind. Sky sponges lack minds and cannot be affected by psychic disciplines, Jalandri courtesan pheromones, and similar mind effecting powers.

Actions

Poison spore. Reaction triggered by a creature moving within 10 feet of the sky sponge. The sky sponge emits a cloud of poisonous spores 10 feet in diameter. All creatures caught in the cloud must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer (5) 1d8 poison damage and gain the poisoned condition until the end of their next turn.

SKY SPONGE STORY HOOKS

- The most obvious use is for an infestation of sky sponges to get into a ship. If this happens the ship suffers a critical system hit every six hours until the infestation is removed.
- Any combat on a sky island can be made more interesting with two things, the sky island crumbling and sky sponges just sitting there waiting to be triggered.
- A classic out of the frying pan and into the fire situation is to have a character who is falling land on a sky island in a clear area surrounded by a patch of sky sponges. Only a truly sadistic GM would have the sky island start crumbling or a flock of darters appear in the sky.

TESSELON

One of the more dangerous predators of Mars' canal lands and the near desert is the fanged tesselon. This medium-sized pack carnivore bears a resemblance to a combination of a reptile and a monkey, and in addition to being one of the more common predators is also domesticated and used as a guard or war animal. Only about a meter tall at the shoulders, the tesselon has six limbs, the front two being able to serve as arms or legs as needed. The forelimbs even have small thumb like pads that allow it to grip objects, although this grip is weak and clumsy and is usually used only when climbing. All limbs end in sharp claws, and the middle and hind pair are particularly long. Its body is covered with a thick reddish hide that ranges from fine skin-like scales along the joints and flanks, to thick protective scales on the spine, neck, and head. The beast's blunt snout is filled with sharp teeth, and two long curved canines protrude past its lower lips. Tesselon senses are extremely acute, and they can see easily under low lighting conditions, and track prey by sound or smell.

Maduri and Silthuri both employ domesticated tesselons as guards and fighting animals. In principalities where blood sports are practiced, tesselons are made to fight each other, or other animals (and sometimes prisoners) in brutal and savage arena battles. Many Silthuri maintain a tesselon pack of high breeding as hunting animals and personal security. Maduri legions employ tesselons in different roles based on the gender of the handlers. Males use tesselons as scouts, and also breed some to be larger and more ferocious than even their wild counterparts. These tesselon breeds are used to break enemy formations, though their use is considered by many legions to be a breach of honor. Female Maduri use tesselons defensively as guard and watch animals, and almost every Maduri legion's encampment is ringed with both Maduri and tesselon sentries.



TESSELON

Medium animal (Mars), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	14(+2)	16(+3)	4(-3)	10(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses low-light vision, scent, passive perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack tactics. A tesselon has advantage on attacks against foes adjacent to an ally.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing.

Flurry of claws. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 feet, up to four creatures within reach, *Hit:* 6 (1d6+2) slashing. A tesselon may do this once and regain use following a short rest.

TESSELON STORY HOOKS

- A lone tesselon is found guarding the body of its master. Any who approach are threatened and assaulted. Who is this person? How did they die? Calming the angry sentry may be the only way to find out.
- Wild tesselon can be found in the rocky highlands and abandoned cities of Mars. Often, they become nuisances that need to be cleared out. Our heroes can do a good deed for a small community and earn some money at the same time, provided the tesselon do not take a bite out of the profits.
- Captured by a scheming Silthuri, our heroes are thrown into a pit where they must face a pack of savage tesselons.



THUNDER LIZARD

All that lives in the Venusian jungles fear the roar of the thunder lizard, the largest land predator in the Solar System. This mighty beast stands on average seven and a half meters tall and weighs at least five tons, if not more. Its long thick tail extends behind it for eight to ten meters, providing stability and balance as well as occasionally seeing use as a weapon. In addition to its great bulk, the thunder lizard is well-armed with strong legs capable of crashing its mass through the underbrush and even small trees, short arms tipped with fearsome claws that can easily rend flesh, and bone crushingly strong jaws filled with rows of razor sharp teeth.

Massive jaws. It is these jaws that are the deadliest weapon in the thunder lizard's arsenal. Its sense of sight and hearing are not terribly acute, but its sense of smell can detect prey or carrion from across kilometers of jungle. While this strong sense of smell aids in locating prey, the beast's small brain does little in formulating tactics, so they mostly charge threats or prey, with almost no attempt at stealth. It is the powerful jaws of the thunder lizard that allow it to overcome its deficiencies and bring down even the largest animals, including the nearly invulnerable jungle tortoise. Each tooth is 6 to 18 inches long, backward curved, slightly serrated, and comes in a series of rows that fills the thunder lizard's mouth. A tooth can be lost, and indeed, the thunder lizard regularly sheds its teeth as new ones grow in. When these teeth, driven by the creature's powerful jaws, clamp shut on a target, they can pierce even the armored hull of a tank.

Ill tempered. If the beast's fearsome weaponry were not enough to make it one of the most dangerous creatures alive, its horrid behavior and foul demeanor would. They can eat nearly anything and will attempt to eat even inedible objects such as vehicles, large pieces of equipment, and interesting looking rocks. In addition, thunder lizards are very territorial and will attack man-sized or larger intruders. Thunder lizards are thankfully scarce; each beast maintains a territory of around seventy-five square kilometers and rarely enters another's lands. This changes during the mating season, which occurs once every three hundred and forty-five days. During this time, male and female thunder lizards bellow out through the jungle, seeking mates. Often, more than one male will court a female, leading to a fight to the death for the right to mate.

Even the mating rituals are violent, and the males inevitably tear down a large swath of jungle in their attempts to woo the fair damsel. After mating the males wander back to their home territories, fighting each other should a chance encounter occur.

Kings of the jungle. The rest of the time thunder lizards wander their domains, keeping out intruders (namely other thunder lizards) and looking for something to eat. Fearing no predators, these great animals feel safe simply striding majestically through their patch of jungle, challenging all comers, stealing kills from smaller predators, and tackling even the largest of prey animals. For some unknown reason, a thunder lizard that has tasted Earthling flesh becomes inordinately fond of it, and will go to great lengths to obtain more, even to the point of ignoring more plentiful or easier game.

Not a sport. Despite their great size, a motionless thunder lizard is a difficult thing to spot in the jungle. Their scaly hides are covered in zigzag patterns of green, black, and brown that simply blend into the surrounding gloom and vegetation. When moving they tend to crash through the underbrush, leaving no doubt as to the approaching juggernaut. Small arms fire is largely useless against one of these brutes, for even if you can deal it a fatal blow, it might be seconds or even minutes before its feeble intellect realizes that it is dead. High caliber rifles, elephant guns generally, are used to hunt thunder lizards, and even then, it is a risky operation calling for nerves of steel, the eyes of a hawk, and the accuracy of an Olympic marksman.

A Thunder Lizard's Lair

Thunder lizards dominate their home range to an extent that they alter the local ecosystem. When cornered in their lairs they are even more fearsome foes as they crash about and cause all manner of secondary mischief. It is easy to realize when one is approaching a thunder lizard's lair for the jungle becomes quiet, the underbrush gets thicker, and the animals move quietly and rapidly in order to avoid provoking the wrath of the mighty king of the Venusian jungle.

Thunder lizards like to kill and eat, but they often kill more than they can eat at once. These leftovers are carried back to their lair where they are hung in the trees. Sadly, thunder lizards are not terribly bright and often forget their cached meals.

These carcasses become the home to hordes of beetles and flies that feast and breed in the millions, as do the carcasses of animals the thunder lizard has killed and forgotten about or simply left to rot on the ground.

While most large animals flee a thunder lizard's lair when the beast comes to set up housekeeping, some smaller animals have evolved to take advantage of the jungle giant's presence. These opportunistic scavengers lurk near the thunder lizard and dart out to steal a chunk off a kill, or sometimes a chunk of prey the king is fighting.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the thunder lizard takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the thunder lizard can't use the same lair effect two rounds in a row. The thunder lizard's movements knock branches off of larger trees and topple smaller ones. All within 80 feet of the thunder lizard must make a DC 18 Dexterity save or suffer 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

The beetles and flies from hanging meat swarm out and attack. This 20-foot sphere of angry insects swarms up from a point within 120 feet of the thunder lizard. Each creature enveloped in the cloud must make a DC 15 Constitution save or become blinded for 1 minute and gain the poisoned condition. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, negating the effects on a success.

A small pack of opportunistic predators such as fanged frills, swooping hawk frogs, or lightning snakes leaps out of the undergrowth and attacks one creature within 80 feet of the thunder lizard, but no closer than 20 feet of the mighty beast (they're opportunistic, not suicidal). The pack makes a single attack at +6 to hit that inflicts 12 (2d8+2) slashing damage. A creature hit by this attack must make a DC 13 Wisdom save or become distracted and suffer disadvantage on all rolls until the end of their next turn.

Regional Effects

The region containing a thunder lizard's lair is heavily impacted by the creature's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- The presence of a thunder lizard drives out many of the large herbivores of the Venusian jungle. The land within 10 miles of the thunder lizard's lair takes twice as long to traverse as the undergrowth has had the opportunity to thrive.
- Predators near a thunder lizard's lair must be fast and stealthy in order to survive. Encounters with other jungle predators are short sharp affairs. These predators gain +10 feet to their movement and advantage on stealth checks, but they rarely stick around for long lest they attract unwanted attention.
- Thunder lizards leave rotting carcasses just lying around. The area within 5 miles of the thunder lizard's lair is befouled with carrion feeding insects that pester creatures entering the area. No short or long rests may be taken in this zone.
- If the thunder lizard dies the jungle returns to its normal state in 1d10 weeks.



THUNDER LIZARD

Gargantuan beast (Venus), unaligned

Armor Class 18

Hit Points 304 (21d20+84)

Speed 40

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22(+6)	12(+1)	18(+4)	3(-4)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Saving Throws Constitution +8

Senses low-light, passive Perception 11

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Too dumb to die. The thunder lizard does not die at 0 hit points but will fight on until the end of its next turn.

Death throes. A dead thunder lizard is not a safe thunder lizard. When a thunder lizard dies it crashes to the ground and thrashes about for a bit, in the process knocking over trees. At the end of the turn it dies, all creatures within 50 feet of the thunder lizard must make a DC 15 Dexterity save (half damage on a success) or suffer 15 (3d8) bludgeoning damage.

Trample. When a thunder lizard moves through the jungle it flattens everything in its path. The thunder lizard can move through another creature's space and if it does so any creatures it passes must make a DC 15 Dexterity save or suffer the damage from a stomp attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The thunder lizard may make two bite attacks or one bite and one stomp attack.

Bite. *Melee:* +10 to hit, reach 20 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 56 (10d8+6) piercing. A large sized or smaller creature hit by a thunder lizard's bite attack must make a DC 15 Dexterity save or be swallowed. If swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has full cover from attacks and other effects originating outside the thunder lizard and takes 36 (6d6) acid damage at the start of the thunder lizard's turn. A creature can cut its way out or have another cut it out of the thunder lizard by inflicting 40 points of damage.

Stomp. *Melee:* +10 to hit, reach 5 feet, up to 3 creatures of large or smaller size, *Hit:* 31 (5d8+6) bludgeoning and knocked prone.

Roar. The thunder lizard lets out a massive roar that echoes through the forest. All creatures within 50 feet must make a DC 18 Wisdom save or become stunned for 1d8+1 rounds.

Legendary Actions

The thunder lizard can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of the creature's turn. The thunder lizard regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Snap snap. The thunder lizard makes a bite attack.

Roaring charge (2 actions). The thunder lizard makes a roar action followed by up to 50 feet of movement and then a bite attack.

Punt and eat (2 actions). The thunder lizard makes a stomp attack against a single creature and then immediately a bite attack against the same creature with advantage.

THUNDER LIZARD STORY HOOKS

- Thunder lizards are not nomadic; they establish a territory and defend it against all comers. These territories are easy to spot, it makes it nearly impossible for a party of adventurers to just wander in and be shocked, shocked to discover a thunder lizard in the jungle. Now, a rocket ship crashing into a territory, that is very possible.
- Although slightly less dangerous than in their lair, a dry sandy arena on Mars, our heroes tossed in with only hand weapons, the gate rises, the thunder lizard roars as it charges out into the light.
- Our heroes need to prove their courage to a Venusian concordat. Their task, enter the territory of a thunder lizard and return with a tooth. Smart explorers will search for a discarded tooth, all the while fearing that the king will awaken.

TRIP LINE SPIDER

The jungles of Venus are treacherous for the unwary, vines grab at passersby, carnivorous bromeliads stab at you, and thunder lizards stalk between the massive trees. Of all these large dangers, the small ones are often overlooked, such as the trip line spider. Calling it small does not do it justice however, for the trip line spider is one of the largest arachnids on the planet, and dwarfs all but a handful of Earthling spiders. Its body is nearly a yard in diameter, and its legs can stretch out for another 30 to 40 inches. The spider's primary form of attack, its venom-filled fangs, are as long as a man's fingers, and as thick as his thumb.

A tangled mess leading to a gaping maw. The trip line spider lairs in burrows in the jungle floor, even though it is not a burrowing animal (these spiders have no qualms about 'disposing' of a burrow's former occupants). From this burrow they run out long threads of silk, some no thicker than a hair, others more like heavy twine. The thinner threads are the shortest and serve to alert the spider if prey nears its burrow, giving it the opportunity to spring out and sink in its poisonous fangs. Thicker strands run further out and are attached to cunningly hidden traps. The trip line spider is capable of constructing deadfalls, pit traps, and even more complex devices using nothing more than its silk and natural environment. When one of these longer and thicker threads, some stretching as far as 60 feet, are tripped, the trap is sprung and the spider is free to amble over and dine at its leisure.

TRIP LINE SPIDER STORY HOOKS

- A chase through the jungles of Venus simply has to involve trying to navigate a trip-line spider's web.
- While traversing the Venusian jungle our heroes have a boon companion, crew member, porter, or someone else they are responsible for wander off into the webbing of a trip-line spider.
- Captured by the evil Dr. Handler, our heroes are tossed into a pit that is the lair of a captive trip-line spider.



TRIP LINE SPIDER

Small beast (Venus), unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 22 (4d6+8)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	18(+4)	14(+2)	4(-3)	14(+2)	10(+0)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Senses blindsight 20 ft, darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spider climb. The trip-line spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web sense. While in contact with a web the trip-line spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web walker. The trip-line spider ignores movement penalties caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d8+4) piercing and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution save or suffer an additional 8 (2d6) poison damage and gain the poisoned condition.

Web (recharge 5-6). *Ranged weapon attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature, *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can attempt a DC 13 Strength check to burst the webbing. The webbing can be attacked and cut away (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison and psychic damage).

Traps (recharge 5-6). One creature within 60 feet of the trip-line spider must make a DC 13 Dexterity save (half damage on a successful save) or suffer one of the following effects:

Deadfall. The target suffers 8 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone.

Hanging meat. The target is restrained and raised 20 feet into the air on a line of webbing.

Pit fall. The target suffers 8 (2d6) piercing damage and is knocked prone at the bottom of a ten-foot-deep pit.

ULODONT

Thundering along the canal valleys and forming great migrations that can brave the deep deserts, the ulodont serves as both a majestic reminder of wild Mars, and in its domesticated form, is one of the planet's most familiar sights. Not much taller at the shoulder than a horse, the ulodont is much longer, stretching 15 to 20 feet from snout to tail. It is a slow creature, despite moving on eight strong legs, and cannot gain a speed beyond that of a fast walk. However, when the creature's three-ton weight is taken into consideration, each step echoes through the air, sending up large clouds of dust.

Primitive anatomy. In both outward form and interior anatomy, the ulodont is very similar to primitive reptiles. It lacks the more developed hip structure that defines the later saurian and relies on a primitive ball and socket arrangement for all of its limbs, yielding great strength, but little flexibility. It is covered in thick layers of hide that both protect it from injury and act as a mobile sun shade, there being a gap between the last layer of hide and the inner skin that permits air to flow through. The beast's neck is nearly non-existent, and its broad blunt head is well protected by layered hide and bony plates, as well as two upward thrusting tusks. Its eyes are tiny specks hidden in folds of protective plate and hide, and the ulodont uses scent more than anything else to find its way.

Desert adapted. The creature is superbly adapted to life in arid conditions, storing water in fatty reservoirs throughout its body, and able to live off this fat for weeks at a time. This, combined with the ulodont's complacent disposition and great physical strength, make it the favored heavy beast of burden for those crossing the deep deserts. This is of course, unless one is not in any hurry, as the ulodont is an agonizingly slow creature that simply cannot be rushed for any reason.



ULODONT

Huge beast (Mars), unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 21 (2d12+8)

Speed 20

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses scent, passive Perception 10

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Trample. An ulodont simply walks over smaller creatures. Any creature large sized or smaller whose space the ulodont passes through must make a DC 13 Dexterity save (half damage on a successful save) or suffer 8 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone.

Stampede. Three or more ulodonts within 5 feet of each other may form a herd. A herd acts on a single initiative, and creature caught in a trample by any members of the herd make their Dexterity save with disadvantage. A creature may be trampled by more than one ulodont in the herd in a turn.

Actions

Tusks. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 16 (2d10+4) piercing.

ULODONT STORY HOOKS

- While domesticated ulodonts are a common sight, wild caught bulls are used in some principalities for blood sports similar to Earthling bull fighting. Capturing a wild bull is a major undertaking, for these ulodonts are not as docile as their domesticated counterparts.
- Our heroes are contracted to transport a cargo hold filled with ulodonts. A few simple skill checks should keep the plodding and docile creatures calm. However, this herd gets panicky during flight, and soon the cargo holds and the entire ship is being threatened by hundreds of tons of stampeding beasts.
- The battle has been won, the villains defeated, and the red sands of Mars are scattered with the vanquished. The sound of battle has riled up a herd of wild ulodonts and the stampede is bearing down on our heroes.

VENUSIANS

The Venusians are territorial and those concordats that have not been contacted by aliens tend to respond to any incursion as a provocation. This is not to say that all Venusians are violent, just that they have had centuries of infighting to teach them how to deal with outsiders. Those that have had contact with aliens might also turn to violence as their first option, particularly those that have been displaced by the Ore Fields or otherwise harmed.



VENUSIAN WARRIOR

Large humanoid (Venusian, Venus), CG

Armor Class 13 (battle straps)

Hit Points 51 (6d10+18)

Speed 40 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	14(+2)	16(+3)	10(+0)	10(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +2, Stealth +4, Survival +2

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 12

Languages Venusian

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Psychic training. Venusians have advantage on saves against mind-affecting effects.

Jungle warriors. Venusian warriors have advantage on Stealth checks made in forest or jungle environments.

Actions

Claws. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 9 (1d8+4) slashing.

Wood axe. *Melee:* +6 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 10 (1d10+4) slashing (versatile 2d6, psychic).

Hunting bola. *Ranged:* +4 to hit, range 30/60, 1 creature, *Hit:* 5 (1d4+2) bludgeoning (entangle).

VENUSIAN SPEAKER

Large humanoid (Venusian, Venus), CG

Armor Class 12 (battle straps)

Hit Points 60 (8d10+16)

Speed 40 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	12(+1)	14(+2)	16(+3)	16(+3)	14(+2)

Skills Arcana +6, Athletics +4, Perception +6, Religion +6, Stealth +4, Survival +6

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 16

Languages Venusian, English

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Psychic training. Venusians have advantage on saves against mind-affecting effects.

Psychic powers. The speaker has 6 power points and knows the following powers: *psychic healing*, *psychic static*, and *psysense*.

Leader. The speaker often leads warriors into battle, more to keep them from getting out of hand than to provide tactical advice. As a bonus action the speaker may issue an order to an ally who may then take a move or attack action.

Actions

Claws. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 6 (1d8+1) slashing.

Speaker's staff. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 5 (1d6+1) bludgeoning (psychic, versatile 1d8).

VENUSIAN STORY HOOKS

Our heroes need access to a territory claimed by a hostile tribe. Perhaps there is a ruin there they want to explore, a rare plant that is needed, or a crashed ship to rescue. Will they try negotiation, stealth, or violence to get what they want? Help is needed and a local tribe of Venusians theoretically belonging to a friendly concordat. Our heroes must try to convince them to join the cause, but what will the Venusians want in return? What tasks will the Venusians demand before they can trust outsiders?

A group of Venusian warriors are spotted at a rocket port on a distant planet. They seem to be looking for someone or something. Days later they are seen again, this time patiently following one of our heroes. Why do they want, and is it with peaceful or malevolent intent?

WINGED DEVIL



The skies of Venus, or at least the air beneath the trees, are filled with a great diversity of life. From tiny insects so small that one must concentrate to see them (and that tend to crawl under clothes and suck blood), to dragonflies, butterflies, and even flying beetles as large as small dogs, insects seem to dominate the flying species. However, a handful of reptiles have taken to the air, and of these, the winged devil is by far the most impressive, and the most dangerous. It is an ambush predator, swooping out of the sky to grab large prey and carry it into the treetops or to cliff-side roosts. Most hunt open areas, though smaller specimens, likely juveniles, have even been seen lurking on the trunks of larger trees, making even the jungles subject to the Winged Devil's predations.

Flying lizards. With a nine-foot-long body and a wingspan of over 30 feet, the winged devil is a creature of the larger clearings and rocky mountainsides. It is reptilian in general body plan, though its scales are very fine, almost like the skin of a mammal. The head is long and narrow, perfect for ripping and tearing deep into a carcass, but also powerful and more than capable of cracking even the heaviest of long bones. The creature's mouth has two types of teeth, long backward curving teeth are in the front and used to grab prey or rip flesh. The rear of the mouth has a set of large flat teeth that are used to crack bone in order to extract the marrow. Much like other aerial predators, the winged devil's eyes are very acute and positioned towards the center of the skull, thus allowing for stereoscopic vision. It has only four limbs, the upper pair comprising powerful wings, and the strong lower pair ending in sharp talons. The winged devil has a dark green dorsal surface, and a grey-blue belly, thus providing camouflage from above and below.

WINGED DEVIL

Large beast (Venus), unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 26 (4d10+4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills athletics +5, Perception +3

Senses low-light vision, passive Perception 13

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 10 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 11 (2d6+3) piercing.

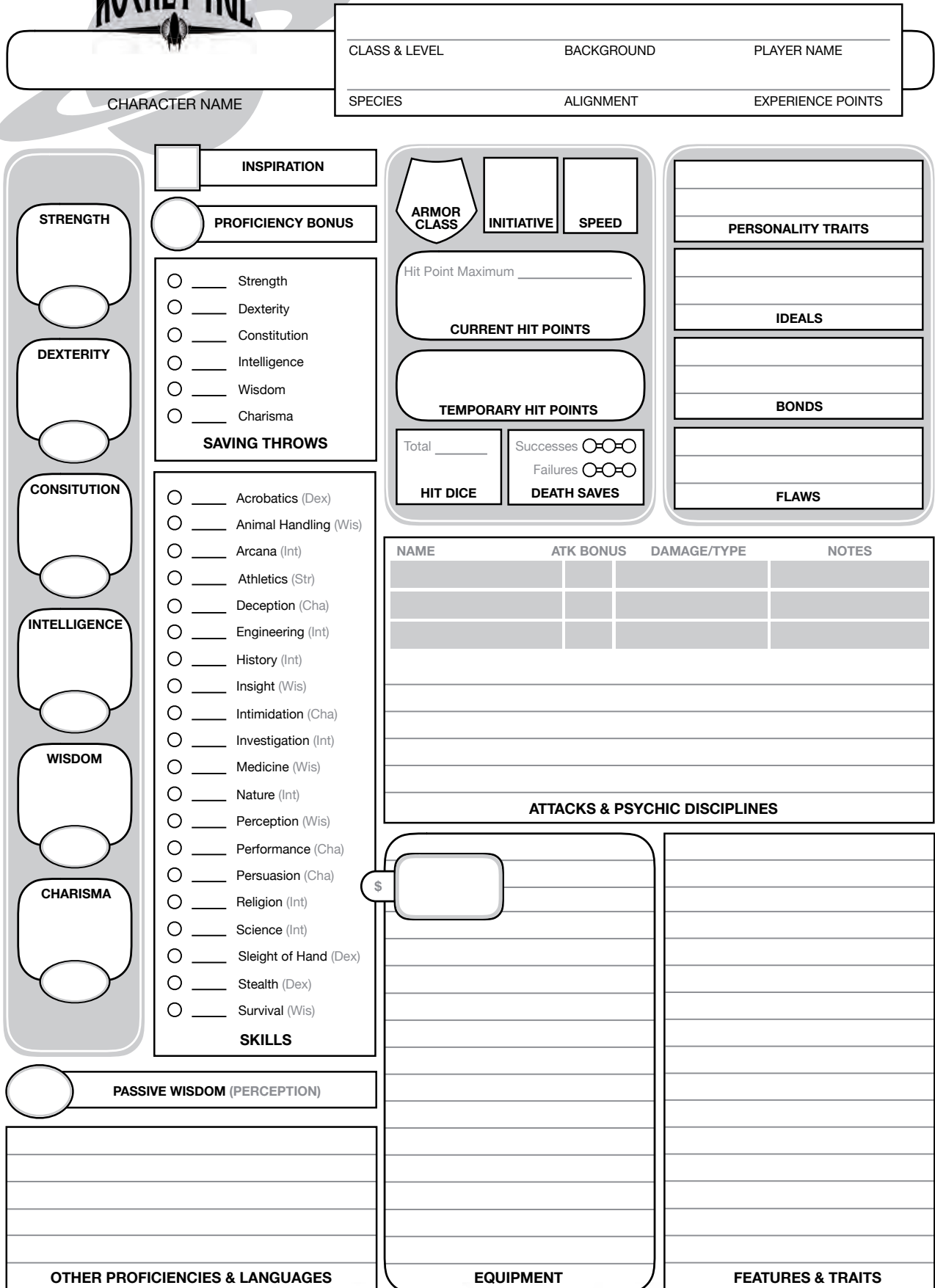
Claws. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* 19 (4d6+3) slashing.

Grab. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, 1 creature, *Hit:* the target is grappled by the winged devil. If the target is medium sized or smaller the winged devil may carry it up into the air. While carrying a creature the winged devil may only fly at 20 feet. Usually a winged devil will carry a creature up to 40-80 feet and then drop them onto something hard or pointy.

Death from above. The winged devil rapidly moves up to 40 feet through the air and makes a single claw or grab attack with advantage. Until the end of the winged devil's next turn all attacks against it suffer disadvantage.

WINGED DEVIL STORY HOOKS

- One winged devil is a threat, but a whole flock? Something has attracted them to the area and they are swarming like sharks in chum.
- A winged devil attack ends with the beast being driven off, but not before it has snatched some important piece of equipment. Now our heroes must track a flying predator through the jungle and raid its nest. Just the climb up to the roost is treacherous, but the young winged devils there (use the same stats as adults but half hit points) are hungry.
- Dr. Handler, mad scientist and evil inventor, has released a flock of winged devils in a populated area. Worse, he can control them with some sort of electronic whistle. Can this fiend be stopped?



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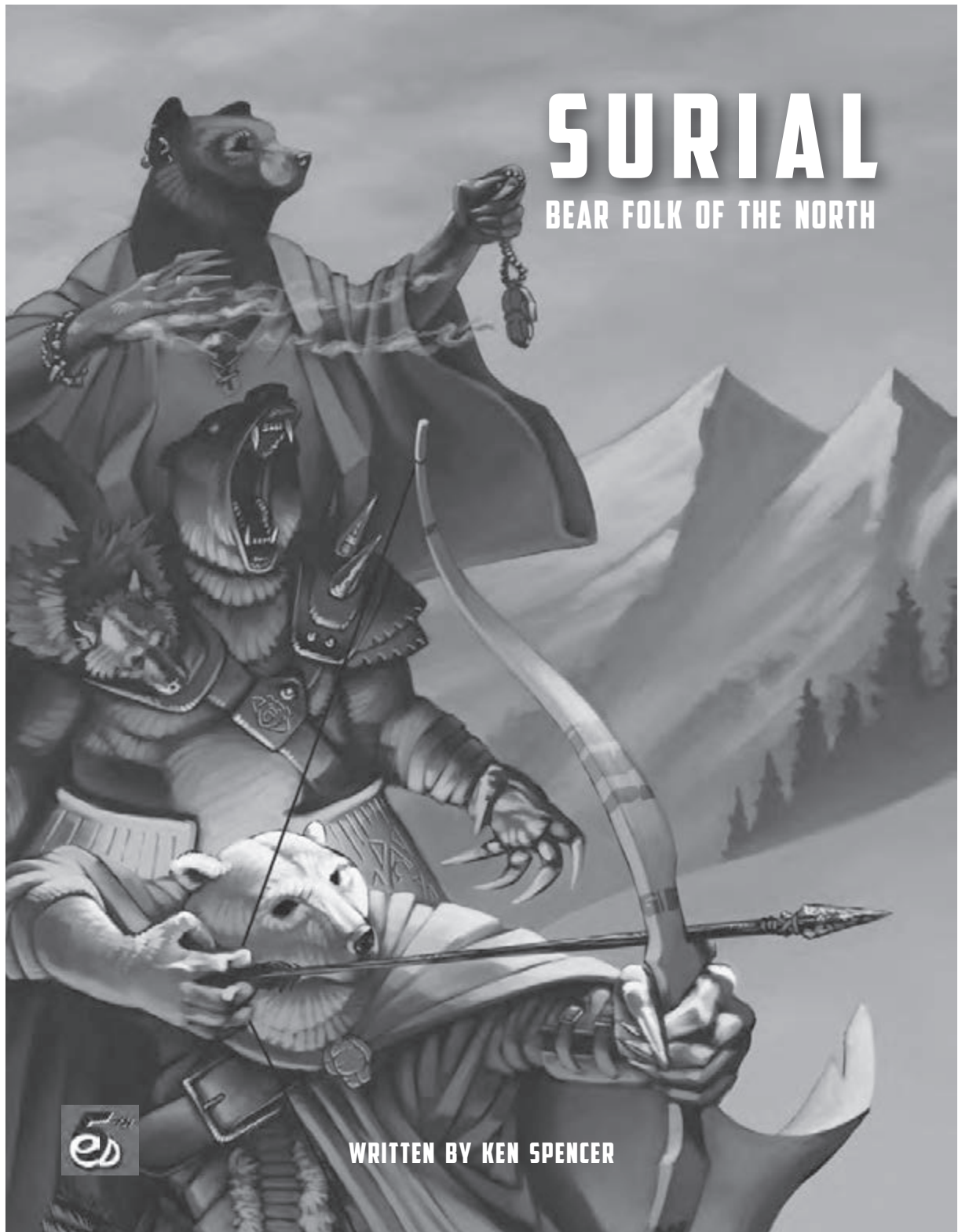
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Welcome to the 1938 that never was and the Solar System that should have been!

Rocket Age is a radium punk sci-fi game of exploring the Solar System, fighting Nazis, Stalinists, aliens, and the bizarre environments of nine planets (yes nine, it is 1938 and Pluto is still a full fledged planet). It is a game of ancient ruins on Mars, the steaming jungles of Venus, strange life in the clouds of Jupiter, RAY guns, chromed rocket ships, radium fuel, hot exhaust, and fins. So many fins on things you didn't know you could put fins on.

The setting is a kitchen sink sandbox for you to set your games in. Want to be the brave explorer discovering lost civilizations and new wonders? We have that on Venus, Mars, Jupiter, the Jovian Moons, and more. Looking for a daring game of brinksmanship as you battle agents of foreign powers (even alien nations)? Choose whom you want to fight and who you want to fight for, such as the Americans, British, French, Nazis, Soviets, Martian princes, or the enigmatic Europeans.

Rocket Age has it all, from details of the planets and moons and their inhabitants, to story hooks for years of adventures, to the weapons and armor and (of course!) the rocket ships. Everything feels alive, everything entices, and...it hooked me.

And if rocket ships and RAY guns kindle something in you, it'll hook you, too.

"Rocket Rangers, AWAY!" - Ed Greenwood

