TINY
FRONTIERS
REVISED

BY ALAN BAHR

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Based on the game Tiny Dungeon by Brandon McFadden

Revised First Edition

To Erin Bahr. This time, you don't have to share the dedication.

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INTRODUCTION

Tiny Frontiers: Revised is a minimalistic table-top roleplaying game that delivers a satisfying gaming experience without books upon books of rules and options. You will not find classes, levels, or experience points in Tiny Frontiers: Revised—instead, you create organic characters that grow through roleplaying. While Tiny Frontiers: Revised does assume its players are familiar with table-top roleplaying, newcomers and veterans alike should be able to easily understand the basic mechanics of the game.

Getting Started

You will need at least two players: one to act as the Game Master, and one to act as an Explorer. It is highly recommended to have at least three players acting as Explorers in a game. Each player will also need three six-sided dice, or d6, called a Dice Pool. You can make do with 1d6 by rolling it multiple times, but it's easier to have three to roll at once when needed. Besides, d6 dice are easy to come by.

You should also have some paper and a pencil to write down your Explorer's information and notes. A plain index card generally has enough space on it to be an adequate Explorer Sheet, which simply lists all of your Explorer's information, gear, and notes.

Game Masters will usually require more paper to keep their thoughts and plans in order, as well as information on Non-Player Characters, or NPCs, the Explorers will encounter.

Finally, *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* is truly a pen and paper game in the classic sense; however, maps and miniatures do assist in visualizing where things are so that everyone is on the same page. While maps and miniatures aren't required, they do have their place at the table.
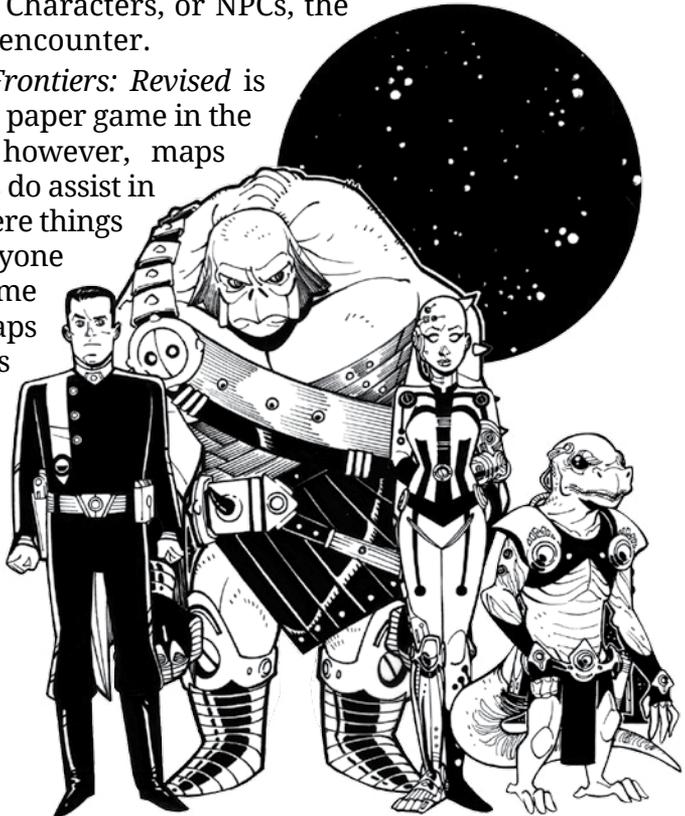
HOW TO PLAY

Before you create your Explorers, it's time to get down to the nitty-gritty of playing the game.

Roleplaying games are about story-telling, and Tiny Frontiers: Revised is no different. Most of the game is played simply by describing your Explorer's actions to the Game Master. When describing these actions, relay what you want to do, or what you're attempting to try. It is the Game Master's job to react to these actions and describe the outcome. Simple actions are typically resolved with just the Game Master's consent.

Tests

The core mechanic that runs Tiny Frontiers: Revised is called a Test, which is a roll of 2d6 from your Dice Pool. For complex actions, the Game Master will usually require you to make a Test to determine if you succeed at what you're doing. Tests are successful if you roll a 5 or a 6 on any of the dice rolled in your Dice Pool, unless otherwise noted by the Game Master.

The Game Master, and certain Traits selected at Explorer Creation, can grant you Advantage in situations. This will allow you to roll 3d6 from your Dice Pool instead of 2d6 for that particular Test, increasing the odds of success!

Other situations, at the Game Master's discretion, may put you at a Disadvantage. When at a Disadvantage, you will only be able to roll 1d6 to resolve your Test. It is important to note that if the situation, trait, Game Master, or any source imposes Disadvantage in a situation, even if you would normally have Advantage due to a particular Trait, you still roll 1d6 for that Test. Xenotech items that grant Advantage are the only things which supersede this—if a Xenotech item grants you Advantage, you will always have Advantage for that situation. Why? Because alien science. That's why.

The long and short of it: Disadvantage overrides Advantage (unless the Advantage is granted by a Xenotech item.) That means if you have Disadvantage on a roll, and Advantage on the same roll, you only roll 1d6.

Obstacles

Obstacles are challenges that usually require you to make a Test to overcome. Obstacles may include attempting to barter with a shopkeeper, pick a lock, search a room for a hidden item, or resolve a conflict with words rather than blasters. The Game Master may determine your roleplaying is sufficient in overcoming the Obstacle and grant you an immediate success without having to Test; however, in most situations, a Test will be necessary to determine the outcome.

It might appear (especially when you get to the section with enemies), that Advantage can take you up to 4d6. That is not the case. All rolls in TinyD6 are made with 1d6, 2d6 or 3d6. If you have 3d6 on a roll, it's likely Advantage is already calculated in for you, and you can't increase it.

Save Tests

Obstacles may arise that require you to make what's called a Save Test to prevent something from happening to you. For example, you need to successfully leap out of the way as a a reactor explodes, or you're climbing a starship tether when it snaps and could potentially fall. Save Tests are also used to stabilize yourself if you begin a turn at 0 Hit Points. Save Tests are just like regular Tests, and unless otherwise noted by the rules or the Game Master, you roll 2d6 to resolve your Test. A 5 or 6 on any of the rolled dice represent a successful Save.

Some Save Tests can be a life or death scenario—these are called Save or Die Tests. Should you fail the Save Test, your character is killed. Period. There is no preventing it. Game Masters are advised to keep these situations few and far between.

Combat

The Game Master will usually announce when Combat is about to begin by requesting an Initiative Test. Explorers will roll a standard 2d6 Test and add up the total of their rolls. Likewise, the Game Master will roll Initiative for any enemy combatants the Explorers will be facing. The highest roller will have the first turn in the Initiative Order, followed by the next highest, and so on. If there is a tie between an Explorer and an enemy, the Explorer always goes first. If there is a tie between two or more Explorers, the tying Explorers reroll for that position until the tie is broken.

Combat is strictly turn-based to keep things running smoothly. A round of combat begins at the top of the Initiative Order, and ends at the bottom. The next round of combat then begins, starting again at the top of the Initiative Order. This continues until the Explorers have defeated their enemies, completed some objective determined by the Game Master, or until the Explorers have been killed or routed. While it can take some time to get through an entire round of combat, in-game, a full round of combat is equal to roughly five or six seconds.

During your turn in the Initiative Order, you have two Actions. You can choose to move, attack, and generally not be useless with these Actions. If you move, that is one Action. If you attack, that is one Action. You

can use both Actions to move, or use both Actions to Attack if you wish. Other Actions include holstering or drawing a weapon, grabbing an item, and giving an item to an ally.

Movement is defined by announcing your intentions to move from one location to another; the Game Master determines whether you can cover enough ground to get there with that Action. This is where miniatures and maps come in handy, as they will assist in determining distance. It is also assumed that each Explorer can move just as far as any other Explorer with a single Action, unless the Game Master says otherwise. A good rule of thumb is to assume your character can move approximately 25 feet in-game with a single Action, so long as there isn't anything hindering their movement. If you are using a combat grid, 25 feet is 5 squares.

Attacking is the most important aspect of Combat. First and foremost, if you are attacking an enemy, you must be within range of your enemy to do so. Your stun-baton may be long, but it isn't going to hit that malfunctioning battlebot that's 25 feet away from you. Getting within range will require you to move if you are using a melee weapon.

Once you're in range, you can attack! Attacking is just another type of Test, and the Obstacle is your enemy. Usually, you're going to be using the weapon you have Mastered to attack. Any weapon type you have Mastered allows you to roll an Attack Test with Advantage, or 3d6. If you are simply Proficient with the weapon you're wielding, your Attack Test is a standard 2d6 Test. You have Disadvantage for Attack Tests while wielding weapons you are not Proficient with—this includes unarmed combat and improvised weapons.

On a successful Attack Test, you deal 1 of point damage to your enemy, regardless of your weapon, unless your Game Master says otherwise. Game Masters are encouraged to reward roleplaying at all times, so a particularly detailed description of an attack may score more than 1 point of damage to your enemy, if the Game Master so decides.

Two special Actions you can perform in Combat are Focus and Evade. When you choose to Focus, the next time you attack, your Test is successful on a roll of 4, 5, or 6, increasing your chances of hitting the enemy. Your Focus Action remains in effect until you choose to attack or until the end of combat, so the Action can carry over to other turns. There is no benefit to stacking Focus Actions.

When you choose to Evade, until the start of your next turn, you can Test 1d6 when you are successfully hit by an enemy. If your Test is successful, you evade the attack and do not take damage.

Tiny Frontiers: Revised adds third and fourth special Actions: Suppressing Fire and Cover. Suppressing Fire lets you make an attack at Disadvantage every time an enemy enters the area you're suppressing.

When you take Cover, all enemy attacks from one direction gain Disadvantage.

To recap combat Actions, you can:

- Evade
- Focus
- Test for an ability
- Attack
- Move
- Suppressing Fire
- Cover

There are four categories of weapons in Tiny Frontiers: Revised—Light Melee, Heavy Melee, Light Ranged, and Heavy Ranged. You can still attack while unarmed, or even with improvised weapons such as a barstool or a rock, but these are not classified as weapons.

Both Light and Heavy Melee Weapons have the benefit of being reliable and never running out of ammunition. Light Melee Weapons have the benefit of only requiring one hand to wield. This frees you up to do other things with your other hand, such as grabbing a med kit, injecting a stimpak, or holding an armshield. You must be adjacent to an enemy, or within 5 feet, to attack with a Light Melee Weapon.

Examples of Light Melee Weapons include tasers, stun batons, laser swords, and mundane knives or daggers. If it's a weapon you can swing with one hand, it's probably a Light Melee Weapon.

Heavy Melee Weapons require you to wield them with both hands due to them being cumbersome or just so... heavy. The benefit of this is that you can attack your enemies with these weapons from 10 feet away, as they have a longer reach than Light Melee Weapons.

Examples of Heavy Melee Weapons include shock-staves, drills, dual-sided laser swords, or mundane greatswords and staves.

Light Ranged Weapons can be held and shot in one hand. You can also take one hand off your weapon freely, as with Light Melee Weapons. Examples of Light Ranged Weapons include handguns, laser pistols, throwing knives, shuriken, hand-crossbows, or anything you could reliably shoot or throw one-handed.

Heavy Ranged Weapons require you to wield them with both hands due to them being cumbersome. Examples of Heavy Ranged Weapons include rifles, automatic weapons, grenade launchers, rocket launchers, and bows. Heavy Ranged Weapons have bigger ammo clips, so you can reroll a failed Cinematic Ammo Test once per mission.

Cinematic Ammo: At the end of every fight, have each player make a Test for each ranged weapon they used. Anyone who fails is out of ammo until they do something to refill their supply. Explorers who share ammo with allies who have run out must Test for Cinematic Ammo with Disadvantage.

Optional Rule: Zones

In combat, characters occupy one of three zones. Zones represent areas close to the fight. There are three zones during combat: **Close**, **Near**, and **Far**. In each zone you can attack with different weapons:

In the **Close** Zone, you can attack with:
- Light Melee
- Light Ranged
- Heavy Melee

In the **Near** Zone, you can attack with:
- Heavy Melee
- Any Ranged

In the **Far** Zone, you can attack with:
- Any Ranged

If you're using psionics or Xenotech, they can be used from any range.

Note: The included Zone sheet also includes Evade and Focus sections, so you can mark which characters have Evaded or Focused each round, and which have not.

CLOSE
- Light Melee
- Heavy Melee
- Light Ranged

NEAR
- Heavy Melee
- Any Ranged

FAR
- Any Ranged

- Focus
- Evade
- Cover
- Supressing Fire

When combat begins, enemies are all in the Close Zone. Enemies can use any attack from their Zone (ranged, psionic, melee), with no penalties. The Zones should viewed from the Explorers' perspective. "I'm staying back at a Ranged Distance" or "I'm closing to Close Range" is the way to view it. Enemies don't move between Zones, instead staying "stationary" as the explorers move around them.

Think of it as the enemies are the eye of the storm in combat, and everything swirls around them. Obviously, this is an extreme abstraction, and the GM should remember that enemies actually move, and describe it as such. Zones are meant to abstract relative distance and provide a quick play aid.

It takes a Move Action for an Explorer to move between zones. There's no limit. An Explorer can spend a Move Action and move from Far to Close, or from Close to Near.

When other abilities or powers (such as creatures, or prestige traits) refer to distances, that Close Zone is within 5 feet of the target, and the Near Zone is within 10 feet of the target.

Therefore, if a creature can attack everyone with 10 feet, they can attack everyone in Close and Near zones. Knocking something back 10 feet would move them from Close to Near, or from Near to Ranged.

In the end, Zones are an abstraction designed to help make combat a little easier to engage in.
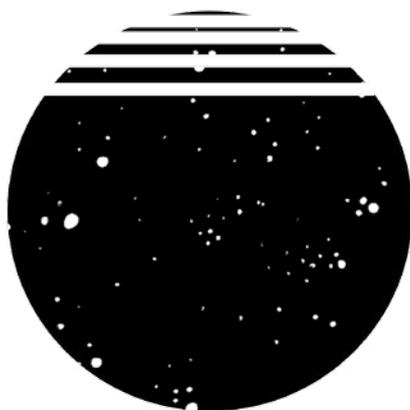
Hit Points

Now that you know your way around the basics of Combat, it's time to discuss Hit Points. Hit Points are determined by your selected Heritage, and they reflect the punishment your body can take before you lose consciousness. In Combat, every successful hit deals 1 point of damage unless otherwise noted by the Game Master. Your choice of weaponry does not alter this. Other game systems generally have you roll for the damage you deal or have different weapons deal different amounts of damage. Tiny Frontiers: Revised does away with this, because a well-placed, mundane dagger can be just as deadly as getting dismembered by a laser sword. Ultimately, the final blow is the one that counts.

Sleeping

You need at least 6 in-game hours of uninterrupted sleep every day to regain your strength. If you manage to obtain 6 hours of uninterrupted sleep, you will fully restore any lost Hit Points to your maximum. You otherwise regain 1 Hit Point for every hour of sleep.

When asleep, Explorers are unconscious. If something is going on around them, they are less likely to be aware of it, and have Disadvantage when making a Test to see if something wakes them up.

Death

The dying process begins when you've taken enough damage to reduce your Hit Points to 0. Hit Points cannot be reduced below 0. At this point, you're knocked unconscious, and without further assistance, you could succumb to your wounds and die.

If you are at 0 Hit Points at the start of your turn in Combat, you can only make a Save Test to stabilize yourself. A successful Save Test will bring your Hit Points up to 1 and ends your turn. If you fail this Save Test, you get one last chance at surviving on your own—at the start of your next turn, make one last Save Test, at Disadvantage. If you fail this final Save Test, your Explorer dies.

While you are unconscious, any ally can attempt to stabilize you by making a Save Test as an Action on their turn, providing they are adjacent (or Close) to you. On a success, you are restored to 1 Hit Point and your next turn would start as a normal turn. Additionally, any items or abilities that could potentially heal you while you are unconscious—such as the Medical Savant Trait, med kits, or stimpacks—can be used by allies to bring you back from the brink.

Should you die, don't worry too much. There are usually ways for the dead to be brought back to life, and hopefully one of your companions will be willing to drag your useless corpse to a cloning vat where you can be resurrected. Of course, this probably won't be cheap.

Hiding & Sneaking

Attempting to hide or sneak around is performed simply by making a standard Test with 2d6. If the Test is successful, you are hidden, or your actions went unnoticed.

Note that you can't simply hide in plain sight, so you need some sort of cover or concealment to hide. It is up to the Game Master to determine if you are in a situation where you could potentially hide.

Allies and enemies alike can also make a standard 2d6 Test to locate someone—or something—that is hidden.

Hiding during Combat uses an Action, as does searching during Combat. These Tests can only be done during your Turn while in Combat.

Xenotech

Xenotech is any technology that is useful, rare, and difficult to find. Most Xenotech is almost impossible to recreate because it's made of unknown materials, has anomalous properties that can't be explained by modern science, the fuel that powers it is so rare, or some mad scientist made it and wrote really poor documentation. Xenotech is coveted by Explorers because it is both useful for exploration, and valuable if you need to sell it.

Xenotech comes in two major categories: Simple and Complex.

Simple Xenotech is easy to use: you can drink a vial of medicine, apply items from a med kit, inject a syringe or stimpak into your arm, aim a gun, swing an axe, wear a suit of armor, or press a button on a box.

Complex Xenotech is trickier, you might need to speak a passphrase, hum a tune, spray a certain perfume on it, flash colored lights at it, psychically project emotions at it, or flip a bunch of switches and press buttons in the right order. Complex Xenotech can only be used by Explorers with the proper training. If you're lucky, you can find a manual for the item which requires about an hour to read, but experimenting and researching carefully on your own can take days or even weeks. Explorers with the Xenotech Expert trait can activate any complex Xenotech without trouble, but are no better at identifying what it does before they use it.

Most Xenotech can only be activated a few times before it is exhausted; anything that can function perpetually is extremely valuable. Some Xenotech may be helpfully labeled (or unhelpfully mislabeled) by the last Explorer who found it. Some Xenotech may have strange or harmful side effects. Safely identifying Xenotech may require Tests or finding specialists who can answer questions about it.

On well-funded missions, each Explorer may be issued a piece of Xenotech necessary to complete the mission. In this case, each Explorer will be given the necessary training to use their Xenotech.

Here are some examples:

- A crystal that makes water within 20 feet breathable like air. It only works for 24 hours.
- An energy knife that can cut through anything, but once it has cut something it can never cut anything made from the same material again.
- A complex gadget that will make every gun within its line of sight shoot at it (up to and including orbital weapons platforms).
- A mask that is programmed to mimic a specific person's face and voice. It fools electronic systems perfectly, but any person within 15 feet can see a telltale flickering.
- A black cube that transforms any surface into a vacuum-safe, intangible barrier 8 feet wide that Explorers can pass through without causing any catastrophic decompression. After an hour the cube and the barrier evaporate completely, leaving an 8-foot-wide hole which may cause catastrophic decompression.
- A grenade that banishes anything in its radius from the timeline. Everything destroyed by it retroactively never existed.
- A pill that can be eaten to learn one language for a month. The user loses the ability to read their native language until it wears off.
- A visor with complex controls that let the wearer see radio waves. The wearer can't see visible light, which may hinder simple tasks (like walking).
- A lamp with beautiful flashing pattern that hypnotizes certain species of predators for 15 minutes before it burns out.
- A tablet that has complex touch commands and a bunch of wires that can be hooked up to a person to repair bullet holes and deep lacerations.

Xenotech items of all kinds may be acquired during adventures. It is up to the Game Master to determine exactly what these items do, how easy it is to use them, and what sort of benefit, if any, they provide. Remember, not all Xenotech is good, and some items that seem harmless could potentially be harmful.

Optional Rules: Experience & Character Growth

Gaining experience is one of the most exciting and fun parts of a roleplaying game. Much like everything in *Tiny Frontiers: Revised*, the rules for growth and leveling are fairly simple and straightforward.

To that end, we've presented two systems that the GM can choose to use if they wish.

The Minimalist Advancement

To advance your characters with the minimalist advancement track, simply gain 1 new trait every 3 sessions. A character can never have more than 7 traits. If you would gain a trait past 7, you may instead swap out a non-Heritage trait for a new trait.

Experience Points

At the end of every session, the GM will award experience. You may buy upgrades with the following costs.

- 6 Experience = a permanent increase to your HP of 1.
- 8 Experience = a new Proficient or Mastered Weapon.
- 10 Experience = a new Trait.

For the GM: Players should receive 1-3 experience per session, awarded "to the group as a whole," meaning everyone in the group gets the same amount of experience for their individual character. Experience is generally awarded as follows:

- 1 for the group as a whole for good roleplay.
- 1 for the group as a whole for defeating enemies (not per enemy, just if they defeated any enemies).
- 1 for the group as a whole for advancing the plot and their goals.
- 1 for the group as a whole if players contributed to the out of game enjoyment of the session (snacks, music, carpooling, hosting at their home).

The Rules Don't Cover That!

Tiny Frontiers: Revised is a minimalist rule set and it provides only a framework for gameplay. There are a lot of scenarios that could happen in a game that these rules don't cover—but neither do the epic tomes that other game systems use.

If a situation arises where an Explorer is asking for a ruling that these rules don't provide an answer to, it is up to the Game Master to provide a ruling. This is known as Game Master Fiat. Ultimately the Game Master has final say on how the game is played and how the rules are enforced. The key is simply to be consistent.

We've included lots of optional rules you can use to simulate the various pieces you might (or might not) like from other RPGs, but in the end, it's your job to make *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* your own. Use whatever pieces you like, and discard the ones you don't!

EXPLORER CREATION

Creating your Explorer is a quick and easy process. You don't necessarily need to follow this specific order, but it serves as a nice outline.

- First, select a Heritage from the Heritage List
- Then select three unique Traits from the Trait List
- Select a Weapon Group to be proficient with
- Select Family Trade
- Select Belief

When you choose a Heritage, you gain abilities that are particular to that Heritage, as well as giving your Explorer a starting point for their worldview. Choosing a Heritage first helps give you a sense of where your Explorer fits in the universe.

Instead of pre-defined classes, Tiny Frontiers: Revised uses Traits to express what your Explorer excels at doing.

Next, you're going to pick a weapon group you are Proficient with. There are four groups of weapons; Light Melee, Heavy Melee, Light Ranged, and Heavy Ranged, which are discussed in more detail in the Combat section.

You might wonder why we shifted our terminology from Race to Heritage. Previous TinyD6 games (and the original Tiny Dungeon) used the term Race to distinguish between the various playable species that exist in the game.

Race, however, is an inelegant word. Connotations aside, Race fails to account for the full spectrum of cultural, environmental, familial, and genetic heritage. Using Heritage allows us to recognize and embrace diversity within groups as well as create new groups on broader grounds than genus and species.

From this group, you select one specific type of weapon that you have Mastered. For example, you can select Light Melee Weapons as your Proficient group, and from that, you can select stunners as your Mastered weapon. Your Explorer will start with one weapon of your choice, ideally the weapon he or she has Mastered. Don't be afraid to be creative—you may have chosen to be Mastered with stunners, but there are many different types of stunners you could arm your Explorer with, such as stun batons, blast knuckle stunners, tablet stunners, or mini stunners disguised as pens or cosmetics.

It is assumed that your Explorer is already wearing the standard armor or clothing of their choosing—be it leather armor, a vaccsuit, or just clothes—as armor serves no Starshipnical function in the game. You may eventually come across Xenotech armor and wearable items that grant special benefits during your travels, but for now, just note what you're wearing.

You also start with 10 GalCreds and an Explorer's Kit, the content of which is described in the Explorer's Kit section.

This next part is going to be the hardest, because these aren't options you select from a list. You're going to want to name your Explorer and give him or her a little bit of a backstory. Going along with that backstory, another reality is
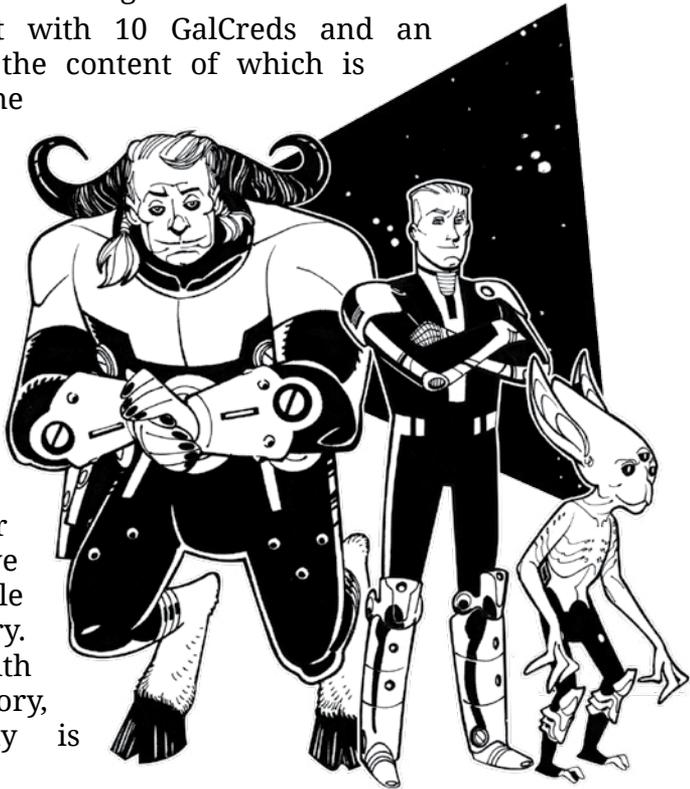
you weren't born an Explorer. No, really. You weren't. Growing up, you were probably exposed to a Family Trade. Perhaps you learned your way around an engine room from your father, who was ship's mechanic. Maybe your mother was a software programmer and taught you how to write simple codes. Whatever it was, you picked up some knowledge of this craft and gain Advantage in situations you can put it to use. Choose some sort of Family Trade for your character; your Game Master will then decide how it will be applicable during gameplay.

Game Masters: While this is going on, you should be thinking about what type of scenario you will be placing the Explorers in. It is the Game Master's job to create a convincing setting and story for the Explorers, which includes locations to visit, enemies to fight, and NPCs to interact with. Is this going to be a one-off adventure? Or are you planning to create an entire galaxy for your Explorers to explore? You can put as much or as little effort into this as you like, but keep in mind it's your job to keep everyone on track and entertained. One-off adventures can be planned with a few minutes of preparation; however, if it is your goal to have a larger campaign in mind, this is going to take some work on your part to plan. Take some time to look through the For The Game Master section.

Finally, Explorers all have a driving principle called a Belief that you will want to write down. This Belief is a simple statement used as a guiding force for your Explorer. Your Belief may be, "I'll always find a diplomatic solution," "GalCreds can buy happiness," or "I let my blaster do the talking." This Belief is not etched in stone, and can be changed or added to with the approval of your Game Master.

HERITAGES

Human

Humans are the most prolific Heritage due to their extreme adaptability and determination. Humans are capable of living in punishing conditions, from icy tundra to blistering deserts. They can produce glorious cities or live simple lives as nomads.

Humans are just as varied as the places you can find them in. They come in all shapes and sizes and temperaments. On average, they are between 5 and 6 feet tall, with males tending to be taller than females.

Human Attributes

- 6 Hit Points
- Humans select an additional Trait from the Trait List.
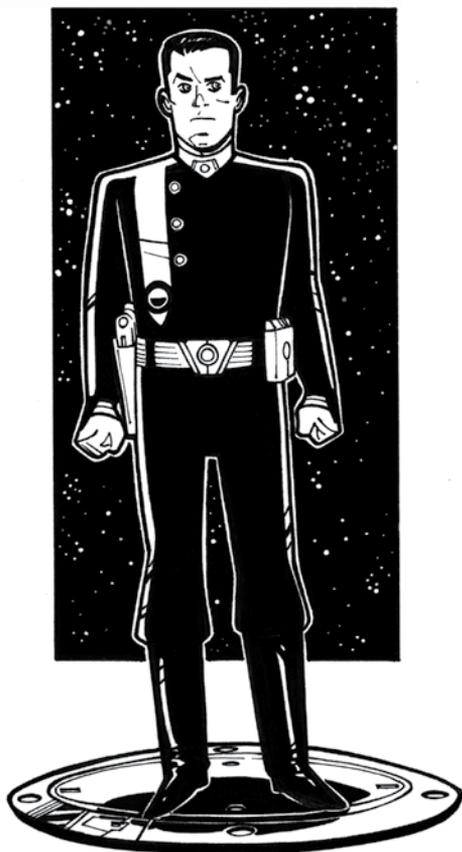
Gens

Built as genetically modified humans, extensive time in the space-lanes and on other planets has led to a divergent evolution where these former super-soldiers have created their own culture and civilization. They are by nature a secretive people, and it can be difficult to earn their trust.

Gens consider themselves genetically superior to baseline humans in just about every way. They're taller, have perfect skin, are always in shape, and are frequently smug about it.

Gens Attributes

- 6 Hit Points
- Gens start with the Heritage Trait *Master of Warfare.*

  Master of Warfare: You have Mastered an additional weapon, and have Advantage when using it. Select a weapon, just like you would at character creation. This is in addition to the Mastered weapon chosen at Explorer Creation.

Autoborg

Autoborgs are intelligent artificial constructs. They are built en masse in factories, and then implanted with artificial intelligences designed to serve whatever role they are built for. Autoborg society is heavily influenced by a strong sense of purpose and responsibility. Because of this, they are viewed as being trustworthy, but impossible to reason with.

 On average, Autoborgs stand 6 feet tall, and have broad, metallic bodies. Autoborgs tend to weigh more than an average human their size, and are often found integrating bits of technology and such to improve their form.

Autoborg Attributes

- 8 Hit Points
- Autoborgs start with the Heritage Traits *Dark Vision* and *Robot.*

  Dark Vision: You are able to see around you in total darkness.

  Robot: You don't need to eat, sleep, or breathe. However, any Test to heal you must be made at Disadvantage.
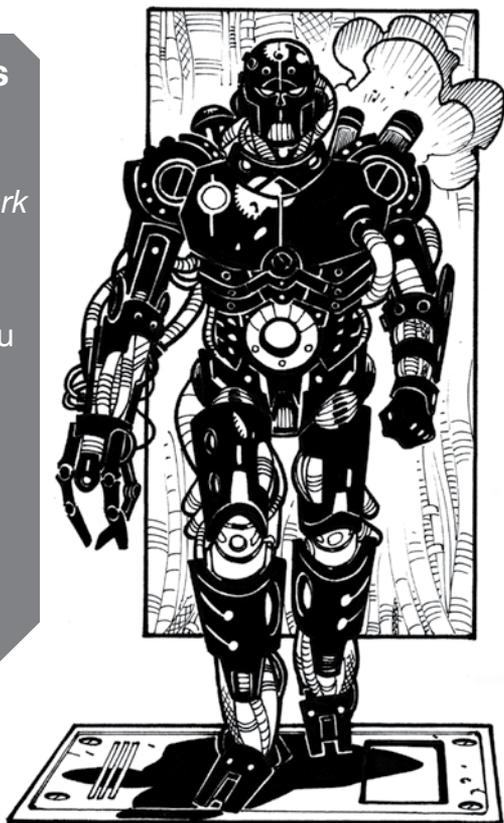
Khalumra

Khalumra are a diminutive species of three eyed aliens. They live on asteroids that they have retrofitted into mobile communities, and they wander the galaxy as traders and purveyors of goods. Their behavior, even in adulthood, is childlike. They are inquisitive by nature and somewhat mischievous, although their antics are rarely malicious. Khalumra are also easily distracted by new experiences, and particularly are fascinated with the larger races.

Standing just over 3 feet tall, Khalumra are on average very scrawny and have wide, oblong heads with protruding, floppy bat-like ears. They have three eyes each, and their feet and hands both have three prehensile "fingers" that they can use interchangably. They are notoriously quick, and due to their compulsive fascination with everything, are viewed as unreliable and easily distracted. Despite their appearance and impish nature, Khalumra are usually good-natured creatures that enjoy the company of anyone who can tolerate them.

Khalumra Attributes

- 4 Hit Points
- Khalumra start with the Heritage Trait *Incredible Agility.*

   Incredible Agility: You can Test 1d6 whenever you are successfully hit by an enemy. If your Test is successful, you evade the attack and do not take damage. You gain no benefit from taking Evade Actions.

Salimar

Salimar have earned a reputation for being hard-nosed, but fair merchants, preferring to live in aquatic or wet climates, as suits their amphibious nature. They are highly intelligent and dignified creatures with a great respect for—and interest in—culture. In Salimarian culture, being well-dressed is an absolute must, as it is symbolic of their wealth and stature. Their skin is glossy black and smooth with patches from their head to their tail that range from snow white, to silver, to dark grey.

On average, Salimar stand roughly 4 and half feet tall; they have elongated bodies with somewhat stumpy legs and thick tails. It is widely known that some Salimar are not only immune to fire, but are actually healed by it; it is less widely known that a divergent branch of the Heritage is immune to cold and healed by it.

Salimar Attributes

- 5 Hit Points
- Salimar start with one of two Heritage Traits: *Pyrothermic Healing* or *Cryothermic Healing.*

  Pyrothermic Healing: Any damage that would be dealt to you by a source of natural (non-Xenotech) fire instead heals you for that amount.

  Cryothermic Healing: Any damage that would be dealt to you by a source of natural (non-Xenotech) cold instead heals you for that amount.

Invex

Invex are individual members of an alien species that is insectoid by Terran standards. They've earned a reputation as tough, hardy mercenaries and deep space explorers, and it is well deserved. They're tenacious, and often display a single-minded focus on a particular problem that borders on fanatical.

A normal Invex stand roughly 7 and half feet tall; they have elongated, and armored bodies with multiple thin legs, and claws or limbs. The armored "skin" of an Invex is a densely compacted form of bio-carbon that is as hard as some metals or stones. Coloring varies, ranging from mottled chitinous shells, to smooth, reactive camouflage that hides the Invex in plain sight.

Invex Attributes

- 5 Hit Points
- Invex start with the *Chitinous Armor* and *Reactive Camo* Heritage Traits.

Chitinous Armor: When rolling to Evade, you succeed on a 4, 5, or 6.

Reactive Camo: Gain Advantage on Sneaking or Hiding Tests.

Tyranax

Tyranax are members Tyranus Imperious, a spacefaring alien empire found deep in the darkest reaches of space. They often travel throughout the galaxies, serving as soldiers and bounty hunters or, rarely, assassins. Violence, might making right, and domination are often the watch words of the Tyranax.

Tyranax stand about twice as tall as the average human, and have four arms protruding from their torsos. They have rough scaled hides and favor weapons that require them to close with their enemies. Ridged spines protrude down their back and arms, giving them a truly fearsome appearance. Their lower arms are smaller and underdeveloped, only good for dexterous work, not for combat, and are often kept folded tightly against their bodies.

Tyranax Attributes

- 5 Hit Points
- Tyranax start with the *Unending Rage* Heritage Trait.

Unending Rage: When attacking with a melee weapon, you deal +1 damage on an attack roll that has a die showing a face of 6.

EXPANDED HERITAGE LIST

Below are new Heritages, created for *Tiny Frontiers: Revised.*

Ilvian

Ilvians are one of the more advanced races out there in the dark. Loners by nature, Ilvians are techno-gnostics, searching after universal enlightenment, which, as a culture, they believe can be accomplished via cybernetic modification and technology.

Ilvians are about the same sizes and shapes as humans, but with light blue skin, milky white eyes, and hairless bodies. They tend to be drawn to professions around technology and are almost always found with cybernetics throughout their body.

Ilvian Attributes

- 6 Hit Points
- Ilvians start with the Heritage Trait *Cybernetic Savant.*

Cybernetic Savant: Ilvians select an additional Trait from the Cybernetic Traits List. They may have up to 3 Cybernetic Traits.

Jkheri

Hailing from an unknown and hidden star system, the Jkheri are mysterious and secretive individuals. They have no gender, instead taking whatever persona, gender, or identity appeals to them at a given juncture. The only immutable feature about a Jkheri is their personal name, which they deem essential to retaining their true identity. They tend to hide information about their culture, and no one really knows why they leave their homes.

Jkheri have no hair and four eyes on a humanoid form. They're around 7 feet tall and tend to be lithe and thin. Their skin is sand-colored, allowing them to blend in with whatever sandy terrain is around them.

Jkheri Attributes

- 8 Hit Points
- Jkheri start with the Heritage Trait *Secretive.*

  Secretive: You gain advantage whenever you attempt to evade or dodge questions or attempts to gather information about you or your activities.
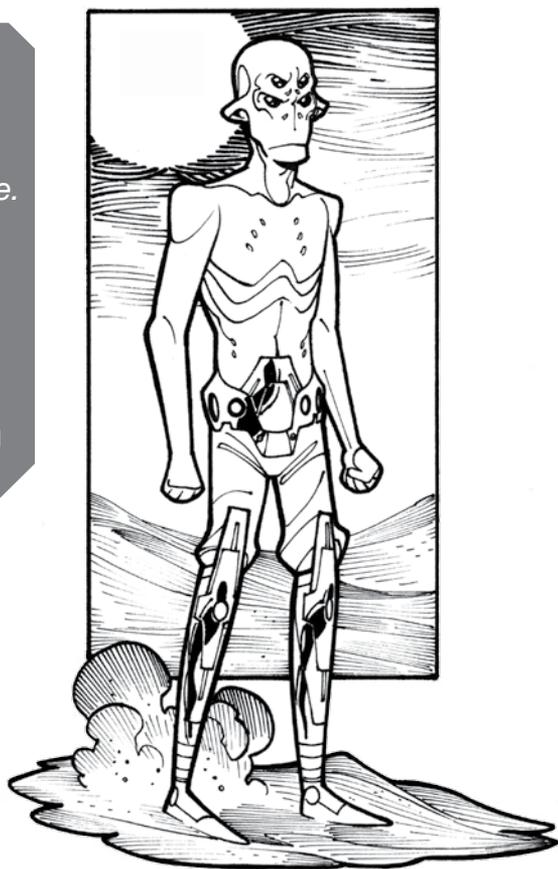
Splinters

No one really knows where the Splinters come from; scientists are pretty clear that they're not from our galaxy, but that's about as far as science has gotten. There's no evidence of how they arrived in our galaxy in the first place. Since no one knew what to call them, they tossed out the nickname of Splinter and it seems to have stuck. Even the Splinters themselves use it.

Standing just under 3 feet tall, Splinters are bizarre aliens who outright unsettle most folk who look at them. All weird angles, strange clothes, and no sensory organs you can spot, they tend to just show up and be around.

Splinters Attributes

- 5 Hit Points
- Splinters start with the Heritage Trait *Unsettling.*

Unsettling: You are unsettling to deal with. You gain Advantage on any rolls to intimidate, threaten, or unsettle others. You also gain one reroll per day.

Nain

Nain were among the oldest of starfaring races, and have established themselves as a large portion of the populace in the galaxy. Nain are clever and mechanically inclined, pioneering new forms of cybernetics, starship drives, weapons, armor, and more, working to improve various components of life in the universe.

On average, Nain stand 4 feet tall, and have broad, stout bodies. They tend to have violet or blue skin and appear to be heavily over muscled. Nain tend to weigh more than an average human and are often found in workshops or repair shops.

Nain Attributes

- 7 Hit Points
- Nain start with the *Tinkerer* Trait.

  Tinkerer: You gain Advantage on tests to modify or enhance technology.

Ahleghiri

Ahleghiri appear human from a distance, until you get one close up, and you see the creature for what it is. Red skin, hooves, and curling horns tend to conjure up images of demons and devils from old Terran history. Luckily, they aren't abominations from the pits of some ancient religious punishment, but aliens evolved to use photosynthesis and light better than most... along with some extra features, because evolution is weird.

On average, Ahleghiri stand roughly 6 and half feet tall, and weigh about as much as a big human. Curled horns, hooves, and red skin often frighten new folk, but Ahleghiri are very friendly and helpful, and have charming demeanors.

Ahleghiri Attributes

- 6 Hit Points
- Ahleghiri start with the *Suneater* Heritage Trait.

Suneater: When standing in direct sunlight and taking no Actions, an Ahleghiri will heal 1 Hit Point per ten minutes.

Holograms

Holograms are just that: AIs who use hardlight projections to interact and wander around the galaxy. A small floating orb projects the AI's image of itself into the world, while the AI itself is housed inside the orb. They're somewhat rare, but common enough most folk will know one when they see one. The hardlight construct can interact with anything just like regular folk, so no problems there.

A Hologram will look exactly like whatever it wants, just a slightly translucent version of that image. They're a little wavy and shaky if you squint and look hard. If they're charging, they just look like a floating silver ball of metal—which they are.
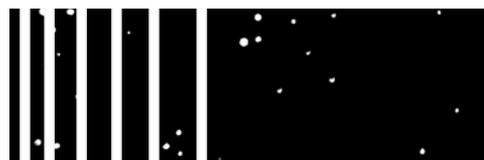
Hologram Attributes

- 8 Hit Points
- Holograms start with the *Hardlight* Heritage Trait.

  Hardlight: Holograms can't be healed by any Test or equipment and must recover their Hit Points naturally. Holograms must recharge daily (use the Sleeping rules). Twice per "day," Holograms may Test with Disadvantage to recover 1 HP.

Grunka

Grunka are big, brutish, violent aliens that tend to work as enforcers, thugs or outlaws for hire. They like to settle down, establish their dominance over a town, and then basically fall into a ritual of gang warfare against other Grunka in the town. No one really likes Grunka... not even other Grunka.

Grunka are big, grey skinned, elephant looking things, minus the trunk, tusks, four legs, tails, and bits that make an elephant nice. Vaguely humanoid shape keeps them from being too outlandish, but their massive build gives Grunka away pretty easily.

However, they do have that whole "never forgettin'" memory thing. But the only thing they seem to remember are grudges.

Grunka Attributes

- 7 Hit Points
- Grunka start with the *Grudge-bearer* Heritage Trait.

Grudge-bearer: Grunka must attack something that damaged them on their next Action, unless they pass a Save at Disadvantage. This forced attack deals +1 damage.
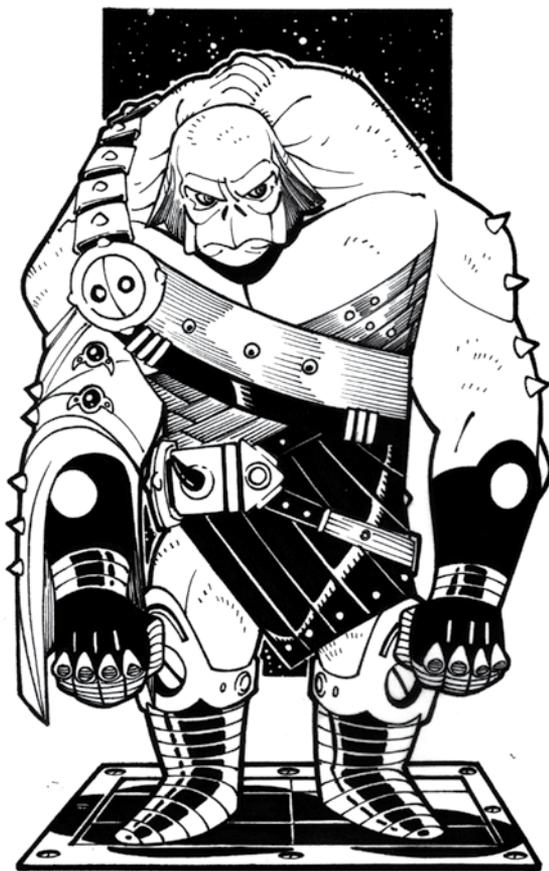
Bilks

Called Bilks (as a demeaning slang term), these aliens hail from various regions of deep space, where atmosphere is at a premium. Comprised of a bizarre psychic entity that found itself a host to bond with, Bilks are generally misunderstood. Their aura of psychic projection is uncomfortable for most travelers, and their limited ability to see upcoming events makes them very unwelcome at casinos and other gambling establishments, as they tend to win... a lot.

Bilks tend to gravitate to human hosts, as they find it's the easiest to plug themselves into such a mutable form. Regardless, the intrusion of the psychic entity tends to hamper any innate genetic abilities or powers the host form has, and as the two minds merge, a Bilk becomes a uniquely different lifeform.

Bilk Attributes

- 5 Hit Points
- Bilks start with the *Precognition* Heritage Traits.

  Precognition: Whenever a Bilk rolls a "1" on a dice during a Test, they may lose one Hit Point to set that dice to a "6" facing, allowing them to succeed.

NOTE: Bilks can look like any other Heritage, but do not have that Heritage's hit points or traits.

Trait List

Acrobat: *It's up there? No problem!* You gain Advantage when Testing to do acrobatic tricks such as tumbling, long-distance jumps, climbing, and maintaining balance.

Ambush Specialist: *Keep your eyes on your six...* You gain Advantage on Tests to locate, disarm, and detect ambushes and traps. You also gain Advantage on Save Tests to avoid traps.

Armor Master: *Your paltry weapons cannot pierce my iron hide!* You have mastered wearing armor like a second skin. When wearing any form of armor, you have an extra 3 Hit Points that must be lost before you take physical damage. These hit points cannot be healed, and must be restored via repairing your armor. It takes a full 8 hours to repair all 3 Hit Points.

Armshield Trainee: *I've got you covered.* While wielding an armshield in one hand, Test with 2d6 instead of 1d6 to Evade. If you choose this Trait, your Explorer gains a shield at Explorer creation.

Barfighter: *Funny how you always fancy yourself a drink, right on Unification day.* You can select Improvised Weapons as a Weapon Group. You do not get to pick a Weapon to Master. Instead, when fighting with any Improvised Weapons, you get one extra Action each turn.

Beastspeaker: *What is it, boy?! The captain's speeder got hit by a meteorite?!* You are able to communicate with animals. This form of communication is primitive and very simplistic.

Beserker: *RAAAAAGH!* When attacking with a Melee Weapon, you can choose to attack with Disadvantage. If you do and succeed, you deal 2 damage instead of 1.

Born Fighter: *I'm always ready for a fight.* When combat starts, you may immediately take 1 Turn (2 Actions) before initiative is rolled.

Brawler: *Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face.* If you are fighting Unarmed, you Evade with 2d6 (instead of 1d6.)

Charismatic: *I can get what I want without even asking.* You gain Advantage when attempting to convince someone of something or otherwise influence them.

Chemist: *Comet dust has many uses. It's also great on salads!* Provided the right reagents and recipes, you can mix medicines, elixirs, chemical bombs, and poisons. You also gain Advantage when identifying unknown liquids and other useful substances.

Cleave: *I will bathe in the blood of enemies!* If your attack drops an enemy to 0 Hit Points, you may immediately make an extra attack with Disadvantage.

Dark-fighter: *Who needs eyes, when I have all the other senses?* You do not suffer Disadvantage for having your sight impaired.

Defender: *I've got your back.* When an adjacent ally is hit, before Evade Tests are made, you may choose to have that attack hit you instead.

Detective: *I always get my man, woman, or alien.* When searching for clues as to an identity, whereabouts, or motives, you gain Advantage.

Diehard: *I'm not going down that easy.* When an attack would reduce you to 0 Hit Points, it instead reduces you to 2 Hit Points. You can do this once per day.

Ecologist: *We go left. I can tell by some of the moss and from these space rodent tracks.* You gain Advantage when attempting to find your way through natural environments, and when attempting to identify dangerous alien creatures.

Educated: *I didn't go to academy for four years for nothing.* You gain Advantage when checking to see if you know specific information. If you don't know something, you do know the best place to find it.

Eidetic Memory: *You remember that guy in that city? Who did that thing? I remember exactly what he said.* When Testing to recall information, you have seen or heard previously— even in passing—you succeed on a roll of 4, 5, or 6.

Engineer: *I fix what y'all break down.* When you are maintaining, managing, or repairing equipment, you gain Advantage. Once per day, you can make a Test with Advantage. If successful, you can restore 1 Depletion point to any object.

Fleet of Foot: *Running away is always a valid option.* Your speed increases from 25 feet to 30 feet.

Ghost in the Machine: *Clear my schedule for the evening and put on some classical music, please. Oh, and don't forget to download my holonet shows tonight.* You have a sentient holographic digital assistant to make your life easier. You can order it to competently manage your digital presence on your behalf, such as setting appointments, managing your electronic messages, or posting photos and videos of your latest adventures to social media. Twice per session, if you are unprepared for a situation, you may Test at Disadvantage. If you succeed, your companion provides you with information that allows you to be prepared. For example, if you are lost, your companion might have previously downloaded a map for you.

Hacker: *Master of the Matrix.* As an Action, you can Test to electronically hack a cyborg, AI, computer, or digital or robotic construct. If your Test is successful, they must make a Save Test. If they fail, they lose all Actions until they make a successful Save Test at the start of their turn (in which they can act again). If they succeed, they lose one Action the next time they would act.

Heavy Weapons Expert: *There is never enough dakka.* As one Action you may attack with a Heavy Ranged Weapon to hit one target, and also the two targets nearest to your initial target (ally or enemy). All of these attacks are made with Disadvantage.

Insightful: *Stop pulling my leg...* You gain Advantage when Testing to discern whether someone is telling the truth or lying.

Learned: *Look, these here compu-books contain the total sum of Grunkian Property Law, as of the treaty of XXXIVVIX.* If you ever need a piece of information and you can't find the answer, you can test with Disadvantage. If successful, the GM will give you a tidbit that will aid you.

Lucky: *Whew! That was close.* You may reroll one Test per session.

Marksman: *The odds of hitting your target increase dramatically when you aim at it.* When using the Focus Action, your next attack with a Ranged Weapon is successful on a Test of 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Martial Artist: *Be like water, flowing through cracks.* You can select Unarmed as a Weapon Group to be proficient with. You must select a martial arts style as your Mastered Weapon.

Medical Savant: *I've seen worse, son. You'll pull through.* As an Action, you can Test 2d6 to heal a creature other than yourself. If the Test is successful, the target creature is healed for 2 Hit Points. This Trait can also be used to cure poison, disease, and other physical ailments within reason. You must be next to the creature to heal it.

Nimble Fingers: *I could have sworn I left it right here!* You gain Advantage when Testing to pick locks, steal, or do slight-of- hand.

Opportunist: *One man's failure is another man's opening to stab the idiot who failed.* If an enemy within range fails to hit with an attack against you, you may immediately make an attack with Disadvantage against that enemy.

Outlaw: *Everything I want, I have to steal or have to win.* You gain Advantage on Tests to avoid detection or capture by "the Law."

Perceptive: *What has been seen cannot be unseen.* You gain Advantage when Testing to gain information about your surroundings or find things that may be hidden. You gain this even while asleep.

Psionic: *Also, I can kill you with my brain.* You have psionic talent because of your species, an ancestor who had powerful talent, or a neural implant that amplifies your latent abilities. AIs, Autoborgs, or Holograms cannot take psionics. Psionics is separated into multiple disciplines. Pick one Discipline when you select this trait. You gain that Discipline. When you gain a Discipline, you gain all the powers located under it. However, each time you use a Power, you must make a successful Test or the Action is wasted. You may select this Trait multiple times (each time giving you a new Discipline). See Psionic Disciplines.

Quick Gun: *Fastest gun around.* When rolling initiative, you roll 3 dice and take the 2 highest for your Initiative score. Your first Ranged Attack of the combat has Advantage.

Quick Shot: *Pew, pew, pew!* As one Action you may make 2 attacks with a Light Ranged Weapon. Both Tests are at Disadvantage.

Resolute: *I will not be a casualty of fear.* You gain Advantage on all Save Tests.

Shield Bearer: *I've got you covered.* While wielding a shield, Test with 2d6 on Evade Actions instead of 1d6. If you choose this Trait, your Explorer gains a shield at Explorer creation.

Sneaky: *Hey, did you hear something?* You gain Advantage when Testing to hide or sneak around without others noticing you.

Strong: *Stand back, I'll kick it in!* You gain Advantage when Testing to do something with brute force.

Survivalist: *These berries are safe to eat... I think.* You gain Advantage when Testing to forage for food, find water, seek shelter, or create shelter in the wild.

Tough: *I have not journeyed all this way because I am made of sugar candy.* You gain 2 additional Hit Points.

Tracker: *These prints are fresh. He went that way.* You gain Advantage when Testing to track a person, creature, or animal in the wilderness. While outside, you can also locate true north without Testing.

Trapmaster: *It's a trap!* You gain Advantage when Testing to create, locate, and disarm traps. You also gain Advantage on Save Tests against traps.

Vigilant: *Better to stay ready than to get ready.* You gain Advantage on Initiative Tests.

Xenotech Expert: *Did you try reading the manual first?* You have spent years learning the tricks, traps, uses, and language of various Xenotech from dead civilizations. You gain Advantage to identify the primary function of any piece of Xenotech you find, and you can always activate complex Xenotech without training. (See Xenotech, .)

Xeno-Hunter: *If it ain't like me, I can kill it.* You have spent years learning how to hunt, kill, and trap other creatures. You can spend an Action to attack an enemy that is not your Heritage at Disadvantage. If you succeed, you deal 1 damage and gain Advantage on your next Test or attack against them.

Cybernetic Trait List

Cybernetic Traits represent fleshy bits of yourself being' replaced with fancified metal ones. A character can only have 2 Cybernetic Traits.

Augmented Reflexes: *Your nervous system has been rewired.* When you fail an Evade Test, you may re-Test with Disadvantage.

Built in Hard-Drive: *Got a database right here.* When Testing to see if you know something, if you fail, you can re-Test with Disadvantage.

Cloaking Field: *Surprise, pardner.* All Tests to locate you when you are hidden are at Disadvantage.

Cyber-Arms: *I got a high-tech appendage where my graspin' limb used to be.* When you are Testing to lift, carry, or budge something, you gain Advantage.

Cyber-Eyes: *Ain't no hiding, these cyber-eyes.* When you fail a perception related Test, you can choose to re-Test it at Disadvantage.

Cyber-Legs: *I get around a lot better than I used to.* You gain Advantage on any Test related to jumping, running, or moving around.

Hidden Weapon: *Never "disarmed." You always have a weapon no-one knows about.* As an Action, you can deploy it. You gain Advantage on the first attack each combat with this weapon. Select either Light Melee or Light Ranged for this weapon.

Imbedded Ammo-Clips: *You feelin' lucky?* Whenever you fail the Cinematic Ammo Test, you may immediately re-Test with Disadvantage.

Subsurface Armor: *Best defense is one that ain't known.* You gain +2 Hit Points. If you have the Diehard Trait, you can use it one additional time per day.

Psionic Disciplines

TELEKINESIS focuses on using the power of the mind to move things, often at damaging or high speeds.

- **Blast**: Test to deal 1 damage at Range. This Test is subject to all the rules of an attack. You may Test with Disadvantage to deal 2 damage instead.
- **Hurl**: As an action you may move any object weighing as much as you without Testing. To hurl it violently, you must make a successful Test. To hurl any object heavier than you, you must make a successful Test with Disadvantage.
- **Shatter**: Test with Disadvantage. If you are successful, all enemies you can see take 1 damage.
- **Shield**: Test. If successful, you may Evade until the start of your next turn. If you choose to Test with Disadvantage and are successful, you Evade with 3d6 on your next turn.

TELEPATHY uses the power of the mind to influence emotions, feelings, and thoughts.

- **Communicate:** You may communicate via distances to any being you are aware of. If the being is within sight, this does not require a Test. If the being is not within sight, you must make a successful Test. If they are not on the same planet, you must make a successful Test with Disadvantage.
- **Quell**: Test to quell the negative emotions in a target. If successful, you gain Advantage on your next roll against that Target.
- **Timeview**: Test. If successful, gain one detail about the history of an object or location you can touch or see.
- **Unmake**: You may Test with Disadvantage. If you are successful, one enemy suffers Disadvantage on all Tests until the start of your next turn.

BIOMANCY unlocks the innate powers of the physical form.

- **Bio-Organic Shock**: Test to deal 1 damage at Range. This Test is subject to all the rules of an attack. If you make this Test with Disadvantage, this Test deals 2 damage.
- **Enhance:** Test. If successful you gain Advantage on your next Test. By Testing with Disadvantage, you can grant this to an Ally.
- **Fast:** Test. If successful, you gain two additional Actions this turn. At the end of these two Actions, you lose 2 Hit Points.
- **Heal:** Test. If successful, restore 2 HP to one target. If you Test with Disadvantage and are successful, you can restore 4 HP to one target.

CRYOMANCY uses the power of the mind to unlock chilling powers.

- **Chill**: Make an Attack Test. If successful, the target takes 1 damage, and Disadvantage on their next Test.
- **Coldsnap**: Make an Attack Test. If successful everything within Close range (5 feet) suffers 1 damage.
- **Freeze**: Make a Test. You may cause one inanimate object that is about half your size or smaller to shatter and break.
- **Glacial**: Make a Test. You cause one target to lose an Action on their next Turn.

PYROMANCY uses the power of the mind to unlock raging infernos of power.

- **Burn**: Test to deal 1 damage at Range. This Test is subject to all the rules of an attack.
- **Ignite**: Make a Test with Disadvantage. If successful, you can cause any object roughly your size or smaller to burst into flames. Anyone who touches these flames suffers 2 damage for the round. To put out the flames, they must successfully Test with Disadvantage.
- **Extinguish**: Make a Test. You may cause any flame or heat based action to cool and cease.
- **Conflagration**: Make a Test with Disadvantage. Everything within arms' reach (or one zone) of you takes 3 Damage. You take 1 Damage.

Weapons

There are four weapon categories: Light Melee, Heavy Melee, Light Ranged, and Heavy Ranged. These categories include a variety of individual weapons, and the listed weapons provided can be supplemented with additional weapons with approval from your Game Master.

Prices are suggestions and represent an average cost for basic weaponry.

Weapon	Cost
Light Melee (Axe, baton, brass knuckles, chainsaw, fencing sword, hammer, knife, laser sword, taser)	1-5 GalCreds
Heavy Melee (Two-handed maul, claymore, piston-hammer, shock-staff, drill, dual-sided laser sword)	1-15 GalCreds
Light Ranged (Hand crossbow, laser pistol, needle pistol, revolver, shuriken, sonic stunner, throwing knives)	1-20 GalCreds
Heavy Ranged (Automatic rifle, frag grenades, flamethrower, goo grenades, laser rifle, longbow, missile launcher, plasma cannon, railgun, stun grenades)	10-25 GalCreds

Items and Equipment

As an Explorer, you start with a basic kit of items from the Items and Equipment list to help get you going.

The Explorer's Kit includes the following items: foil sleeping bag, lighter, belt pouch, fanny pack, electric lantern with 72 hours of charge, water purification pills, 50 feet of strong cord, 7 days of nutrition pills, and a plastic poncho.

Other items are left to the GM to determine availability and cost.
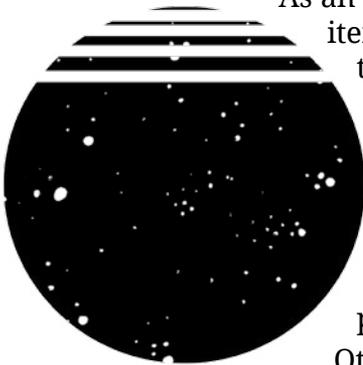
Depletion Points

All items in *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* have a unique modifier called "Depletion." Each item is assigned 6 Depletion Points upon purchase. These points represent how sturdy the item is, and how long it lasts.

Every time you use an item outside of combat, after you've finished using it, roll a d6. If the result on the d6 is a one, reduce the Depletion by 1. If you used it in combat, roll at the end of the combat. Once Depletion hits 0, the item is used up and can no longer be used.

Depletion points cannot normally be restored (though the Engineer Trait allows some restoration). These are some categories of items that experience Depletion:

- Rations
- Torches, electric lanterns, and chemical lanterns
- Waterskin
- Oil
- Flint & Steel
- Weapons

FOR THE GAME MASTER

Do you think being an Explorer is hard? Well, the life of a Game Master isn't easy, either. You're expected to tell a compelling story, play the roles of multiple non-player characters, create enemies, run combat, be an arbitrator of the rules... the list goes on. But don't sweat it. *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* is here to help.

The sections that follow are dedicated to you, the Game Master! They provide additional information to assist you in running a game, such as building an adventure, crafting enemies, and other useful tips. The Game Master should study this part of *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* before character creation.

Running Adventures

This is undoubtedly the hardest part of being the Game Master, but luckily, you have options. Tiny Frontiers: Revised is a setting-neutral sci-fi game system—meaning that you generally should be able to take the fluff and story of an already established setting, even from another game system, and run the Tiny Frontiers: Revised rules within it. This may require you to make some changes to the rules to ensure everything fits, but it's the quickest way to get things started. There list of supplemental gaming material out there for premade characters, plot hooks, missions, and campaign settings is unending.

But before we get too deep, ask yourself this question: is this going to be a one-off mission that just lasts for one game session, or do you have a larger campaign in mind?

If you are planning a one-off session, then things aren't going to be too difficult, even if you plan to create the adventure yourself. One-off missions generally do not require a significant amount of world-building—meaning you do not need to spend time creating the rich history that larger campaigns require. One-off missions present your players with a single main objective or quest to complete in the game session.

For example, perhaps you plan to have your players' Explorers approached by an individual who wants them to retrieve an alien relic from an abandoned starbase. Your job is to create a motive for this individual. Who is this person? Why do they want the relic? Let's assume it's for some nefarious purposes. You should engage your players in a bit of roleplaying where you are playing the role of this prospective client trying to hire the Explorers. Obviously if this person is a bad guy, he or she isn't going to reveal that initially. Your goal is make sure the Explorers take on the job; otherwise you don't have much of a game session.

Now what Explorer doesn't want GalCreds? Your nefarious villain has convinced the Explorers to take on the job of finding this relic for a large reward. Now your job is to plot the course of the Explorers to the abandoned starbase. Perhaps on the way, they are attacked by space pirates, or they are presented with a side-quest. Maybe things go smoothly, and they end up at the starbase with few to no issues. It's really up to you and how much time you wish to spend. Keep in mind, one-off sessions may last as little as a couple hours, or as long as an all-day event.

So next your Explorers find the starbase! You will need to have planned out the inside of this installation a bit beforehand. How many levels are in the starbase? Are there traps or puzzles that need to be solved? Are there enemies lying in wait? You should plan these obstacles in a way that ensures that each member of the party has a chance to contribute meaningfully, even modifying your plans if necessary.

Whatever you plan, the Explorers need to make their way through to their final destination and retrieve the relic. This is a good spot to point something out about players: they will rarely do what you expect them to do.

Having found the relic, the Explorers may decide they don't want to return the relic to their client, and would rather keep it for themselves. Hopefully they won't, and they'll bring the relic to their seedy client. But you can't expect them to do what you want! That can't be stressed enough. If the Explorers aren't acting according to your plan, it's your job to go with the flow and see where they take you. Try not to

railroad players into making their Explorers do things they don't want to do. They are just as much of the storyteller as you are, and the story is all about them.

Assuming they're true to their word, the Explorers return to their client with the relic in hand, and now you can decide whether or not this individual is an enemy. Once given the relic, perhaps the villain reveals him or herself to be a slave trader, and the relic is a powerful tool that can mind control a certain species of peaceful alien, or the villain wants the relic because it's a doomsday device that can hold an entire planet hostage.

Now the final battle can begin!

Your other option is building a campaign setting. This basically strings a bunch of adventures together into an overarching plotline, where there is a main goal to achieve, but smaller challenges must be overcome first across multiple sessions.

Campaigns will require more thought be put into the worlds the Explorers occupy; this means you will have to create numerous locations such as outposts and planets, name them, and create the history of the galaxy itself.

This is a big challenge, and we recommend working at it slowly. If your aim is to create a campaign, it's best to create a general history, and then describe the first settlement the Explorers find themselves in. From there, it's a matter of building upon what you've already established, and this really lessens the burden of trying to write a vivid, living world before your game even gets started. It sounds like a lot of work, and it is, but creating an enjoyable campaign setting of your own is one of the most rewarding things a Game Master can do.

Just remember, whether you are running a one-off session or a campaign, be flexible, but be consistent. Let your players work with you to tell the story, but never forget their actions. If they deviate in an unexpected way, go with it. But if they do something that wouldn't make sense within the game's world, such as killing someone they were meant to protect, or even accidentally destroying an item they were meant to retrieve, the Explorers should potentially face in-game consequences for those actions.

Enemies Chart

Threat	HP	Description
Fodder	1	Fodder enemies are people or animals that have virtually no combat ability. They can be used to throw additional enemies into combat for a more epic feel.
Low	2	Low threat enemies may represent wild animals or average criminals.
Medium	3-5	Medium threat enemies can begin to be dangerous in small groups, and can represent skilled combatants or predatory creatures.
High	6-8	High threat enemies are just as dangerous as a skilled Explorer. They are often leaders of Low threat or Fodder threat enemies. Since they're usually leaders, they often have unique abilities that bolster their minions.
Heroic	9-14	Heroic threat enemies are easily more skilled than your average Explorer. Provide two or three unique abilities for Heroic enemies, and several Fodder enemies to protect them.
Solo	15+	Solo threats are enemies that require an entire party to engage with them. This is the realm of giant monsters, city-leveling war machines, and reality-warping entities. These creatures often have a wide variety of abilities to defend themselves from attackers.

Enemies

The enemy chart is to assist the Game Master in crafting challenging fights. As a Game Master, you want to be sure your Explorers feel threatened. The goal isn't necessarily to kill your Explorers, but the danger of death should always be present and possible. Explorers should never feel as though they are above running to save their hides if need be.

Enemies can serve many roles. The most basic role of enemies is to justify calling in Explorers to complete a mission that would otherwise be easy for ordinary people (such as fighting through some dangerous wildlife to flip a switch and reboot a terraforming system). You can also use enemies to make a seemingly mundane and simple task become extremely complicated. Enemies may actively try to prevent the Explorers from completing their mission. It may be possible to negotiate with some enemies, although they will certainly have wants and goals of their own. A mission's sole goal may be to find and defeat an enemy or group of enemies.

Enemies can also have unique abilities, either selected from the Traits List just like an

Explorer, or unique abilities the Game Master feels appropriate. You should choose abilities that would be appropriate for the type of enemy, such as basic combat training for a guard, or multiple weapon attacks per round from a war machine. When the Explorers are on a planet with a harsh environment, native lifeforms may have abilities that make them well-adapted to the environment.

Enemies can have specific weaknesses for Explorers to exploit. This weakness may be something that disables one of the enemy's abilities, instantly defeats that enemy, or forces the enemy to flee from the Explorers. An entire mission may revolve around the Explorers finding a weakness that allows them to deal with an enemy or species of enemies. A dangerous alien monster might be vulnerable to freezing temperatures, or it may be possible to shut down a combat drone's shields by transmitting the right deactivation codes. Sometimes this may be a social task, such as finding evidence to blackmail someone, or obtaining research from someone who has been studying the enemy's biology. A particular piece of Xenotech may be the key to finding an enemy's weakness, or it may need to be reverse-engineered and mass-produced to deal with the entire species. When designing a weakness, make sure that the Explorers have ample opportunity to learn of its existence before they try to fight the enemy.

Dread and tension can serve a large role in introducing more powerful enemies. Once Explorers have rolled initiative, a lot of the tension goes away because now they can just shoot it. If Explorers keep hearing the monster, or seeing blurry video recordings of it, or finding its victims, or learning about its bizarre biology, or hearing tales and rumors from NPCs, then when they finally meet it they will understand that it's not just another encounter, but a dangerous adversary. If you are running a campaign, you may want to spend multiple sessions seeding rumors about a Solo-level enemy and giving the Explorers opportunities to learn its weaknesses.

Game Masters should try to vary enemy types to keep things interesting (unless the entire mission has a reason for similar enemies, like stopping an army of killer robots). Here are some varieties of enemies you can use:

Random Enemy Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result
2	Giant ameobas or blobs of runaway nanites.
3	Undead corpses animated by technology, like nanite-virus zombies or corrupt holographic ghosts.
4	Mutants or genetically modified creatures.
5	Robots that may or may not have been designed for combat.
6	Hostile alien lifeforms that resemble common or mythological Terran animals.
7	People and generally humanoid aliens.
8	Vehicles like tanks, small aircraft, or Mecha.
9	Carnivorous flora that is rooted in place, using pheromones or other means to lure in its prey.
10	Cyborgs with combat enhancements.
11	Psionic-based lifeforms made of pure energy.
12	Highly symbiotic species that rely on each other for survival.

Random Planet Generation (3d6 roll)

3d6	Description	Mechanics
3	Molten Glass Rain	Any character outside without proper (extensive and expensive) protection takes 3 damage a round. Ships without custom built protection can only last for a short time before damage starts to set in.
4	Frozen Tundra	Any character outside without proper protection takes 2 damage a round.
5	Abandoned Battlefield	The planet is covered with craters, fields of glass, dud munitions, and broken vehicles.
6	Excessive Heat	All rolls to survive in the wild are at Disadvantage without proper equipment.
7	Hostile Vegetation	When in terrain with vegetation, all damage taken is increased by one, or once per round, a random player takes an attack from the vegetation that deals 1 damage.
8	Toxic Atmosphere	All organic lifeforms must wear masks to filter the air on this planet. If the mask is removed, the character takes 1 damage a round.
9	Dead Planet	All resources and sentient life on this planet are long gone and dead, and it is filled with archaic ruins and technology.
10	Heavily Populated	The planet is full of sentient life and thriving civilizations. Technology ranges from primitive to FTL.
11	Dustball	The planet's surface is mostly uninteresting rocks and dirt with no atmosphere. Something else about the planet makes it interesting, and it may not be immediately obvious what this is.

3d6	Description	Mechanics
12	Waterworld	Most of the planet's surface is covered with deep oceans.
13	Mixed Planet	Roll Twice and combine those two results.
14	Garden World	The planet's climate is pleasant. Food is plentiful and made of easily digestible sugars and minerals. It's impossible for an Explorer to starve to death, and checks to navigate are made with Advantage.
15	Mudball	Rain carries extreme mineral deposits, layering everything with a crust of lime. The unstable terrain is complex layers that change every time it rains and hinder movement when it floods.
16	Toxic Life	Climate is tolerable, and wildlife is mostly docile. However, everything is toxic and will cause a slow, painful death if eaten.
17	Ladder Climate	The climate varies based on elevation. The lower atmosphere is thick and sulfurous, and the upper atmosphere is cold and scoured by high winds. Only a narrow band at a certain altitude is habitable.
18	Planet of Terror	The plants on the planet are often small appendages of large carnivorous fauna. Anytime anyone is near vegetation, they are attacked. Roll one extra time on the trait table.
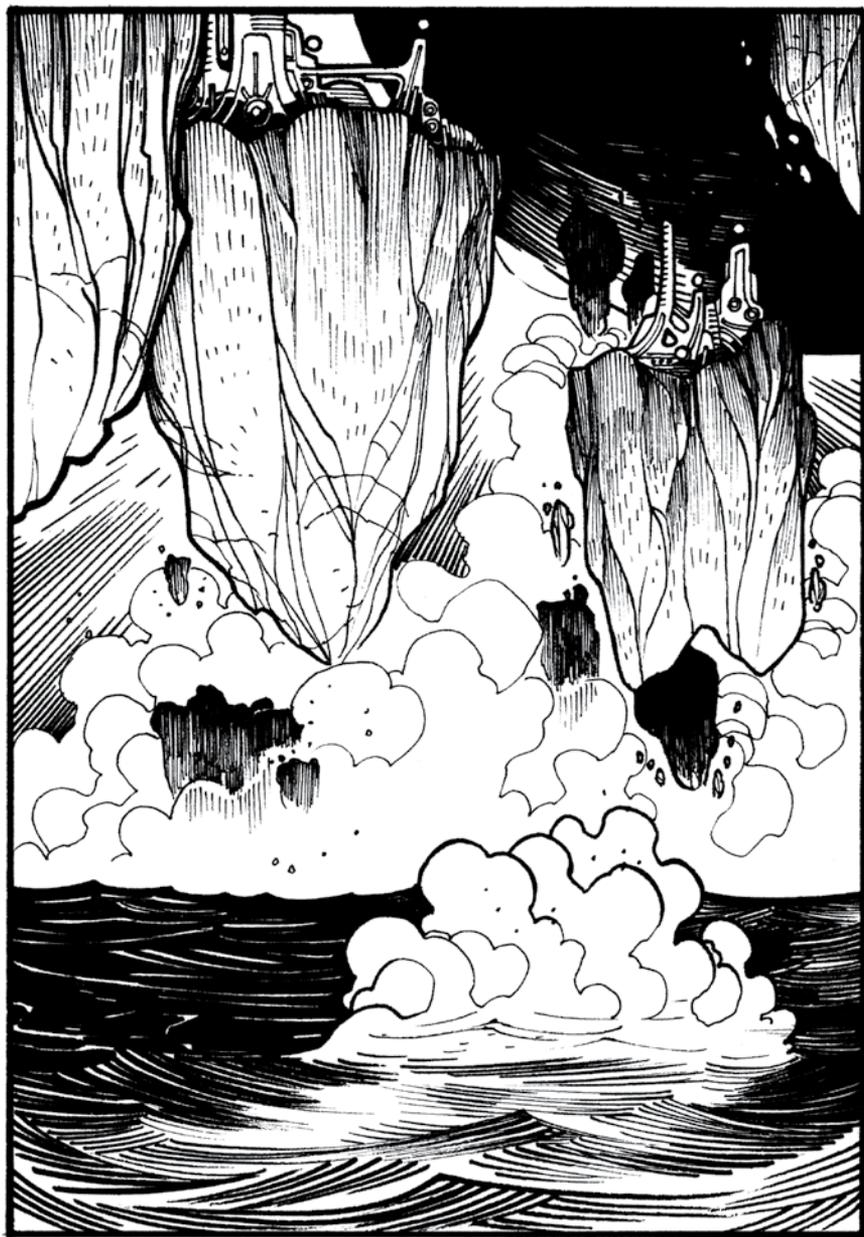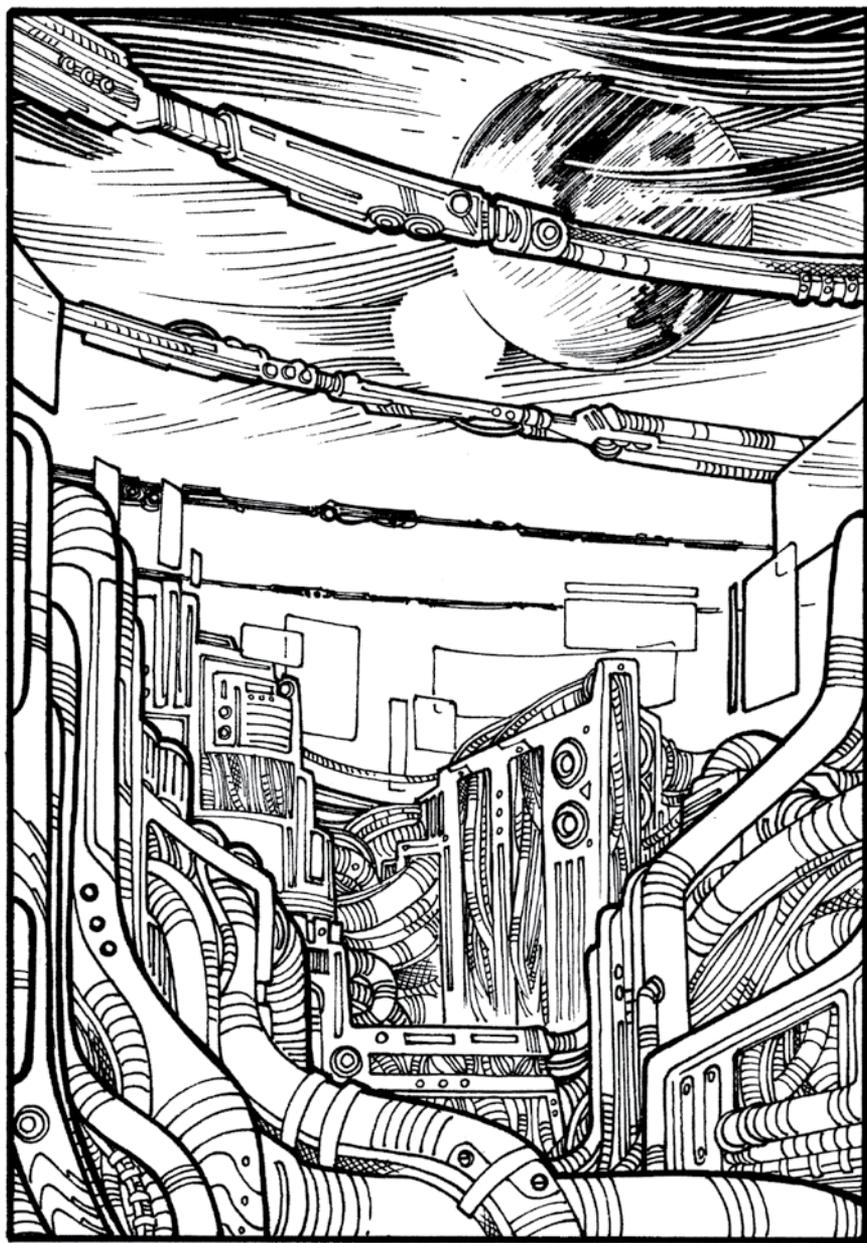
Random Settlement Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result	Mechanics
2	Theocracy	A religion (or philosophy) dominates the settlement's schools of thoughts, and influences their every action.
3	Seedy Port	A wretched hive of scum and villainy.
4	Intolerant	A fairly reasonable philosophy that addresses one of society's ills is taken to an extreme, resulting in an inconvenient cultural custom. Anyone who doesn't conform is an outcast.
5	Dictatorship	A cruel leader maintains order through military power. Members of the resistance are hunted and rehabilitated using the best technology available.
6	Harmony	The people living here have used genetic manipulation to survive comfortably in the planet's environment. The settlement is sparsely populated to make it easier to live in touch with whatever passes for nature on this world.
7	Educational	The settlement has galactic-class training facilities for a highly specific trade or profession. May be publicly advertised, or a closely guarded secret.
8	Research Outpost	Most of the population are scientists studying a specific field of research. Their work is either unique to a research topic only found at this location, or purely theoretical.
9	Trading Post	The local sector is sparsely populated. Lone settlers, miners, and other independent types visit to sell their goods and buy things they can't find elsewhere.

2d6	Result	Mechanics
10	Abandoned Research Facility	This remote research facility was working on secret research, but was abandoned for some reason. Old security systems and former experiments may be woken up by Explorers.
11	Ancient Ruins	Old ruins have been picked over by archaeologists and treasure hunters. Anything valuable left behind is either extremely well hidden or extremely dangerous to uncover.
12	Abandoned Civilization	Large and well-organized cities are completely devoid of sentient life for an unknown reason. Years or decades of nature have begun to reclaim things.

Stellar Frontier Enemy Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result
2	Formerly peaceful worker robots gone rogue!
3	Outlaws!
4	Misguided Lawmen (or maybe not so misguided!)
5	Frontier Horrors
6	Thieving gamblers
7	Angry drunks
8	Posse mistaking you for someone else
9	Void Spiders
10	Grunka mercenaries
11	Scorned lover
12	Bounty Hunter

City Enemy Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result
2	Formerly peaceful worker robots gone rogue!
3	Gang Members!
4	Corrupt Law Enforcement
5	Sewer Ullugoths
6	Secret Alien Incursion
7	Resistance Fighters
8	Corporate Security
9	Speeder Thieves
10	Mercenaries
11	Someone from their past
12	Rivals

Space Station Enemy Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result
2	Sentient Clouds of Noxious Gas
3	Pirates!
4	Space Station Security
5	Asteroid Colonists
6	Smugglers
7	Military Detachment
8	Rouge AI
9	Something is trapped in the walls...
10	Assassin Robots
11	Bounty Hunters
12	Infiltrating Alien Menace!

Deep Space Enemy Generation (2d6 roll)

2d6	Result
2	Massive Alien Menance!
3	Pirates!
4	Enemy Fleet
5	Asteroid turning into mobile weapons platform
6	Stowaways
7	Ion Storm
8	Derelict Ship
9	Terrifying Space Monkeys
10	Nebula Corsairs
11	The PCs from the Future!
12	New Alien Species

Bestiary

Frontier Horror

HP: 6 (High)

Description: A malicious, predatory creature, who haunts stellar frontier planets preying on lost or unsuspecting settlers.

Traits:

- **Claw** (Melee Attack): Test 2d6 against an enemy within 5 feet of you.
- **Fleet of Foot**
- **Sneaky**
- **Tracker**

Noxious Cloud

HP: 6 (High)

Description: A massive cloud of toxic gas, imbued with some awful sentience.

Traits:

- **Overwhelm** (Melee Attack): Test 2d6 against an enemy within 5 feet of you.
- **Immune to Damage:** A Noxious Cloud is immune to damage from normal weapon attacks.
- **Sneaky**

Void Spiders

HP: 4 (Medium)

Description: The dark colored spider can exist in the vacuum of space or in atmospheric conditions.

Traits:

- **Poison Shot** (Ranged Attack): Test 2d6 against an enemy within 5 feet of you.
- **Bite** (Melee Attack): Test 2d6 against an enemy within 5 feet of you.

A Small Bestiary?

The original Tiny Frontiers had no Bestiary. That was a deliberate attempt to encourage the GM to create their own enemies and scale them to the sort of game their players were telling. Science Fiction is a big genre, and there's room for a lot of things.

You might find inspiration in Tiny Dungeon 2e, Tiny Wastelands, Mecha & Monsters or forthcoming TinyD6 books. We've provided some basic enemies here for inspiration, but most soldiers, pirates, and similar will be created like Explorers.

Hacking

These Hacking Rules are less than minimalist, but they help accentuate the feeling of Hacking in this game.

There are three components to a Hack: Firewall Strength, Feedback, and Response.

Firewall Strength measures how hard the target is to Hack. There are three levels of strength: Weak, Medium, Strong.

- Hackers gain Advantage when Hacking a Weak Firewall.
- They gain no Advantage or Disadvantage when Hacking a Medium Firewall.
- They gain Disadvantage when Hacking a Strong Firewall.

Feedback determines the penalty if the Hack fails. Feedback comes in three dosages: Low Dose, Medium Dose, High Dose.

If a Low Dose Hack is failed, the Hacker takes 1 damage.

If a Medium Dose Hack is failed, the Hacker takes 2 damage.

If a High Does Hack is failed, the Hacker takes 3 damage.

Response determines what happens if the Hack is successful. This is the reward that the Hacker will gain after the Hack is completed successfully. The GM will inform the Hacker of the Response.

New Hacking Traits

LEET: *You are among the best of hackers.* Before you start a Hack, you may Test. If successful, you can choose to know either the Feedback or the Firewall Strength of the Hack.

One with the Matrix: *No one hacks like you.* If you have LEET, you gain Advantage on your Test for that trait. Additionally, if successful, you may know all three components of the target of the hack.

Optional Combat Rules

The following rules are written to enhance or allow extra options around combat. These rules do tend to break the streamlined nature of the game, so use them carefully.

Criticals

Critical Hits: If all the dice rolled for an Attack Test come up with a "6" on the face, you have achieved a Critical Hit! Increase your total damage by 1. You can only Critically Hit with a weapon you have Mastered and if that attack does not have Disadvantage.

Critical Miss: If all the dice rolled for an Attack Test come up with a "1" on the face, you have a Critical Miss on your hands! The GM will choose what happens, but it probably won't be good. Some options involve weapons breaking, allies being shot instead, or you dropping the weapon. There's no end to the potential here.

Variable Weapon Damage

Light Weapons: When you successfully attack with a Light Weapon, you deal 1d2 +1 damage. (Roll a d6. If the result is 1-3, deal 2 damage. If it's 4-6, deal 3 damage.)

Heavy Weapons: When you successfully attack with a Heavy Weapon, you deal 1d3+1 damage. (Roll a d6. If the result is 1-2, deal 2 damage. If it's 3-4, deal 3 damage. If it's 5-6, deal 4 damage.)

Armor and Damage Reduction

Here we introduce some rules for streamlined armor and damage reduction. These rules necessitate some additional traits, which you will find below. If you wear armor without the appropriate Trait, you suffer Disadvantage on all rolls.

Light Armor: Reduce the damage you take by 1, to a minimum of 0.

Medium Armor: Reduce the damage you take by 2, to a minimum of 0.

Heavy Armor: Reduce the damage you take by 3, to a minimum of 0.

Note: These rules should only be used opposite the variable damage rules.

New Traits for Armor:

Light Armor Training: *You are trained in using Light Armors.* You gain a suit of Light Armor and may wear Light Armor.

Medium Armor Training: *You are trained in using Medium Armors.* You gain a suit of Medium Armor and may wear Medium Armor. You must already have Light Armor Training.

Heavy Armor Training: *You are trained in using Heavy Armors.* You gain a suit of Heavy Armor and may wear Heavy Armor. You must already have Medium Armor Training.
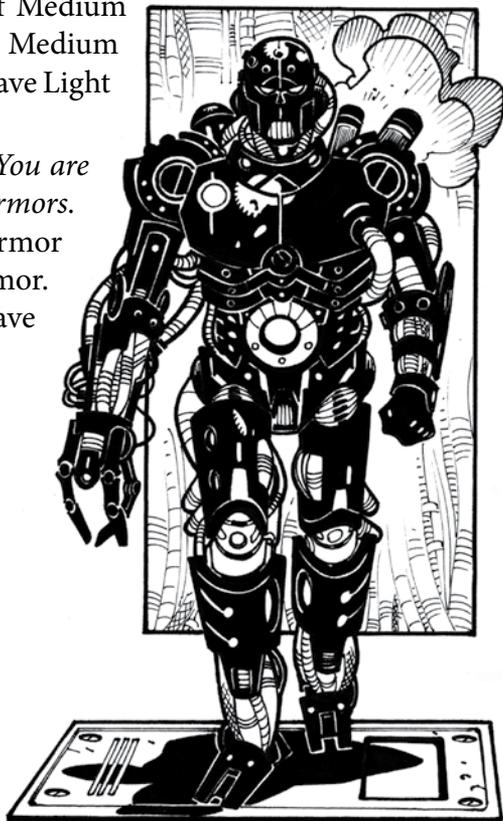
Appendix: Starship Rules

One of the best parts of science fiction is watching exciting space battles, and growing attached to the starships that are like characters in their own right. In *Tiny Frontiers: Revised*, we treat ships like characters, but we use Systems in place of Traits.

Using starships is an optional rule in *Tiny Frontiers: Revised*. In a one-shot mission, the Game Master should decide whether the Explorers will need to use their starship for any complex Tests or combat to achieve their mission. In a long-running campaign, the Explorers will probably need a starship for travel at some point.

The Explorers should own their starship (or effectively own it if they answer to a larger organization), and the Game Master should give the Explorers a strong warning in advance if anything might happen that would cause their starship to be destroyed or lost. The size of the starship is up to the Game Master because piloting a small ship with half a dozen crew is effectively the same as captaining a large ship with hundreds of crew. When designing enemies for starship encounters, use the normal Enemy rules.

Explorers design their starship together, helping to form it as a complete character.

Repairing and Refueling Starships

For each point of Structure damage your Starship takes, you need one hour of repair. No Test required, just the downtime and access to appropriate resources and facilities. Any other situation will be adjudicated by the GM.

Fuel is recovered at one point an hour, just like Structure. However, most Starships have renewable energy sources (nuclear, electromagnetic, or other types), and do not require facilities to recover Fuel, just down time.

Starships and Zones

When using the Starship rules, Zone combat is the preferred method to handle engagements.

Starship Creation

Creating your Starship is a longer, but still fairly quick, process. You don't necessarily need to follow this specific order, but it serves as common flow for the process (there are more details after the checklist).

- Select a Chassis
- Select systems as dictated by your Chassis

First, select a chassis from the Chassis List. This will give you a chassis system (which is unique to your chassis) and your Structure.

Then select unique systems from the system List. *Tiny Frontiers: Revised* uses systems to express what your Starship excels at doing. Each chassis dictates how many systems of each type you can have. You can only select each system once, and you get a certain number of systems.
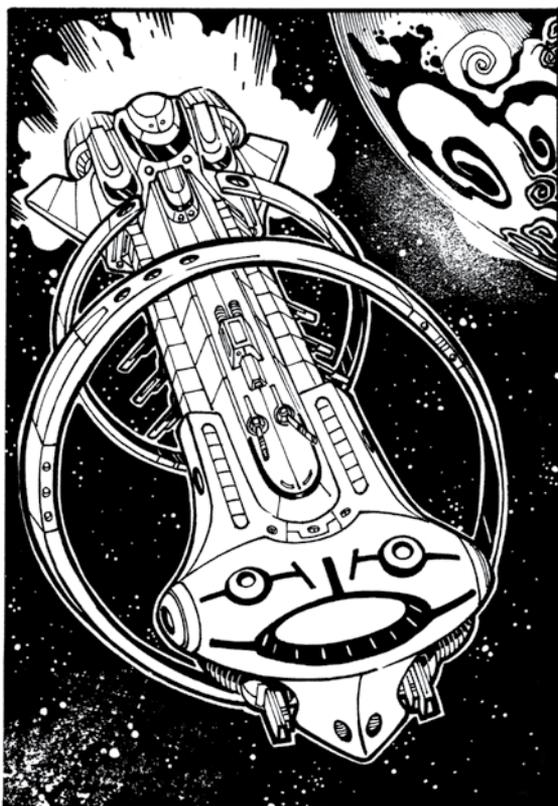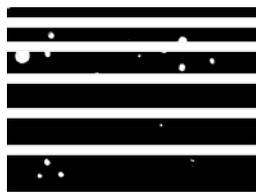
Chassis List

Striker-Class

Strikers are the nick-name for lithe, mobile, and agile chassis. They tend to be exceptionally quick, and serve as fighters or nimble attackers. They are often connected directly to their pilots via neural link. This allows for speed of movement and reflexes that you often cannot find in larger Starships. This benefit comes with a drawback: Strikers tend to be less sturdy than the larger, more armored Starships.

Structure: 6

Fuel: 10

Crew: Up to 12

Chassis System: Agile Dodge—*Passive*: Whenever the Striker is hit by a Ranged attack, they may roll a Test at Disadvantage. If they succeed, they negate all damage from the attack. This does not stack with the Evade action.

Other Systems:

- 1 Sensor
- 2 Weapon
- 1 Defense
- 2 Movement

Scout-Class

Scouts are the all-purpose Starship, designed for everyday and all-situation usage. They tend to be moderately tough and have a good variety of systems. They also have the benefit of being dramatically cheaper to produce than other types of Starship, so you see a lot more of them. They tend to be a little on the small side, but are tougher than the average Striker.

Structure: 8

Fuel: 8

Crew: Up to 150

Chassis System: Adaptable Build—*Passive*: Scouts gain 1 extra system when building their chassis.

Other Systems:

- 1 Sensor
- 2 Defense
- 2 Weapon
- 1 Movement
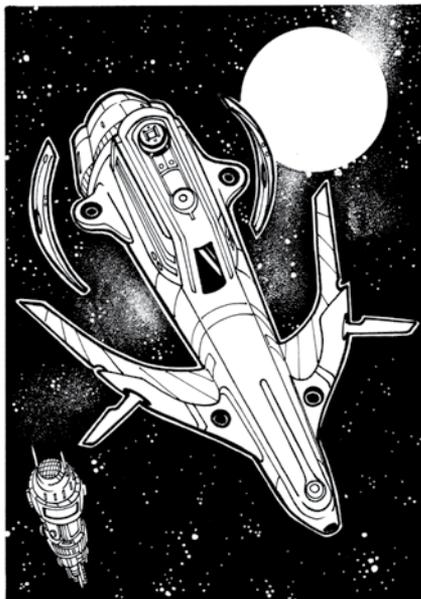
Cruiser-Class

A Cruiser is one of the biggest ships you can find. Often serving as battlecruisers, Cruisers form the backbone of military fleets.

Structure: 10

Fuel: 6

Crew: Up to 500

Chassis System: Buffered Shielding—*Passive*: When a Cruiser is hit, they may disable one system to ignore the damage. The disabled system can no longer be used until the Cruiser has a chance to repair.

Other Systems:

- 1 Sensor
- 2 Defense
- 3 Weapon
- 1 Movement

Carrier-Class

The largest form of ship, Carriers are often the flagships and centerpieces of interstellar navies or fleets.

Structure: 12

Fuel: 4

Crew: 500+

Chassis System: Flagship—*Passive*: When attempting to gain an advantage in Diplomacy or Intimidation, the ship's reputation provides its crew with Advantage.

Other Systems:

- 1 Sensor
- 3 Weapon
- 3 Defense
- 1 Movement

System Lists

There are 5 types of systems for Starships: Basic, Sensor, Weapon, Defense, and Movement. As the name might imply, they tend to impact or affect certain aspects of the Starship.

All Starships have all Basic systems. The rest may be selected at character creation. Unless otherwise noted, systems Tests resolve immediately and don't last.

Basic Systems:

- **Weapons**: Basic weapons (such as small lasers) are useful for breaking up asteroids or cleaning the hull of a capital-sized ship. **Action**: Test at Disadvantage to attack an enemy ship.
- **Scanners**: Basic scanners can show live camera footage of things nearby your ship. **Action**: Pick one enemy ship and make a Test at Disadvantage. If you succeed, all your ship's attack rolls against that ship gain Advantage this round.
- **Thrusters**: Basic thrusters get your ship anywhere in the galaxy, but will not protect you from long, boring interstellar trips. **Action**: Each time an enemy attacks your ship for the rest of the round, you may Test at Disadvantage to Evade the attack.

- **Shields**: Basic force fields protect your ship from sand-and-gravel-sized space debris. **Action**: Test at Disadvantage. If you succeed, the next attack to hit your ship is negated. The shield dissipates after two rounds if it hasn't taken a hit.
- **Life Support**: Basic oxygen recycling systems keep you and your crew alive and protect you from the cold of deep space. **Action**: Make a Test at Disadvantage. If you succeed, repair 1 point of damage to your ship.
- **Reactor**: A basic nuclear reactor keeps all your ship's systems online. **Action**: Pick one of the other five systems and make a Test at Disadvantage. If you succeed, all rolls with that system and special systems of the same type lose Disadvantage this round. If they don't have Disadvantage, they gain Advantage this round.
- **Docking Bay/Transporter Bay**: All ships have some sort of area that allows for embarking and disembarking. This slot is a reminder about that. Your GM will tell you which your ship has based on their game and universe.

Sensor Systems:

- **Long-Range Scanners**: Sensitive scanners that can detect enemy Starships from lightyears away. *Passive*: When you Search, you Test with Advantage.
- **Jamming Array**: A sophisticated sensor array that can jam enemy communications. *Passive*: Spend 3 Fuel to give an opponent Disadvantage on a Test before they Test.
- **Holographic Emitters**: A hardlight disguise, allowing you to disguise your Starship as another Starship or artificial object up to twice as large. **Action**: Make a Test. If you succeed, your next attack Test gains Advantage.
- **Interior Scanners**: A high-resolution electrical scanning system that is sensitive enough to locate biological nervous systems and electronic handheld devices, allowing the Starship to intelligently reroute power when it takes damage. **Action**: Make a Test with Disadvantage. If you succeed, you may choose one System and your target may not use it until your next turn.

Weapon Systems:

- **Antimatter Missiles**: Dramatically unreliable hard-hitting missiles. **Action**: Spend 2 Fuel. Make an Attack Test. If you succeed, you deal 1d6 damage to a target. (Roll a d6 dice. The number showing is how much damage you deal.)

- **Armor Piercing Multi-cannon**: A rapid-fire high velocity weapon designed to pierce armor and puncture plating. **Action**: Make three Attack Tests with Disadvantage. Each successful test deals 1 damage. This damage cannot be reduced.

- **Plasma Cannons**: Rapid-firing melty guns. **Action**: Make two Attack Tests, the second one at Disadvantage. Each attack does 1 damage. If both attacks are successful, the Disadvantaged attack does 2 damage.

- **EMP Mines**: Bombs that disrupt electronics. **Action**: Make an Attack Test against a target with electronics. If you succeed, choose one system, and your target cannot use it until your next turn.

- **Charge Cannon**: **Action**: Spend 2 Fuel. If you take no other actions this turn, you may make an Attack Test with Disadvantage. If you succeed, deal 6 damage to your target. This system cannot benefit from the Focus Action or be used in consecutive rounds.

- **Devastation Cannon**: A large, powerful, and destructive cannon, often outlawed in civilized systems. **Action**: Make an Attack Test that deals 3 damage.

- **Rapid Fire Lasers**: A massive burst of multiple lasers. **Action**: Perform an Attack Test with Disadvantage. If the first attack misses, no other attacks can be made. If the attack hits, you may make an extra Attack Test with Disadvantage (with the same benefit), to a limit of 3 Attack Tests.

- **Main Cannon**: A reliable long-range weapon is mounted on your Starship. **Action**: Make an Attack Test. If successful, deal 2 damage. If you fire on an immobile target, this attack has Advantage.

- **Automatic Cannon**: Your Starship has multiple automatic weapons and plenty of ammunition. **Action**: Perform 2 Attack Tests against the same Target.
- **Armor Piercing Shots**: Heavy, single fire shots designed to crack enemy armor. **Action**: Perform an Attack Test. This attack deals 2 damage if it hits, and ignores anything that reduces damage (but the attack can still be Evaded).
- **Swarm Missiles**: A ridiculous number of independently seeking missiles. **Action**: Make 6 Attack Tests at Disadvantage. If all 6 Tests succeed, deal 1 extra Damage.
- **Gravity Cannon**: A unique weapon, that relies on gravity manipulation to deal damage. **Action**: Make 2 Attack Tests at Disadvantage. Each deals 1 damage. If both hit, you may move the target one zone.
- **Warforged**: This Starship is built to be a mobile weapons platform. *Passive*: You gain 2 additional Weapons systems, but lose 1 Defense System.

Defense Systems:

- **Mining Shields**: Shields designed to hold up against a barrage of heavy space debris cover your Starship. *Passive*: If you are attacked by a Test that makes multiple rolls, reduce the total damage taken after all rolls by 1 (minimum 1).
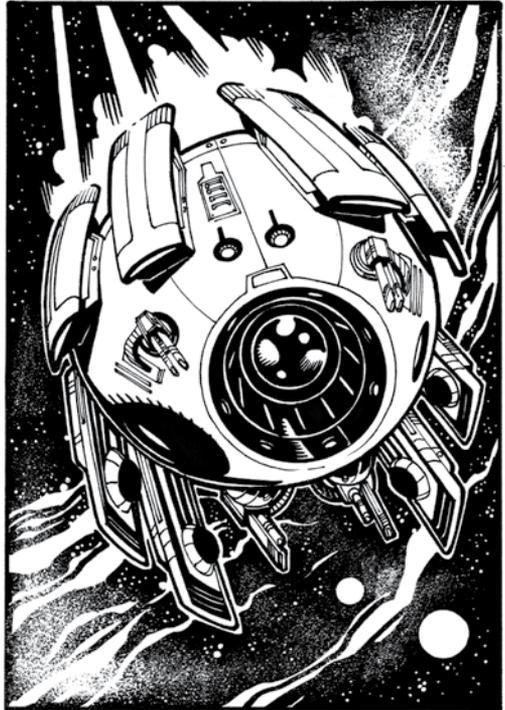
- **Multi-phase Shield**: Several force field emitters allow for fine manipulation of everything around your Starship. *Passive*: When Evading, you test with 2d6.
- **Cloaking**: A light-bending field makes your Starship almost invisible. *Passive*: When you Hide during combat, you Test with Advantage.
- **Reinforced Materials**: Massively sturdy and dense metals make up your Starship's chassis. *Passive*: Permanently increase your Starship's Structure by 4.
- **Repair Drones**: Robots assist in repair tasks. **Action**: Spend 3 Fuel. Restore 2 Structure to either your Starship or an adjacent Starship.
- **Armor Plating**: Thick armor plating covers your Starship, protecting you from damage and shock. *Passive*: Permanently increase your Structure by 2. When at Near Zone, reduce total damage by 1 (minimum 1).
- **Titanium Shield**: You've welded a massive amount of plating onto your Starship. You can use this to protect your Starship and prevent damage. *Passive*: Any attack action against your Starship deals 1 less damage. This system costs both a Weapons and Defense system slot.

Movement Systems:
- **Stealth Engines**: Engines that have no detectable exhaust. **Action**: Spend 2 Fuel. You may Test to Hide without taking an action this turn.
- **Fuel Tanks**: Massive reservoirs of fuel. *Passive*: Permanently increase your Starship's Fuel by 4.
- **Gravity Engines**: A reactionless engine that is very efficient for long missions. **Action**: Spend 2 Fuel, and then move. You may use an Attack System (giving your Test Disadvantage) at the end of the move.
- **Microfusion Reactor**: A high-yield reactor that packs a punch. **Action**: Deal 2 damage to every enemy in the encounter and 1 damage to your Starship and every friendly. Using this action disables this system for the rest of the mission.

- **Emergency Power**: Redundant power systems that are resistant to damage. *Passive*: When you would be reduced to 0 Structure, spend 3 Fuel. You instead are reduced to 3 Structure (effectively repairing 3).
- **Power Core**: An energy-dense reactor that can be used as a makeshift explosive. **Action**: Spend 1 or more Fuel and roll a Test. If you succeed, deal 1 damage per Fuel spent, to every enemy and ally in the encounter. Any non-reinforced buildings within 1 kilometer of your Starship are leveled or catch fire. Using this action disables your Starship for the rest of the Fight.
- **Bodyguard Protocol**: You have fast-reaction boosters that allow you to aid your allies. *Passive*: If it is not your turn and an ally would take damage, spend Fuel equal to that damage. You move adjacent to that ally, and the damage is applied to you as though you'd been hit by the attack.

Crew Positions

On a Starship, the Explorers will serve as the crew. Frequently this puts them in command positions. Crew positions are determined at the start of the game and rarely change throughout the game (though they can, and should).

Each Crew position provides that crew member a benefit they can use as an action during space combat.

Captain: The Captain can forgo both their actions to give any other Crew member an additional action on their turn.

Helm: The Helm can reroll one failed Evade Test per round.

Communications: The Communications can reroll one failed Sensors system roll per round.

Doctor: When in their med-bay, the Doctor always helps to heal 1 extra Hit Point on a successful Healing Test.

Engineer: When in their Engineering Bay, the Engineer can forfeit both their actions to bring a disabled system back online or restore 1 Structure to the Starship (no test required).

Tactical: When making an attack with a Weapons system, Tactical may forfeit one action on their turn to increase damage dealt by 1.

Captaining Ships

Each Explorer will have a role on the starship, either from their Explorer background or based on which special system they chose. The most coveted and dramatic position on a starship is the captain's seat. Unfortunately, this can cause problems if higher-ranking Explorers decide to boss around lower-ranking Explorers against their wishes, or lead the Explorers into trouble that nobody wants to deal with.

The Game Master should encourage all of the players to contribute equally to completing their mission. A wise captain listens to advice from their competent and well-trained crew. You may want to make the youngest or least experienced player at the table take the role of the captain, so that more experienced players can take an advisory role for the newbie. The rank and roles of the Explorers shouldn't get in the way of the players' enjoyment of the game they are playing. Remember, it's just a game.

THE AMAZING GALAXY RACE

by Tobie Abad

"I didn't come here to make friends. I'm here to win it! I don't care if others start calling me an Autoborg wannabe, or if the Tyranax fanbase try to sabotage my ship to help their contestant. I'm gonna show them all that being short and fast is all that... that... whoa just look at that! The whole planet is actually made of wood!"

~ Jodor Skyow – Khalumra pilot of the Cicada

Introduction

The Amazing Galaxy Race is the longest running reality game show broadcast through subspace transmat to over seven thousand audience planets (and is also available on PsychNet Pay Per View in some systems). Created by Lesie "the Dog" Ieri and Bert "the Van" Munsr, the original series first aired in Ahleghiri holovision over two hundred years ago and has been a galaxy-wide phenomenon. 12 Contestants, who race around the galaxy in their personal starships, strive to be the first to reach "Check Point" planets and succeed in various challenges. Be last to reach an Elimination Point and you are removed from the race. Your characters have been invited to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Do you have what it takes?

The Race

Each race is a series of challenges that the 12 Contestants must overcome. No one knows how many "steps" are present in a race (and previous episodes have shown the number has changed each season) but each step falls under one of the four possible kinds of Planet Stops.

Each player is a Contestant in the Amazing Galaxy Race. The GM will have NPCs to represent the other contestants. Everyone should have their own backstories; why they joined the race, or where they need the money.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Odd	Kill someone	Get Rich	Escape Prison	Medical Needs	Last Wish	Prove Oneself
Even	Love	Be Famous	Pay Bills	Thrillseeker	Owe Mob	Ruin Show

Use this table to quickly generate a backstory for each NPC. Feel free to reveal their backstory through expressions, actions they take, or even the way they portray their focus to the race.

Route Planets

Contestants receive clues that suggest this planet is the next destination. The clues to this may be given in a cryptic manner and are permitted to use any resources, such as information gained through the use of technology, psychic powers, or coercion. It is not uncommon for the clues to also include any restrictions or caveats on the manner of transport that will be used.

A race can be as short or as long as you want it to be. For one-shot games, the race can simply be represented as 12 stops long, but only the "key stops" are played through as game scenes. For longer sessions or a full campaign focused on this race, it can last many more stops. Given the 12 Contestants, you will want to make sure there are enough Elimination possibilities to reduce their number. Or just make sure some NPC Contestants are removed from the race due to accident or injury and the like.

To track the race properly, create a grid for each Contestant. Each column should represent a Stop in the race. When resolving a Stop, write in the appropriate cell the number of tests the contestant had to make (not counting tie breakers). The total number of tests determine the order in the race, with the lowest totals being those in the lead.

Ties are always broken by having both Contestants roll 1d6. The lower number wins. If the tie is against an NPC, the PC automatically wins.

Check Point Planets

In these planets, the Contestants that arrive compete in a task to be allowed to be the first to leave for the next Route Planet.

Like the Challenge Planets, these determine the sequence of characters in reaching a stop. All Contestants must succeed in three test rolls, which can represent various unexpected twists or events during the race. The total number of attempts to roll three successful test rolls is then their value for the race this Stop.

In Check Point Planets, ties do not need to be broken. Also, when starting from a Check Point Planet, it is assumed that there was enough time to rest and recover. All Contestants should be allowed to heal back to full health, barring specific grievous injury that would not permit that.

Finally, Check Points reset the "values" of each Contestant to zero after they leave. So everyone still in the race is "back" in the race as anyone can end up back on the lead.

Detour Planets

These Planet stops typically offer the Contestants a choice between two tasks, "each with their own pros and cons." The two tasks have, at times, lead to some Contestants teaming up in order to accomplish the given task sooner, or to eliminate a particularly strong competitor. Detour planets are usually the most popular episodes for the viewing audience. Failing to accomplish a task can penalize a contestant with either delays in starting the next leg or with "Technical Troubles" where a device or system is deactivated or withdrawn from the contestant's resources.

Detour Planets should be the meat of this kind of a game. Detour Planet challenges should require Tests and Save Tests to resolve. You can break each challenge down to requiring a number of rolls to be made, to reflect the incremental number of tasks or the growing difficulty of tasks that need to be

Challenge Generator

Choose between Easy, Tricky, or Crazy (or roll 1d6 to determine.) Then roll 1d6 to generate the Challenge keywords. Each Challenge can be set on a planet, in outer space near a planet, or in any location within a planet. They do not all have to be the same planet.

For Crazy, any further "Crazy" results become Tricky instead.

d6	Tricky [1] (two Test/Save rolls to pass)	Easy [2-4] (one Test/Save roll to pass)	Crazy [6]
1	Reconfigure something	Disarm a device	Roll twice
2	Track something between planets	Build or craft something	Roll once, but it has to be done twice
3	Smuggle something	Locate something	Roll once, but it has to be done twice)
4	Acquire something contraband	Decode something	Roll thrice, and they have to be performed in that sequence
5	Access a guarded location	Transfer something	Roll thrice, and they have to be performed in that sequence
6	Navigate a dangerous location	Perform something	Roll twice

Example:

The GM decides the Contestants have a Crazy challenge.

For the first one, she rolls a 4, and that gets "Roll thrice, and perform in that sequence." She gets 1, 2, and 6. The 6 (Crazy) is treated as Tricky instead. So the Challenges are (Tricky), (Easy), and (Tricky). She rolls 2 for Tricky: Track something between planets. She rolls for Easy: Transfer something. And finally, a 4 for Tricky: Acquire something contraband

The GM determines the contestants have to Track a comet that flies between two planets, get close enough to gather some comet dust, then trade the dust at Adnarra, an artificial planet made of wood, for Flawed Diamonds, a contraband object. The Tracking Challenge requires two Tests to clear. The Gathering might require a single Save to do without damaging the ship. And the final trade can require a Test and a Save, or two Tests to clear.

For the second one, she rolls a 2, which is "Roll one, but it has to be done twice." She rolls 2 (Easy) and it is a 3: Locate Something. This needs to be done twice, so that's 2 Tests to clear. She decides the challenge is to locate a hidden ship in an asteroid field.

She decides to call the first one Star Dust and the second one Rock Dust. Players will be asked to choose between "Star Dust" or "Rock Dust" as this Stop's challenge.

Failed Rolls and Delays

Each failed test or save means that Challenger is running behind. Each Contestant who clears the Challenge without needing extra rolls completes it in order. To break ties, have both roll 1d6 and the finished in ascending value. If there still are ties, both can roll a Test that seems narratively appropriate to break the tie.

Thankfully, for Challenges, there are no eliminations. But track the order they finish, as that determines the order they leave as well in the next stop.

accomplished without having the character simply outright fail. Assign Advantages and Disadvantages when they seem appropriate given the Contestant's concept and background.

First use the Generator to generate the two Challenges. Both must be of the same difficulty.

Then after rolling them, come up with a fun name for the players to choose between them.

Each Contestant chooses one of the two Challenges (without knowing what they will entail) until the challenge actually begins.

Elimination Planets

The last to arrive at an Elimination Planet is removed from the race. On the rare case that two or more contestants arrive at the same time in last place, a Sudden Death battle match is used to resolve the matter.

On an Elimination Planet, the Contestants have to get three successful Tests or Saves. As before, failed rolls mean they take longer to reach this Planet. Upon getting there, their total is once again reviewed (but note that earlier Check Points should have reset values) to see who placed what in the race. NPCs should be eliminated during the first few Stops, just so the players have more chances of fun. But once there are the same number of NPCs with PCs, anything goes.

If the Contestant has the highest total when they reach an Elimination Planet, they are Eliminated from the race.

Finish Line

Once there are only 3 Contestants left, the next planet is considered a Finish Line Planet. The winner of the race 42 Million GalCreds.

This is it! The final Stop! Make sure to pull out all the stops and make this be the most exciting moment in the game. Even better, be sure to always have a Check Point planet before the Finish Line, so all three Contestants feel like anything can happen.

The winner is the first one to complete five Tests or Saves.

The Rules of the Race

Contestants are prohibited from asking assistance for friends, family members, other Contestants, or from people they meet during the race.

In theory, no one should help. But then again, if a Contestant can get away with it, they probably would. A Save roll can be utilized to get help from such without being caught, with failure having the cheat being caught or aborted.

Destruction of property, violence, Xenotech use, and bio enhancement is strictly prohibited during the race.

Again, this is more theory than actual. Saves can be used to represent hiding the use of such. Blaming another Contestant can work too, if it seems plausible.

Contestants cannot alter, hinder, or sabotage the attempts of other Contestants to go through the race.

As above. In fact, be sure to have the NPCs use such tactics to add to the drama and excitement of the game! Who knows, maybe the race is rigged? Maybe it's just being used as a front to hide an assassination attempt?

Teleportation and warp technology is expressly prohibited from being used during the race.

NPCs using such should be made to fail spectacularly. If any PC opts to use such tech, remind them that the race organizers likely made sure of keeping an eye out for such ever since the contest began. It should be the last resort, if it was even considered being used.

K'ne vell

An Ahleghiri who won the last year's AGR after the last five Contestants had to back out of the race due to intense migraines. His youngest daughter, Esme Vell, has just been chosen for this year's race. And K'ne is not going to let anyone get in her way.

THE PINKERTON INTERSTELLAR DETECTIVE AGENCY

by Alana Joli Abbott

Birdie Edwards looked at the body in distaste. "I can't immediately see how he ended up in so many…"

"Pieces?" Alyx suggested helpfully, his voice resonating behind his respirator. The khalumra's eyes were tracking in three different directions, trying to put together the puzzle, and Birdie couldn't look at him.

"I was going to say locations." Birdie pinched the bridge of her nose. There seemed to be too much body in the room, and not enough of it attached. The science building was sealed after dark to allow the cleaning 'bots full access to sanitize all empty surfaces. Somehow, the killer had not only been in the building, but left, and left this… mess behind them.

"Still nothing on the security cams," Alyx noted, checking his datapad. "Captain Morrie sent the rest of the files, too."

Birdie knelt, wishing her own respirator were a little less bulky. Neither humans nor khalumras were made for the atmosphere drop during sanitation. The Tyranax scattered across the floor around them wouldn't have been able to breathe in it after lock down either. So how in the galaxy…

"Alyx, do you count five hands?"

Alyx's large ears fluttered in irritation. "I was trying not to count them at all," he admitted. "But Tyranax only have…"

"Four, I know," said Birdie. She stood. She could feel the headache coming on.

"We really ought to take this to—"

"Don't say it."

"—Holmes for analysis," Alyx continued, ignoring her interruption.

Birdie sighed and took out a hand scanner, one of the Agency's most advanced. "You're not wrong," she admitted. "But Holmes will want a scan of everything. And I'm not sure it's in our budget."

"If we let it play violin, we'll get a discount," Alyx said cheerfully.

She started scanning. "You couldn't pay me enough to listen to that again..."

History

The Pinkerton Agency got its start on Earth in the 1800s, but it has long since outgrown its one-time ambition of a private security firm and has become one of the preeminent agencies of private investigators in the known galaxy. With the rapid expansion of human colonization that took place in the 2300s, the Pinkertons, too, found their way to the edges of human civilization, solving crime and working with local police investigators and law enforcement to bring murderers, forgers, and industrial spies to justice.

As humans intermingled with other species in the galaxy, the Pinkertons expanded their own forces to include a diverse array of investigators. Because frequently Pinkerton agents must go undercover to bring down a conspiracy, having members of many different heritages has opened doors to investigations that might have once remained closed. Thus, any given office of the Pinkertons, and any field team, is likely to be comprised of a mixed group, though humans are still the dominant species within the organization.

In the Modern Galaxy

It's the 2470s by the Old Earth calendar, and the populated galaxy is as large as any sentient species has ever known. While the Solar system and other star systems within the mid-range of the dense eye of the galaxy bask in the light of civilization (which, as per usual, means overlarge bureaucracy and governmental intrigue, all with the best

technologies the galaxy has to offer), the far arms of the galaxy often fall beyond the reach of strong legal protections. The Pinkertons work from the eye to the outer extent of the arms, and their jobs are as varied as their employees.

Eye jobs frequently involve corporate and government espionage. There are currently no spoken wars in the eye regions, but various governments are frequently at odds with each other, and the Pinkertons are known for their work untangling cyberterrorism and holospying. Two of the coolly feuding governments are the Commonwealth of Sgra, which is formed from a number of space stations near the exact galactic center, and features Kepler University one of the largest scientific institutions in the galaxy, and the Republic of Zaku, based on a planet where the home offices of MagneTech, one of the widest-spread corporations, are located.

The mid-ranges of the galaxy are vast, but include the Solar System, where the home office of the Pinkerton Interstellar Detective Agency remain in Ann Arbor, Michigan, at the base of the University of Michigan's space elevator. Director Kate Wahrn resides on planet and keeps a close tab on the company's operations. Wahrn is a huge fan of zero-g college football and is well known for her support of the University. She is also well-known for staying out of politics, and continues to uphold the original, honorable Pinkerton Code.

Mid-range jobs are the bread-and-butter of the agency and involve the type of undercover and detective work the company is best known for. Breaking up gangs and criminal agencies by joining those agencies in order to gather evidence; solving odd murder cases where the local law can find no answers; tracking down notorious outlaws,

smugglers, and pirates; and unmasking conspirators behind propaganda are among the types of work Pinkerton agents find in the mid-range.

In the outer reaches of the arms, law is a little messier, and the Pinkertons can sometimes be called in not only to solve crimes, but to enforce order. Though the Pinkertons are not a military agency, they have been known to stand between settlements and hostile wild creatures, to serve as seven agents against bandits attempting to take over a forgotten town, or to track down ships that have gone beyond the reaches of communication and into the vast. Some of those Pinkerton Agents' names have been written on the walls of the agency headquarters, as they have been lost beyond the boundaries of the galaxy.

221B Bakerstar

In the Perseus Arm of the galaxy, there is a small station called, tongue in cheek (if the owner had a tongue), 221B Bakerstar. There, Pinkerton Agents have been known to contract an artificial intelligence known to them as Holmes to help them analyze data. Holmes is one of the most advanced AI in the galaxy, has no physical body, and has disconnected—or so the Pinkertons have been led to believe—from all systems to make itself impervious to viral or systematic invasions. Thus, in order to get Holmes's expertise, Pinkerton Agents must provide the AI with all their evidence, and even then, the AI is just as likely to give clues as it is to actually give answers.

Holmes has a flair for the dramatic, enjoys violin music (which it pumps through the station), and is desperately expensive.
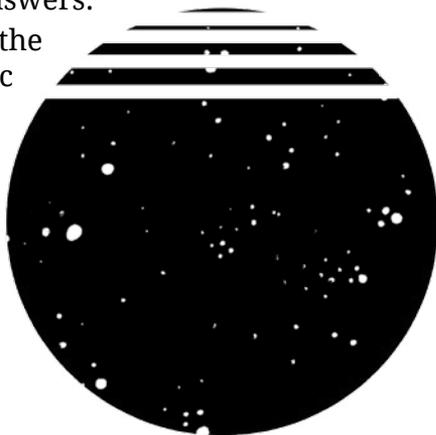
Copies

The Pinkerton Agency has recently been experimenting with short-term cloning technology that would allow it to make copies of its Agents to send into dangerous situations in order to gain intelligence. Copies have half the hit points of their original agent but gain the trait Eidetic Memory. Copies may be sent on assignment, allowing the Agent to be in two places at once; once returned to their original, the copy's memory is reabsorbed into the Agent.

Adventure hooks

- Dr. Korma Wynn, an Ilvian scientist at Kepler University, has hired the Pinkerton Agency to unravel the theft of her data—but when the agents arrive, Wynn has disappeared as well. Though plenty of clues point to MagneTech spies trying to steal Wynn's latest research, there's a possibility that one of her colleagues, jealous of her success, is actually behind her disappearance. The agents have to wade through university bureaucracy, very real corporate spies, and black hole science to discover Wynn, while the scientist is still alive, to keep the Pinkerton reputation intact.

- Scandal erupts on Earth when a University of Michigan zero-g football player is discovered to have been replaced by a Pinkerton Agency copy on the field. Where is the real player? How did he get access to Pinkerton technology?

Local police have arrested Director Wahrn, and it's up to the agents to clear her name—unless Wahrn really was involved in the web of zero-g Big Ten football gambling the investigation begins to uncover…

- Ornata 5 is a resort planet in the Cygnus Arm, well beyond the reach of any government besides its own. On the surface, it is a paradise, a playground for the wealthy, a vibrant planet with habitable locations spanning its small globe, and double sunsets courtesy of its binary star system. But while many of the wealthy truly do go only to play and please themselves, there's an underside to Ornata 5 that few ever see… and the illicit dealings that take place on the planet have impacts that span the galaxy. The agents are sent undercover to discover the ringleaders behind the Ornata 5 organization, and to see if they can discover the major players in systems across the galaxy.

For more inspiration

The Pinkerton National Detective Agency is a real agency operating in the modern United States, primarily as a security firm, but they have a long history as the inspiration behind dime store novel private eyes from the 1800s and beyond; they appear prominently in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novel *The Valley of Fear*. Two excellent science fiction private investigator novels are *Kiln People* by David Brin (which inspired the idea of the copies) and *Red Planet Blues* by Robert J. Sawyer.

THE BLOOD ARKS

by Elizabeth Chaipraditkul

Destiny Written in Blood

"Child of the greatest house in the Milky Way, you were born into tradition. You will live your life in service of your family. You will drink deep your enemies failures. You will spread the glory of our house to the ends of the known universe and conquer all who stand in your way. So says the Captain."

Earth is dead. Humanity took to space in search of a new home and found nothing. Six large Arks (ships) sent to different corners of the galaxy all came back to home-space empty handed. Over the years each evolved, developed their own culture, totally changed by their time in the emptiness of space. The difference could not stand and so there was war.

Now, there are six Great Houses on the Milky Way. Each with families numbering in the thousands, each a pool of avarice and greed. Poverty is a thing of the past and Companions, sentient service bots, deal with all of humanity's menial tasks leaving the houses to focus on what they do best – plot against one another.

House Above All

Every person is born into a Great House, which are named after the first Arks launched from earth – Pompey, Still Water, Sanctum, Luna, Sol, and Terra (known as the Lost Ark). Within each Great House there are various families who intermarry in order to improve their position. The ruling family of the house and its captain are descend from the captains of the first Arks and are considered near holy. Only the House of Pompey, has an 'impure' captain a fact which is the cause of a considerable amount of scandal.

Oil Sport

Outright aggression is passé. Wars are fought on the ground of distant planets by Companions and their bodies recovered when the fight concluded. If two members of differing Great Houses want to fight they do it through Oil Sport.

The Oil Sport Arena is located on 7th Great Ark, built as a neutral ground where the Houses could port in and meet with one another. Each Companion who works the Ark is programmed to be utterly neutral – programming which has been known to be exploited in order to spy and backstab. The Arena itself seats 55,000 people and has individual private quarters for the captains of the six Great Houses.

Within the arena Companions fight for the glory of their house. Fights don't stop until the crowd 'sees oil' and the bots slick blood pools on the crystal floor. Houses pit Companions against one another in Oil Sport for glory, sport, and to settle grudges – the losing side out thousands of creds for their destroyed Companion and publicly humiliated for their shameful loss.

Companions

Companions are ever present in Ark life. Indistinguishable from humans aside from their jet black eyes, tears, and blood they care for every need the Great Houses have from waste to pleasure. Unwilling to live with cold creatures who could not feel, the houses programmed them with emotions. Companions are keenly aware of their position in life, but are bound by countless codes preventing them from harming a human without commands from another. That is, except for the Companions of the Fifth Sanctum...

The Six Great Houses

Within the cosmos there are six Great Houses, three are the largest and most prosperous – the House of Pompey, the House of Still Waters, and the House of the Fifth Sanctum. Below them three other houses vie for dominance, hoping to one day overshadow the larger houses – the House of the Lost Ark, the House of Luna, and the House of Sol.

The House of Pompey

A viper's nest in a galaxy set on tearing itself apart, the House of Pompey views itself as the purest house in the galaxy. Strict breeding rules and an enshrined class system within the House ensures every person knows their place and position is only gained through acts of unspeakable tragedy. Captain Maximus III gain his position through murdering the last captain's entire family right down to the last child – ensuring they would never be able to challenge his family's right to leadership.

The House of Still Waters

A house of inventors, hackers, and technoheads the House of Still Waters could be considered a 'friendlier' house at least from within. With the ability to spy on one another through virtually any surface within their numerous arks, plotting against one another for increased position within the Ark is virtually pointless. Instead, the House of Still Waters focuses their efforts on the other houses, making ships go dark and life support system fail.

The House of the Fifth Sanctum

Captain Lucinde runs the House of the Fifth Sanctum. In a blood red cape, matching suit, and crimson gloves she cuts terrifying figure no matter where she goes. The dark obsidian walls of her lead Ark help instil this fear as does the Companions she elevated to 'human' status. The house garnered the nickname 'heretics' when they freed their

Companions after suffering startling losses on the Battle of Mars. Worshipping Lucinde as a god the inhabitants of the Fifth Sanctum, human and Companion alike, form the most brutal Ark in the galaxy.

The Houses of Sol, Luna, and the Lost Ark

Each of the three smaller houses are no less rife with scheming than the larger three. Sol and Luna have been feuding since the Arks took to exploration and many believe they would be the largest houses if their feud would subside. The hate stems for a soured love affair, or so the story goes, and many believe a successful marriage between the two houses (something which has never happened with any house) is the only thing that would solve the problem.

The House of the Lost Ark was the last Ark (called Terra) to arrive back at the rendezvous point so many years ago. Many believe they touched the edges of our galaxy and the experience turned their people into... something else. Most members of the house wander through life between dreams and reality addicted to toxic inhalants to enhance their dream-like state.
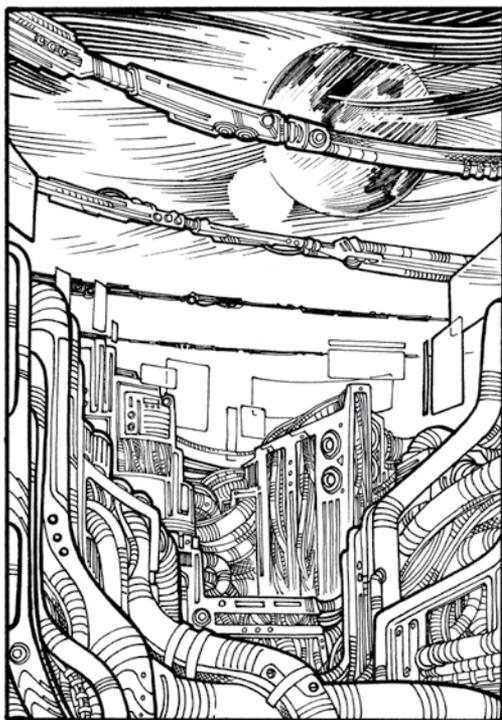
FIXERS

by Steve Diamond

Possible Themes:

Con Artists, Adventure, Heists, Seriously-Anything-Stop-Thinking-So-Hard

Inspired by:

Leverage, Pitch Black/Chronicles of Riddick, The Expanse by James S.A. Corey, Oceans Eleven, Guardians of the Galaxy, Matchstick Men, SKIN GAME by Jim Butcher, The Italian Job, etc.

The Concept:

Who doesn't love a good heist film/novel?

A motley crew of con artists and mercenaries are thrown together—sometimes by choice, sometimes by force—to do a job. One last job? Yeah. Just one more. What could go wrong?

"Fixers" is a setting that can be used on its own, or as a skin put on top of any other micro-setting in Tiny Frontiers.

Look, the galaxy is a huge place. Countless people from countless species on countless planets. But do you know what they all have in common?

They all have problems.

Everyone needs something, and usually—be sure to check the fine-print of the contract—they want to pay you for it.

It. Such a broad word. The "it" someone wants could be an actual item. Maybe a missing person. Lost reputation. Revenge. Love. A whole damn planet. The needs are as varied as the clients they come from. This is where you come in.

You're a Fixer.

Your job is to simply—again, please read the fine print of the contract as your job may not, in fact, be simple—get your

client what they want. You can be one of those ethical Fixers, and only take on clients who have the moral high-ground. Or maybe getting your hands dirty is irrelevant, as long as you can make rent, payroll, and feed you and your crew.

Use your connections. Make new connections with every job you finish. You have a certain set of skills, and you should fill your crew with other licensed Fixers who make up for your deficiencies.

Just remember you aren't the only Fixer in the galaxy, and clients rarely care who take care of their problems.

Setting Fluff:

"I already told you. I don't do that sort of thing anymore."

People never listen. No matter how many times I tell 'em, they always ask. They want the old Ezekiel. The young Ezekiel. A few old souls even want violent Ezekiel. I'm not that guy anymore. He died with his wife. His two children. His dog.

"Listen, Zeke—"

"You don't get to call me that," I interrupt, but the Ursan keeps on talking. The propensity for ignoring social queues is a hallmark of their species. This is why I drink alone. Conversation is exhausting.

"—I've been trying to tell you this isn't a normal job. It's a sure thing—"

"There's no such thing as a 'sure thing' anymore."

"—and the best part? We would be crippling TakomakiCorp."

The galaxy stopped.

TakomakiCorp. The interstellar shipping corporation responsible for the death of my family. They hadn't properly checked the seals on their cruise-liner. My family suffocated to death.

I downed the rest of my drink, and carefully set the glass back down. It was real, Earth-made crystal. Worth a fortune.

"Ok," I told the Ursan. "You have me for one, last job. But I'm going to need a team..."

Fixers are one of the galaxy's oldest professions. Right up there with soldiers, preachers, and politicians. As the known galaxy expands, the need for problem-solvers grows right along with it.

All that said, it isn't easy to become a Fixer.

In the old days, a few centuries ago, anyone could say they were a Fixer. But that led to too many fakes showing up and fleecing old-folks out of their retirement—one of the oldest cons in the galaxy. One of those grandmas happened to be a princess from Taurus Prime. The Tauren royal family—yes, they are a race of bull-people—got pissed, and went to war with everyone.

This siege on the galaxy lasted decades. The Taurens killed trillions, including complete xenocide on the species from which came the fake Fixer. But they didn't stop there. Surely the fake Fixer didn't work alone. Surely others were involved. Someone else was guilty. And if not, they would be by the time the Taurens were done with their crusade.

They only stopped when the entire galaxy assured the Taurens that all Fixers would be licensed from that moment on. Miraculously, the Taurens became one of the most peaceful galactic civilizations after the treaty...or maybe everyone was just too scared to even consider screwing them again.

The process for having your application reviewed and approved is, in the words several female Fixers, "A million times worse than giving birth...while on fire...with clowns menacing you."

It's also idiotically expensive. And the yearly dues are brutal.

This makes a Fixer's reputation the most important asset they own. The more known, reliable, and trustworthy, they more likely work is to be sent their way. Or, the more ruthless, conniving, and dangerous, the more likely "other" work is desired.

Overtly screw other Fixers? Your license will be revoked.

Which is a polite way of saying the Fixer's Guild will have you executed.

This isn't to say you can't ever mess with other Fixers. On the contrary. If you aren't screwing with other Fixers, you aren't doing your job well enough.

Just make sure you don't get caught.

Sample Adventure Hooks:

"Fixers" can be as simple or complex as you want it. The goal of these sample hooks is to make the players stars of the show. Roleplaying flashbacks to show how awesome your plans really are? Yeah, that's encouraged. Making sure the players are put in difficult situations? Always recommended.

After all, where's the fun in a heist story if it's never difficult?

I. One last job. The dreaded words that haunt every Fixer. Just when you think you're out of the game, you get yanked back in for one final job. Everyone knows how these sorts of jobs go. You're probably gonna die.

Being a Fixer is a dangerous job. Most don't make it to retirement...at least not the kind where you spend your days on the artificial vacation planet, Eden 1.

Maybe you can beat the odds.

It's just one last job.

You can quit any time.

What's this last job? Well that's up to the players. But it better be personal, because that's the only way you get a "retired" Fixer back in the game.

Maybe your family was murdered, and this is payback.

Maybe you get a new lead on that case you took that you couldn't fix.

Maybe the money is soooooo good, you can buy your own planet with it.

Or maybe...maybe the client is the type that a wink and smile gets your knees weak.

The point is, like all "one last jobs," this is going to go poorly. Disaster, betrayal, intrigue, and even comedy are the themes of this hook.

II. It's time for a heist. Fixers in the galaxy are always stealing—ahem, REACQUIRING goods for their clients.

Who doesn't like a good heist? The point of this hook is to put the players in a situation where they get to do their best intergalactic Ocean's Eleven, or Italian Job. Each player takes a different roll in the crew. The great part of this hook is the potential for rival Fixers to come in and screw you over. Or even your client screwing you...just because.

This isn't your first rodeo. Or, frankly, your tenth,

Your crew of Fixers has developed a knack for breaking in and...liberating...goods that "belong" to the clients. Try not to ask too many questions about the strict ownership of the goods.

Your latest client, one of those idiot scientists from Acturus, needs you to "get back" his "stolen" research.

Here's the rub:

It's being stored on Ares Station back by Old Earth. Ares Station is a science station guarded like a military installation. That's probably because the science they do at Ares is weapon development.

If you can get by the long-range sensors (which you can't), and get by the weapons platforms (you won't), and get inside (sure, have fun), then you'll just have to get by all the armed guards, security death-traps, and all that stuff you don't even know about...

Simple smash-and-grab job. Right.

III. This one is simple. You screwed up. You didn't read the contract carefully enough. There's a big difference between capture and kill apparently. Your client doesn't just want you dead, he wants your existence erased.

Maybe...maybe you shouldn't have trusted that translation app.

The Mantid Queen—she looks just like you expect—didn't want her enemy killed. Well, she did. Sort-of. But not by you. Other Fixers have warned you from taking on jobs for the Mantids, as their contracts tend to revolve around context, nuance, and a bunch of other things no one quite understands.

So yeah, you're in breach of contract. Yay.

You need to run. And you need to get out of this contract somehow.

Trust me, you don't want to see what angry Mantids do to other species...
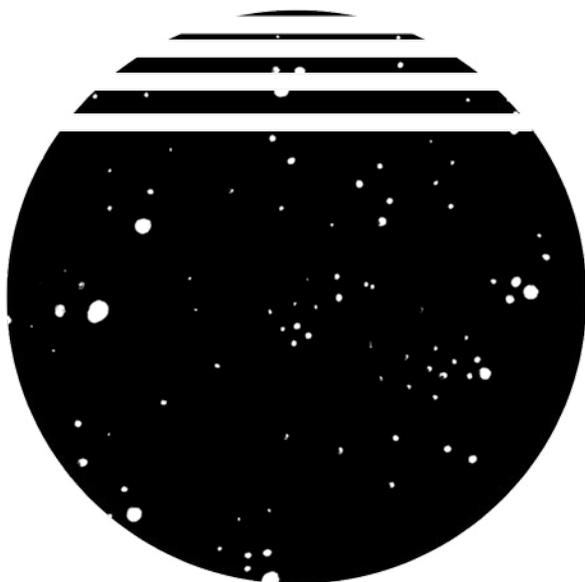
THE STATION

by Dianna Gunn

The R-7 research station orbits an uninhabited gas giant in Salar, home system of the Salaran Empire. Originally intended for researching alien life forms, it has now been repurposed to study and create biochemical weapons for use in Salar's war against their former colonies.

The base consists of two separate rectangular sections connected by a short cylindrical elevator and repair passage.

The Experiments

At this time all of R-7's resources are focused on researching the dehificus virus.

The Dehificus Virus

The dehificus virus kills humans and most water-based life forms in 12-24 hours by absorbing their internal liquids. The first symptoms of the disease are fever and extreme thirst. Once the virus has absorbed enough liquid it bursts through the skin in the form of wet, puss-filled boils. Bodies of dehificus victims are extremely contagious and must be incinerated immediately.

The dehificus virus can only be cured with morentus, a rare herb that only grows on the Salaran home planet. Morentus must be used within the first two hours after symptoms appear in order to be effective.

The Experiments' Objectives

R-7's current experiments focus on weaponizing the dehificus virus in the following ways:

• To shorten kill time to under five minutes

Current Status: Kill time of the weaponized dehificus virus is at four hours

Assigned Staff: Five scientists + Assistants

Assigned Labs: Laboratory one

- To create a gas version of the dehificus virus

Current Status: Gas created, but too unstable to be useful outside of heavily controlled environments

Assigned Staff: Four scientists + Assistants

Assigned Labs: Laboratory two

- To create a portable dispersal method for the dehificus gas

Current Status: Building a prototype dispersal method roughly the size of a small suitcase

Assigned Staff: Five scientists + Assistants

Assigned Labs: Laboratory three

The Base

Living Sections

One living section is dedicated to staff, and one is dedicated to the prisoners. The staff living area encompasses floors one through three. Prisoners live on floors five and six. Experiments are conducted on floor four.

The Staff Section

The scientists and their assistants live on floor one, as far away from the prisoners as physically possible. The primary shuttle bay is also on this floor, along with a storeroom for emergency supplies and weapons.

Most of floor two is dedicated to the kitchen, mess hall, and recreation areas. It also holds several storage rooms and a small medical bay.

Security guards, maintenance workers, and cooks live on floor three. This is also the location of the elevator connecting to the prisoners' section.

The Prisoners' Section

Half of floor five is devoted to prisoners' cells. The other half is devoted to a mess hall, a small recreation area, and shared showers for each gender.

Floor six is dedicated entirely to prisoners' quarters. Designed for alien life forms, these chambers are significantly bigger

than chambers on floor five. As a result prisoners are often forced to share cells.

There are a total of forty cells on the station, twenty on floor five and twenty on floor six.

The Laboratories

Floor four is mostly devoted to the station's three laboratories and several storage rooms. There are three main laboratories, each with two containment/observation cells and four storage rooms. All labs must be accessed through airlock-style doors.

Lab one is dedicated to reducing the dehificus virus's kill time. Experiments are run at least once a week, sometimes twice. Four prisoners are experimented on at a time. Prisoners do not return from these experiments. Lab one contains an incinerator for processing infected corpses.

Lab two is dedicated to creating a gas version of the dehificus virus for weaponized dispersal. Experiments are run once every two weeks. Six prisoners are experimented on at a time. Most prisoners are returned to their cells after one week of recovery and decontamination.

Lab three is dedicated to creating a portable dispersal system for the weaponized dehificus gas. Experiments are run sporadically as new dispersal systems are created. Five prisoners are typically used for this experiment, one to use the dispersal system and four to experience its effects. Most prisoners return to their cells one week after these experiments.

The Elevators

The two main sections of the R-7 have their own internal elevators, and a separate connection to the primary elevator shaft between sections.

Internal Elevators

Each internal elevator has access to all three floors of its section. All internal elevator entrances are constantly guarded by two human security guards.

External Elevator

The external elevator only connects to floors three and four. Two human guards and two security drones are placed at each entrance at all times.

The external elevator can be sealed at both ends in the event of contamination.

The Shuttle Bay

There is only one shuttle bay on Station R-7, located on floor one. It's large enough to hold up to three shuttles. One shuttle permanently resides in this bay. It has powerful sublight engines for quick transport within the solar system, but no hyperdrive.

Security

Station R-7 has a variety of security measures in place.

Security Stations and Patrols

Two guards are always stationed at every elevator entrance, excluding the internal elevator on floor two. The shuttle bay is guarded by two drones and one human at all times.

An additional pair of guards patrols each floor three times a day. Patrols start on floor one and happen at 6:00hrs, 12:00hrs, 18:00hrs, and 22:00hrs.

The Venting System

The entire prisoners' living section will vent its contents into space in the event of a disease outbreak or other security breaches.

The Staff

At any given time Station R-7 carries the following staff:

- 14 Scientists + 1 assistant for each scientist
- 1 Cook + 1 assistant
- 2 Maintenance workers + 5 maintenance robots
- 1 Chief of Security
- 20 security guards
- One purely medical doctor + 2 robotic assistants

NPCs

Dr. Sharosa: Primary Scientist, Lab Two

Dr. Sharosa was one of the first scientists assigned to the dehificus experiments. They work as both a scientist and an administrator, and are rarely seen outside of the lab.

After sixteen months of trying to perfect this weapon, and seeing the devastating effects the experiments have on prisoners, Dr. Sharosa believes the weapon is too cruel to be used. They are now sabotaging the experiments.

Dr. Sharosa will help prisoners who reach the laboratory level on their own escape the base altogether.

Torken Marleno: Security Guard

Torken is the guard most consistently assigned to watch the elevator on floor five between 14:00hrs and 20:00hrs.

He regularly smuggles goods, mostly recent news media and small personal items, into the prison for a price. He is even open to helping prisoners escape, for the right bribe.

The Prisoners

At any given time there are between 50 and 80 prisoners on Station R-7. Roughly half of these prisoners are war criminals from the former colonies. The other half are draft dodgers, mostly from the Salaran home world.

The Shipments

Every four weeks a heavily armed shipment comes to Station R-7. This shipment brings a variety of supplies including food and medical supplies. It also brings prisoners in groups of twenty or thirty at a time.

The entire base goes into high alert on shipment days and no experiments are conducted.

Potential Scenario: Escape or Die

Designed to be played in 2-4 hours

Rules for this Scenario:

- Anyone who comes within arm's reach of you or your cellmate will be infected
- Once someone is infected you can choose to bring them with you to find the cure, kill them, or let them die from the disease
- All prisoners start the game without weapons

The Story

You've spent the past three months imprisoned on the R-7 base, living in one of the shared cells on floor six. Five days ago your cellmate was selected to participate in an experiment. You assumed you would never see them again.

Today they were returned to your cell, looking exhausted but healthy. They went straight to bed.

An hour later they woke up and threw their blankets off, complaining about how hot it was. A quick hand to their forehead revealed an intense fever. Your cellmate has a mutated form of the dehificus virus. Based on the current state of the dehificus experiments, **your cellmate will die if the cure is not administered within two hours** (GM can modify the time limit for shorter or longer games).

The contamination sensors haven't detected the disease yet, but they may detect it at any time (at the discretion of the GM). If the contamination is detected, or the guards push one of the outbreak buttons, you and all the other prisoners will be jettisoned into space.

You must reach Laboratory Two, where the refined version of the morentus herb is stored, within two hours to save your cellmate.

If you reach Laboratory Two within the allotted time the GM can choose to expand this scenario by having Dr. Sharosa or Torken Marleno help you reach the shuttle bay.

OF CROWNS AND SCALES

by John D. Kennedy

Possible Themes:

An Old World Made New, Ancient Monarchies, Hope of Rescue

Inspired by:

Dinoriders, Dinosaucers, John Carter

The Arrival

"Duke Darzan! Duke Darzan! The wormhole's finally destabilizing!" The anxious helmsman gripped the steering wheel of the stellar liner Majestic so hard that his fingers had gone numb. He was exhausted, as was the rest of the crew, as they had been forced to stay at their stations ever since the enemy fleet had forced them to make a random jump into light speed to escape them. Forced to travel through an unstable anomaly, they had no idea where they were going or even if they were going to make it at all. With a sudden shock, the maelstrom of colors that lined the sides of the wormhole disappeared and the fleet was thrown back into real space. Crew stations exploded in a flurry of spark and debris and passengers found themselves thrown about their cabins as the make shift flotilla found itself spiraling through space.

The duke, who had taken control of the stellar liner after its captain had been killed, was the first to reach his footing. As he gazed out of the view screen of the vessel, his eyes beheld something as grand as it was frightening.

"What planet is that?"

On Sklarr, the messenger hurried down the streets of Trecacia City. His heavy footsteps stomped on the pebble streets as he hurried towards the grand golden dome at the edge of the city. Raising a four fingered hand to the door, he knocked repeatedly until it was flung open violently.

The figure at the door was an imposing sight, with his brownish red scales covered in numerous tattoos and markings denoting him of royal birth. The horns on his head sported numerous rings and a heavy pair of spectacles sat upon his eyes. His nostrils bristled as he looked at the intruding servant as one would a Flargus Mite digging into their scales. "Yes?" Magister Cantor's voices echoed in his entry way. "Why do you bother me at this hour?"

"You have been summoned to a meeting, my lord." The fin on the servant's head drooped a bit as he feared a formal reprimand from talking to one of much higher station than he. "The Barsai has summoned you personally."

"Hmm, yes, yes," intoned Magister Cantor solemnly. "The Barsai must have received my note I sent him earlier this evening about my...observations."

"Observations, my lord?"

"Yes." The aging seer draped a thick blanket over his shoulders while walking towards the royal palace. "It appears we have many more stars in the sky above us than we did before. And they appear to be getting closer..."

The World of Sklarr

Over six thousand souls ended up in the refugee flotilla after a fleet of strange aliens appeared on the edge of Known Space. They attacked without warning, and though the Imperial Navy was mobilized to defend the Empire, hundreds of vessels were caught in their path. A small flotilla of ships consisting mainly of passenger liners and cargo transports was attempting to get to safety when they were forced to make an unplanned jump into hyperspace. Though the fleet managed to survive, they did not arrive at their intended destination.

The fleet appeared above Sklarr, a planet ruled by dynasties of reptilian overlords whose forms mirrored dinosaurs from the throne world of Earth's history. These dynasts, who were engaged in a state of near constant warfare with each other, viewed the humans as invaders, and several used their access to Sklarr's barely functioning planetary defense systems to shoot the fleet down.

Now humanity exists in small colonies scattered around an area they've called the Bad Lands, where the ancient bones of Sklarrans lie in the sun among the relics of their civilization. The dynasts have sent scouting parties to see what humanity wants, but for the most part keep their distance. Some have even invited human beings to their courts to see what the strange creatures have to offer them, or even to broker alliances with them in the hope that they can get an advantage over their opponents.

Led by the Captain's Council headed by Duke Darzan, humanity has spent the past five years building New Terra City. The city itself is full of intrigue and politics as several factions within the city try to seize control over mankind's dwindling resources, while visitors from across Sklarr watch the city with great interest. Several factors will determine the fate of humanity and the Sklarrans. The first is whether key pieces of technology necessary for interstellar flight can be replicated and allow mankind the chance to leave the planet. The second is whether the squabbling of the dynasts can be set aside long enough for them to decide to crush the upstart mammals or aid them in their goal of leaving their planet.

The third is that at the edge of the Sklarr solar system, a strange storm is appearing in space, and all too familiar ships appear as harbingers of an even greater threat.

The Courts of Sklarr

The Sklarrans are descended from great sauria in the same way that humanity is descended from apes but where as mankind found one common form, the Sklarrans found a multitude of different tribes based upon their needs. Though some kingdoms are based around one or two breeds of Sklarran, several of the larger kingdoms and alliances incorporate dozens of different breeds. Some are united by a common philosophy, such as a unifying religion or creed that binds them together to form one nation. Others are descended from ancient empires that have existed for centuries and are steeped in tradition and obedience to their monarchs. Though they are referred to

as dynasts by mankind, their royal titles differ as greatly as praetor, president, barsai, and even grand emperor.

Although warfare is a constant threat to the Sklarran way of life, the next great obstacle they must overcome is dwindling resources on their planet. Their food supplies cannot sustain their great population, and as modern medicine extends their life span into centuries, the Sklarrans continually fight over arable land and herds of domesticated animals used for food. Though most Sklarrans descended from carnivores were able to accommodate vegetables and fruits into their diets, they still needed large quantities of protein and certain herbivorous kinds of Sklarrans are unable to digest meat.

As New Terra City starts to form alliances of their own, they have come into contact with three of the larger alliances on Sklarr. These power blocs are only interested in what humanity has to offer; if they could obtain all of mankind's resources and then crush them utterly, they likely would. It is only the advanced technology of the humans that have kept them safe so far, which is a fact that most human adventurers try to keep safe.

The three largest power blocs on Sklarr are:

The Hokota League, which is made up completely of herbivores and omnivores willing to forego the majority of their carnivorous habits. They are able to prosper due to the size of their population, but the vast majority of their workforce is used to grow crops needed to feed their people. Their courts differ greatly among their fellow dynasts as each as the widest variety of Sklarrans but the dynasts of the Hokota League are the suspicious of outsiders as they have had to endure centuries of predations by their neighbors. They would love most to see humanity driven from the face of Sklarr, but few are united on how to do that.

The Triumvirate of Vra is the strongest alliance to be made up of the fewest nations. Led by the God Kings, the Triumvirate is ruled by a loose alliance between the Pharaoh of Hekkion, the Tyrant of Breze, and the Empress Salkara II. These leaders rule their realms with an iron claw and though they have welcomed human ambassadors to

their court, they rule with near absolute authority. Though many have hoped to splinter their alliance, their rulers are united in their conquest of Sklarr. They see humanity as a means to break their stalemate with the few kingdoms around them that have managed to resist their rule.

The Society of Akkarlesh is the third strongest alliance in the world and perhaps the strangest. An archipelago located in the center of the Great Ocean, it is made up of an alliance between Sklarrans descended from ocean dwelling and flying sauria. These Sklarrans have managed to take control of the world's oceans, and their floating courts are the height of decadence and excess with the numerous luxuries they are capable of offering visitors. Few possess the might to challenge the Akkarlesh Royal Navy, whose flyers backed by fleets of submersible sauria make them a potent threat.

Of Man and Sklarran

The survivors of the flotilla have managed to salvage as much technology as they can from their ships, only half of their fleet is capable of flight and even then they are kept in New Terra City. Most of the ships having formed the buildings that make up the city, and despite the best efforts of the New Terran Engineering Corp, the city is always short on supplies. Adventurers heading forth from the city explore the Bad Lands with the hope they can uncover new resources for the city or meet traders willing to do business with the city.

What the New Terrans discovered shortly after landing on the planet was that not only had Sklarr once had a golden age of technology that had surpassed even the great sciences known to man, but that some terrible incident had devastated the planet in centuries past. This incident, known only as The Great Shroud, saw half of the planet devastated by a large explosion that covered the planet in debris and dust. Though the Sklarrans survived, their society never recovered, and the remains of their great cities dot the landscape. In the Bad Lands New Terran explorers discover ancient bunkers and buried cities full of technology and treasures, though they are often guarded by

automated defenses or tribes of Sklarrans who protect their homes fiercely. The Sklarrans themselves are armed with primitive laser weapons and blades of tempered obsidian that resist shattering when striking at an opponent and which sometimes glow with great heat.

Sample Adventure Hooks:

Each one of these hooks have the same goals: To make the player characters central to the unfolding story, to create a vehicle for interpersonal drama and mystery, and to reinforce the themes of the setting, be they adventure, horror, politics or some mix of the three. The secondary goal is to challenge the players to make difficult choices.

I. The sound of trumpets heralds the group's arrival from the distance, and soon the adventurers encounter a grand procession of Sklarrans riding great sauropods covered in royal blankets and great tapestries. Made up of over one hundred Sklarrans, they are a royal party that has been sent to invite the adventurers to the court of Barsai Zu'kuum. But as the player characters travel with them, they notice the group is acting strangely, and that these nobles may have sinister intentions as their worship of a banned sun god marks them as outsiders even among the Sklarrans.

"Greetings, great leaders of humanity! Our great and mighty Barsai, Zu'kuum the Sunblessed, has heard of your great deeds and would invite you to his temple! If you follow us we shall share our feast with you and our bottles of spicy hot wine. Our great Barsai would like to discuss a deal of great providence and wealth with you if you would but just follow us."

II. An explosion rocks through New Terra City. The reactor of the Harrigan, one of the few warships available to the New Terrans, was sabotaged and explodes, killing twenty. Security footage reveals that the saboteurs were possibly human, and graffiti is discovered nearby linking to a radical group that wants mankind to give up the dream of leaving and conquer the neighboring Sklarran kingdoms. But who is really to blame?

"We need your help. Between radiation leaking from the damaged ships around where the Harrigan exploded and trying to keep people under control, we have angry Sklarran ambassadors demanding an audience with the Captain's Council. The Duke has requested that you help with the investigation, and any information that you can find about the perpetrators of this act would go a long way towards calming everyone down."

III. Grand Chief Farian'Dushann'Elegorr is dead. His kingdom, in the center of the Briar Forests, has invited representatives to attend the funeral and witness the transition of power. But an attempted assassination of his son leads to the entire kingdom being locked down, and the fact that a human weapon was used puts suspicion on the outsiders. The real assassin must be found or else the kingdom may switch its alliances towards the nearby Triumvirate of Vra.

"Did you hear? The new Grand Chief was badly burned by a human weapon! If I were you, leatherskins, I'd find a way out of here. I can shelter you for now, but I'm afraid the Royal Guards are arresting any humans they find. If we cannot get you out of the country soon, then you might find yourselves locked in the deepest, darkest dungeon."

BEST TASTING HOME FRIES IN THE GALAXY

by Melanie R. Meadors

Possible Themes:

Stranded, Revolution, Fighting Against the Man, Superheroes, Rescue, Escape

Inspired by:

Firefly, Outlaw Star, Cowboy Bebop, Trigun

Crash Landing!

Klaxons are screaming, lights are flashing. You have no idea what happened. All you and your crew were trying to do was make a perfectly safe and routine jump to your home planet to cash in on your last venture, and BOOM—you were pulled from light speed and all heck broke loose.

Are you being drawn in by some sort of tractor beam? Are you crashing of your own accord? You might be able to tell by looking at one of the various instruments and control panels on your ship, but suddenly everything falls silent. The lights go out, all sensors stop their measurements. The only source of light is the window in front of you, which shows a planet getting closer...and closer...

Luckily, you have an ace pilot on board with you who has gotten your crew out of countless jams before. Will his luck hold? Or will you be pulverized on the surface of the planet—or vaporized in the atmosphere?

The Good News...

You've landed safely, somehow! You check to see if the rest of the crew is in one piece. After all, you have no idea what resources this planet has or even if you can breathe the air... Oh, wait. You must be able to breathe the air, because upon closer inspection, you just noticed the hull of the ship has been breached. Yep, that is most definitely bad news, since you have no idea where you are or if this place might have parts you need. You don't even know if they speak your language!

The Lay of the Land

Upon stepping out of your ship, you and your crew discover the air to be clear, comfortable to breathe, and the temperature, while on the hot side, is still tolerable. Your ship has landed on a sandy patch of desert-looking terrain. You can see some rocky formations off to the distance in all directions.

If you have a really good navigator in your party, perhaps he can tell that you've crash landed on the planet Cores, in the Dibet system. Cores is a name that sticks out in memory, because it is a penal planet. The entire planet is a prison for criminals and shady characters. At least, it started out that way. The original prisoners started having children, and now there is a new generation of people who didn't do anything to earn the harsh life on this mining planet.

Of course, if your navigator relies on a computer or digital device to get his information, rather than his vast knowledge, he's out of luck. Any one who tries to use electronics discovers they are completely worthless due to the constant electromagnetic pulses satellites of the planet produce. This is in order to prevent the residents from creating tech that would allow them to escape from the planet somehow. It's also to prevent large scale communications that would lead to coups and conspiracy. The only places protected from the EMPs are at the poles of the planet, which are also the locations of the only launchpads on the planet. Once per

week, a ship lands at the North Pole and drops off supplies and food for the residents, since the desert climate doesn't allow much food to grow. The Warden of the prison planet and his flunkies live in a compound at the North Pole, and supervise these shipments. It's rumored that he keeps the best goods for himself and forces the residents to eat whatever is left.

The residents of the planet work at the mines, located throughout the planet. There is an ore here that is taken elsewhere to be processed into something usable—and very secret. Maybe it's used to make weapons. Maybe it's traded with an alien race in order to gain favor. Who knows? The ore is shipped off planet using the launchpad at the South Pole.

To the south of your landing site, you see some ramshackle buildings. Nothing that suggests a high level civilization, but hey, maybe there is someone there who can help, or who knows more about the planet so your crew can fix the ship or find a new one and get back to business!

The Town of Harmony

At the edge of town, you see a sign which reads: "Welcome to Harmony." Only, all the letter of the sign are crossed out except for the H. Someone wrote "Hell" beneath the original word. Your eyes drift the something dangling under the sign, and you notice it's an arm, dangling from a chain. In the hand of the arm is a can of spray paint.

Moving on? Brave folks will see that town consists of what can only be tenements, shacks, and even tents. In the middle of it is a building, no less dilapidated than the rest, but where people are actually hanging about. Across the side of the building says, "Double D's Diner." There isn't any glass in the windows, so you can see plainly there are people sitting inside, eating.

Some Interesting Characters and Possible Adventure Hooks:

Sully, Owner and Chef at Double D's Diner

Behind the counter you see a bald, dark-skinned man wielding a spatula. He's cooking up eggs and home fries and bacon like nobody's business—and it's a good thing, because every table in the place is full. When he hears the jangle of the bells on the door that signal it's opened, he looks up with steel-gray eyes. "Sit anywhere there's room," he says in a low growl. You notice when he walks, it sounds like *step*-THUD *step*-THUD. If you look carefully, you can see that he has one cybernetic leg, and an ill-working one at that. If there is a mechanic in your party, he can tell that the leg just needs some simple repairs. Everyone who comes into the diner greets Sully by name, as if everyone knows everyone else here. He doesn't take orders—everyone who sits down has a plate put down in front of them containing the same meal: eggs, bacon, and nuclear-orange home fries. Does he get that food from the Warden? Seems awfully nutritious and fresh. He yells at people who don't eat their food, some for wasting food, others for not taking care of themselves. He's gruff and cranky sounding, but why would he be chastising folks if he didn't care? Maybe someone can figure out what his deal is if, say, they offered to fix his leg.

Loner Kid in the Corner Booth

Sitting alone in a corner booth of the diner is a dark-haired boy, kind of thin, who moves in a strange, jilted way. When you make eye-contact, you notice his dark eyes are weird and glassy, yet he seems alert. He keeps looking at Sully,

watching his every move. After observing him for a while, you notice he routinely brings a hand to the top of his ear, almost like he's going to push his hair behind his ear, like he's done it a million times before, but his hair is cut short. He only orders coffee. Cup after cup. If someone from the party approaches him, to ask for directions or help, he scowls, but looks guilty. "I wouldn't hang around here if I were you," he says. Unlike everyone else in the place, he's wearing all black street clothes rather than mining clothing. He keeps his hand in his pocket at all times. Would anyone in the place know who he is? Since he's a bit more refined than others in the place, maybe he would know where to go for help.

Bubbly Waitress Droid...Isn't She?

The waitress is wearing a pink dress with a white apron, much like in ancient times. Her long golden wavy hair is pulled back in a pony tail, and she has an ever-present smile. She's perfect in every way—at least, she is if you listen to the marketing people of the company that sells this model of droid. Yet when she looks over at Sully, you notice that her gaze lingers on him. If a customer complains, and Sully notices, her eyes shift as if embarrassed to have made a mistake. But droids can't feel shame, right? Neither can they have crushes on people, but all it takes is one look to see she has feelings for Sully. What's up with that? Are droids on this planet more advanced than elsewhere? Or is there more than meets the eye to this one? How do droids work with the EMPs?

Other Folks at the Diner

Everyone at the diner seems to be wearing the same sort of jumpsuit, except for the loner kid and the waitress. Even Sully is wearing a version with torn off sleeves. Cleanliness does not seem to be a virtue in this place. Dirty faces, clothes, hands. It looks like everyone just got off from a shift at work, only there weren't any factories or even buildings that looked large enough to be a place where all these folks could work in town. Everyone seems tired, worn down. You

get a couple glances when you enter, and you realize your party stands out. Even after crashing and trudging through the sand, your clothes are cleaner and less worn, and you definitely have more energy. Are you at risk here? What are these people's stories? Some are younger, and were probably born here. Have they ever thought of acting out against the unfair ways here?

Butch, the Cabbie

After a while, you notice some people leave, and others arrive. You look out the window and see a wagon with benches on it, and people hopping on and off of it with tool bags. An old timer with a thick gray mustache sits at the front, wearing a cap with a brim to shade his face and a pair of goggles. He drives a pair of animals the likes of which you've never seen before. They have six legs a piece and are brown and woolly with tusks protruding from their mouths. Word is, he brings workers to and from the mines from this town every day. Can he bring you somewhere of use? Does he work for the Warden? Or is his friendliness toward the regular folks genuine? How can he help or hinder your party?

Is there *anyone* here who can help your party get back into space where you belong? Or, perhaps, is there any way you can help *them*, if you think they might deserve it?

BEARS. IN. SPACE.

by William Munn

Possible Themes:

Exploration, Survival, Colonization, First Contact

Inspired by:

Star Trek. Swiss Family Robinson. The Muppet Show. Bears everywhere.

The Rise of Intelligent Animals & Ursus Exploration

Humanity is poorly suited for the rigors of deep space exploration and colonization on the fringes of the civilized galaxy. Proper cryostasis is risky for homo-sapiens without great expense, so we turned to genetic advances in the animal kingdom. Ursus Exploration came to be because bears and other animals have better tools for exploring the galaxy and preparing the way for humanity. Animal-sapiens, as intelligent non-humans are colloquially known, have naturally supported or genetically reawakened hibernation and an omnivorous diet well-suited for long journeys to undeveloped worlds where food is sparse. Their superior physical attributes (including immense strength, sense of smell, and the natural sprinting ability of up to 60 MPH) are key to managing the unknown. Of course, a built-in defense system using their claws and jaws also doesn't hurt. Human genetic engineers have uplifted multiple species into the new terrestrial-based sapiens heritages:

Tirhu

The survivalist brown bear (tirhu-sapiens) get along well with humans and other species when they must, but retain some of their solitary nature.

(**Suggested stats:** 6HP, Heritage Trait: Natural Survivor [some form of advantage in survival situations])

Awrla

Dexterous and clever (and not technically a bear, but chosen for the preceding reasons) the red panda (awrla-sapiens) are precocious and are prone to infighting with each other. May be prone to playing tricks on crewmates.

(**Suggested stats:** 4HP, Heritage Trait: Climbing Maestro [some form of advantage in climbing/balance/agility])

Karhu

Wise, methodical, and deadly, the polar bear (karhu-sapiens) is often a chosen leader for their general stability and trustworthiness. Karhu respect all uplifted animals as equal. Don't underestimate their claws in a fight.

7HP, Heritage Trait: Powerful Claws

Humhu

The long-tongued and curious sloth bear (humhu-sapiens) tend to only go into space with other heritages. Left to their own devices, they wouldn't do much. Humhu don't tend to respect authority but otherwise, bear no grudges.

(**Suggested stats:** 6HP, Heritage Trait: Heightened Senses [some form of advantage in sense-based awareness])

Ursus Exploration gives the assignments, and space-faring ships of animal-sapiens large and small take them on. Crews may include the occasional human, gen, or autoborg, or even the rare friendly non-terrestrial person. The animal-sapiens heritages aren't openly hostile to any particular group without just cause. The human race regards their creations with feelings ranging from curiosity and gratitude to fear and even open hostility. Many regard UE as heroes of the planet and yet are still terrified in the presence of a giant intelligent polar bear.

Adventurers take on the role of the crew of an Ursus Exploration ship, colonists preparing a planet for future habitation by the other sapient earth species, or making first-contact with the other intelligent races of the galaxy. Think Star Trek on the Millennium Falcon with Ursus Exploration in place of the Federation. Some leaders of UE are animal-sapiens, but most are humans and gens. The habitable planets nearest to Earth are inhabited by human, gen, and animal-sapiens, and lines of trade are established with many alien heritages throughout the galaxy. Meanwhile, animal-sapiens continue to push the boundaries of exploration farther and farther from the earth— what will they find?

What Derelict?

Thunder had a methodical way about her odd for her Awrla heritage. She was inclined to use her head in tight situations, including hurling objects at her enemies with her overpowered brain. The world of computers, robots, and AIs trembled at her resounding presence, and the nets and webs closed their doors in vain. She also excelled in the healer's art. Aboard *The Minor*, an Ursus Exploration ship, Captain Resolve was always kind to Thunder, even turning the other way when she got into tiffs with her sister. Resolve was a patient Karhu. *And I bet he isn't even thirty*, Thunder thought, *he's too young to be this cool and collected.*

As it happened, the fourth crew-member onboard the UES Minor, a Humhu named Gordon, was one of the trickiest tests of patience Thunder has seen her captain deal with. Somehow the gengineers on Earth had messed up Gordon's hibernation DNA markers, and now he had an unfortunate tendency of lapsing into partial hibernation at inopportune moments. The captain was often asking Thunder to administer stimulants to the sloth bear during tricky assignments where falling asleep could be hazardous to him or the rest of the team. It was her least favorite duty because Gordon complained constantly, and he smelled like sardines. Today was no different.

"But, I'm tired," Gordon said. "Can't you just tell Cap you gave it to me?"

"It's duty, Gordon. Can't have you dozing off in the middle of q-manip maintenance. We'd all end up in quantum bits." Resolve replied from a nearby compartment where he could overhear the exchange.

"Aww, I wouldn't let anything that important slip," the Humhu said with all the petulance of a two-year-old cub getting kicked out of her mother's den.

"Here on the edge of civ, everything's critical," Resolve chided, "even the trash compactors."

"Yeah!" Lightning said leaning around the navigator's chair to chime in down the main hall of the ship. "We all have to be one-hundred percent sharp." While her back was turned, the ship's proximity alarms klaxoned, and she promptly fell out of her seat. With a terrified look, she scrambled up to navigate the vessel around a piece of what looked like debris.

The polar bear captain did his best to hide his amusement, but Gordon showed no such restraint and rolled his eyes so hard they moved his entire head in a circle.

Lightning yelped, "What in the name of my furry hide was that?" The sisters, Lightning and Thunder, were as different as it was possible for two Awrla to be. Lightning was quick, nimble, and brilliant. No surprise there. The purple of her laser sword cast its glow in the wake of multitudes of her fallen enemies. She was also a bit jumpy and tended to act or speak before thinking.

"Scanning—looks like it used to be a ship," Thunder replied breathless from her rush back to the bridge.

"Strange all the way out here. Are there records of any failed Ursus missions to Beta Orionis?" Resolve asked.

"No sir, we're the first," the Thunder replied.

"We should check it out!" Lightning said and grabbed an away-bag from the wall and started stuffing bite-sized eucalyptus bales into it.

The other three crew members stared at her while she crammed the bag full of snacks pausing only to shove one in her mouth several times and gulping each one down.

"What?" she asked catching a half-chewed bite that fell from her mouth as she spoke.

The other three laughed out loud. This was so Lightning.

For her part, Lightning looked a little sheepish, then giggled too.

The Captain was the first to settle down and said, "Alright, Lightning. Look over the wreckage. Take Gordon—Gordon you'll need more go-juice before you leave."

"Whatever you say, sir. Anything to get off the Minor for a few hours."

Thunder scooted into her sister's seat at the helm and turned the Minor around and expertly sidled her up next to their discovered junk heap. It only vaguely resembled a ship. *Lightning isn't the only one who can fly*, she thought with a certain smugness.

Then, caught off-guard, she gasped audibly as *The Minor's* automated docking protocols perfectly synced up to the derelict and the readings showed that its atmosphere and artificial gravity were both operating within acceptable parameters. She mentioned as much to Resolve, and he took a moment to ponder.

It wasn't long before he decided to suit up as well and walked with Lightning and Gordon to the docking bay. The three of them had weapons drawn, and Lightning's laser sword snapped to life.

Thunder watched the video feed from the captain's helmet. When the three of them set foot on the other ship, its lumen system automatically lit the hallway before them. The hallway was pristine—undamaged. Nearly perfect, outside of a few scuff marks on the shiny floor. Odd. The readings from Captain Resolve's suit beeped the safety of the environment, and he unsealed and removed his helmet. Thunder heard him take a deep breath. "Smells antiseptic. Like a human ship," Resolve said.

Strange, what would humans be doing this far out? Thunder thought.

She didn't have time to ponder. There was a loud crash, and away party's video and audio feeds went to static.

Oh no, Thunder thought. *Pirates*.

NPCs

The Crew of the Minor

Resolve

Heritage: Karhu
HP: 9
Heritage Traits: Powerful Claws
Traits: Strong, Tough, Diehard
Weapon Proficiency: Heavy Melee
Weapon Mastery: Claws, Greataxe
Family Trade: Ursus Lobbyists
Belief: All intelligent creatures are equal regardless of how they obtained their intelligence.
Ship Rank: Captain

Lightning

Heritage: Awrla
HP: 6
Heritage Traits: Climbing Maestro
Traits: Tough, Born Fighter, Charismatic
Weapon Proficiency: Light Melee
Weapon Mastery: Laser Sword
Family Trade: Extraction specialists (thieves)
Belief: I'm invincible!
Crew Rank: Tactical/Helm

Thunder

Heritage: Awrla
HP: 4
Heritage Traits: Climbing Maestro
Traits: Psionic - Telekinesis, Psionic - Biomancy, Hacker
Weapon Proficiency: Light Ranged

Weapon Mastery: Laser Pistol

Family Trade: Extraction specialists (thieves)

Belief: Some problems can't be solved with a laser sword or gun.

Ship Rank: Communications/Medical

Gordon

Heritage: Humhu

HP: 6

Heritage Traits: Heightened Senses

Traits: Engineer, Marksman, Educated

Weapon Proficiency: Heavy Ranged

Weapon Mastery: Laser Sniper Rifle

Family Trade: Truffle hunters

Belief: Space exploration is almost as critical as my nap.

Ship Rank: Engineer

The UES Minor

Chassis: Striker Class

Structure: 6

Fuel: 14

Crew: Up to 12

Chassis System: Agile Dodge - *Passive*: Whenever the Striker is hit by a Ranged attack, they may roll a Test at Disadvantage. If they succeed, they negate all damage from the attack. This does not stack with the Evade action.

Other Systems:

Jamming Array: A sophisticated sensor array that can jam enemy communications. Passive: Spend 3 Fuel to give an opponent Disadvantage on a Test before they Test.

Armor Piercing Multi-cannon: A rapid-fire high velocity weapon designed to pierce armor and puncture plating. Action: Make three Attack Tests with Disadvantage. Each successful test deals 1 damage. This damage cannot be reduced.

Main Cannon: A reliable long-range weapon is mounted on your Starship. Action: Make an Attack Test. If successful, deal 2 damage. If you fire on an immobile target, this attack has Advantage.

Repair Drones: Robots assist in repair tasks. Action: Spend 3 Fuel. Restore 2 Structure to either your Starship or an adjacent Starship.

Gravity Engines: A reactionless engine that is very efficient for long missions. Action: Spend 2 Fuel, and then move. You may use an Attack System (giving your Test Disadvantage) at the end of the move.

Fuel Tanks: Massive reservoirs of fuel. Passive: Permanently increase your Starship's Fuel by 4.

Adventure Starters

Winter's End on Slojo

Players are part of a colony ship settling UEP22741, also known as Slojo. Slojo is the 4th planet from the binary stars in the center of the system. As a frontier planet conditions are somewhat rustic, and in some ways resemble the old west, if the old west had laser pistol toting animal-sapiens. The colony ships landed only ten earth years previous, and the first winter in that time has now passed (3 EY long). Now that the snows are melting, strange structures can be seen north of the main colony settlement. The marshal asks our heroes to investigate, and they discover that the structures were built to shelter someone, or something, from winter. They apparently were made with tools, but the builders are nowhere to be found. They must unravel the mystery, and discover if there is more sentient life dwelling on Slojo, and what to do about it.

First Contact With The Salimar

 Ursus Exploration has been in contact with a new sentient species who call themselves the Salimar. A strategic alliance with this trading, space-faring civilization will be a boon for both sides if only we can come to a mutually beneficial agreement. Players are part of an envoy escorting UE diplomats to make first contact. The problem is, the diplomats never showed up. Now our heroes must try to find the missing ship of diplomats, but the galaxy is vast, and time is running out. Who will meet with the Salimar if all other options run out?

Dead Planet Hunting

 Throughout UE's exploration of the galaxy, we've stumbled upon more than one "dead" planet. Even Mars in our Solar system once held burgeoning life. UE leadership has decided to devote resources to catalog such planets and determine what wiped out their life (and in infrequent cases, their civilization). After several instances of meteor strikes and other mundane causes wiping out single-cell life on dusty rocks like Mars, our heroes come upon a planetary system were not one, but three planets were once colonized by a civilization where now only lower life-forms remain. The hunters must brave the violent indigenous species to gather evidence solve the mystery.

Home No More

 The crew of the UES Dayglider returned to earth for refueling and reassignment, and they wander out of the UE containment area to a local human bar. After a ruckus, several humans are dead or wounded, and the crew is missing. Local authorities insist the explorers are to blame, but UE sends a group of investigators (the Players) to determine what happened and find the missing crew. Tensions mount as the investigators find growing evidence pointing to the guilt of the crew of the Dayglider. They have to find answers quickly before all UE operations and animal-sapiens are exiled from Earth indefinitely.

THE VENTURE

by Dan Wells

The human race colonized dozens of systems and hundreds of worlds, but as their civilization grew, civil government was superseded by the rule of private corporations, grabbing resources and claiming territory until every citizen of the galaxy was an employee of one company and an enemy to all others. This left the corporations with no customers and no market for growth, resulting in a bloody conflict called The Market War, which lasted for three decades before a group of CEOs was able to broker a peace. They recognized that they could not survive without an open market and healthy competition, so they created the Joint Venture: ten systems, comprising dozens of planets, in which every business is allowed to operate freely. The businesses themselves were consolidated into seven super corporations, called Syndicates, each with its own multiplanetary fiefdom, and each with a representative on The Bureau, which rules the Venture as a Board of Directors.

The Venture is the only thing keeping the Syndicates from tumbling back into open war, so the Syndicates and the Bureau have worked for two centuries to keep it functional, stable, and safe. Each Syndicate has a specialty, but they all have their fingers in a bit of everything, putting them in constant competition; some of this is handled with cutthroat but legal business practices, and some of it with hackers, spies, covert infiltrators, black ops, and even assault troops when the situation calls for it. The Consumers--the people of the Venture--are completely oblivious to this shadow war, even though most of them work for a division of a division of a Syndicate. The Employees, though--the people born and raised on Syndicate worlds, who identify with their corporate brands as deeply as any patriot--will stop at nothing to see their company come out on top.

The Venture

Homeworld: Capitol

Focus: The Venture is kind of like a wildlife preserve, where ruthless corporations keep naive consumers well-fed and well-employed, all so they can watch the right ads and buy the right stuff. Money cycles in and out of the Venture like water through a filter, and each Syndicate is doing everything they can to get more back out than they put in.

- **Operatives**: Venture operatives keep the peace and enforce the trade laws, punishing violations where necessary.
- **Police**: Street-level cops fighting street-level crime.
- **Venture Interplanetary Security (VIS):** Space cops, patrolling the open space between planets.
- **Bureau Agents:** Agents who investigate the Syndicates directly, watching for violations.
- **Enforcers:** Armed to the teeth with advanced, computerized gear, the Enforcers are a physical threat big enough to make even the tough Syndicate soldier pause.

Agri-Max

Homeworld: Carilon

Cultural Focus: Victory Through Discovery

Description: Agri-Max is a tight conglomeration of food-science corporations, with sidelines in oil-based bio-fuels, algae-based batteries and solar cells, and even genetic engineering, including efficient plants, custom pets, engineered work animals, and human augmentation--though human DNA mods are illegal, so they keep these technologies top secret.

Operatives: Agri-Max has older gear, but maintains their edge through genetic augmentation, animal mounts and companions, and an extensive suite of drugs called Boosts.

- **Newmans:** An engineered super human, using everything from heightened reflexes and healing to gills and claws and more.
- **K9s:** A commando who works in conjunction with an engineered animal companion.

- **Outriders:** Soldiers with larger animals used as mounts: raptors, cats, bears, and sometimes even birds or cetaceans.
- **Boosters:** Agri-Max's best infiltrators and spies use a suite of hidden drugs to turn from a mild-mannered nobody to a devastating powerhouse in only a few heartbeats.

Wheelhouse Unlimited

Homeworld: Vostok

Cultural Focus: Get in, Get it Done, Get Out

Description: Wheelhouse is the Venture's primary supplier of both water and energy, including the Beranium ore that makes FTL drives possible. Through this, they also control a huge number of planetary and asteroid mines, many of them operated by advanced robotics, and are a major producer of spaceships, airplanes, hovercraft, and wheeled vehicles.

Operatives: WHU's military strength lies in speed, power, and drones. They favor high mobility and energy-based weapons.

- **Bruisers:** Arguably the most powerful heavy insertion troops in the galaxy.
- **Daredevils:** Peerless stunt drivers with some of the most advanced cars, motorcycles, and ATVs in the galaxy.
- **Razorwings:** Equipped with flight packs, precise cutting lasers, and advanced cybersecurity suites.
- **Toymasters:** Gadgeteers equipped with short range defense drones, long range attack drones, palm-sized assassin bots, wasp-sized recon bots, and more.

Magniplex Studios

Homeworld: Magniplex Prime

Cultural Focus: If You're Going to Do it, Do it Big

Description: Magniplex has its finger in every branch of the Venture's entertainment, from movies to publishing to sports to news to virtual reality. They have TVs, phones, game systems, and fashion, and they have the advertising muscle to sell it all.

Operatives: Magniplex agents lean toward the lighter, less combat-oriented end of the spectrum.

- **Holo-Men:** Advanced holographic technology and cyber-projectors can make them look like anyone they want.
- **Drama Queens:** A deep cover con artist of immaculate skill.
- **FX:** Covert technicians who excel behind the scenes, coding and hacking and manipulating everything from data to signals to cybernetics to thoughts.
- **Bouncers:** Start with a big brawler, use bionics to make them bigger, then give them a nice suit and an overpowered gun.

Arroyo, Inc.

Homeworld: Sadec V

Cultural Focus: Everything Is Part of the Whole

Description: Arroyo builds everything, from tiny consumer devices to massive construction projects and interstellar vessels, and all of it is visually branded and seamlessly integrated into the Arroyo SmartLife network. This ecosystem of networked technology could not function without an amazing level of anti-hacking measures, and thus Arroyo has become the leading expert in cybersecurity.

Operatives: Every Syndicate uses branded arms and armor: smooth curves, white panels, soft glowing lights, and a user-friendly interface.

- **Cubos:** Cubos have no bodies: their minds have been uploaded to secure, portable hard drives, from which they can be transferred in and out of almost any computer system in the galaxy.
- **Espadas:** Soldiers using a dedicated suite of networked technology, functioning as a single extension of the operative's mind.
- **Caballeros:** Drivers and fighter pilots partnered with limited AI sidekicks.
- **Ojos:** Among the best surveillance experts in the galaxy.

Najima Telecommunications

Homeworld: Altura

Cultural Focus: Wherever You Go, We're Already There

Description: Najima builds and maintains the infrastructure for phones, Internet, and more, including a vast satellite network with deep space repeaters, enabling convenient communication even between solar systems. Every Syndicate has their own encryption and usually their own infrastructure, but Najima's is the best and most Consumers in the Venture use it. If someone doesn't use an Arroyo phone, they probably use a Najima.

Operatives: Najima has more rivals than most, because they use their leverage to compete in every industry they can.

- **Alsuqur:** Armed patrols, protecting satellites, repeaters, and space lanes.
- **Albaraqa:** A failed cable technology became, with tweaking, a devastating weapon called the Lightning Whip, used for movement and combat, and easily concealed for covert missions.
- **Alzilal:** Spies and assassins, armed with cybernetic senses and weapons.
- **Wahush:** Heavy infantry with advanced electronic warfare suites.

Fúxiâo Enterprises

Homeworld: Jiā

Cultural Focus: Only We Have Secrets

Description: A chemical company that sells cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, batteries, solvents, solar cells, and more. Fúxiâo is about science, at every level and in every market, and within their area of specialty there is virtually nothing they can't analyze, reverse-engineer, and improve upon.

Operatives: Fúxiâo uses subtle methods with a deceptive, underhanded flair.

- **Lâohû:** Hard combat troops with a toolbox array of chemical weapons: tranquilizers, paralytics, hallucinogenics, acids, and more.
- **Guí:** Black ops combat hackers armed with sniper rifles and deadly blades, all fully plastic and impossible for enemy security systems to detect.
- **Kāihuā:** Poison experts who use subterfuge and seduction to get close to their targets, learn what they can, and kill who they must.
- **Dà Shû:** Biologically enhanced nightmares who can chew through anything, resist deadly toxins, and survive for weeks in pits and sewers and other environments no sane operative would get into at all.

Paladin Enterprises

Homeworld: Morolia

Cultural Focus: Appearance Is Everything

Description: A healthcare company focusing on hospitals, pharmacology, and cybernetics, with expansions into genetics, hospitality, private security, and the best public relations in the Venture. All of their divisions present themselves as sincere, caring companies, but they will betray anyone to protect their bottom line, and arrange things so they still look like the heroes.

Operatives: Maintaining their reputation requires both highly visible soldiers and hidden black ops commandos.

- **Protectors:** A well-trained, well-groomed army that always makes sure that they look like the good guys.
- **Persuaders:** Cybernetically enhanced security teams, capable of blending in or standing out as the situation requires.
- **Hosts:** A cybernetic spy equipped with hidden ports containing autonomous minidrones.
- **Nevers:** Ragtag warriors with no uniform and no standard-issue equipment; used when Paladin wants to keep its fingerprints far away from a sensitive job.

Independent Businesses

Homeworld: Planets, stations, and asteroids throughout the Venture

Cultural Focus: Fight for Every Penny

Description: The Venture is designed as a capitalist paradise, but independent business are outlawed. If you're not a Syndicate and you want to make a buck, you need a careful balance of publicity, secrecy, forgery, and armed force.

Operatives: There is no set group or style of Independent operative, though they do tend to fall into four basic categories.

- **Techrats:** Coders, hackers, and information specialists.
- **Mercs:** Armed muscle, plain and simple.
- **Faces:** Con artists, liars, moles, and more.
- **Ronin:** The Ronin is unique, even among Independents: they seek not to feed a corporation but to make the world, or the Venture, or even the Galaxy, a better place. Some are lone wolves, fighting injustice wherever they find it, while others are teams or even mini corporations of their own, pooling their resources to take down bigger targets.

WARPED

by Drew Wendell

Possible Themes:

Exploration, Rebellion, Empire Building, Diplomacy, Piracy, and Megaverse Altering Events.

Inspired by:

Ancient Aliens, Star Trek, The Harlock Saga, Quantum Break, Battleship Yamato, Foundation, and YouTube Conspiracy Videos.

The Past:

It didn't take long. It was bound to happen. Newton worked out gravity, and less than three centuries later we put a man on the moon. Einstein worked out space-time, and just less than four centuries, we figured out how to warp it.

It all started with orichalcum, a rare, red metal with a faint glow found in the depths of the Earth and on Mars. We didn't know quite what to do with it until Dr. Tannhauser plugged some into a fusion reactor and bent space. I don't know the science of it, but if you run enough juice through it, orichalcum can fold space. Suddenly, we could travel faster than light, and the eggheads had just started debating whether we could use the T-Drive to hop dimensions when someone answered the question for us. That's when things got weird.

It's hard to explain without falling into conflicting theories of religion, history, and just about everything else, so I'll stick to the absolute facts.

Orichalcum is special stuff, maybe the most important stuff in the megaverse; and everyone wants it, especially the Mighty.

The Mighty are the name we've given to the first or most powerful sentient species to start dimension hopping and collecting orichalcum. They're still collecting it, hording it, and fighting each other over it, like we used to do with gold or oil. The Mighty, and their Servitors, have been meddling in Earthly affairs for a long time; thousands of years if you believe the conspiracy nuts, who don't look quite as crazy anymore. I have to say some of it's pretty convincing: the Mighty setting themselves up as gods, getting their devoted followers to mine orichalcum, and making their human pawns do the heavy lifting for the massive machines the Mighty use to purify the stuff. Just who or what from history was the work of the Mighty isn't certain, but the conspiracy buffs smelled something rotten; they called the puppet master "Aten."

What we know for sure is they'd set up a base inside the moon. We found this out when an Ahleghiri fleet arrived. While humanity was busy coming to grips with the apocalypse, the Aten scrambled its fleet, which poured out of false craters on the dark side of the moon. By the time the two motherships locked in combat, the militaries of Earth came up with a fleet of their own and a typically human solution. We nuked everything and everybody that wasn't us. Amazingly, it worked. I suppose it wouldn't occur to other intelligent races to detonate thousands of nuclear warheads in the middle of a space battle, poisoning a huge swath of the sky and creating an orbital shotgun blast of debris the size of a continent, travelling at 17,500 mph. We're special like that.

With all the commanders blown to bits, both sides just stopped fighting. For a moment, there was silence. First we waited, and then we came up with a surprisingly human solution: we started to talk. Turns out, neither side wanted to be fighting in the first place. The Gens, Aten's genetically engineered humans, and the Ahleghiri, got us up to speed pretty quick.

We learned orichalcum shows up predominantly in planets with sentient life, or which once had sentient life.

Some people say sentient life creates orichalcum, but we can't prove that. Other people say we've got it backwards and sentient life only shows up on planets with orichalcum because it causes sentient life to develop. We can't prove that either. All we know for sure is to get orichalcum, you've usually got to take it.

 The Mighty generally get their orichalcum, or "ori," as it's now commonly known, by influencing or enslaving sentient species and getting them to dig the stuff up. Some, like Aten, work subtly; others, like Al-Gal, who ruled the Ahleghiri, openly rule as god-kings. Still others, like the Horde Fleet, wander space, ripping planets to shreds and processing the scraps for ori. A handful of Mighty seem benevolent and enlightened, but even they have to defend their territory by force.

 The Ahleghiri helped us build the T-Gate just beyond the moon, to send them back home, and the Heliopause Disruptor Field, to keep unwanted guests from showing up on our doorstep. When they left, the truth sunk in: if we wanted to keep our freedom, we'd have to fight for it.

The Present:

All that was three centuries ago. About two decades ago, our brainiacs noticed the disruptor field was weakening. Every time ori works its magic, a little burns off; sometimes just molecules, sometimes kilograms, depending on the use. The ori fueling the HDF was running low and we didn't have a lot lying around; we'd used most of it for ori-tech, weapons and ships capable of fighting off the next invasion. The only way to get the ori we needed was to go out and find it.

 For twenty years, we've sent out fleet after fleet. We discovered the Axis, an ancient, enormous way station between dimensions and central meeting point for species with ori-tech. Some negotiated trade deals, others found ruined worlds to explore, and still others hired themselves out as mercenaries. Some made allies among the other

sentients, some made a lot of enemies. Some came back laden with ori, some never came back at all. Pirates, explorers, petty despots, merchant princes, villains, and heroes; we can be whatever we want out there. Get rich, save the world, or do a little of both. So what do you say kid? Got it in you?

Adventure Hooks

1. **Retrograde** – Your oriscope detects a ruined world covered by a vast, abandoned cityscape. Within metal ziggurats and pyramids, the ancient, automated machines of the Mighty still churn, refining the last kilograms of the planet's orichalcum. Twisted and deadly creatures lurk in the deep shadows and dark alleys of the city. Among these are savage but vaguely intelligent humanoids, loping and grunting, clad in scraps of animal skin. Are they the remnants of a once great civilization? Did the Mighty strip them of sentience when they stripped the planet of orichalcum? What happens if the you take the rest?

2. **Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis** – In a far corner of the megaverse, you discover a world in turmoil. Two of the Mighty have spent a century at war over the planet and their battles have rained advanced tech, including weaponry, down on the Bronze Age cultures below. With their armories depleted, the Mighty enlist the planet's denizens, who worship them as gods, to continue the conflict. The arrival of even a single starship could swing the balance to one side... or in favor of the oppressed but well-armed populace.

Ori-Tech

Orimeter/Oriscope: This piece of kit can be hand held (orimeters) or built into a ship (oriscope); either way it detects orichalcum. Orimeters provide precise locations in the immediate vicinity; oriscopes detect large amounts from parsecs or dimensions away.

Warp-Tech

Warp-Tech uses orichalcum to bend space. It's more an art than a science, and requires the Warp Wizard Trait to use. When selecting the Trait, pick two of the abilities below. These abilities do not require a test to activate, though some abilities require tests to use successfully.

- **Displacement**: When rolling one die to Evade, you succeed on a 4, 5, or 6.
- **Slide-Step**: On a successful Evade, you may move [units]
- **Teleport:** Spend an action to move any distance within line of sight.
- **Curve-Bullet:** Sacrifice 1 Hit Point to do an additional 1 damage on your next successful Ranged attack.
- **Redirect:** Spend an action. The next time you are successfully attacked, Test with Disadvantage. If successful, the attack hits a target of your choice as well, dealing full damage to the target and half damage to you (minimum 1).

Chrono-Tech

Chrono-Tech uses orichalcum to alter the flow of time. Doing so requires years of disciplined training and the Chronomancer Trait. When selecting the Trait, pick two of the abilities below. These abilities do not require a test to activate, though some abilities require tests to use successfully.

- **Tempus Fugit:** Reroll 1's on initiative.
- **Slow Motion:** Test to deny a target one action on her next turn.
- **Overclocked:** Sacrifice 1 Hit Point for an additional action on your next turn.
- **Interupt:** Sacrifice 1 Hit Point to take one of your actions after any action in the round, regardless of whose turn it is.
- **Speed Force:** Sacrifice 1 Hit Point to add 1 Damage to your next successful Melee attack.

Note: Warp and Chrono Tech take a toll on the mind and body. Characters with Psionics or Cybernetics cannot take the Warp Wizard or Chronomancer Trait.

THE GRAND ARCHIVE

by Wendelyn Reischl

Humanity has lived amongst the stars for millennia. For nearly a thousand years they have collected the memories and genetic codes of their forebearers with a drop of blood collected in the moments before death. These treasures, more valuable than any other resource, are stored in a fortified space station at the hub of human occupied space; it is known as the Grand Archive.

The Grand Archive

This state of the art space station is the bastion of humanity and all of its collective knowledge. Not only does it serve as a storage vault, it also houses the assembly of the Central Human Authority, and is the birthplace of the Progeny. There are scientific research facilities, training facilities, hab units, and the command headquarters for humanity's vast military and exploration fleets.

There is nowhere in human occupied space that is more important or better defended than the Grand Archive. Citizens who seek to board the Grand Archive are heavily scrutinized before they are admitted. The genetic vault itself is sealed except to the Antiquarians, the collectors and caretakers of the genetic memory. The elite Vault Guardians are the only people allowed to carry weapons aboard the station. The Vault Guardians are trained to fight in a style that specifically does not shed blood in order to protect against genetic contamination.

The Archive's Progeny

Many of humanity's explorers and soldiers are born as the Archive's Progeny, human genetic constructs that combine both the physical characteristics and the genetic memories of their forebearers. All of the Archive's Progeny are born at the Grand Archive. To best leverage the genetic memories they possess, each Progeny's path is selected for them prior to gestation. They are cultivated with rigorous physical training regimens among others who share their destiny. The Progeny also submit to an educational program known as Anamnesis – the process of "re-remembering" -- their forebearer's experiences.

The Archive's Progeny are a step ahead in development and their bodies are supplemented to grow faster than their natural counterparts, reaching full physical and mental maturity at age 15. Though this accelerated growth can cause early organ failure, the Progeny program is deemed worthwhile by the Central Human Authority (CHA). While each Progeny has their own thoughts and feelings, it can be a challenge to suss them apart from their bred-in memories and biases from prior lifetimes.

There is a divide among the Progeny. Some of them embrace the past, falling with ease into living as a forebearers, sometimes even taking an old name and living as if they simply were that person. There are those with stronger wills who seek to understand themselves as individuals, separate from their forebearers, but with an added layer of insight and experience. That is the harder path to take, requiring hours spent in meditation and self-reflection.

Certain factions within the CHA have concerns that the Progeny program could be subverted to produce types of children with specific or implanted memories as a form of deep manipulation. For example, using an extreme loyalist as a forebearers for a unit of soldiers could cause a shift in the power structure, or even lead to a coup.

The Void's Children

People who are born naturally across the reaches of space are known as Void's Children. These children grow up with what is considered an archaic or traditional childhood raised by their families with a galaxy of choice spread out before them. They do not carry with them the genetic memory of their parents. Per the regulations, the more politically minded are tapped as high ranking diplomats and military officials. While others among the Void's Children prefer to live simple lives as creatives, many of whom crave autonomy from the strict CHA system.

While the Void's Children are conceived naturally, previous human genetic conditioning has enabled coupling to spark life without the restrictions of previously imposed by gender. Any person can carry a child with their lover. While no instances have been recorded, it is possible for humans to have offspring with other sentient species across the galaxy.

Unlike the Archive's Progeny, the Void's Children do not have the echoes of memories ringing in their minds. They see themselves as pure and natural, without the concern of ingrained manipulation that haunts the Progeny. Whereas the Progeny see themselves as superior, the next step in human evolution. They derisively refer to the Void's Children as "Devoid" because they lack inherited knowledge of prior lifetimes. However, this is why many top ranking officials are required to be Void's Children in order to prevent undue influence or manipulation at the genetic level.

The Galdan:

These extremely long lived beings hail from a different galaxy and have much to offer humans in the way of technology that is far superior to their own. While they make themselves appear in a humanoid form, their natural state is far outside the realm of human acceptance. Some courageous and curious Galdan seek to leave the fleet and live among the humans to learn about humanity first hand.

The Progeny especially interest the Galdan as they contain lifetimes worth of experiences more on par with the lifespan of the Galdan species.

The Galdan's appearance at the edge of human occupied space is a mystery. While they have a small fleet, they are not overtly hostile to humanity. The overall sense is tense, as if the Galdan did not expect to find humanity in their path. The Galdan, or at least this faction of the species, are a dying species and seek a way to preserve themselves or reverse their decline.

One of the most important recent changes to interstellar politics is a budding alliance with the Galdan species. They have travelled into Central Human Authority space with a small fleet and only a few thousand of their people. The linchpin of the alliance is a point of enormous contention; they require access to the Grand Archive and wish to store their own genetic memories alongside humanity's own. The Central Human Authority does not believe they can defeat the Galdan in open war and there are strong indications that the alliance will be formed.

The origin, innate abilities, and natural appearance of the Galdan species is left specifically vague. Perhaps this species ties in with the Bloc's discovery (see below) but it could be completely separate. Game facilitators and players are encouraged to work together to better define this species.

The Antiquarians:

A select few of the most trusted people in humanity are sent to the far reaches of the void to collect the blood of the fallen to bring back to the Grand Archive. Sometimes they physically collect the sample themselves, especially when it is critical to ensure the blood is not contaminated, more often they retrieve vaults of samples collected by medical staff. The most important members of CHA society are assigned an Antiquarian as a constant companion to ensure proper sample collection when they die. The Antiquarian's goal is to have a complete record of the human experience going forward, and as such no one is exempt from submitting blood. This duty to humanity is paramount beyond all else.

High ranking Antiquarians travel in the best ships and are shown the highest respect where they travel. However the lower level Antiquarians, accompanied by guards, are sent to warzones and the dangerous reaches beyond humanity's control to salvage what they can of the record for return to the Grand Archive.

The Myth of Legacy:

The Antiquarians have a theory that someday a Progeny will be born that can contain all human experience recorded in one single being called "Legacy." There is a secret program currently in place testing the feasibility of Legacy, called the Heir program. The Heirs are unknowingly implanted with more and more genetic memories throughout their lifetime to see how many people can be contained within one body. The results have not been positive in most cases, but testing continues.

The Bloc

Elsewhere in the galaxy, there is a branch faction of humanity known as the Bloc that has broken off from the CHA. The Bloc primarily consists of Void's Children who claim that they want autonomy and to be left alone to live out their lives. Thus far it has been a cold war. Their relationship with the Galdan is unknown, In general they are a destabilizing element trying to run raids on the Vault, infiltrate the CHA, and generally keeping things fluid and unpredictable. Rumors swirl that they have made a monumental discover that they are keeping from the Grand Archive. No Antiquarians have returned from the Bloc in more than a decade.

Some questions
to explore in game

- Is an entire blood sample is used to create a Progeny, if not how many can be created? How does this impact the use of blood samples, are some more valuable that others? Who decides when samples are used?
- Are there Void's Children and Archive's Progeny that are genetic siblings?
- What are the factions within the Central Human Authority and what divides them? What are relations like between Progeny and the Void's Children? Does one group have more power than the other?
- Is anyone seeking to destroy the genetic vault within the Grand Archive? Is there only a single genetic vault? Does humanity (or the Galdan) have the technology to duplicate the vault?
- Is the Progeny program a valuable upgrade to humanity or it is too easily manipulated? Who might be manipulating the Progeny and to what end?
- What is the Bloc keeping from the rest of humanity?
- Will the Central Human Authority allow the Galdan access to the Grand Archive? What happens if they do? What happens if they don't?
- Why are the Galdan trying to enter Central Human Authority space? Are they fleeing something or searching for something? Did they come specifically for the Archive?
- What happens if Legacy is successfully created? Can Legacy be contaminated? What happens if Legacy dies or is captured?

TRISTAR!

by Ben Woerner

Tropes:

Space Westerns, Asteroid Mining, Shootouts, Aliens

"This asteroid ain't big enough for the both of us Reid! And I'm disinclined to hand over this here chunk of agua fria to you and your precious band of Rangers. If you want to tussle over this little chunk of eludium then I think you best be touching iron or get blasted to Hell!"

- Hexus Red's last words before his cyborg body was destroyed for the fifth time by John "Silverhorse" Reid, Lone Star Ranger

Introduction

The system of Tristar is a boomtown. The rarest of elements and a key ingredient in powering FTL jumpgates, Eludium, was discovered in massive quantities in the vast asteroid fields that circle the trinary of red, blue, and yellow stars. Tristar is part of the New Frontier: an area once colonized by various galactic races, but lost contact with the rest of the civilized galaxy after the Starnish-Adastracan Wars. During the wars FTL via jumpgates was discovered and let the Adastracans dominate and win the final war.

The various species throughout the galaxy soon gained access to the FTL jumpgates and the galaxy is in the throes of a colonizing expansion boom. Robot ships travel at near relativistic speeds to every corner of the galaxy to connect known systems with jumpgates or rediscover old ones. Tristar is part of the rediscovered New Frontier of star systems.

When the gate arrived and new folks began streaming into the system they discovered several surviving bands of species living amongst the asteroids in Tsé Bit'a'í Ships (giant O'Neill style cylinder ships with hollow interiors that use centripetal force to create artificial gravities and open arable

land and water). The planets were either gas giants or nigh uninhabitable. Leaving the original inhabitants alone the new arrivals quickly set about terraforming the six rocky planets by bombarding them with icy asteroids and heating them with space mirrors brought from other systems.

Despite the five new terraformed planets there wasn't much interest in Tristar, for several decades, until a prospector discovered eludium on Jefferson. A small rush began, but when little more was unearthed the rush faded until two years later a cartographer realized that all the eludium discovered was at sites where the terraformers had launched asteroids into the planet. A real boom began in earnest and the system was flooded with asteroid miners, outlaws, asteroid mining suppliers, massive spaceship casinos, brothels, luxury resorts, preachers, bandidos, revolutionaries, con-artists, bounty hunters, and lawmen.

Eludium is near impossible to detect, but one property it has when it mixed with water is to raise the melting point of the water several hundred degrees. Miners use this quirk to detect eludium rich asteroids by heating them up, if the ice water doesn't sublimate then the asteroid is an "agua fria" and contains eludium. Miners will collect large groups of agua fria asteroids using small automatic robot thrusters and guidance systems that they mount onto each rock. Once they have a large enough collection they drive them, like the cattle of the old west, to one of the many space stations that orbit the six planets of Tristar. There the refineries and transport ships send the eludium out of the system to the rest of the galaxy.

Mining would be straightforward if not for the bands of roving outlaws that hide amongst the vast asteroid fields and wait for the right moment

to steal the asteroids out from under the noses of the drovers and miners. The colonists got serious about the outlaws once a band calling themselves the Cowboys whipped out the entire space station Cochise. Each planet has approached the problem from a different angle, but Marshals, Rangers, and various private bounty hunter groups patrol the asteroid fields looking to put an end to the banditry.

 Things are complicated by several revolutionary groups that use asteroid rustling to fund their campaigns, and they aren't alone. The original inhabitants, often called Nonpake, an Starnish word, though they don't call themselves that, also claim various areas of the asteroid fields for themselves and while eludium isn't a primary goal for most Tsé Bit'a'í Ships, several enterprising ships have taken on mining eludium for themselves in areas that, of course, the various powers claim. The planetary governments are using both the revolutionaries and the Nonpake as stalking horses against each other as they try to gain dominance in the system. This makes the job of the various lawmen harder or easier depending on their views on the rights of the Nonpake.

Factions of Tristar

The six main planets of Tristar make up the largest governments and populations within the system, but beyond them are multiple smaller groups that wield significant power.

The Nonpoke

The inhabitants of the Tsé Bit'a'í Ships (O'Neill Cylinders) call themselves, "The People," in the various languages spoken by the multiple species of aliens and humans that mix together. They do have a common language of Diné Dihil, or Space Navajo. This language developed hundreds of years ago during the Early Diaspora when multiple

Native American nations took to the skies and established new homelands on new planets and in some cases built traveling homeworlds via the earliest successful O'Neill Cylinders. Starnish, Tarasque, Mongol, Diné, Cree, Daili, and many other human and alien species have joined together in creating these mobile societies living amongst the asteroid fields of Tristar. They mine the asteroids for water and rare minerals needed to sustain their agricultural systems within their ships.

The largest and best known is Wickiup. It is the seat of the Tsé Bit'a'í ship government and where all great meetings and government business is handled that concerns all of the Tsé Bit'a'í ships. The boom and massive influx of colonists has been both a welcome opportunity and a blight for the Nonpoke. They wish to continue on with their style of living, but the encroachment of the eludium miners and various government, bandit, and rebel groups has made life difficult.

Enterprising ships like the Wipila Wiki, Thunderbird, and Garuda have armed their ships and begin mining and trading in eludium while the ships Goyahkla, Hotamétaneo'o, and the Yazidi have taken to claiming specific areas of the asteroid fields and drive off or killed any who might enter their territory.

Jefferson

The largest and most Earth like planet in Tristar is also the original source of the eludium rush and thus has an orbit filled with the largest number of mobile space stations, mining concerns, and various groups both legal and illegal. It also boasts the largest settled population and the oldest settlement of Nonpake original inhabitants of the four armed Tyranax aliens of the Daili Empire. After some early tensions they are now a major part of the Jefferson government. Their familiarity with Tristar allowed them early access to some of the richest deposit sites.

The Gumsham Coalition is the largest mining coalition in the entire system and wholly owned and operated by Daili descended Tyranax. The planet is nearest to one of the smaller, but richest eludium asteroid belts. To combat the various unsavory factions they have employed the services of the Pinkerton Detective Agency to drive out all unwanted groups of criminals, revolutionaries, and various miner unions.

New Deseret

A religious colony founded by Space Mormons. They are a break-off sect of the Earth based Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints who believe that to rule over their own planet they must go and find one and literally rule it. New Deseret is situated closest to the Tristar jump gate, and while the government on the surface and in orbit forbid all the popular vices of the miners and boomtown hangers on, the strategic location of the planet near the gate makes it the primary location for the largest shipyards for shipping eludium out of Tristar.

The Space Mormons run what has become known as the Parley & Prattle shipyard and space station, although they insist it is technically called the Parley Pratt Space Station of Latter Day Saints. As it is a neutral location and the Space Mormons have focused on the shipping of refined eludium out of the system, Parley & Prattle has become a hub for business deals and sober negotiations between hostile parties including a truce and eventual peace between Lone Star and Nuevo Mexico after their short range war over the asteroid fields.

Nuevo Mexico

Founded by original colonists from the country of Mexico on Earth, Nuevo Mexico has not prospered from the eludium boom like the other planets. Stuck between the orbits of Tombstone and Lone Star without an intervening asteroid belt, the planet seems to be a backwater compared to rest of the system. Initially, a military style junta set up

control of the planet and engaged in a war over control of the asteroid fields nearest Lone Star, but after a bloody and protracted war the population of Nuevo Mexico revolted against their own government and replaced it with a more peaceful Republic.

Since then the colonists have spent the recent years sculpting the surface of the planet and turning it into what might be the single largest art project and commune anywhere in the galaxy. Now a center of art, culture, religious and social experimentation both philosophically and chemically, Nuevo Mexico has attracted a massive number of learned intellectuals and spiritualists from around the system and across the galaxy. It is home to the New Frontier Art School and the popularity of the art produced by these people has brought massive wealth to the planet from auctions and sales of various art pieces.

Tombstone

is a wretched hive of scum and villainy. A planet of vast deserts, craggy mountains, endless windstorms, and one shining domed jewel of a city: Phoenicia. Phoenicia was founded by a motley group of alien outcasts from across the galaxy, and languished as other planets began to benefit from the eludium boom. That is until Deh'rahn Jehonis, a former commander of an AdAstracan Imperial outpost base on the planet, struck it big when on asteroid patrol he discovered the single largest agua fria to date. He resigned his commission, sold the agua fria to the Daili Consortium, and bought the entirety of Phoenicia and the surrounding lands with the proceeds.

He has slaved to turn the city into a place where all are welcome. To drive off the bandidos and asteroid rustlers he hired retired lawman Wellheart W'yatts to run his Sheriff's office and staffed it with former Imperial soldiers. Beyond the city though, the badlands of Tombstone are beyond all civilization and only the desperate, criminal, or worse call the dust choked terrain home.

New Vegas

is a dwarf planet that sails around the Tristars cutting a wake down the middle of the Colorado asteroid belt or belts, depending on if you're from Lone Star who claim the inner ring as their own territory. New Vegas was uninhabited until the jumpgate arrived and the Vegas Trading Company or VTC set up shop on the lunar-like surface. The President of the VTC, Rand Galt the III, believes in a state of ultra liberty free of all government oppression and offered anchorage in orbit around the dwarf planet for small monthly fees to any and all takers, while the planet surface remains the exclusive private property of the VTC.

  Casino ships, brothel stations, private luxury resort cruise ships, military contractors, and industrialists all call New Vegas orbit home. The system only works though due to the endless supply of goods, food, and water that flow to New Vegas to sustain the house of cards that is the lurid neon soaked skies of New Vegas. The VTC employs Blackstar Security to patrol around the planet and terminate any criminal elements with extreme prejudice. Complaints about Blackstar's methods to the Adastracan government on Comanche has fallen on deaf ears as the owner of Blackstar is a cousin of the Imperial Secretary of Communication.

Comanche

is the coldest of the main planets with a rocky and mountainous surface that was snow covered until the dropping of asteroids heated the planet up. Now it is only snow covered during the winter. Massive crater seas, deep fjords, and a single lowland ocean basin cover the planet during the rest of the year. Of course, winter lasts for half of Comanche's orbital year. It's name comes from the original inhabitants of Comanche people from Earth who colonized the planet during the Early Diaspora. Most of the new inhabitants are species of aliens or transhumans that prefer cold weather, but even still most live in large tunnels under the endless mountain ranges. This has created a

culture of experienced miners. Some of the best mine and refinery bosses are born on Comanche.

The Comanche government has strong ties to the Adastracan Imperial government going so far as to grant them an orbit to house a large military space dock and training base. The local Adastracan Imperial government also has their headquarters here located next to the space dock. The presence of military destroyers, frigates, cruisers, and even the occasional carrier tend to scare off most space based criminal elements. Besides providing expert miners

Comanche is also known for growing high quality nip in the warmer valleys of the planet. Nip is a popular psychoactive drug and non-addictive painkiller used throughout the galaxy, but especially loved by the Khanzi, an alien people who look remarkably like large (about 4 feet tall) upright Terran house cats. It's official name is cannacaea nepetus, but most call it catnip, Khanzi nip, or just nip.

Lone Star

is a massive gas giant protostar that never lit. Twice the size of Jupiter, the red, white, and blue striped giant sits next to the largest asteroid belt. One massive white storm sits deep within the dark blue bands of the planet and is one possible origin of the planet's name. The planet itself provides only certain gases from its highest orbit, but the numerous moons that ring the planet and the literal rings of the planet are what make Lone Star so important. Not only is it situated close to the Colorado asteroid belt, but the planet's own rings are rich with eludium and many of the moons are large enough to have their own atmospheres that have been terraformed. The Republic of Lone Star is a federation of all the moons and stations within the orbit of Lone Star.

Unlike Jefferson, Lone Star had few large organizations of miners or locals when the boom struck, and with the close proximity of agua fria the Republic has exploded in size and criminality.

To combat the lawlessness the Republic created a band of lawmen and women called The Lone Star Rangers. These Rangers travel in heavily armed single crewed Mustang ships. Mustangs are equipped with limited autonomous AI functions. Rangers patrol the vast Colorado belt, the rings, and the upper atmosphere of Lone Star itself. They have powerful armored and augmented space suits and carry plasma rifles and pistols. It isn't uncommon to see a single ranger in a gunfight against a band of rustlers on the surface of an asteroid.

Bandits and Rebels

Difficult to distinguish between most rebel groups engage in active banditry within the system and most bandits hail from Starnish, from minor conquered star nations, or remnants of the Adastracan Civil War rebels that ended just before the Starnish-Adastracan Wars kicked off. These groups dig themselves into large asteroids, usually mining eludium rich asteroids and leaving the iron or basalt cores as a platform for their hidden bases. Then they begin robbing and killing anyone who gets too close and rustling agua fria asteroids that travel along routes near their bases.

The most notorious leader of these gangs is Hexus Red. He and his gang have employed remote drone cyborg bodies to control while rustling and hidden their base deep within the largest asteroid fields near Lone Star and New Vegas. They can attack without impunity or fear for themselves as if their remote drone body is destroyed they simply deploy a new one. They vigorously defend the location of their secret base, and while Hexus Red always employs a distinct looking cyborg, no one except maybe Silverhorse, the Lone Star Ranger, has glimpsed the real body of Hexus Red.

Other infamous bandit and rebel groups include the Euskadi (A Starnish rebel group), the Cochise Cowboys (infamous for their destruction of Cochise station), The Banes (a Duros gang), and Quantrill's Killers (they only ever leave one survivor who is blinded after witnessing the atrocities and left with enough supplies and a beacon so they can be found to spread the tale of the Quantrill Killers).

Tristar Marshals

The Tristar Marshals are a collection of law-enforcement personnel from across the system that have joined into a loose collective to fight lawlessness in the Tristar system. Started by William Dillon and Rachel Givens a month after the destruction of Cochise Station. The Marshals grant membership to law-enforcement members and registered bounty hunters of the various governments so that they might travel beyond their borders to pursue criminals and arrest them for trial.

The Marshals are fighting an uphill battle. While that have been able to pass legislation to create their organization no one nation wishes to fund the Marshals. Chronically underfunded, most credits come from the 5% donation for any bounties or rewards won by the members in pursuit of criminals and various groups. The saying, "Marshals have tin stars because they cannot afford brass stars," is a common saying in the Tristar system.

Of course, when the Marshals band together to hunt down a group or individual, nothing short of an army can stop them. In fact, the only instance of the Marshals being thwarted is when the Adastrican fleet stopped the Marshals from pursuing one of their officers back onto a base. An officer involved in espionage and clandestine activities against the Jefferson Gumsham Coalition (she was training rebel groups to attack Gumsham shipments enroute to Parley & Prattle).

That isn't to say all Marshals are of one mind. Many Marshals have found themselves on opposite sides of an issue. Most issues are about leniency and whether or not certain criminals are better brought in dead or alive.

Optional Rules

Duels

Facing off against a bad guy in the middle of a dusty asteroid tunnel at Solar noon is a common occurrence in Tristar. Here are some optional rules to help you run a duel between two characters.

First, a duel only happens between two characters. A duel can be one round and then devolve into general combat, or last several rounds and only ever include the two characters. The two characters decide first what weapons and where they are going to meet. "Your current weapon," and, "Right now, in the middle of this battle," are acceptable answers. They decide on how to determine the winner: First blood, touch, to the death, to the pain. After that, they decide on the stakes, some of them, like death, are obvious, while other stakes can be anything: the winner owns this asteroid, the winner gets 100 credits, the loser gives the winner their Silverhawk spaceship.

Second, the two duelists face off. They both roll to size up their opponent. Whoever wins gets to know their opponent's traits and if they are proficient with their current weapon. If you lose you get to know if your opponent has the Duelist Trait.

Third, either opponent can now concede the duel by acknowledging the other as the winner of the Duel. If the duel is to the death, they will then let the winner cut them down. The winner decides whether or not to grant them mercy.

Finally, if neither concedes, the two duelists attack either other. First, they both roll initiative. If either has the Duelist Trait they gain advantage on their roll and their opponent is at disadvantage. If both have the Duelist Trait they cancel each other out and roll as if neither had the trait. Other traits may apply to this initiative roll. The same Duelist rules apply for the attack roll. Whoever wins the initiative attacks first and applies their damage immediately, if they hit. If their opponent can return the attack they do so now and apply any damage now if they hit. One, both, or neither character can be injured or killed at this time.

If both characters wish to continue (the winner hasn't been decided, or their passion/hatred isn't quenched) they may continue fighting by entering combat.

New Trait: Duelist

When you are in a duel you gain advantage and your opponent gains disadvantage on your initiative and attack rolls. If your opponent also has this Trait your traits cancel each other out and you fight as if neither of you have this trait. This does not prevent other Traits from applying to any of your rolls.
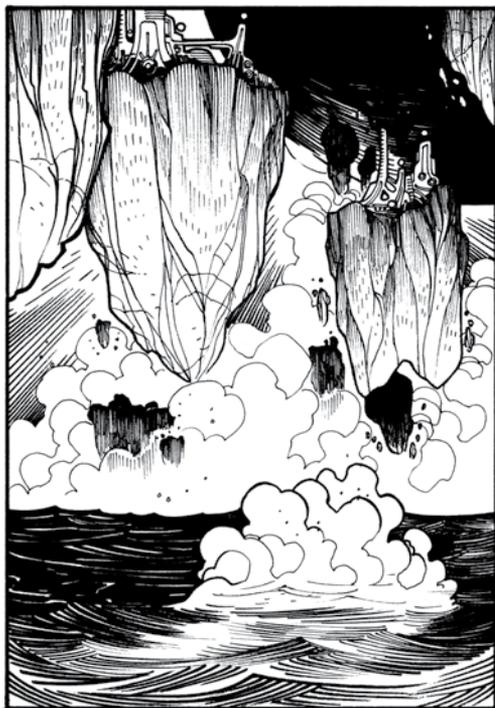
New Trait: The Law!

"I've shot people I like more for less." You are a legitimate law-enforcement being. When executing your duties, you are not charged with any crimes that are accepted as standard law-enforcement actions (ex: If you shoot a criminal wanted dead or alive you are not charged with their murder, but if you shoot an unarmed bystander you will be charged). You gain advantage on any action to convince law-abiding citizens to help you and disadvantage when asking for help from the less savory.

Inspired by

Shows like: BraveStarr, Sparks Nevada: Marshal on Mars, Cowboy BeBop, Guardians of the Galaxy, Firefly, The Adventures of the Galaxy Rangers, Trigun, Star Wars: Clone Wars (specifically characters like Cad Bane).

Music like: A Tribe Called Red, Roy Rogers, Johnny Cash, Marty Robbins, Ennio Morricone, Blues Saraceno, Chingon.

And games like: Wild Guns, StarCraft, and Borderlands

Tiny Frontiers: Revised is here! All new art, expanded and revised rules, and all new micro-settings come together with the minimalist TinyD6 rule system for a revision of the bestselling minimalist space opera roleplaying game!

Powered by the TinyD6 engine, with streamlined mechanics that utilize only one to three single six-sided dice on every action, characters that can be written 3x5 notecard, and easy to understand and teach rules, Tiny Frontiers: Revised is great for all groups, ages, and experience levels!

So grab some dice, some pencils, some friends, and get ready for some minimalist, straight-forward, space opera roleplaying!