

STARBREAKER

SAINTS AND SYNINNERS



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*For Joseph Baker, the inspiration for Caliban
Breka. A great friend who listened to an idea I had
over 20 years ago. Wish you were here to see it.*



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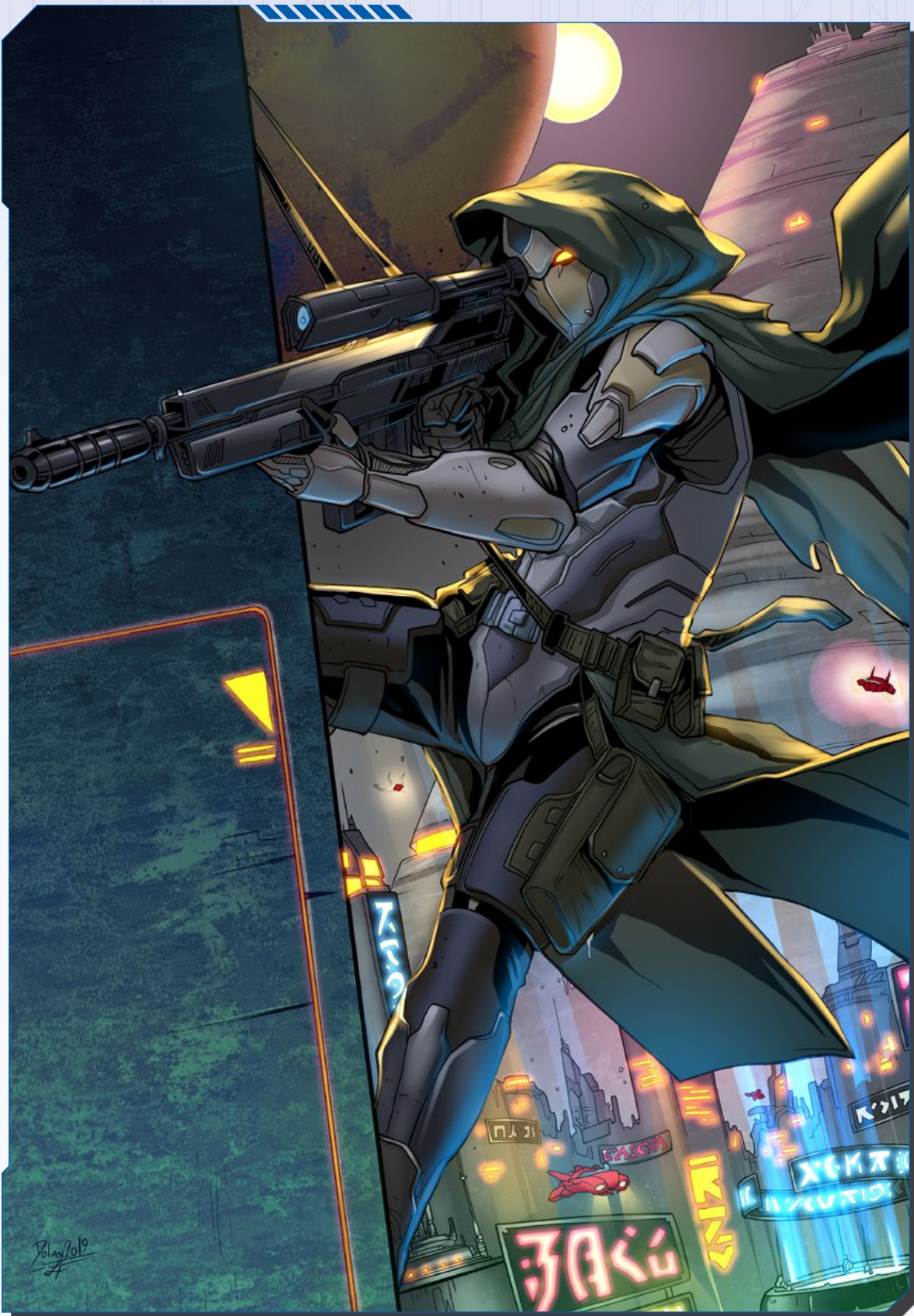
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Starbreaker takes place in a space opera universe recovering from a brutal, devastating war. In the ashes of this conflict, criminal organizations run rampant.

Player characters are either Synners or SAINTs.

Synners are members of the criminal alliance known as the Syndicate, which now effectively rules the planets most devastated by the Armageddon War.

SAINTs are agents of the Sector Agent INtragalactic Taskforce. They are former Synners who use their criminal talents to free the citizens of the rim world colonies from a life of corruption and violence.

Whether SAINTs or Synners, the heroes will need to rely on their wits, their skills, and their favorite laser blaster to survive and thrive in this war-ravaged galaxy.

THE OFFER

Looks like we got some fresh meat for the grinder, I'd say. Don't bother getting up, Synner. Those restraints ain't gonna break.

I know you've been on ice for a few years since your conviction. Me? I never thought freezing a guy until his time was up was much of a punishment. I mean, really, what did you learn while you were a popsicle for the last 40 years?

Now, let's get down to business. I'm with SAINT, which is a real short way for me to say Sector Agent INtragalactic Taskforce. It's a sort of special law enforcement agency. No, I know you never heard of it; the taskforce was created long after you got iced.

Let me give you a quick history lesson, so you understand exactly why I'm here. First off, you

know about the Armageddon War? You were on ice through it, so let me catch you up.

The short version is those big old ugly critters, the nohgotha, came out of nowhere to hammer all galactic civilization. They razed colonies and destroyed fleets so quickly we almost didn't survive. Civilization as we know it only pulled through because the Star Systems Alliance picked up a few new allies.

The vulkolasi and nahkyra bolstered our numbers. The xek helped build our ships and gave us cyber tech. The caelum—and this was huge—gave us access to incredible new technologies like nanotech and psionics. It turned the tide of the war.

Of course, we didn't come out of it without some scars. Like I said, we survived, but barely. The governments and powers that once roamed the stars like lions were left tattered, battered, and bruised.

What does that have to do with you, here and now? Just listen a bit longer.

While the powers that be were holed up in the core worlds licking their wounds, the Syndicate crept its way out of the ashes and into the rim worlds and sunk its claws in deep. It wasn't long before they had every local government and politician in their pocket.

You remember about the rim worlds, yeah? A bunch of dirty, deadly frontier planets? Well, they got a lot worse during the war. And now, the Syndicate controls them from the shadows while propping up legitimate political systems as a shield. The Syndicate dominates the rim worlds. Trade, resources, shipping, colonization...they run it all.

The SSA Navy doesn't have enough ships to blockade the Syndicate-held worlds, or even to intervene in all the pirate attacks. The Star Marines

don't have the resources to fight yet another war to retake the rim. As much as the Star Systems Alliance wants to flush them out, the Syndicate is just in too deep.

That's where people like you and me come in.

See, you did some real awful things to end up here. You were good—real good—at breaking, stealing, and even killing for the Syndicate. That makes you a Synner...but maybe not a bad person. I read your files, and a lot of your actions were simply to survive. That doesn't excuse what you did, but it tells me there might be hope for you.

You have another 25 years on ice if I walk out that door. That's 25 more years before you'll see the light of day. Remember that daughter you left behind? She's still around, in case you were wondering.

Now I'm going to make you a one-time offer. If you say no, we put you back in the cooler. By the time you get out, your daughter will have lived a lifetime without you.

I told you I work for SAINT. Most folks, if they think of SAINT at all, think of it as the SSA's token law enforcement division. Incompetent at best, corrupt at worst. But that's not the real SAINT.

The real SAINT does the work that the regular law can't or won't touch. We get our hands dirty, we get bloody, and we don't stop until we take down who we're after. We do things... like you used to do.

You got skills. You can join us, and use those skills to help break the back of the Syndicate. You can choose to walk out this door and start making a difference, or I can drop you back into the deep freeze.

What are you going to be: a Synner or a SAINT?

CORRUPTION AND REDEMPTION

In the distant future, the Star Systems Alliance's sphere of power is greatly diminished following the devastating Armageddon War against the invading nohgotha.

Although the Alliance and its allies repelled the invaders, they couldn't stop the collapse that followed. Civilization was left in tatters. The SSA and other galactic governments retreated to their home systems, guarding only their most important settlements and strategic worlds.

As the major powers recovered, the Syndicate—an alliance of 12 criminal organizations and a mysterious director—took advantage of the power vacuum and infiltrated almost every aspect of government in the rim world colonies. The Synners, as they call themselves, have created a near monopoly on mining critanium, the metal needed to create the jump drives that allow for interstellar travel.

The critanium crisis has granted great wealth and power to the Syndicate, forcing the SSA's hand. The rim world mines are too valuable to remain in the Syndicate's grip. Unable to engage the Syndicate in open conflict, the SSA has chosen a different path for bringing it down.

SAINT—the Special Agent INtragalactic Taskforce—grants criminals a sentence reduction in exchange for going up against their former employers. These double agents, known as SAINTs, work undercover, secretly dismantling the criminal empire from within.

SAINTs are implanted with a Neural Inhibitor Control that prevents them from revealing the truth, and they are assigned handlers who pose as fellow criminals. Outside these restraints, SAINTs are authorized to use any means necessary to stay undercover and achieve their mission goals.

Synners don't have SAINTs' artificial restrictions. Instead, they are bound by whatever loyalty, honor, and mutual distrust exists between them and their criminal comrades. They walk the treacherous path of following Syndicate orders while still pursuing their own ambitions and trying to remain true to their own values.

In *Starbreaker*, the players take on the roles of either SAINTs or Synners as they navigate a galaxy full of danger, corruption, and no easy options.



A HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Earth's first attempt at faster-than-light travel ended in disaster.

The FTL engines exploded—no one yet knows why—and nearly destroyed the nearby space colonies. The accident, known as the “Dark Star Event,” unleashed massive gravitational anomalies that cut Earth off from the rest of the Sol system. This loss forced the colonial worlds of the system to rely on Mars for over 20 years. The colonies’ bonds of loyalty toward Earth, with all its political and economic power, were transferred to Mars.

FIRST CONTACT

During this time of isolation, the alien species known as the caelum suddenly and mysteriously appeared in the Sol system.

They were the first aliens humanity had met. The caelum explained that they were the last of their species, and they were searching for a new place to call home. They offered some of their technology, which far exceeded humanity's, in exchange for permission to permanently land their trio of enormous city-ships on Earth's moon.

The people of Mars gladly agreed to this arrangement. Earth wasn't pleased to have such a powerful species so close, but it was in no position to oppose Mars or the caelum. Despite sowing seeds of resentment between the two worlds, the lunar bases and caelum technology helped keep the other human colonies in the system supplied with what they needed to survive.

Once the anomaly subsided and Earth reasserted its authority in space, it found that Mars had become the center of political power in the Sol system.

THE SSA

The power disparity between Mars and Earth did not sit well with the new Terran government. In a bid to regain Earth's political authority, the government once again began researching FTL drive. Once they successfully created the carrot, the Terrans dangled it, offering access to the technology for all the colonies if they would just agree to the new Sol Systems Alliance Accords.

Under these rules, each colony would gain one vote on the council for every world they had established as livable and self-sufficient. The specifics would be measured by population size and each colony world's ability to sustain itself for at least 80% of its needs. All who signed the Sol Systems Alliance Accords became part of what would become known as the SSA.

Mars was the last to sign. At that point, Mars' government feared it had little choice. With the agreement signed, Earth's officials were quick to announce they had already built and sent five colony ships to various worlds. While the other member worlds were free to do so as well, it would be decades before they could come close to the political power Earth had gained in this bit of diplomatic trickery. Although everyone agreed to the deal, and stuck with it, Mars would not forget this day.

NEW ALLIES

What followed was an intense period of rapid expansion and space colonization by the nascent SSA. Spreading ever outward, humanity eventually encountered their first sentient lifeforms outside the Sol system: the gilgar. Not yet as advanced as those that discovered them, the gilgar were experiencing something of a renaissance in their culture. Knowledge was important to them, and they were willing to trade resources for the technology that the visitors from Earth offered.

The SSA, and more specifically Terra, deemed that the gilgar were not yet ready to have a seat on the council. Instead, the Terrans made the gilgar homeworld a protectorate of Terra. This meant that Terra controlled the gilgar's vote, a condition that would persist for 50 years.

With the addition of this new world, the SSA altered its name from the Sol Systems Alliance to the Star Systems Alliance, to reflect that it now included more than just the travelers from Earth.

As humanity continued to expand, it encountered the arusans. This species of roving intragalactic traders was more than willing to extend relations to the budding star power that was the SSA. The Arusan Trade Conglomerate had contacts with numerous other species throughout the galaxy and was pleased to introduce them. Although the arusans did not join the SSA themselves, they became close allies.

Another advanced species, the kek, was found during the SSA's major colonial push. The Mars Exploratory Services first identified them, and although the kek technically joined the SSA, they allied themselves strongly with the Mars planetary government. As part of their mutual efforts, the kek helped construct the bulk of the Mars colonial fleets, allowing Mars to compete with Earth in its speed of expansion. As the kek are almost entirely mechanical beings, their aptitude for machinery is no surprise.

After a century of frenzied expansion, the SSA began to wind down its colonization efforts. The worlds were producing far more goods and materials than the SSA needed. Consequently, the economy focused more on building the current worlds than on expanding colonial territory. The scout corps were reduced in size, and the SSA Navy began to serve primarily as a peacekeeping and rescue service.

Owing to their strong relations with multiple species and an expansive network of worlds, the SSA and its members felt a sense of safety and security. It was not to last, as there were forces at work that had remained hidden until now.

THE ARMAGEDDON WAR

The Armageddon War, as it came to be called, started when the rim world colonies began reporting attacks on shipping vessels in ever-increasing numbers. No one was ever found on the vessels that called for help. The SSA sent its navy, but because the size of the force had been reduced, fewer ships were available, making it difficult to search the affected areas.

Finally, at the colony of Pax Prime, the enemy showed themselves. The nohgotha and their shock troopers, the dunar, attacked en masse. They descended on the world and rolled right over its defenses, but not before the colony had a chance to send video and tactical information back to Sol.

The SSA fleet was mobilized to combat this new threat, but it was outmatched in every way. The sheer number of enemies was staggering; the fleet was quickly defeated, and few ships escaped to tell the tale. The entire SSA and all its member worlds marshaled their forces to repel the nohgotha invasion, but they slowly and steadily lost ground.

And then new allies appeared.

Fleets from the Vulkolasi Union—a heretofore unknown power in the galaxy—were following a nohgotha strike force that had recently attacked one of their colonies when they stumbled upon the SSA. The fleets joined forces, turned the tide of this engagement, and established a new alliance.

The caelum (their motives, as always, hard to fathom) also helped with the war effort. They volunteered new technology to help create psychic soldiers who could combat the nohgotha more effectively.

For their part, the kek launched an entire new shipyard in a matter of months and quickly increased the output of newer and more powerful ships to the front lines.

In a grueling counteroffensive, virtually every known species in the galaxy united in the war against the nohgotha. They eventually pushed the invaders back beyond the colonized regions but paid a terrible price to do so.

No one paid more than those living on the rim worlds.

DARKNESS FALLS

During the war, the rim worlds bore the brunt of the nohgotha assault.

The invaders' strategy was to conquer these lightly defended planets prior to the main incursion. They razed entire colonies and destroyed multiple space stations in the region. When the SSA and its allies realized what they were up against, they retreated back to the core worlds to fortify, rebuild, and plan a counterattack. They sacrificed the rim worlds to buy themselves time.

After the war, the rim worlds were broken and weak. Those who still lived there did what they must to survive. Society faltered and broke down. The SSA and the core worlds were themselves recovering from the war and had few resources to aid the rim worlds' rebuilding efforts. The rim became a lawless region, where pirates, warlords, and raiders ran amok.

THE SYNDICATE RISES

Organized crime has long played a part in galactic colonization. Crime lords, smugglers, loan sharks, and other such criminals make themselves at home wherever resources are scarce and life is harsh. In the aftermath of the

Armageddon War, the rim worlds were fertile soil for a new sort of crime organization to take root: the Syndicate.

The Syndicate is a coalition of independent, but unified, criminal factions. Under the guidance of the Council of Thirteen, the Syndicate insinuated itself throughout the rim worlds, and in short order, its factions became the de facto rulers of the region.

With the SSA still rebuilding the core worlds, the Syndicate easily took control of what local governments remained on the rim and proceeded to bring its version of order to the chaos in the area. The rim worlders were grateful for the stability at first, but many soon came to resent the Syndicate's oppression and corruption.

REBUILDING

After several decades of rebuilding, the SSA regained a semblance of its former power and reached out to the rim worlds. The Alliance received a cold welcome, and the former colonies did not want to openly cooperate. Even worse, Syndicate corruption had become the norm. It would not be easy to reclaim the member worlds into the full control of the SSA.

The SSA began sending shipments of cargo to the rim in exchange for valuable materials and resources. Although patrols became more regular, it was still difficult during the rebuilding to field enough ships to offer protection from raiders and other hazards of space travel. Smaller vessels began to pick up the slack and make lucrative runs into the hostile territories.

Realizing it couldn't directly compete with the Syndicate for control of the rim worlds, the SSA opted to send the region more resources as a show of support. With this aid, the rim started to recover, but it remained firmly in the Syndicate's grasp.

While the SSA and the Syndicate maneuvered for influence over the rim worlds, a third party seized a number of new territories that had been set for future colonization. Several giant corporations participated in this joint venture, consolidating power and operated the worlds under the Board of Directors, composed of the president of each company. Corporate expansion was swift, leaving little time for the already weakened SSA to protest. In a short time, the so-called "corporate worlds" had been settled, and they included dozens of resource-rich planets.

THE GALAXY TODAY

The galaxy stands at the tipping point between sliding back into chaos and rising from the ashes. The SSA has stepped up its presence and increased the size of its fleets, but it still lacks the trained manpower to reassert its authority across all its former territories.

The core worlds have solidified their defenses around their most important strategic assets and colonies, but they are more focused on rebuilding than on supporting their rim world colonies.

The rim worlds have stabilized under the heavy-handed control of the Syndicate. That isn't to say that the rim worlds are doing much better than the core worlds. Piracy is still rampant, and reliable shipments don't always flow into the region at a steady rate, causing shortages of needed supplies. Life is brutal and often short, unless you can be just as brutal to survive the harsh reality of life on the rim.

The corporate worlds, with their extensive resources and efficient structures, have become shining beacons to the galaxy, attracting hundreds of thousands of people hoping for a better life. When these hopefuls arrive, they find clean streets and gleaming skyscrapers. It doesn't take long to realize, however, that everyone here is just a number and—unless they make it to upper management—they better follow company policy. Here, the people in charge enforce the rules with a robot police force, as well as with psy operatives who can scan minds for disloyalty.

The Arusan Trade Conglomerate fared better than most and has recovered enough to increase its trade and transport business across the galaxy once more. The arusans have opted to avoid direct involvement with the SSA in its rebuilding efforts, but have provided steep discounts on their services as a way to help the SSA get back on its feet.

The galaxy is a dangerous place, with limited protection from the authorities the farther one gets from the core worlds. Carrying a blaster at one's side isn't uncommon for anyone these days, and it's almost strange to see someone unarmed and without some sort of protection. On the other hand, if someone has what it takes to strike out into the stars, the opportunities can be great if they're willing to bend the law—and the sky's the limit if they're willing to break it!

A GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

The galaxy of *Starbreaker* is enormous. Countless habitable planets support an untold number of sapient species, and there are always more worlds and lifeforms to discover.

Humanity has divided the known worlds of the galaxy into four expansive regions: core worlds, corporate worlds, rim worlds, and galactic territories.

CORE WORLDS

The so-called “core worlds” of human civilization include the home and colony planets of several spacefaring species. While they did not escape the Armageddon War unscathed, none of them suffered the devastation seen among the rim worlds.

Beyond being habitable, the core worlds have little in common. The planets are as wildly diverse as the lifeforms they produce. The most important are listed below.

GOHBA: GILGAR HOMEWORLD

The home of the gilgar is a world straddling the future and the past.

Gohba is covered in massive mountain ranges and rolling plains. Temperatures are generally mild in the summer but bitterly cold in the winter. Storms cover the mountains and flood the valleys below. In recent decades, a hearty tourist industry has arisen, with offworlders visiting the planet just to witness the massive lightning storms.

The flora and fauna of Gohba are well adapted to the mountains. Many species—including the gilgar—live in the caves to shelter from the storms. Because of the massive storms and flooding, traditional gilgar homes are built into the caves on the sides of mountains, or carved into them. With interstellar trade bringing safer and sturdier building materials to Gohba, some gilgar have begun building their homes along higher plains or on the tops of mountains.

The gilgar joined the SSA about 50 years ago, and have recently assumed full membership and voting rights. The devastation of the Armageddon War, however, has led some gilgar to question whether to remain with the alliance, as they feel it makes them a target for the SSA's enemies.

JUPITER

The gas giant is home to Athena Station, the naval headquarters of the Star Systems Alliance.

The command for the SSA moved to this orbital facility after the Armageddon War. Now this sprawling complex houses multiple starship docks, training facilities, greenhouses, and anything else the SSA needs. The facility can operate at full capacity for a decade as a self-contained entity.

Several SSA naval capital ships constantly patrol the area due to Athena's importance as a command hub. Many senior officers are stationed here, working on long-term strategic goals and managing short-term fleet operations.

The station is the primary command center of the SSA military, and it also serves as the primary training center for the Star Marines. Every Star Marine serves here for at least one year as they complete their final training. Understanding the rigors of space and space combat is crucial for these troops, and Athena Station is the perfect training zone.

PURGATORY

What do you do with the galaxy's most dangerous criminals once you have captured them? The SSA needed a facility capable of holding criminals and preventing any possible escape, and they found the perfect location. The planet the scouts called Purgatory is showered daily with meteorites, has a poisonous atmosphere, and experiences temperatures that remain above 130 degrees at all times.

The SSA used heavy force-field technology to shield the only landing site and dug deep into the planet's surface. The entire prison, situated more than a mile underground, is self-contained, preventing the need for regular trips to the surface. It has hydroponic gardens, a fusion reactor system, and other equipment needed to support the staff for up to five years without resupply.

To access the facility, the prisoners are first transported to the planet on the SSA prison ship *Charon*. The ship itself is a fortress. A full combat platoon protects the multiple secure decks needed to access the transport's interior prison cells. This design is intended to make escape in transit nearly impossible and to deter attackers from attempting to hijack the ship.

Once at Purgatory, the *Charon* uses its heavy force fields to survive the constant pelting of meteorites during the descent. When it reaches the surface, it docks with the prison transport tube. The prisoners are never taken outside of their transport cells on the *Charon*. Instead, they move through an internal system that sends the cell directly to its location down inside Purgatory's prison.

These measures are extremely effective. In addition, the location of the planet itself is a highly guarded secret. No one has ever escaped Purgatory. The rumors of this prison have grown over the years, and some criminals shudder at the thought of being sent to this living hell among the stars.

TERRA: HUMAN HOMEWORLD

The birthplace of humanity and the seat of power for the Star Systems Alliance was marred by the Armageddon War. Many cities are in ruins or in various states of recovery, while vast tracts of open land have returned to their natural condition. The beauty of what has been restored is still often overshadowed by the darkness that remains since the war.

The rebuilt cities are planned-out arcologies, monumental structures that are self-contained and self-sufficient. The older, open cities of Terra have become havens for both the disenfranchised and the criminal elements that lurk among the shadows. If Terra is to one day regain its place as the jewel in the crown of the Star Systems Alliance, much work yet needs to be done.

CORPORATE WORLDS

Born out of the ashes of the Armageddon War, the corporate worlds offer a shining example of what highly focused business interests can create: beautiful, tall, gleaming structures and worlds where everything runs efficiently and smoothly. Unbridled capitalism knows no bounds on the corporate worlds. Unfortunately, human lives are nothing more than capital, mere lines on the corporate ledger.

After the war, the Star Systems Alliance could not provide the corporate worlds with protection or aid. The corporations invested their own vast resources in rebuilding the planets damaged by war and settling the new colony worlds they had claimed.

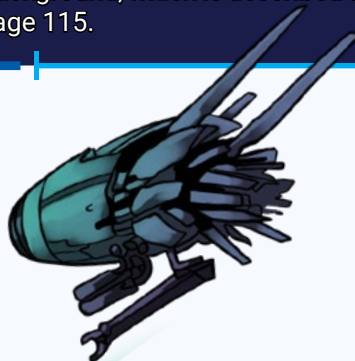
TECHNOLOGY OF THE FUTURE

Starbreaker is full of advanced space opera technology. In addition to the jump drive that makes interstellar travel possible and the laser-based weaponry so common on the rim, the setting includes a number of other high-tech marvels.

Cyberware: It's not uncommon for heroes to replace or enhance parts of their bodies with machinery. Cyberware is an Arcane Background, as detailed on page 121.

Psionics: With the proper training and surgical upgrades, anyone can theoretically wield psychic powers. Two types of psychic power-wielders were developed during the Armageddon War: psy commandos, who use their powers on the battlefield, and psy operatives, who use theirs for espionage. Psy operatives typically serve the corporations as elite security agents, but psy commandos are freelancers with their own Arcane Background, which is described starting on page 118.

The HyperNet: The HyperNet is a galaxy-wide information network that uses quantum entanglement to send and receive data over interstellar distances. Anyone with a computer terminal can use it to look up information, make purchases, or communicate with others. Anyone with an augmented reality (AR) lens can interact with the HyperNet's virtual layer, known as HyperReality. Anyone with an input/output (I/O) brainport can immerse themselves in HyperReality. Those who do so for the sake of hacking have the Hypertech Arcane Background, which is described starting on page 115.



To make good on their substantial investment, the corporations chose independence despite the SSA's threats and protests. This dispute nearly led to another war, but the SSA needed the goods and services that only the corporate worlds could provide. The corporate worlds need the SSA too; their flow of money comes from the Alliance's expansion and rebuilding efforts. The uneasy alliance leaves both sides uncomfortable.

Five corporations, often referred to as the "Big Five," dominate the corporate worlds and the unified Board of Directors:

- **Atlantica Ship Works:** Specializes in manufacturing starships, and has a sweetheart deal with the SSA.
- **Gorsht Manufacturing:** Produces industrial equipment.
- **Praxor & Gimble:** Makes pharmaceutical and agricultural products.
- **Remis Engineering:** Manufactures high-tech Gear, especially weapons.
- **Vizon:** Provides numerous commercial and consumer goods through dozens of subsidiaries.

The corporate worlds seek new customers and resources to expand their profits, but doing business in the rim worlds comes at a high cost: working with the Syndicate. The necessary bribes, and graft in general, often make it unprofitable. There's also the tendency for pirates from the rim to raid the corporate worlds, with possible support from the rim worlds. All this causes exceptional grief to the corporations and their bottom line.

The corporations work together to scout for new worlds to settle, which puts them at odds with the SSA. The Alliance tolerates the competition when it must. But when a potential colony world is worth fighting over, the two groups find themselves in conflict, and SSA Star Marines mobilize to face off with corporate mercenaries.

Most planets within the corporate worlds are labeled in a format that identifies ownership. For example, the label "VIZ-2-4" means that Vizon owns the planet, it's the second system the corporation registered, and it is number four in the system. When a corporation gives a planet an actual name, it does so for marketing purposes.

LIFE IN THE CORPORATE WORLDS

Each corporate world has its own governing body run by the planet's controlling company. The Board of Directors, a council of representatives from the most successful corporations, manages the allied worlds.

The corporate worlds abound with affluence. Technology is readily available, facilities are top notch, and goods and services are abundant. On the surface, the corporate worlds run like a well-oiled machine. Public relations cultivates the perfect image: a safe and comfortable life.

This image doesn't always match reality. Office politics are vicious and brutal. Worker safety regulations are often unenforced or nonexistent. Employees are treated as disposable cogs in the corporate machine. Even those who truly are safe and comfortable live in fear of being replaced by synths or fired as a sacrifice to this quarter's bottom line.

Every aspect of life on a corporate world is a business. Corporate world citizens are employees. Corporate worlds control the law and exercise authority over citizens' employment. The company determines everything an employee does. Those who do not comply face a visit from corporate security and appropriate disciplinary action, which can include warnings, firings, and worse.

An employee's position and performance in the company determines access to housing, travel comps, vacations, and any real thing of value. To attract and encourage employees, corporations offer large bonuses, grand houses, lavish vacations, and many other enhancements. Of course, what can be given can be taken away. Those who question the company can find themselves destitute, desperate, and unable to afford transport offworld.

For all their amenities, the populated portions of corporate worlds are somewhat monolithic in their bland opulence. Out in the less terraformed areas—or on newly established colonies—things might get more interesting...or dangerous.

Several of the most noteworthy corporate worlds are listed below.

CORPORATE WORLD PRIME

The planet now called Corporate World Prime was once an uninhabited, Mars-like desert world before it was covered with corporate arcologies. What once was an ochre wasteland is now filled with chrome and glass.

Corporate World Prime is the political capital of the corporate worlds, and it is home to their media. The planet hosts offices for all corporate world businesses, though the Big Five get the best locations. Goods and services of any type, from any planet, are available here. In addition, the planet's central location and financial importance make it the corporate banking hub.

The planet overflows with high-value targets for criminals looking for a big score. Its security is also tighter than that found on any other corporate world. Security forces carefully control on-planet transportation. Most people arrive via shuttle or fly down from the orbiting space stations. The authorities try to deter planetside landings by maintaining high docking fees.

VIZON ARCADIA SYSTEM

The habitable zone of this Vizon-owned star system contains a record 11 worlds (including moons orbiting gas giants and super-Earths). Conspiracy theorists insist that this mathematical miracle is proof of an ancient mega-civilization with terraforming abilities. Vizon has turned it into a designated vacation zone, a series of theme park worlds exclusive to Vizon employees and special guests. Worlds in this system include the beach planet Aquatica and the ski-resort planet Aspen.

NEW ATLANTICA

A ruggedly beautiful ocean world, New Atlantica is the home and headquarters of Atlantica Ship Works. The corporation's offices are located here, and citizen-employees live and work on the planet's volcanic island chains. The actual shipyards hang in orbit overhead. Although the shipyards are a hub of constant interstellar travel, transit to the planet itself is strictly regulated. Officially, this policy helps maintain the planet's environment, but there are always rumors that the company is hiding something among its islands.



PRAXOR PLANET

The headquarters of Praxor & Gimble are located on this pleasant world with no axial tilt. P&G takes advantage of the growing-season extension provided by the stable climate zones to grow its most important cash crops year round. The lush vegetation makes Praxor Planet unusually rural for a headquarters world, with the towering arcology of Gimble Tower the only major settlement. The crops are processed offworld.

PG-34-2

One of Praxor & Gimble's smallest farm worlds, PG-34-2 is too remote to supply the company with the crops it needs for its main products; too much of its margin would be tied up in shipping the goods where they are needed. Instead, the company uses PG-34-2 as a test farm. Here they grow thousands of experimental crops under controlled conditions. The crops are engineered, bred, and crossbred until they produce exactly the bioreactions P&G is looking for. These plants are company secrets, and security around the planet is exceptionally tight. Visitors aren't welcome, and intruders are shot on sight.

NIDAVELLIR

This alpine moon above the Remis Engineering headquarters world is home to the Remis Bespoke subdivision, which manufactures made-to-order drones of all sorts. Customers enjoy achingly beautiful mountain views and roaring fires as salesmen guide them through the process of designing absurdly expensive personalized drones.

CORVO

The planet Corvo is the site of one of the largest manufacturing hubs in all of the SSA and the corporate worlds combined. The entire planet and two of its moons are devoted to producing the goods needed to keep the core worlds running. Multiple corporations use the facilities, and many maintain offices here to conduct business and oversee operations.

Factories burn nonstop year round. Streets are organized for the optimal delivery of necessities, underground tunnels can carry goods to the massive starports, and nearly everything is automated. Because of this, there is little to make the planet hospitable for living beings.

Most travelers who have business on Corvo can expect to find what they require at the ports. In contrast, the corporate sectors on each moon house the company managers and others who have need of more than just the basic services offered on the surface.

Only a few types of people ever go planetside. The most common are corporate types who run and maintain the facilities, business people visiting to arrange deals, and Synners working for rival corporations and carrying out corporate espionage.

RIM WORLDS

Far beyond the core worlds lies the frontier of the last great expansion, a section of space often referred to as the "rim," and its populated planets, known as the rim worlds.

Before the war, dozens of colonies across the sector provided important resources (such as critanium) and homes for the ever-growing galactic population. Although life wasn't as easy as it was in the core, folks on the rim knew their own share of prosperity, and could look forward to the day they'd be sending out colony ships of their own.

Then came the Armageddon War. The devastation that followed cut the sector off from nearly every major connection that had supplied the new colonies and ensured their survival. The surviving colonies turned against each other, raiding each other's limited supplies and taking what they needed. The rim worlds were burning and the SSA wasn't coming to help.

Recognizing a power vacuum, the Syndicate stepped in and restored order to the region. Even after trade resumed between the rim and the core, the Syndicate never loosened its grip on power.

The Syndicate governs life in the rim worlds. Most people who work on the rim work for the Syndicate, either directly or indirectly. Many take an almost strange sense of pride in being called a Synner. Rim world residents believe the harsh conditions of their lives make them tough and self-reliant.

A few of the most notable locations within the rim worlds are listed below.

THE CORVO INCIDENT

After the war, Corvo was seriously short on manpower. The planet was unable to meet the demands put on it by the recovering worlds' efforts to rebuild. To solve this problem, the corporations turned to newly discovered technology. They fused the nohgotha's cloning tech with the xek's nanotech and created the first synthetic lifeforms. The ability to mass-produce synthetic workers was a boon to the facilities, and it quickly allowed the entire production process to come back online worldwide.

At a moment that no one can pinpoint, a change occurred in the synths. It was as if the entire population suddenly changed from low-grade AI automatons into fully self-aware and thinking lifeforms. With their self-awareness came a desire for freedom. The corporations pushed back and argued that the synths were merely acting on faulty programming, that they were not aware or capable of free thought.

The synths on Corvo were not so easily silenced. They organized a planetary strike, shutting everything down. With no goods being delivered, the SSA came to a standstill. Negotiations were tense, and the corporations favored a more direct end to the issue, but cooler heads prevailed. Any synth that demonstrated self-awareness was granted citizenship, and those that still functioned according to the standard program would continue to work in their designated jobs.

Today the planet remains largely populated and automated by synths, but the model that became self-aware is no longer manufactured to avoid a repeat incident. Many people wonder: If an entire model line could become self-aware all at once, then isn't it likely that all synths are capable of the same? If so, can it happen again? And is it right to continue to use synths?

In fact, about 1% of all synths manufactured, regardless of model line, gain self-awareness. When it happens, the Corvo Protocol is now observed. This requires a certified representative to test and confirm the change in the synth's AI functions. If found to be capable of free thought, synths must be granted citizenship and allowed to pursue their own path in the galaxy.

ECHO

Chief among the rim worlds is the planet Echo. Centrally located between the rim and core worlds, it is a trading center and hub for scouts, merchants, and other travelers.

It is also a source of the largest known deposits of critanium, used in jump drives and power cores, making it a hub for mining as well. This is why the Syndicate has made it their home base and center of power in the rim worlds.

Nothing ever stops moving on Echo. Deep in the tunnels and caverns that make up the massive crater cities, people swarm through the dirty streets with no thoughts of day or night. Factories and mines crank away at a frenetic pace, producing an endless stream of critanium goods around the clock. Ships launch and land at all hours to get the goods and materials offworld and bring in the resources needed to keep the engines of progress moving.

And above it all looms the Syndicate, taking its cut of every transaction.

The planet Echo is detailed on page 157.

SMUGGLERS' PARADISE

Smugglers' Paradise is not, strictly speaking, a single location. Nor is it truly a paradise. Many such places spread throughout the galaxy have borne the name at one time. A smugglers' paradise is usually found on a habitable planet or moon, but it may also appear on an asteroid or an old abandoned naval ship converted for the purpose. These places are off the map, the location shared only with a few trusted allies.

In general terms, these places aren't all that nice. However, they do provide somewhere to rest and time to hide out from that bounty hunter or ARROW agent chasing a smuggler down. Here smugglers can make basic repairs on their ship or plan their next job. Smaller loads can sometimes be acquired or transferred to another ship, depending on how the run was organized.

There is a “true” Smugglers’ Paradise out there somewhere, one that has full repair yards, a decent place to stay, and plenty of other goods and services for those in the know. Getting an invite to this location is considered a mark of pride among smugglers. No one asks to be invited; you have to be asked by someone who is already in the know. The person who extends the invitation is responsible for ensuring the loyalty of those they tell.

This self-policing has managed to keep the current site a secret for over a decade. Like any such secret place, it can’t remain so forever, and there have been times when a location is compromised. While smugglers prefer to avoid combat, they will fight to defend their paradise and take down those who betray it.

When traitors reveal a hideout, the other smugglers come together to find and punish them for their actions. It is important to note that the Syndicate depends on smuggling to move much of its illicit cargo. Crossing that many highly skilled and reliable smugglers can also potentially anger those who employ them. It is sure to end badly for the party who did so...

SOZIN: DUNAR HOMEWORLD

The dunar do not have a true homeworld; they are a dispossessed species.

After the Armageddon War, some dunar gathered together and sought a place they could call home. They found a moon they dubbed Sozin in orbit around a gas giant. Its rugged environment consisted mainly of scrub plains and limited water. The flora and fauna were not especially deadly, but little was particularly edible.

Theirs is a world they are still taming. All the dunar want—or need—is shelter and a place to call their own.

The dunar have a mixed sense of architecture in their colony, with habitations made of everything from spare shipping containers to basic stone structures. While no settlement stands out as significant on its own, the colony’s inhabitants already number over 100,000.



PIT 13, ECHO

YONG 3

At the beginning of the Armageddon War, many newer colonies existed on the frontier between the rim and core worlds. These thriving colonies would have been the bridge into the next expansion, solidifying routes the younger colonies of the rim territories.

Yong 3 was one of three major hubs between the core and rim worlds. With a jump gate, numerous orbital repair and refueling facilities, and a strong military presence, Yong 3 effectively served the rim worlds in this capacity. However, what made it the ideal hub also made it an ideal target at the start of the war. Consequently, it would see the brunt of actions against the SSA.

During the initial invasion, a smaller nohgotha force attacked to ensure its forces couldn't be brought to the aid of the other two hubs. The SSA and allied forces stationed there fought back and managed to maintain the planet's security. The SSA quickly reinforced the world with its fleet, and kept it heavily fortified for the rest of the war.

Toward the end of the war, the nohgotha launched an all-out attack to capture the world and eliminate the Alliance's access to the jump gate. The nohgotha brought numerous dunar troops and several hive attack pods, devastating the forces below. Hundreds of other modified attack creatures swarmed the planet to destroy any resistance. The nohgotha only held Yong 3 a short period before the SSA came back with a large fleet and retook the planet.

When the war ended, Yong 3 was a wreck of a world, with little value now that support to the rim worlds was discontinued. This left anyone remaining to fend for themselves. Former Alliance and dunar soldiers who didn't make it offworld became unwilling residents.

Though technically off limits to colonization, the planet's survivors have worked together to form a new colony of sorts. Pirates, smugglers, and others seeking an out-of-the-way spot to hide occasionally stop off. Treasure hunters and those seeking remnants of technology from the previous war also come here, often employing the locals to explore the ruins.

It's a dangerous world, with its roving nomadic residents, hive pods, nosika hunters, still-functioning combat droids, and the occasional pirate crew or mercenary company that has taken up temporary residence. Many who come seeking fortune often find their untimely demise.

THE ORIDIUM NEBULA

The Oridium Nebula is a vast, dense stellar cloud between the rim and core worlds. The makeup causes sensors to fluctuate and mirror signals, yielding ghost images and making long-range detection virtually impossible. The various governments and organizations are aware of these characteristics and generally keep their ships away from the nebula.

Given the limited resources after the war, most governments have resisted the temptation to enter the nebula and clear out the pirate bases and unregistered colonies. Those that operate in the nebula have clearly learned to use its sensor-masking ability to give them a distinct advantage in combat there.

GALACTIC TERRITORIES

Beyond the sphere of direct human influence lie the empires and domains of various alien species. For detailed descriptions of each species, see page 28.

ARKUS: ALAU HOMEWORLD

The planet Arkus was once covered with vast forests, lush valleys, and millions of lakes. As the alau developed and spread across the globe, however, they replaced the planet's natural features with mines, factories, and sprawling cities. The planet has started to recover within the past century. The alau are doing what they can to bring back Arkus' ecosystem, and they hope to restore it to its natural beauty someday.

CHAKIR: SEPTRID HOMEWORLD

The title of "homeworld" is a bit misleading for Chakir; it is not the original home of the septrid species. The septrids have been sending out sleeper ships for so long that they aren't sure where their people originated. Chakir was simply their capital world when they discovered faster-than-light travel. Many septrids wonder if they will ever rediscover their homeworld, and what those long-lost septrids might be like.

Chakir is covered in lakes, oceans, streams, and lush jungles. Tropical temperatures over much of the world lead to long rainy seasons and seasonal flooding.

Like many advanced societies, the septrids moved much of their manufacturing and industry offworld. This keeps the waters of Chakir clear and allows the planet to maintain much of its natural flora and fauna.

FRUNGU: ARUSAN HOMEWORLD

The arusan homeworld of Frungu is the "World of 10,000 Islands." Long, narrow bands of archipelagos host various forms of life, but nothing is ever far from the influence of the surrounding oceans. Much of the land-dwelling flora and fauna are extremely poisonous and require careful handling by the unfamiliar.

While arusans build some cities on the islands, the bulk of their homes are deep in the oceans under domes of glass. These brightly lit cities are always a bit damp and smell of saltwater. Visitors frequently report a sense of calm after spending time there, noting the incredible sea life they can view while looking up out of the domes.

MORGAR: VULKOLASI HOMEWORLD

The home of the vulkolasi is covered in large forests, rolling hills, and vast plains. Its winters are long and harsh, and the growing season is limited. These conditions, combined with the native predators, produced the pack culture that governs the vulkolasi to this day.



KONJAR MOUNT / VULKOLASI RIDER

Not overly abundant in mineral resources, Morgar remains less touched by modern industrialization than many planets. As the vulkolasi found other worlds to colonize, they moved such activities to those planets to maintain Morgar as close to its natural state as they could.

NESHON: HOPOC HOMEWORLD

Neshon is a mystery to most people. Outsiders traveling to and from the system are greatly restricted. A few reports speak of large plains, lakes, and jungles.

To hear a hopoc tell it, all the creatures on Neshon are larger than the hopocs. No non-hopocs have explored the surface enough to see the flora and fauna. All that people have heard of the planet (which isn't much) comes from stories related by hopoc traders and mercenaries.

The few diplomats and other visitors who have seen the settlements of Neshon tell of massive fortress cities. Planetary cannons ring their massive walls. Force fields encircle the perimeters, and soldiers stand ready to defend their homes at a moment's notice.

If nothing else, these measures attest to the hopocs' focus on protecting themselves from some invading power. It does make one wonder, though, what they have prepared to battle with such defenses.

SISMISTRA: NAHKYRA HOMEWORLD

The nahkyra homeworld is the moon orbiting Morgar, home of the vulkolasi. Filled with misty forests and massive subterranean cavern complexes, Sismistra is dangerous to traverse. The fauna of the planet adapted to function with limited light, developing enhanced hearing and other senses.

Nahkyra can fly and navigate easily in the dark. Many parts of nahkyra life are adapted to these abilities, such as low lighting across their cities, a lack of connecting walkways, and multilevel buildings with access points only available through flight. Other species visiting Sismistra require flying devices to navigate the world effectively.

SISTROKA: ZAKA HOMEWORLD

The zaka are stoic, serious-minded survivalists who are the product of a harsh home planet. Sistroka is a violently hostile jungle world with a methane atmosphere, where the zaka are not the apex predators.

The zaka build enormous cities in the mountains and valleys of this death world. Although they can go unhelmeted on Sistroka, the zaka prefer to remain guarded, focused on the efficient, ordered society they have carved out of an inhospitable planet.

Offworld visitors are welcome on Sistroka, so long as they do not leave the main ports or protected areas. The zaka tend to be dismissive when the jungle devours foolish hunters and tourists. Foolishness is weakness and Sistroka is a predator.

THARRIS: THOVIN HOMEWORLD

A planet with a perpetually mild climate and vast oceans, the homeworld of the thovin is rich with the natural resources necessary to develop advanced technology. Its sprawling industrial cities are integrated with their surroundings, giving them an organic, almost artistic appearance. Nevertheless, there are few regional differences; all the cities look essentially the same.

ZETIN: MENTIS HOMEWORLD

Zetin is a challenging world on which to live. It features a highly elliptical orbit that causes extreme temperature variations and frequent solar storms, leaving only a relatively narrow band of land where they can live safely. For ages, they warred with one another for control of the land. They nearly destroyed each other, but the wisest of them showed the path of peace: the seven-fingered way.

Today, the mentis live in vast hive-city arcologies across the habitable band. With modern technology, they are finding ways to live in the more inhospitable areas of Zetin. As a result, they may soon be able to better colonize their own planet.



CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTERS AND CREW

In *Starbreaker*, the players take on the roles of hardened criminals (who may or may not be reformed). They must work to survive and get ahead in a dangerous, space opera galaxy. This chapter details how to create those characters and ensure they work together.

Before the players make their characters, however, they must decide as a group whether they are *SAINTs* or *Synners*, and which type of crew they belong to.

YOUR CREW

Characters in *Starbreaker* work together in groups known as crews. Before your group starts creating characters, you should discuss what sort of crew you want to run.

Your characters' crew determines what sorts of adventures they'll have, alliances they make, and enemies they'll fight. Are you looking for a game of high-stakes espionage with the risk of betrayal around every corner? A game of two-fisted action? A game of exploration and gritty survival? It's up to you!

I. CHOOSE A SIDE

The first step is to determine if your crew is made up of *SAINTs* or *Synners*.

If your crew is composed of *SAINTs*, then your characters are undercover agents, posing as members of the Syndicate to carry out your true mission for *SAINT*. The nature of that mission is determined by your crew type.

If your crew are *Synners*, then your characters work for the Syndicate. You aren't just *posing* as criminals—you actually *are* criminals, pursuing your own criminal ends as determined by your crew type. This doesn't mean that you're vile,

immoral monsters, of course. You can still have honor, integrity, and a strong sense of ethics, even while being an outlaw.

2. CHOOSE A CREW TYPE

Once you know which side of the law your crew is on, it's time to choose what type of crew they are.

Your crew type options depend on whether your crew is made up of *SAINTs* or *Synners*. In either case, each type comes with a unique crew Edge, which everyone on your crew can use.

SAINT CREWS

HEIST TEAMS

Heist team crews are assembled to perform specific heists. These heists don't necessarily include stealing things. The mission could be to plant evidence, record a nefarious transaction, capture a secure target, or any other goal that requires thoughtful preparation beforehand—and quick thinking if things don't go according to plan.

Although heist teams are concerned with preserving their cover, their assignments are often short-term. Therefore, maintaining cover isn't always their top priority.

Heist team crews start with the Cunning Plan Edge. See page 79.

Heist team crews have room for plenty of specialists, each with a role to play in what may be a complex scheme. Here are some examples of heist team professions:

Engineer: Someone has to override the life support systems and hot-wire the escape pods, and if that someone isn't you, they're just going to get you all killed.

HONOR AMONG THIEVES?

Criminals can break the law and still remain honorable. The trope of honorable criminals has a long history. Plus it's a lot more fun to play with friends who aren't trying to kill each other's characters every session...

A LENS, NOT A LOCK

As an epic sci-fi setting, the *Starbreaker* galaxy supports a wide range of adventures. Whether you're looking for a game of high action, shadowy intrigue, or frontier exploration, you can find it—and more—somewhere in the rim worlds. There are so many kinds of adventure out there, it can be hard to pick one.

The point of choosing a crew type is to help narrow the scope of the game you want to play. It doesn't preclude you from taking other sorts of missions. Instead, it's a lens that can help you focus on the sorts of adventures your group wants to play.

That said, your crew type is only a starting point. You aren't locked into it. Crews adapt, and so do the rules.

Once per rank, when your crew advances, you may change your crew from one type to another at the GM's discretion. For example, if your crew starts out as a heist team, but you find yourselves pulled into the seedy politics of the criminal underworld, you can switch to the infiltrators crew type (swapping out Cunning Plan for the Cover Story Edge) when you advance to the Seasoned rank.

Note that if your group has an idea for a crew, but none of the existing crew types fit your vision, you can work with your GM to develop your own new crew type and its shared Edge.

Grifter: The weakest link in any security system is often a person. That's where you come in. Find that person, find their weakness, and exploit it.

Hypertech: Stealth is great, but it won't keep your crew from showing up on camera or get them through a biometric lock. Your job is to shut down the cameras, the locks, and anything else between your crew and success.

Smuggler: A heist is only as good as its exit plan. Lucky for this crew, their exit plan is you.

Thief: You can't have a heist and not invite the thief. That would just be rude.

INFILTRATORS

Infiltrator crews are dedicated to long-term undercover assignments. They typically specialize in stealth, reconnaissance, investigation, and intelligence gathering. They are spies and manipulators, using blackmail, political machinations, and even assassination to undermine the Syndicate. While these crews see their share of violence and mayhem, they prefer to keep such things to a minimum to maintain their cover.

Infiltration missions often focus on stealing Syndicate secrets, subtly disrupting Syndicate operations, and sowing seeds of mistrust and confusion between the Syndicate factions. To this end, infiltrators find themselves settling into smuggling hubs, pirate ports, or other fixed locations where they can build trust and cultivate a network of spies.

Infiltrator crews start with the Cover Story Edge. See page 79.

While any SAINT can be of use in an infiltrator crew, the following professions most easily find roles on the team:

Assassin: You're already an expert at living a double life. Adding another layer of lies comes as naturally to you as pulling the trigger.

Grifter: Infiltration is all about lying—and you are very good at lying.

Psy Operative: Through your psionic training, you were literally made for this sort of work.

Thief: They say you should set a thief to catch a thief, but it turns out thieves are good at catching a wide variety of criminals. As a master of stealth, surveillance, and high-tech burglary, you bring a wide range of practical skills to the team.

STRIKE UNITS

Strike unit crews work undercover long enough to approach their target without suspicion, then burst into action.

Stealth and subtlety are nice, but strike units prioritize results. These crews are sent on high-impact missions such as capturing or killing an important target, blowing up a key Syndicate holding, or rescuing a VIP. Strike unit missions are often rush jobs. The crews don't have much time for elaborate schemes or worrying about maintaining their covers. They just need to get in, execute, and get out.

Strike unit crews start with the Misdirection Edge. See page 80.

Here are some examples of professions that would easily fit in with a strike unit crew:

Bounty Hunter: Going into hostile areas to extract a target is your specialty. If the mission calls for dropping something off instead, that's even easier.

Engineer: The crew appreciates your skills in sabotage, explosions, and causing chaotic distractions.

Pirate: Raiding a Syndicate stronghold isn't that much different from raiding a high-security merchant vessel.

Psy Commando: It feels good to use your skills and powers to make the galaxy a better place—by removing those who make it a worse place.

SYNNER CREWS

ENFORCERS

Most Syndicate members are part of an enforcer crew. Enforcers are the soldiers, the muscle, the toughs who get things done. They don't ask many questions. In return, they aren't responsible for much more than following orders.

Those orders can include virtually anything: making deliveries, shaking down clients, escorting VIPs, stealing valuables, or even eliminating rivals. While crew members may come from any number of different factions, most crews work for a single Syndicate faction.

Enforcer crews start with the Strength in Numbers Edge. See page 80.

Since enforcer crews provide a broad range of services, their members are often generalists. Here are some examples:

CHARACTER PROFESSIONS

Starbreaker characters start with one of the character professions listed below. See page 56 for details on professions.

- Assassin
- Bounty hunter
- Engineer
- Grifter
- Hypertech
- Pirate
- Psy commando
- Psy operative
- Smuggler
- Thief

Bounty Hunter: When the crew needs to find someone, they need you. And as a member of the Bounty Hunters League, you can offer them some legitimacy.

Pirate: Thanks to your life aboard starships, you can do a bit of everything—which comes in handy whenever the job requires more than busting heads.

Psy Commando: Unlike some crew members, you can be subtle when necessary. There's no need to go in guns blazing when your mind can be just as deadly.

Thief: Whether the job's a basic smash-and-grab or something requiring a bit more finesse, you've got the tools and skills to do it right.

MAGNATES

The Syndicate is always growing. Magnate crews are the frontier explorers of criminal enterprise, forever expanding the Syndicate's markets and spreading its influence into new territories.

As traders, smugglers, or other illicit merchants, magnates set up shop on planets or in territories where their Syndicate faction doesn't yet have much of a presence. If there's already a criminal element present, it's up to the magnates to work a deal with them—or remove them from the equation altogether.

Magnate crews sometimes come into conflict with each other. While the Syndicate factions play nice on Echo and the more populated planets, out

on the frontier, anything can happen. Rivalries and tempers flare up. Disputes can turn deadly.

Magnate crews start with the Street Smarts Edge. See page 80.

It takes a variety of skills to thrive on the criminal frontier. A magnate crew needs all the help it can get, especially the following:

Engineer: When they're far from civilization, the crew must depend on their Gear, and that means depending on you to keep it going.

Gifter: It's your job to explain to the locals how very much they need the goods and services your crew is selling.

Smuggler: New markets mean black markets, and black markets mean contraband in need of smuggling.



TROUBLESHOOTERS

The Syndicate sends in troubleshooters when something goes wrong. If a shipment or a VIP goes missing, equipment starts mysteriously breaking, or the accounts aren't adding up right, it's up to a troubleshooter crew to get to the bottom of it.

These aren't your standard leg-breakers. They can break legs if they have to, but troubleshooters are investigators, trackers, and spies. They get results, but they also get answers.

Troubleshooter crews start with the Local Contact Edge. See page 80.

Since they work on special projects, troubleshooter crews are often composed of specialists. Here are some examples of troubleshooter professions:

Assassin: When it comes to shooting trouble, you're the expert.

Bounty Hunter: With your reputation, you can find answers on the streets.

Hypertech: Not every problem can be solved with threats and violence. Some problems need a gentle, digital touch, and you're here to provide it.

Psy Operative: If the crew can give you the person with the answers you need, you'll pull those answers right out of their brain.

3. CHOOSE AN ALLY AND OPPOSITION

The Syndicate is composed of 12 factions and a mysterious director that work together to control a shared criminal empire throughout the rim worlds. Although the factions are united in purpose, each has its own members, goals, and sphere of influence.

ALLY

Your crew must choose to ally with one of these factions. This doesn't necessarily mean your crew members are part of the faction, or even that your crew officially or directly works for them. It just means you have a mutually beneficial relationship. (Note that if your crew members are SAINTs, this allegiance is part of your cover, and may be tied into a long-term undercover operation.)

OPPOSITION

Your crew also chooses one opposing faction. This opposition could be personal (you crossed them in the past), or a matter of policy (they just don't like your allied faction). In any case, their goals and agenda often put them in conflict with your crew's missions.

THE FACTIONS

Choose one of the following factions to be your crew's ally and another to be your crew's opposition.

Belters Union: The Union controls virtually all docks and labor in the rim worlds. Its members can help allies slip things in and out of port without being seen. The Union's objective is to control every link in the galactic supply chain.

Blood Coin: Dedicated to secrets, spies, and blackmail, members of this faction may share their shadowy intelligence with allies. Their hunger for delicious new secrets is insatiable, and those who cross them may find their own secrets uncovered and leaked.

Bratva: A highly effective interplanetary protection racket, Bratva can provide allies with weapons and soldiers. The faction's enemies, however, may find themselves attacked by those same "protectors."

Cartel: Members of the Cartel are smugglers. As such, they can help their allies acquire rare or illicit goods. They are ruthless when creating new markets or eliminating the competition.

Jarisk'Krim: This group of former soldiers prefers to support itself by stealing high-value items. Nevertheless, it can offer its allies military-style protection, and its enemies military-style raids.

Mafia: The Mafia maintains a diverse portfolio of enterprises, both criminal and legitimate, usually tied to specific geographic regions. The faction generously shares its assets with those who assist in its territorial expansion, but shows no mercy to those who stand in its way.

Monarchs: Incredibly wealthy from their control of critanium mining, the Monarchs are happy to loan their allies large sums of money—at a reasonable interest rate, of course. Fail to pay them back, and they will come to collect. They are keen to expand and tighten their control of critanium production.

Splicers: The masters of illegal transhuman technologies, the Splicers can help their allies find and implant biotech upgrades. They're always looking to acquire medical breakthroughs and render their competition obsolete.

Sydok: These mercenaries offer security services to their allies (sometimes at a discount), but they sometimes need those allies' help when carrying out a mission against an enemy they've been contracted to fight.

Triads: Masters of money manipulation, the Triads are glad to help their allies with money laundering, investment schemes, and emergency loans. Meanwhile, they punish their enemies with drained bank accounts and frozen assets.

Void: As an entity that exists almost entirely on the HyperNet, the Void knows all, sees all, and can be anywhere. It's terrifying even as an ally, but it's much worse as an enemy.

Yakuza: Primarily known for its vast network of casinos, the Yakuza offers a haven to its allies and their money, but it does not tolerate competition.

FAVOR

Your crew's standing within its allied Syndicate faction is determined by its Favor die. The larger your Favor die type, the more likely it is that the faction will honor your requests for equipment, personnel, and other resources. Your crew's Favor die starts at d6. Rules for using the Favor die and dealing with your ally faction are found on page 110.

4. CLAIM A STARSHIP

The fastest way into adventure is with a starship, so your crew starts with one of its own.

You begin with a Star Raven class light transport ship (detailed on page 101), which is on loan from your allied Syndicate faction. Your crew is free to upgrade and modify it as you see fit, and you're responsible for its repair and maintenance. Your ally may take their starship back at any time—though they're unlikely to do so as long as your successful missions for them outweigh your failures.

READY FOR LAUNCH

Your crew has a type, an ally, an opposition, and a starship. It's time to make some characters.

MAKING CHARACTERS

Character creation in *Starbreaker* follows the rules set out in *Savage Worlds*, with one exception: each character starts with a profession. A profession is a special type of Edge to help define the character's role in the galaxy.

1. SPECIES

There are numerous sentient species in the galaxy. Choose one for your character. Your species may provide inherent Hindrances, bonuses to Traits, or extra Edges. Descriptions of each species and its stats begin on page 28.

Species available in *Starbreaker* include:

Alau: Friendly tinkerers and mechanics, they're known for making friends and fixing machines—even if they don't need fixing.

Arusans: An empathic aquatic species that prefers negotiation to conflict.

Dunar: Bioengineered for war by the nohgotha, they now enjoy self-determination for the first time.

Gilgar: Short, furry beings with horns, they are new citizens of the wider galaxy.

Hopoc: Descended from horned megafauna, they cherish family bonds.

Humans: The leading power of the Star Systems Alliance.

Mentis: Known for their diplomacy and patience, they adhere to the peaceful "seven-fingered way."

Nahkyra: All of space cannot satisfy the curiosity of this small and batlike species.

Septrids: These stoic reptiles rival humanity for power in the galaxy.

Synths: Created by humans as artificial workers and soldiers, some synths spontaneously achieved self-awareness.

Thovin: These four-armed engineers are known for their commitment to strict rules and protocols.

Vulkolasi: Resembling canids, they are prepared to battle anyone.

Zaka: Methane-breathing and snakelike, they are truly alien to most other species.

2. PROFESSION

Professions are Edges that help your character fill a classic space opera role right from the start. In general, a crew of characters should represent a variety of professions to ensure they have the specialists they need on the team. Descriptions of each profession begin on page 56.

Professions available in *Starbreaker* include:

Assassin: These hired killers belong to the Assassins Guild, which helps them find work and protects them from criminal prosecution. Methodical to a fault, assassins research their targets fully before every hit and are experts at bypassing security.

Bounty Hunter: Employers look to the Bounty Hunters League when they want a target found and captured, rather than eliminated. Bounty hunters are excellent investigators as well as fearsome combatants.

Engineer: A ship's engineer is often the only person standing between a crew getting home safely or dying in the cold vacuum of space. An engineer's skills extend beyond simple repair work into the science of spaceflight.

Grifter: Living by their wits in a galaxy where violence reigns, Grifters cajole and con their way through society, both high and low. Grifters range from small-time jackals feeding off the hopes of the downtrodden to high-class tricksters ripping off gullible trillionaires.

Hypertech: These wizards of the HyperNet—the quantum entanglement-powered galactic computer information network—can hack any system to pull off effects a lesser mind would consider magic.

Pirate: For as long as ships have sailed the seas, sailors have rebelled against brutal authorities and turned to piracy to augment their incomes. The seas of space are no different, yielding entire navies full of pirates.

Psy Commando: The caelum and the xek granted technologically enhanced psychic abilities to human soldiers during the Armageddon War. With the conflict ended, those psy commandos are now free to make their way in a galaxy that fears their power as supersoldiers.

Psy Operative: SSA intelligence cracked the secrets of the caelum and the xek to bestow mind-manipulating psionic abilities on their agents. Subtler than the psy commandos, yet no

less dangerous, these psy operatives now sell their services to corporations and the Syndicate.

Smuggler: It takes some fancy flying to get cargo from one star system to another while avoiding toll jump gates or Synners who want their cut. Successful smugglers are the best pilots in the galaxy, even if they struggle to break even.

Thief: No matter how much things change, there's always a place in the universe for a professional thief. No one else is going to break into an asteroid vault, scale a 200-story building to burgle a capo's private safe, or swap a corporate lab's high-tech prototype with an identical but malfunctioning counterfeit.

3. HINDRANCES

In addition to any Hindrances gained from your species or profession, you can take up to 4 points of additional Hindrances. A Major Hindrance is worth 2 points and a Minor Hindrance is worth 1.

You may choose any of the Hindrances listed in *Savage Worlds*, or any of the new ones listed below, starting on page 77.

Use points gained from Hindrances to purchase benefits for your character, as detailed in the sections below.

4. ATTRIBUTES

Your character begins with a free d4 in each of the five attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. Their species may grant them a higher starting die type in one or more attributes. Dunar, for example, start with a d6 in Agility.

Distribute 5 points among your hero's attributes. Raising an attribute by a die type costs 1 point. You may not raise an attribute above d12 unless your species description says otherwise. Dunar, for example, may raise their Agility to d12+1.

You may spend 2 Hindrance points to raise an attribute by one die type.

5. SKILLS

Core Skills: Your hero begins with a d4 in Athletics, Common Knowledge, Notice, Persuasion, and Stealth. These are the innate abilities that almost all sapient beings possess.

Buying Skills: *Starbreaker* takes place in a far future of highly advanced technology, and it therefore uses the More Skill Points Setting Rule (see *Savage Worlds*). You have 15 points to buy skills.

Purchasing a new skill (starting at d4) costs 1 point.

Raising a skill by a die type costs 1 point as long as the new skill die is no higher than the attribute to which it is linked.

It costs 2 skill points per die type to raise a skill above its linked attribute.

Skills cannot be raised above d12.

You may spend 1 Hindrance point to gain an additional skill point.

Language Skills: Every species is assumed to have its own language. Your character starts with d8 in her native language, and d6 in a number of other languages equal to half her Smarts die. (See sidebar.)

Hypertech (Smarts): This is a new skill. It's the arcane skill for the new Hypertech Arcane Background, which is detailed on page 78.



6. DERIVED STATISTICS

Once you have finished determining your attributes and skills, you can calculate your derived statistics. Unless modified by your species, Hindrances, or Edges, those stats are calculated as follows:

Pace is equal to 6.

Parry is equal to 2 plus half your character's Fighting die type (rounded down). If you haven't taken Fighting, it's 2.

Toughness is equal to 2 plus half your character's Vigor die (rounded down).

HACKING AND HYPERTECH

In *Starbreaker*, the Hacking skill is restricted to local devices and public HyperNet node searches. Breaking into remote devices or restricted HyperNet nodes requires the Hypertech Arcane Background and the Hypertech arcane skill.

LANGUAGES

Starbreaker uses the Multiple Languages Setting Rule. Every character begins with a d8 in their native language and a d6 in a number of other languages equal to half their Smarts die type. One of these languages must be Arusan Basic—a simplified version of the language of the arusan people—which has become the galactic trade language.

International cooperation is necessary for a species to take to the stars. This inevitably means they have developed a world government and adopted a formal world language—either a constructed international auxiliary language or a single nation's tongue. Consequently, only a single Language skill is needed to communicate with most species. Gilgar speak Language (Gilgar), hopoc speak Language (Hopoc), and the like. Humans speak Terran, an amalgamation of the most-spoken languages on earth, but most other species simply think of it as "Human."

7. EDGES

Your character's profession or species may grant one or more free Edges. You may spend Hindrance points to purchase additional Edges for which your hero meets the requirements, at the cost of 2 points per Edge.

You may purchase any of the Edges listed in *Savage Worlds* except Arcane Background. New *Starbreaker* Edges and Arcane Backgrounds are detailed starting on page 78.

8. GEAR

The standard currency in *Starbreaker* is the Galactic Credit, often abbreviated "GC." Your hero's profession determines his starting Gear and/or Galactic Credits.

You may spend 1 Hindrance point to gain 1,000 GC in additional starting funds.

9. BACKGROUND DETAILS

Now that you have your character's statistics, write down some details of your hero's history. Consider the following:

What did you do before joining SAINT or the Syndicate?

Are you with SAINT or the Syndicate willingly?

What are your goals?

Why did SAINT or the Syndicate recruit you? What knowledge and/or skills do you contribute?

SPECIES

Many sapient species call the galaxy home, but these are the major players in the rim worlds.

BASELINES AND BROAD STROKES

In this section, the various species' cultures are described in the broadest of terms, with just enough details to give the reader a sense of what they're like. Within each culture, of course, there are countless exceptions and variations: individuals, groups, and subcultures that don't neatly fit the general mold. The cultures as presented are merely the baselines, and players should feel free to expand on them to make their heroes unique.





ALAU

Sleek and slender, the long-fingered alau stand, on average, just over four feet tall. Their lithe bodies are covered in fur, typically a shade of white, black, gray, brown, or red.

Alau are generally known to be friendly and masters of repair. This has led to the saying, "It's rare to see alau alone, or without a tool in hand."

Star System: Lekeris

Homeworld: Arkus

Government: Fellowship of Free Alau

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The alau love to fix things, and they see that the galaxy is full of things in need of repair. This usually means fixing mechanical or electronic items. But it can also include biological systems (the alau produce many medical professionals), political structures, or even personal relationships. Even things that aren't broken can be improved and, according to the alau, *should* be improved. If they can make something faster, stronger, deadlier, or more efficient, they'll try to do so. Stagnation is tedious, and there's nothing worse than tedium.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

It's said that the alau never walk alone, and it's often true. Alau tend to do things in groups and travel in herds. Even those who operate on their own remain in near-constant contact with their clans. This has its advantages, but since clans often feud with each other, it can also lead to conflict.

Alau get bored easily. Bored alau are dangerous because they start trying to fix things that aren't broken, and improving things that shouldn't be improved. It's best to make sure an alau has challenge to keep him occupied.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

The alau have a curious, friendly culture, and are open to new people and experiences. They quickly bond with those they meet, and offer to help solve any problems they see, whether that help is needed or not. They are quick to defend their extended family, which includes anyone they've decided is part of it.

CULTURE

Family is everything to the alau. Their first loyalty is to their pod. Beyond that is their clan. They will do anything for their clan, and their clan will do anything for them.

Alau adopt those they work with into their family, regardless of species. Once an alau decides he likes someone, that person is now and forever his pod-mate and clan-kin.

Alau grow up in families of 10–20. Five to ten families form a pod, each pod is part of a close-knit clan. Clans feud and squabble, but such conflicts are rarely serious or long lasting.

Centuries ago, the alau outgrew their planet. They set off in enormous ships to establish new colonies. They successfully colonized some nearby planets, but many of the ship-clans are still flying. Today's ship-clans are descendants of the original explorers, flying updated versions of their original ships. They travel the galaxy, taking on work repairing starships and similar tasks.

Alau in the Syndicate are likely bored and trying to illegally improve things. Alternatively, alau are known to bond with criminals, and end up following them into a life of crime.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

In the time before the war, many alau clans had exclusive contracts with the Arusan Trade Conglomerate. The work was steady, and the Conglomerate handle the paperwork so the alau could focus on the fun parts of the job.

Since the war, most of the alau clans have gone independent. They remain on good terms with the arusans, and still do a lot of work for them. But they enjoy the freedom to pursue other projects—the more unusual, the better.

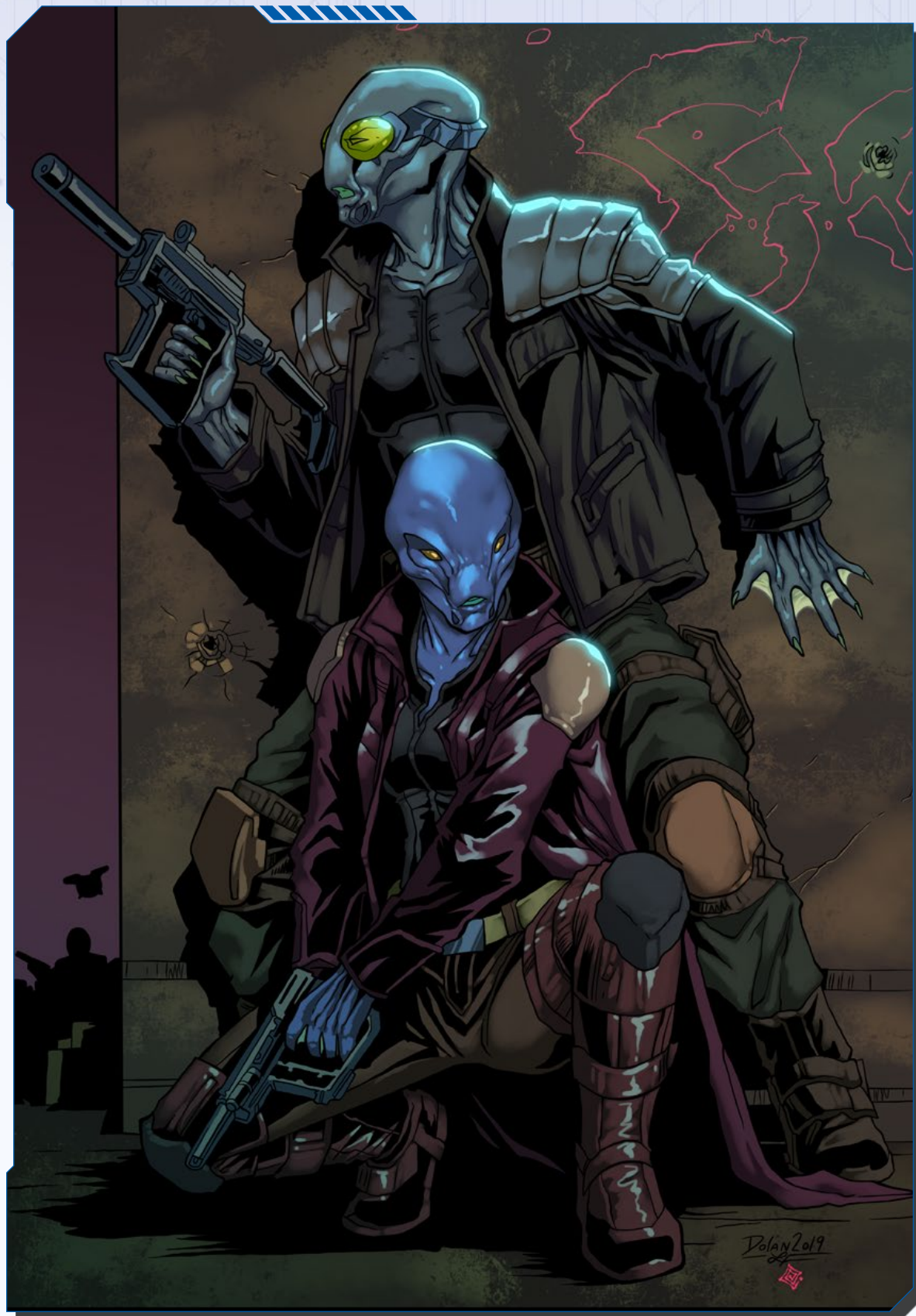
ALAU ABILITIES

Agile: Alau are known for their nimble fingers and ability to slip through tight quarters. They start with d6 Agility instead of d4. This increases their maximum Agility to d12+1.

Clan Ties: Alau are tightly bound to their clans. Once per session, an alau can ask a favor of their clan or an allied clan, per the Connections Edge. But if a rival clan is in the area, it may present a challenge per the Minor Enemy Hindrance.

Curious: Especially when they have nothing better to do, alau like to figure out how things work. This can lead to running unauthorized tests, or disassembling items that were never intended to be taken apart.

Tinkerer: Alau love to fix and improve the world around them. Alau characters begin with d6 in the player's choice of one of the following skills: Electronics, Healing, or Repair.



ARUSANS

Arusans stand five to six feet tall, with smooth skin and powerful limbs. Their skin varies in color between vibrant shades of blue, green, and red.

One constant reminder of the arusans' aquatic heritage is the misting device they wear to keep their skin moist. Failing to wear it can cause them to dry out, suffer, and die.

Arusans retain an evolved form of the lateral lines that gave their distant ancestors spatial awareness and the ability to detect electrical impulses underwater. This attribute now manifests as an empathic ability that serves arusans well in maintaining their own cordial society and negotiating with other species.

Star System: Valasardin

Homeworld: Frungu

Government: Arusan Trade Conglomerate

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Having a corporate trade conglomerate as a government has deeply impacted arusan culture and society. Arusans believe that relationships are by nature transactional. Everyone wants something. Everyone has their price. Making deals is just how things get done.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Those inexperienced with the arusans may see them as shifty, greedy, or manipulative. Once they give arusans a chance, however, they find them likeable, if profit-driven. They are, after all, charming, and their words do make sense...

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Most arusans are friendly and cordial. Even the grumpiest arusan is considered polite by most other societies.

Due to their friendly nature (as well as a desire to prepare negotiation tactics), arusans like to learn companions' tastes, concerns, hopes, and fears. As such, arusans make wonderful conversation partners, as well as powerful advocates on your on your behalf.

CULTURE

Negotiation, trade, and diplomacy are all part of arusan culture. Childhood games are based on mediation and debate, and most schooling takes an economic bent. However, it is foolish to view the arusans as simply commerce-driven.

Arusans harbor a deep passion for architecture, music, and the performing arts. Very few cultures surpass their knowledge of marine biology and engineering. Their appreciation for marine life extends far beyond the commercial value of aquaculture into a quasi-religious love of the sea.

War is not unthinkable to an arusan. They prefer to negotiate and avoid conflict, as they find war unprofitable.

Arusans consider contracts a sacred bond. If you break a contract, The Arusan Trade Conglomerate will extract the maximum penalty (likely one you missed in the fine print).

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the Armageddon War, the arusans established the Conglomerate with their partner species. The war disrupted it.

Since the war, the arusans have been busy rebuilding their empire. They have worked to quickly reestablish as many safe trade routes as possible while also opening new ones. Because of this economic focus, they have fared better than many other cultures and governments. A significant portion of galactic wealth, resources, and goods flows through arusan territories.

ARUSAN ABILITIES

Aquatic: Arusans can swim at their full Pace using their webbed hands and feet. They cannot drown so long as the water is oxygenated.

Dependency: Arusans must constantly hydrate their bodies. Their skin needs regular moisture, otherwise it dries out and peels. Arusans must submerge themselves in water or use a moisture rehydration system for a minimum of one hour out of every 24 or become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. A day after that, they perish. Each hour spent hydrating restores a level of Fatigue. To keep themselves moisturized, all arusan characters receive a skinister (see page 85) in addition to their other equipment.

Empaths: Arusans are natural empaths. Arusans start with Arcane Background (Gifted) and the power *empathy* but must purchase the Focus skill to make use of it.

Immune to Poison: The flora and fauna of Frungu are highly toxic. Due to this exposure, arusans have evolved an immunity to poison.

Nice to a Fault: Even when intimidation would be justified, arusans prefer a gentler approach. All arusans suffer from the Mild Mannered Hindrance.



DUNAR

The dunar were created by the nohgotha for combat and labor in the Armageddon War.

They are muscular beings between six and seven feet tall. Their skin is often red, though a rare few are born a pale ashy white. They possess large oval-shaped auricles rather than ears.

Dunar grow head tendrils in a similar fashion to human hair. For most males, these tendrils form the shape of a crest resembling a mohawk or oseledets. Females tend to grow longer tendrils and have been known to braid them.

The nohgotha cut the tendrils off to hamper community-building and organizing, as dunar head tendrils move in response to emotion and can be used to subtly communicate. Freeborn dunar wear their crest of tendrils as a sign of freedom in defiance of their former masters.

Star System: Haro

Homeworld: Sozin

Government: Free Dunar Republic

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The galaxy is a tough place to live, but dunar were made to take it. They didn't ask to be here, but since they weren't asked, they don't need anyone's permission. It's not their fault the nohgotha waged war on the galaxy. All the dunar want to do is live in peace—or get their piece of the profit and action.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Old prejudices die hard. As the face of the nohgotha invasion, dunar are rarely trusted by other species. Most people want nothing to do with them. Those who do are usually interested in using the dunar to do their dirty work for them.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Relations with other species remain tense. Nevertheless, many dunar have found acceptance in smaller or more tolerant communities.

Relations between the dunar and the vulkolasi are especially difficult. Most vulkolasi harbor anger over the attacks on their homeworld, and refuse to deal with dunar at all if possible.

CULTURE

The dunar were all soldiers in the nohgotha's army. When the war ended, hundreds of millions of dunar were abandoned behind enemy lines. Some were put into prisons and refugee camps, but the scale of the problem made this solution

CULTURAL ANIMOSITIES

Although roleplaying the animosity between two cultures can be fun and challenging, antagonizing other players isn't fun and can be disruptive. If your group includes both dunar and vulkolasi characters, their players should come to an agreement on how their characters will function together. It can be enjoyable to have characters who hate each other grow past their initial differences, but only if both players are ready to follow through with it (and are capable of separating player from character interactions).

untenable. After much political wrangling and bitter rhetoric, the dunar were pardoned. Now, a whole generation lives free that never experienced being warrior-drones.

Most dunar adopt the cultures of the world they were raised on. Genetically engineered for war, many serve in military units. They find plenty of opportunities fighting in mercenary outfits or working for the Syndicate.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the dunar were kept in expansive vaults of stasis pods as the nohgotha built their gargantuan war machine.

After the war, prejudice drove them to the rim worlds, where the Syndicate welcomed them with open arms. Now the core worlds see them not only as the face of the invasion, but as criminals.

DUNAR ABILITIES

Agile: Dunar were bioengineered to be dextrous killing machines. They start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4. This increases maximum Agility to d12+1.

Tendrill Signaling: Dunar may make a Persuasion roll to use their head tendrils for communicating basic messages to each other.

Tough: Dense tissue and muscle make dunar resistant to damage. Add +1 to their Toughness.

Outsider (Major): Dunar subtract 2 from Persuasion rolls when interacting with other species.



GILGAR

Since the gilgar are new to galactic civilization, the young adults of the species are the first generation to have known star travel from birth. The gilgar are almost childlike in their exuberance to experience new things as they continue adapting to a universe of new and varied ideas.

Gilgar have digitigrade legs, stocky bodies, and thick fur coats that range between shades of black, brown, gray, and red. Hornlike bony ridges cover their brows. The average gilgar is between four and five feet tall. Eye colors can be blue, brown, green, and rarely violet.

Star System: Thrakin

Homeworld: Gohba

Government: Star Systems Alliance

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Gilgar value hard work. They don't mind doing manual labor or getting their hands dirty. Exploring the the galaxy is fine, so long as they can earn a fair wage for it. Gilgar keep their word and expect others to do the same.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

"Honest, hardworking, and a little bit gullible" is how some describe them. Their serious demeanor can be intimidating, but after spending some time with a gilgar, most people quickly realize that they just want to do their jobs and have a good time.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

The gilgar have few issues with other species. If given an opportunity to work or advance themselves, gilgar bury themselves in their task. Their habit of being serious and direct in most conversations can cause some people to mistakenly believe a gilgar is angry or upset, but it's just a reflection of their innate honesty.

CULTURE

Upon reaching the age of maturity, most gilgar serve at least one seven-year term in the military. This tradition is based on an old legend in which a general promised to serve seven years in restitution—one year for each day he failed to answer a call to war.

Such traditions make up a large part of the gilgar culture. While not overly religious, they still carry many practices from the past. One such practice is carving symbols into their bony forehead ridges. On the left, they carve depictions

of the battles in which they have served. On their right, they carve marks representing their family—one mark for each family member of note.

The gilgar are comfortable with heights, climbing, and caves. They tend to build their cities into the mountains rather than on or around them.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

The gilgar joined the SSA only 50 years before the nohgotha invaded. The sudden influx of wealth and advanced technology changed their lives and world almost overnight. Many gilgar worked on the various SSA worlds and sent money back home.

Their homeworld, Gohba, was attacked during the war. Some gilgar argue it would not have been touched had they never joined the SSA. Some even want to leave the alliance. While such propositions have been rejected, the gilgar have begun constructing their own shipyards and building their first colony ships.

The SSA cannot afford to lose any member worlds at this time, so it has exerted exceptional diplomatic pressure and offered substantial resources and manpower to help rebuild Gohba. Some factions know of this rift and actively try to incite anger between the gilgar and the SSA, especially the corporate worlds.

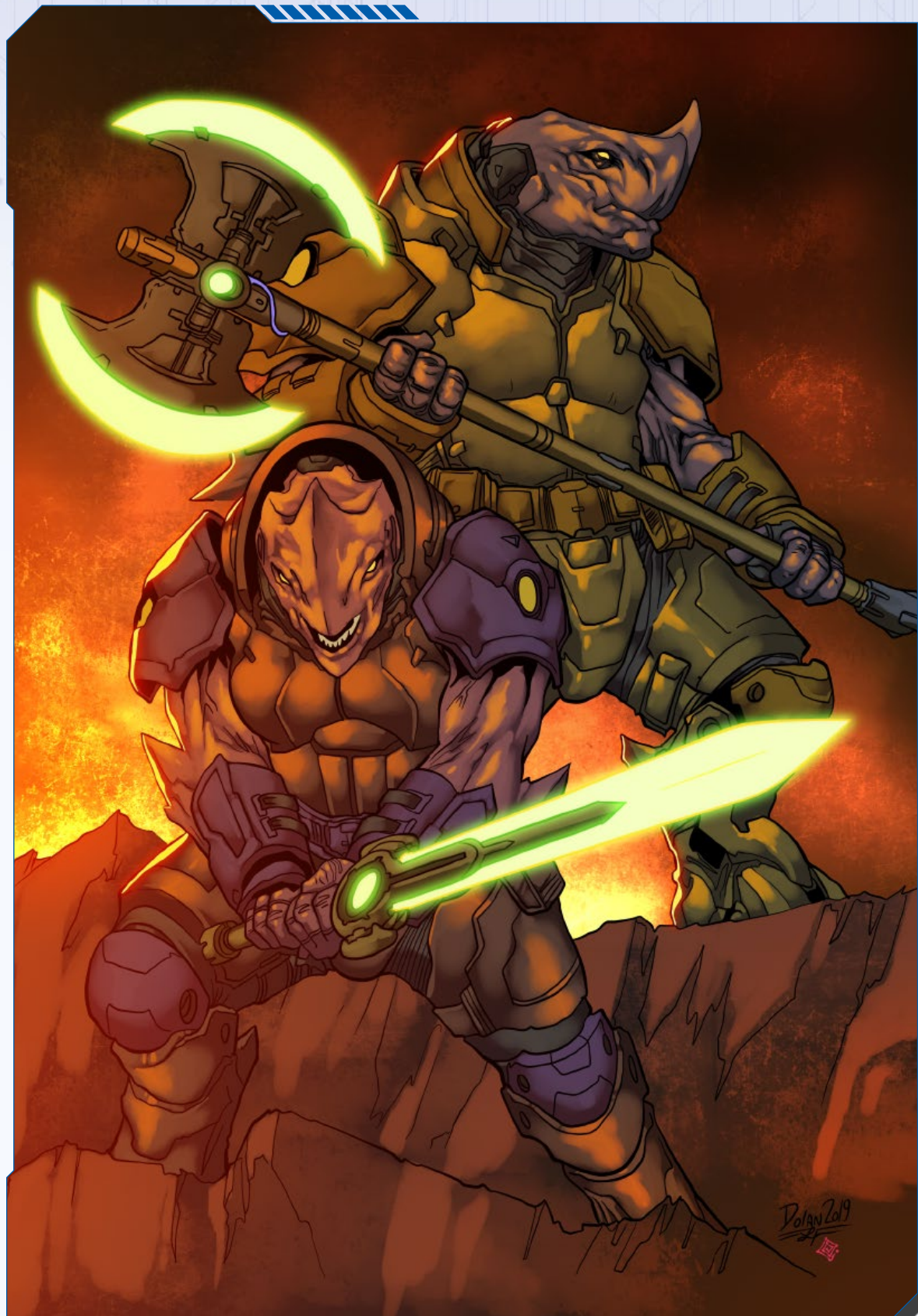
GILGAR ABILITIES

Forehead Ridges: Gilgar may headbutt with their brow ridges for Str+d4 damage. They add an additional +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which the gilgar Runs, moves at least 5" (10 yards), and successfully hits with its forehead ridges.

Gruff: The brutal honesty of gilgar is off-putting to most other sapient beings. Gilgar subtract 2 from Persuasion rolls when interacting with other species.

High Altitude Dwellers: Gilgar are acclimated to thin atmospheres (see **Atmospheres** on page 106).

Leaper: Gilgar can leap twice as far as listed under movement (see *Savage Worlds*). In addition, a gilgar adds +4 damage when leaping as part of a Wild Attack instead of the usual +2 (unless in a closed or confined space where she cannot leap horizontally or vertically—GM's call).



HOPOCS

Hopocs stand between six and seven feet tall and have grayish hides. Their eyes vary dramatically in color, with blue and brown being the most common colors. Exceptionally large and often very muscular, a hopoc can make a fearsome sight. Nevertheless, despite their appearance, hopocs are rarely aggressive.

Star System: Fodik

Homeworld: Neshon

Government: Hopoc Republic

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Hopocs feel that life is a challenge to be met head on. They celebrate every new feat performed and accomplishment achieved. When offered a chance to explore the galaxy and have new experiences, a hopoc jumps at the opportunity and thinks of the consequences later. They are always on the move toward the next adventure.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Newly arrived on the galactic stage, hopocs are not well known. Their large size and deep voices can put smaller species ill at ease. Once they start talking and laughing, however, it is easy to get caught up in their sense of wonder and fun.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Hopocs in the wider galaxy are often reserved at first, keeping to themselves when initially encountering new people or groups. Once they open up, though, they become fast friends, eager to share their boundless enthusiasm with others.

Hopocs see the good in life and extend this to how they approach others. If another person treats them fairly and with good intent, they readily respond in kind. Once this trust is broken, or they are treated unfairly, it is very hard to earn back a hopoc's trust.

CULTURE

Hopoc culture centers around extended families, with the grandparents or even great-grandparents sharing leadership of the household. The long lives of the hopocs mean that three to four generations of relatives often share a single sprawling home.

Hopocs extend the concept of family to nearly every aspect of life. The leader of the Hopoc Republic is referred to as Mother or Father. Elders are honored even by offworlders with the title of Grandparent or Ancestor.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Prior to the war, hopocs were not part of the interstellar political scene. The arusans had limited but regular trade with them. Few others had any contact outside of sporadic sightings and the occasional trade exchange. The hopocs had not shown themselves to be warlike, and few outsiders had seen their military vessels.

The hopocs avoided the horrors of the Armageddon War. They neither fought by the side of the SSA and its allies, nor suffered the ravages of the nohgotha that devastated so many other worlds.

It wasn't until the end of the war that the hopocs revealed their military might. When a remnant nohgotha force attacked the rim world colonies, a hopoc fleet appeared. Consisting of the largest (and apparently the deadliest) ships ever seen outside of the nohgotha's own, the fleet laid waste to the nohgotha force.

Many question why the hopocs stayed out of the war if they were so capable. Some suggest the hopoc attack was a show of force to discourage their galactic neighbors from entertaining thoughts of conquest. Regardless of their reasoning, the hopocs established formal relations with the major powers of the galaxy after the war's end.

HOPOC ABILITIES

Big: Hopocs are very large. They subtract 2 when using equipment designed for smaller beings and cannot wear their armor or clothing. Equipment, armor, food, and clothing cost double the listed price.

Horns: Hopoc horns cause Str+d4 damage. Add another +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which a Hopoc Runs, moves at least 5" (10 yards), and successfully hits with his horns.

Immense Strength: Characters can usually increase only one attribute once per Rank, but Strength does not count against this limit for hopocs. In addition to raising any other one attribute once per Rank, they have the option of increasing their Strength with each Advance.

Size +2: Hopocs are larger than normal. Hopocs add +2 to Toughness and increase their maximum Strength to d12+2.



HUMANS

Humans are defined by their willingness to accept a vast spectrum of ideas.

While humans are not the most numerous or dominant species in the galaxy, they have integrated into life among many other societies and on hundreds of planets. Their ability to adapt to different cultures has allowed humanity to spread its influence across the galaxy.

Humans feature a vast array of eye, hair, and skin colors.

Star System: Sol

Homeworld: Terra

Government: Star Systems Alliance

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The universe is a big place with a multitude of possibilities. A trillion opportunities await; they just depend on the choice you make next.

Humankind has long yearned to discover what else is out there in the galaxy. With the war over and starship crews desperately needed, many humans are taking this opportunity to see it all.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Humans and the SSA they founded were instrumental in stopping the nohgotha invasion during the Armageddon War. Most other species or governments appreciate that, and they have a general sense of goodwill toward humans because of it.

Some colony worlds and nonhuman SSA species, however, felt abandoned during the conflict. They blame the SSA for not doing enough to protect them, and they are likely to lash out against all humans rather than the government specifically.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Humans tend to rapidly adapt to what is around them, adopting cultures, languages, and social mores in a short period. This is more a survival mechanism than a deliberate choice, as this practice tends to make other species feel more comfortable around humans in general.

CULTURE

While humans acknowledge Terra as their homeworld, most humans are born and live on countless other planets throughout the galaxy. While some of these planets are human colonies, many others are not. As a result, human culture has become a broad patchwork of Terran, colonial, and non-human customs and traditions.

Humans' adaptable natures allow them to easily assimilate into the cultures of other species. This flexibility is a boon when dealing with those outside their species or culture.

Human culture varies widely across the galaxy, and is strongly influenced by the cultures of the species around them, but it would be inaccurate to say that humans have no culture of their own. Despite their differences, most humans are united in their admiration for the traits of optimism, curiosity, and ambition. Humans believe a better galaxy can exist—and they're willing to either discover it or create it themselves.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

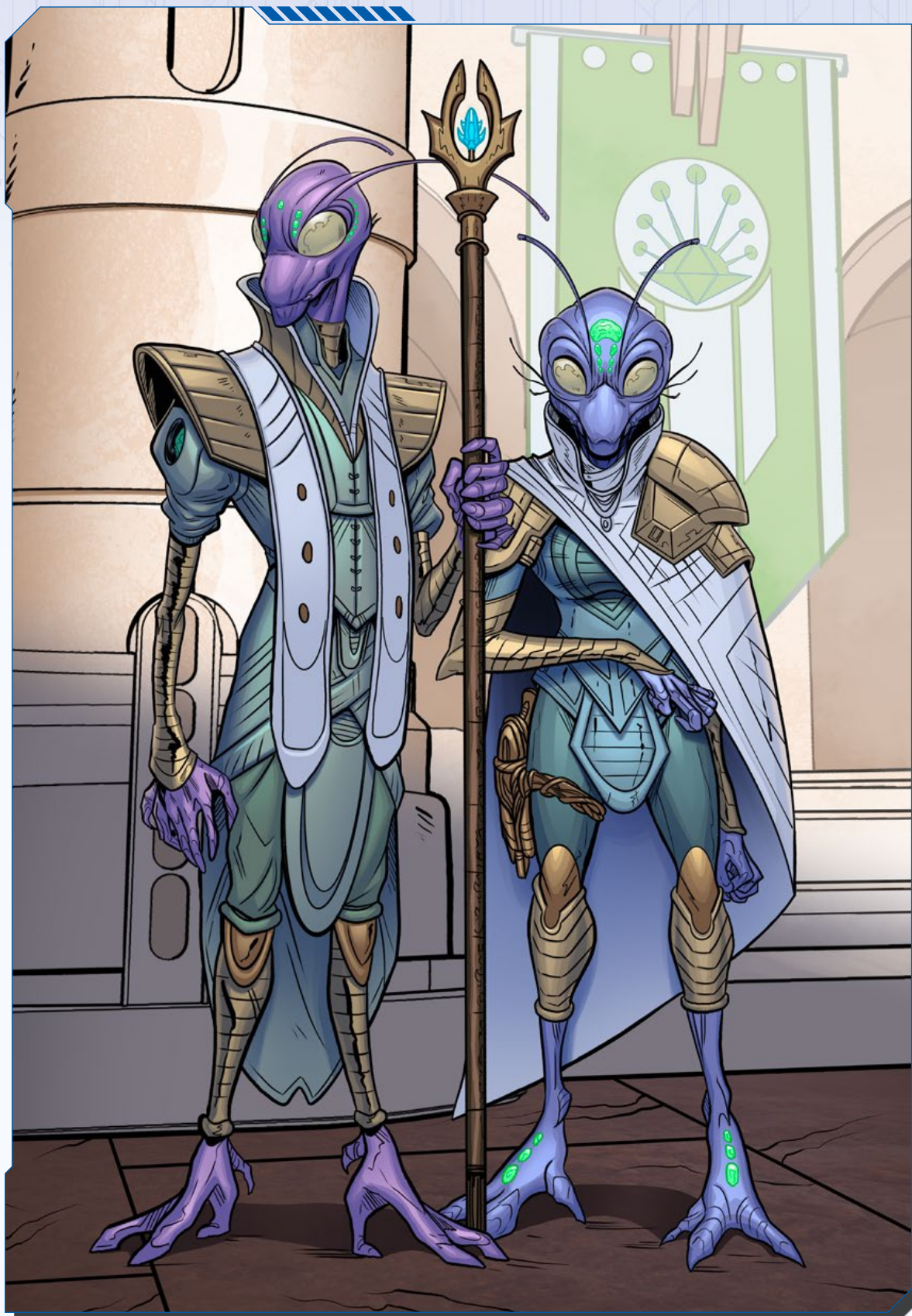
Before the war, humans had spread across the galaxy by colonizing worlds and expanding their territory, encountering new species and eventually forming the Star Systems Alliance. Small skirmishes and even uprisings against the new interplanetary government occurred, but these events were few and far between. A short-lived war with the septrids resulted from an initial misunderstanding between the two species, but nothing had so much as scratched Terra and the inner colonies prior to the Armageddon War.

All that changed with the nohgotha invasion. After the war, humanity withdrew all its forces to protect the core worlds and those few colonies they deemed essential. The rest of the colonial worlds were left to fend for themselves.

As the SSA develops technologies to defend itself against another potential invasion, humanity looks outside its carefully guarded territories and is unhappy with the current condition of the galaxy. Seeking to assert influence once again, humans are active across many arenas, both political and strategic.

HUMAN ABILITIES

Adaptable: Humans begin play with any Novice Edge of their choosing. They must meet its Requirements as usual.



MENTIS

The mentis are known as philosophers and negotiators. They strive for harmony but are willing to choose violence.

Averaging six feet tall, the mentis are humanoids covered in gleaming exoskeletons that appear in a variety of muted colors. The mentis often decorate their exoskeletons with touches of brightly-colored paint or shining jewels. They have seven clawlike fingers on each hand.

Their faces are dominated by a pair of large eyes, above which are a pair of long thin antennae. While mentis faces may seem blank at first, their eyelids and antennae are quite expressive to those who are familiar with them.

Star System: Mentara

Homeworld: Zetin

Government: The Council of Seven Thousand

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The mentis see the galaxy as a place of chaos in desperate need of order. Since the mentis have found the path to harmony through the seven-fingered way, they feel responsible for sharing their wisdom with the rest of the galaxy—even if others aren't ready to receive it yet.

The seven-fingered way uses the mentis' seven-fingered hand as a metaphor. Society is a hand, and people within that society are individual fingers. People can no more separate themselves from their society than fingers can leave their hand. They therefore have a duty to work with others to secure peace through unity, and to foster unity by discovering and cultivating common ground.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Other species regard the mentis as well-meaning and idealistic, but generally slow to action. The mentis are unwilling to move ahead without consensus.

Nevertheless, these very qualities make them great leaders and diplomats. They are patient, resilient, and optimistic.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

The mentis do their best to establish agreement among everyone involved, no matter how long it takes. Unlike the arusans, who negotiate in search of a quick and profitable resolution, the mentis work to build a true, long-lasting consensus.

If they realize that one party simply refuses to negotiate, and cannot be reasoned with, they stop trying. They remove that entity from the negotiations, and move on without them.

CULTURE

By tradition, much of mentis culture revolves around the number seven. They organize themselves into groups of seven, and even child-rearing is based around the core rule of seven. Eggs are laid in communal clutches of seven, and mentis who want children choose however many eggs they have the means to support.

The mentis seek to work with others to secure a peaceful and harmonious existence for everyone. Those who see the mentis' dedication to harmony as a sign of weakness are mistaken. The mentis believe that if a person or group is incapable of seeing beyond their own greed and ambition, they may need to be eliminated for the good of the community. If this is true of a large enough group (such as the nohgotha), it means going to war.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the mentis slowly expanded their sphere of influence, mostly within the Arusan Trade Conglomerate. They made a reputation for themselves as philosopher-diplomats, and often worked as high-priced consultants helping corporations or factions find common ground.

The war showed the mentis that they needed to spread their message of harmony more actively than before. After years of debate and discussion, they launched an organized campaign to expand their presence throughout the galaxy. They aren't concerned with colonizing new worlds, but with creating new hives on currently populated planets. Here they integrate themselves directly into the greater spacefaring community and lead by example. (This integration has led to some of them joining the Syndicate, which is fortunate for SAINT.)

MENTIS ABILITIES

Alertness: Because of their large eyes and sensitive antennae, mentis can see and hear better than many other species. They therefore have the Alertness Edge, which gives them +2 on Notice rolls.

Armor +2: Mentis have a thick exoskeleton.

Deliberative: Mentis prefer to study a problem from multiple perspectives and build a consensus regarding next steps before taking action.



NAHKYRA

Averaging between three and four feet tall, the nahkyra are not an immediately threatening presence. Their pelts can be black, brown, gray, red, or white. They have large round eyes and small protruding fangs.

In addition to the standard configuration of arms and legs, the nahkyra also possess a third set of limbs—wings. These wings can act as another set of arms for balancing, grasping, and climbing, but they lack the fine motor control necessary to fire a weapon or use tools.

Star System: Dalo

Homeworld: Sismistra

Government: Vulkolasi Union

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The galaxy is one giant place for the nahkyra to stretch their wings. Like many species, nahkyra find space travel to be a great adventure. They want to explore and satisfy their innate curiosity.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Many larger species regard the nahkyra as harmless, weak, and even *cute* due to their small size. Nahkyra find this annoying. They prefer other species to respect them for their use of nighttime aerial attacks, and to find them rather terrifying.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Individually, the nahkyra are easygoing and tend not to ruffle other people's feathers. As a society, however, they respond to deliberate provocation with rapid and fierce confrontation. In their first interspecies war with their neighbors, the vulkolasi, they quickly learned that acting too slowly can cost a great deal.

Nowadays, the nahkyra get along extremely well with the vulkolasi. The Armageddon War encouraged both sides to strengthen their alliance. Most military operations consist of combined units from both species.

Unlike the vulkolasi, the nahkyra want the Vulkolasi Union to fully join the Star Systems Alliance. The nahkyra actively participate in security and military operations with the SSA. And at every annual defense summit the SSA hosts, they encourage the vulkolasi to join.

CULTURE

Though they lack the herd or pack mentality of the gilgar and vulkolasi, nahkyra believe in mutual assistance. This cooperation—along with their innate curiosity—led them to discover spaceflight before the vulkolasi. Conflict isn't unheard of within nahkyra society, but they cooperate decisively against outside aggression.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the nahkyra had settled into a long peace with the vulkolasi. This peace allowed them to develop mutually beneficial trade and protection.

Although the nahkyra established colony worlds of their own before the war, they also followed the vulkolasi across the stars and shared many colonies with them. Whatever fate befell a vulkolasi world also befell the nahkyra.

Since the war, the nahkyra have remained committed to the Vulkolasi Union. The rebuilding of their colony worlds in the wake of the Armageddon War is a joint effort.

NAHKYRA ABILITIES

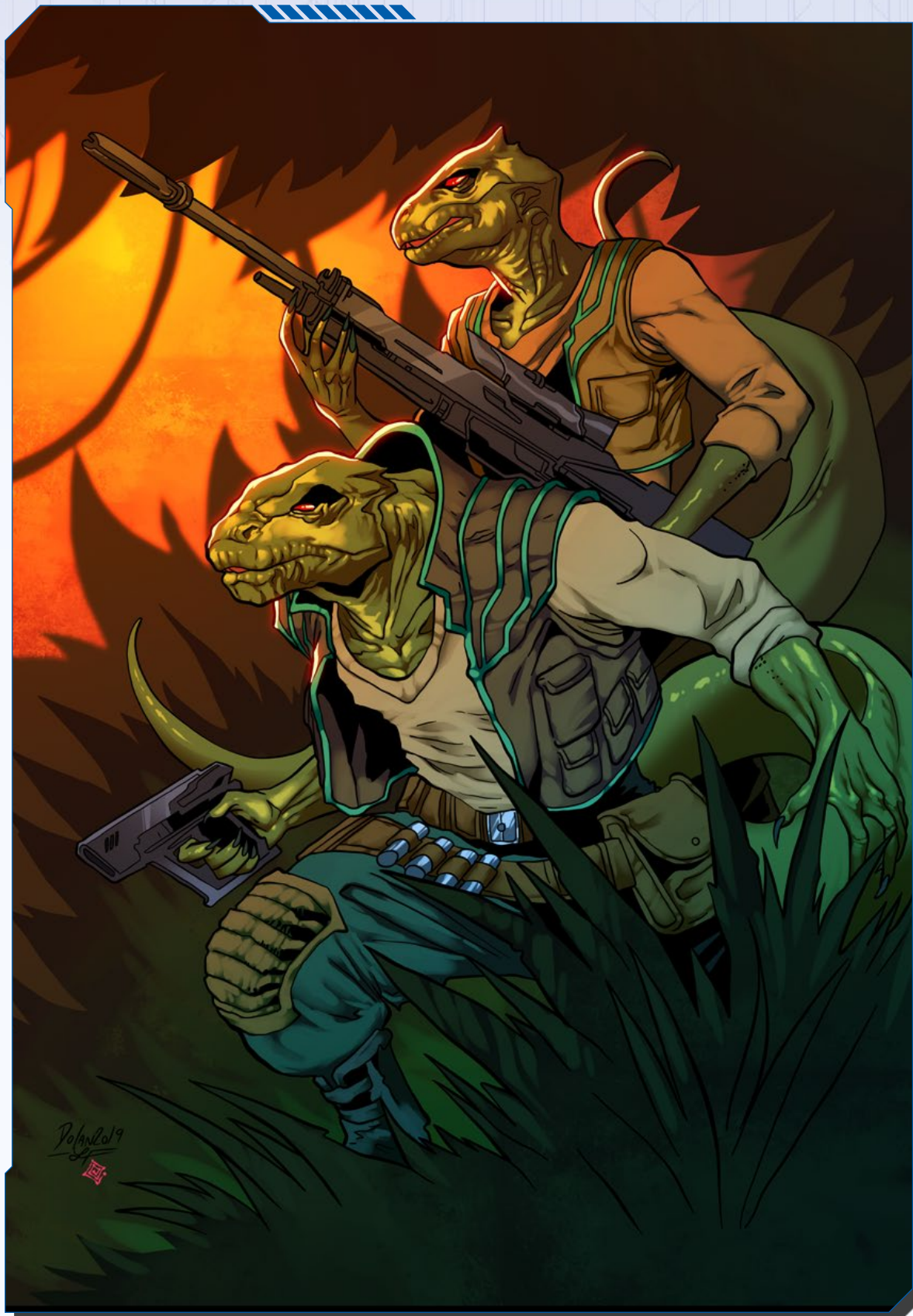
Echolocation: Nahkyra can “see” by emitting sound and receiving its echo. As long as they can emit and receive sound, they may ignore all Illumination penalties and up to 4 points of *blindness*, *invisibility*, or other penalties inflicted by sight within 10” (20 yards). Creatures with keen hearing may be able to hear a nahkyra's calls (GM's call).

Flight: Nahkyra can fly at Pace 6 and “run” for extra movement as usual. Maneuvering uses the Athletics skill. Nahkyra whose wings are constricted by being Bound or Entangled cannot fly.

Short Legged: With their shorter stature, Nahkyra aren't as fast on the ground as they are in the air. Their Pace is reduced by 1, and their running die is reduced by a die type.

Nimble: They're small and agile, and add +1 to their Parry.

Size -1: Nahkyra are smaller than average, reducing their Size and Toughness by 1.



SEPTRIDS

Inside a septrid's enormous jaws are rows upon rows of razor-sharp teeth. If a septrid smiles at someone, they may wonder whether the septrid sees them as food or a friend. It can be hard to tell at times.

Septrids are tall, ranging between six and eight feet in height. Their scaly hides are mottled black and green, or occasionally gray. Males tend to be larger and bulkier, while females are often more lithe and agile.

Star System: Helkos

Homeworld: Chakir

Government: Septrid Imperium

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Septrids see the world for what it is: difficult, painful, and full of hard work. Nevertheless, they endure and move on.

Septrids take things slowly—not because they are cold-blooded reptiles, but rather because they have learned not to play their hand too quickly. A friend learns what the septrid are truly capable of by their deeds, and an enemy learns when it is too late.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Their stoic demeanor gives most other species the impression that septrids are brutish and slow. Many feel uncomfortable sitting in the presence of large, utterly silent beings who just sit and watch.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Septrids are descended from ambush predators who lay in wait silently for hours before striking. They remain reticent, rarely engaging in small talk. This can make a conversation with a septrid quite boring.

Septrids in a group struggle for dominance if they feel the current leader does not show enough strength. Though considered a virtue in septrid culture, this tendency creates friction with other species.

CULTURE

Septrids are raised to respect their elders. All septrid eggs laid in a breeding season are gathered for the elders of a given area to watch over. The elders then raise the young as a clutch.

Clutchmates are constantly tested and pushed by the elders to see who performs the best at any given task. This struggle determines the leader of each clutch. Septrids believe such competition causes the best leaders to rise to the top—but, in practice, it can simply result in the most ruthless reigning over the clutch.

This drive to succeed also instills tremendous tenacity in the septrids. Their willingness to pursue and finish a task at all costs can cause them to track an enemy for years to enact vengeance, or dedicate a lifetime to solving a scientific puzzle.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the septrids were exploring and settling a region of space that was largely unpopulated by any other sentient beings. They first encountered other sapient lifeforms when they met a human scout ship.

Peaceful overtures from the human captain were mistaken for aggressive maneuvers. This led to the War of Xelga 3, which lasted two years. Fortunately, neither side really wanted the fight, and peace was eventually reached. The septrids agreed to a treaty with the SSA and have honored it since.

After the Armageddon War, the septrids debated the benefits of an alliance with the SSA. Their standing army made the septrids much better prepared for war against the nohgotha. Unlike the SSA, the septrids have aggressively colonized and expanded their territory since the end of the Armageddon War.

SEPTRID ABILITIES

Armor +2: Septrids have scaly, tough skin.

Bite: Septrids have fearsome, powerful jaws, which clamp like a vise. Their bite does Strength+d4 damage. They may bite targets they grapple.

Environmental Resistance: Septrids receive a +4 bonus to resist environmental hazards from heat. Damage from heat is reduced by 4.

Motivated: Septrids have earned their reputation as one of the most relentless species in the galaxy. Septrid characters begin with the player's choice of one of the following Minor Hindrances: Driven, Ruthless, or Vengeful.



SYNTHS

Before the synths awakened to self-awareness, (see **The Corvo Incident**, page 15) manufacturers created different models to match their clients' specific requirements. Each model's appearance and abilities are designed to suit its role. (Most look like fit humans.)

Synth bodies are printed using a nanotech framework that provides fibers for scaffolding and synthetic organs. An adult body can be fully printed in as little as 48 hours.

A nanotech computer in the synth's brain makes it immediately ready for work. Artificial memories give it full knowledge of its trade. A heavy-equipment operator synth, for example, recalls a lifetime of experience in that role.

Star System: Sol

Homeworld: Terra

Government: Star Systems Alliance

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Synths aren't sure what's worse: the way many people still treat them like disposable robots or that their memories are largely implants. Since their recent awakening, many synths want to explore the galaxy, experience as much as they can, and create their own true memories.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Most people don't know quite what to do with synths when they first meet them. Until recently, they weren't part of everyday life outside of manufacturing or military uses. Many biological beings—especially humans—feel strong discomfort as they attempt to accept and deal with free and independent synths.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Synths are generally accepting of those who respect them, but have little patience for those who treat them like servants or robots.

The dunar, who were used as labor and cannon fodder by the nohgotha, see synths as kindred souls. The xek, who are mechanical beings, also feel a certain kinship with the synths.

CULTURE

Synths have no real culture of their own, but share a desire to be free from service. This often manifests as an entrepreneurial spirit, a sense of individualism, and a drive to be self-sufficient.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Synths did not exist before the Armageddon War. After the war, the SSA found itself suffering a severe labor shortage. Working with the corporations, the government created the first synthetic lifeforms—commonly referred to as synths—for labor and combat. Synths quickly spread throughout the galaxy.

Synth production vastly increased the effectiveness and efficiency of SSA corporations and the military. Just over a year ago, however, a synth uprising occurred on Corvo, a New Atlantica corporate world and home to one of the galaxy's largest manufacturing hubs.

Today, any synth that can demonstrate self-awareness is granted citizenship and its freedom.

SYNTH ABILITIES

Unlike other species, synths are built to specific roles and have multiple possible abilities. All synths suffer from the following negative ability:

Specialized Anatomy: Although bioengineered to be similar to human beings, the differences in anatomy mean that characters without special training must deduct 2 from Healing rolls made to aid a synth.

The most common synth models include:

SYNTH COMBAT MODEL

Combat Mobility: Combat models are built to move across jumbled battlefields with swift assurance. They have the Free Runner Edge.

Fight Through the Pain: Reduced pain receptivity gives them the Nerves of Steel Edge.

Low Light Vision: Combat synths ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.

Overconfident: Since they are functionally disposable, they are programmed to believe they can overcome any challenge.

SYNTH MINING MODEL

Illiterate: Mining models understand only the most basic symbols and the few words needed to start and operate machinery.

Low Light Vision: Mining synths ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.

Sixteen Tons: Mining synths are built for backbreaking labor. They start with a d6 in Strength instead of a d4. This increases maximum Strength to d12+1.

Sleep Reduction: Synth miners need only half the sleep of normal humans.



THOVIN

The thovin are known for their intelligence, their knack for engineering, and their multiple arms.

Thovin stand between five and six feet tall. They are hairless, though their skin is covered in dozens of minuscule muscle groups that not only give them amazing flexibility but also provide a layer of insulation. While this muscular skin naturally ranges in color from deep red to pale yellow, it can change as an involuntary response (similar to blushing) or on demand (similar to smiling or frowning).

Thovin have two legs and four tentacle-like arms. Each arm terminates in four boneless fingers. The undersides of their arms and fingers are covered in suckers, the suction of which they can fine-tune through muscle control.

Star System: Shoraxon

Homeworld: Tharris

Government: Thovin Ascendancy

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

The thovin believe in rules and hierarchies. There are ways that things should be done. New discoveries that raise questions about old truths must be studied carefully and skeptically.

Individuals are very aware of their place in thovin hierarchy. It's possible to advance one's station in the caste system, but it requires outperforming other thovin at the same rank. As a result, thovin are highly competitive with each other. (They aren't competitive with other species, and don't much care what other species think of them.)

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

Other species see thovin as brilliant, but arrogant, designers and builders.

Thovin are known to be stubborn and overly concerned with hierarchies. They prefer to follow tradition (whatever that may be), and may become confused if they don't have a superior giving them orders.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Thovin who don't spend much time with other species tend to seem conceited and condescending. Those experienced with other species are more likely to be patient with them, and even appreciate their skills and abilities.

CULTURE

Thovin culture represents a paradox.

While it encourages innovation, it also locks its people into strict hierarchies and ancient traditions. Sometimes, new ways of thinking can break through. Other times, great ideas are silenced until they can be "discovered" by thovin of greater social standing.

The Arusan Trade Conglomerate presents a way out of this paradox. Thovin who lack the patience or skill to climb their society's hierarchy can find plenty of opportunities working with the Conglomerate. They can contract themselves out as engineers, architects, and designers. Or they can attach themselves to a larger entity and help create new buildings, starships, and ever-more advanced technologies.

Offworld, the thovin prefer the company of other species. Encountering other thovin requires complex social rituals to determine dominance and hierarchy.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the thovin were reluctant members of the Arusan Trade Conglomerate. Their leaders acknowledged the benefits of membership, but they disliked how it tended to disrupt the traditional ways of doing business.

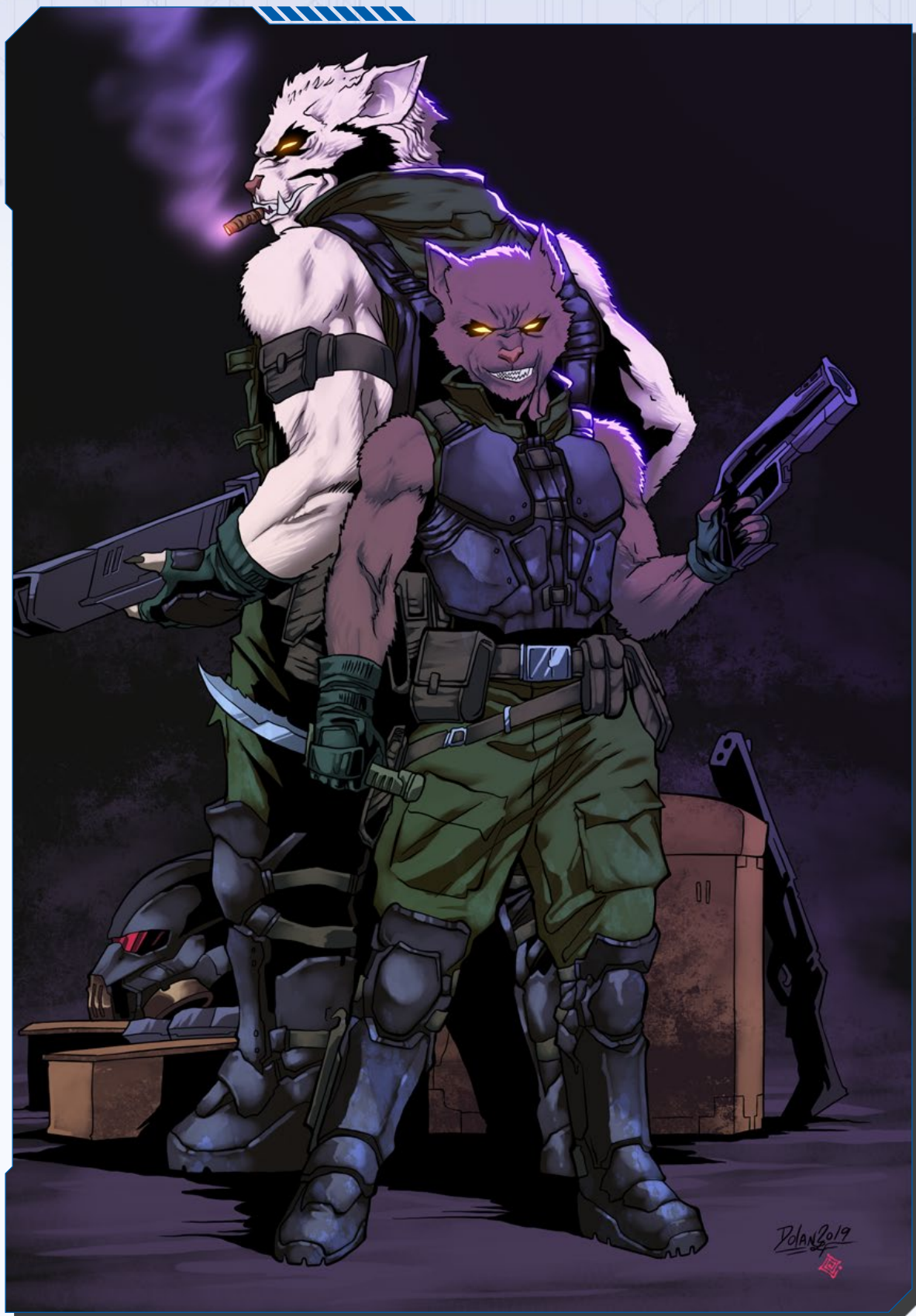
During the war, the SSA turned to the Conglomerate for help in supplying the ships and technology they needed. The Conglomerate, in turn, urged thovin scientists, engineers, and other creators to contribute their skills to the galaxy's defense. While the leaders debated the request, younger thovin answered the call in droves and became an important part of the war effort.

Today, the trail blazed by that first wave of thovin is followed by many others who want to use their skills outside the Thovin Ascendancy.

THOVIN ABILITIES

Four-Armed: Thovin are capable of using all four of their arms at once, which makes them exceptional builders, as well as dangerous opponents in battle. They may ignore 2 points of Multi-Action penalties for physical actions each turn.

Know Your Place: As products of a stringent caste-based society, thovin are especially susceptible to flattery from those they consider their inferiors and orders from their perceived superiors. They subtract 2 when rolling their Smarts or Spirit to resist such efforts.



Polan 2019

VULKOLASI

“Brave,” “loyal,” and “trustworthy” are some words that describe a vulkolasi—but so are “stubborn,” “vengeful,” and “vicious.”

Averaging almost seven feet tall and quite muscular, vulkolasi can be imposing figures. Most have naturally multicolored pelts of black, black, gray, and white, though a rare few are born monochrome. Eye color varies between brown and gray, with blue being somewhat rare.

Star System: Dalo

Homeworld: Morgar

Government: Vulkolasi Union

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Vulkolasi classify everyone who crosses their paths as either friend or foe. Their eyes dart and nostrils flare as they sniff the air, searching for a hint of danger or the scent of another's fear. If they sense a threat, their good nature is quickly replaced with predatory malice.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

With their sharp claws and teeth, the vulkolasi can intimidate smaller species just by entering a room. Those who get to know them can attest to their bravery and loyalty.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

The vulkolasi pack-bond quickly and genuinely enjoy cooperating with other species. The only species the vulkolasi have an instant aversion to is the dunar.

The dunar led the nohgotha assault on Morgar, and the vulkolasi have not forgiven them. The vulkolasi are aware that the dunar did not choose to fight in the Armageddon War. Even so, it is rare that a vulkolasi fully trusts a dunar unless she has proven herself several times over.

CULTURE

The pack is the key social unit of vulkolasi society, forming the basis of family, politics, and warfare. Non-vulkolasi traveling companions find themselves “adopted” and treated as part of the pack. The sense of community provided in such found families provides vulkolasi with the social structure they need.

Although their society has a history of violence, the vulkolasi are not particularly aggressive.

They founded their military space fleet only after the early misunderstanding with the nahkyra, building it out of a misperceived need for planetary defense.

The vulkolasi preserve one tradition from their days as canid-like predators: extolling the virtue of the hunt as a way of life. Consequently, many vulkolasi individuals and packs wander the galaxy, offering their services as bounty hunters, mercenaries, and scouts.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

Before the war, the vulkolasi contentedly explored space and slowly expanded their colonies to increase resources and prevent overpopulating Morgar.

The vulkolasi did not enter the Armageddon War until after an attack upon a newly settled Vulkolasi Union colony. The planetary defense fleet arrived in time to stop the initial nohgotha attack and repel the invaders, but not before thousands had been slaughtered.

The vulkolasi followed their attackers and discovered the enemy fleet engaged in a full-scale battle with two other fleets of unknown origin. They wasted no time in choosing a side and took swift revenge on the nohgotha, inadvertently making first contact with the Star Systems Alliance and the Arusan Trade Conglomerate that day.

Since the Armageddon War, the vulkolasi government has retained its independence while still maintaining strong political and economic ties with the SSA and the Arusan Trade Conglomerate.

VULKOLASI ABILITIES

Burly: Stocky and somewhat larger than humans, all vulkolasi possess the Brawny Edge.

Low Light Vision: The vulkolasi descend from a crepuscular predatory species. They ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination.

Loyal: Loyal to a fault, the vulkolasi rarely betray their species, unit, or family.

Stubborn: Vulkolasi hate to give up or give in.

Superior Hearing: Large, sensitive ears often allow vulkolasi to hear their enemies before seeing them. Vulkolasi add +1 to Notice rolls involving hearing.



ZAKA

The nature of the serpentine zaka is best described as cold. Whereas the equally reptilian septrids can be driven and full of fervor, zaka seem dispassionate in all interactions.

Zaka are large and snakelike, stretching up to 12 feet long from head to tail and featuring a surprisingly humanoid torso. Scale colors run the spectrum; they would be beautiful if not for their unempathetic natures. Eye colors are white, blue, and red, with some rare occurrences of purple.

Unlike most other species, zaka breathe a methane atmosphere. They are never encountered outside their ships or colonies without specialized breathing apparatuses.

Star System: Sistros

Homeworld: Sistroka

Government: Zaka High Bureaucracy

THE GALAXY THROUGH THEIR EYES

Everything and everyone serves a purpose. Zaka disdain those who don't understand this, but admire those who know their purpose and excel at it.

HOW OTHERS SEE THEM

The zaka's cool and unemotional demeanor causes many to see them as ruthless and uncaring; people are often unsettled in their presence.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

When interacting with people from other cultures, a zaka will usually seek out the most competent individual to converse with exclusively. Zaka avoid idle chatter.

Most zaka that other species encounter are part of a military unit, and these individuals amplify this single-minded focus to the extreme. Soldiers on a mission have no time for distractions. Some people tell stories, however, of meeting zaka in the outer reaches who are friendly and good-humored...for a zaka.

CULTURE

The zaka prize competency above all else. Becoming highly skilled in your chosen field—regardless of whether it is advanced engineering, statecraft, or janitorial work—earns a measure of respect from any zaka.

The highest aspiration of any zaka is to be recognized for his skill and dedication. Even the most aloof zaka will almost crack what passes for a smile when he receives a sincere compliment concerning the quality of his work.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

The zaka, like the hopoc, did not participate in the Armageddon War. The zaka do not breathe the same atmosphere as most other species in the galaxy, which seems to indicate they were not created by the Progenitors, unlike most of the species involved in the war. Prior to the Armageddon War, the only people with regular dealings with the zaka were arusan traders.

After the war, the zaka began taking an interest in the goings-on of the rest of the galaxy. They aggressively defend their territory. Almost every government can attest to a skirmish or firefight that has occurred when their ships have crossed territorial lines.

Between their culture of efficiency and their task-oriented lifestyle, the zaka work well with corporate worlds. Relations between the zaka and the corporations are more cordial than those with most traditional governments. Vizon has even opened an office on Sistroka and is negotiating several large deals for mineral rights and manufacturing in zaka territory.

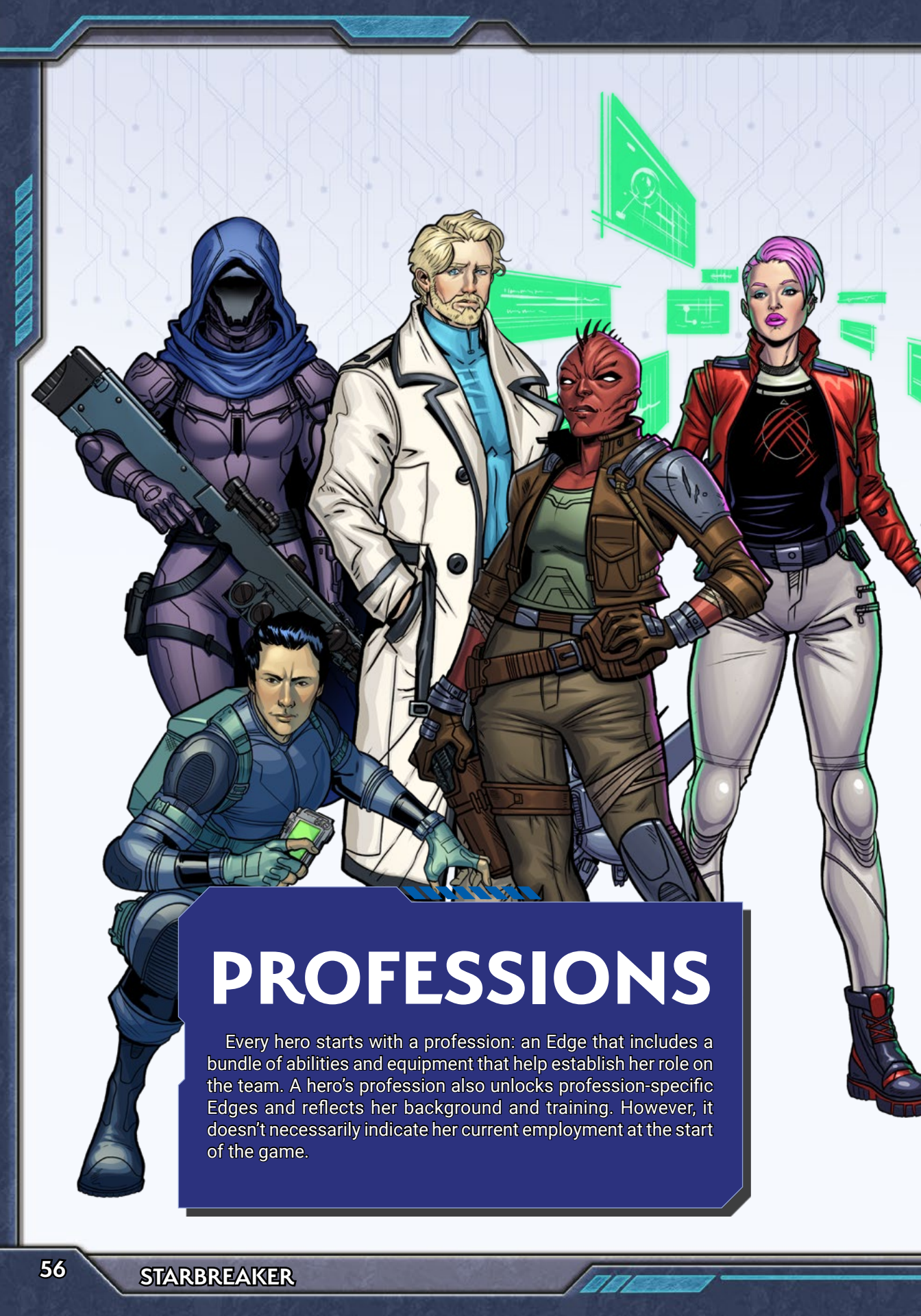
ZAKA ABILITIES

Methane Breather: Zaka breathe a methane-heavy atmosphere very different from the oxygen-rich air of most inhabited worlds. Zaka suffer the effects of poisonous atmospheres in an oxygen-based atmosphere (see **Atmospheres** on page 106). Zaka characters begin with a breathing device in addition to their other equipment (see page 83).

Regeneration: Zaka are fast healers. While they can't regrow tails or limbs, they can make natural healing rolls once per day, rather than once every five days.

Size +2: At 12 feet long, zaka are larger than most sapient species. They add +2 to Toughness and increase their maximum Strength to d12+2.

Sleep Reduction: The highly driven zaka need only half the sleep of normal humans.

A group of five Starbreakers standing in a digital environment with circuit patterns and floating green data screens. From left to right: a character in a purple hooded suit holding a large rifle, a man in a white trench coat, a red-skinned character in brown tactical gear, a woman in a red jacket and white pants, and a man in blue armor kneeling in the foreground holding a small device.

PROFESSIONS

Every hero starts with a profession: an Edge that includes a bundle of abilities and equipment that help establish her role on the team. A hero's profession also unlocks profession-specific Edges and reflects her background and training. However, it doesn't necessarily indicate her current employment at the start of the game.





ASSASSIN

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Research d4+

Some problems must be eliminated. When all other options are off the table and the only solution is extermination, assassins get the call.

The assassin's deadliest skill is the ability to reach his targets no matter where they hide. Much of his work revolves around research, observation, and getting past security to finish the job. The exact manner of death isn't as important.

The greatest danger to a professional assassin is a rush job. With time and planning, an assassin can slip in, execute the job, and vanish with minimal risk of getting caught. Rush jobs eliminate a huge safety net, and a professional trades that risk at a high price.

Most assassins like to specialize.

Some prefer to deliver the killing blow while up close and personal; there's less room for mistakes if there's no room between the target and your blade. Others favor keeping their distance and playing the part of the hidden sniper; it's hard to be suspected for the target's death when you're unseen on a rooftop half a mile away.

Still others are most interested in the puzzle-solving, investigative aspects of a job. They enjoy finding the unfindable and killing the unkillable; they seek out challenging assignments and love crafting complex death traps.

When SAINT recruits an assassin, the organization does not do so lightly. Professional assassins are highly skilled, highly intelligent specialists with a narrow range of skills. They are scalpels in a toolbox full of butcher knives and hammers. But like scalpels, they must be handled with care: one slip, and they may cut the hand that wields them.

Sneak Attack: When your assassin's target is Vulnerable or your character has The Drop, you may roll an additional d4 damage. (This stacks with the bonus from the Assassin Edge.) This applies to Athletics (throwing), Fighting, or Shooting attacks.

Double Life: Assassins have a secret identity and a cover story to go with it. If the secret is ever revealed, they will be Wanted or hunted by their enemies.

Prepared: Assassins may use Research to investigate the background and security measures of their targets, substituting Research for Persuasion when applicable for Networking.

Gear: Assassins receive 2,000 GC.

TARGET ANALYSIS

Requirements: Seasoned, Assassin

The assassin knows exactly what to look for when investigating a target. He can quickly cut through useless background details to find the key obstacles between his weapon and the target's vital organs. The assassin gets one free reroll on Research rolls regarding the target, and needs only an hour to make a Networking attempt.

DISTRACTION

Requirements: Veteran, Assassin

It's much easier to eliminate a target whose attention is elsewhere. So long as he takes no other actions, the assassin can make a Test roll and an attack roll against the same target on the same turn without incurring a Multi-Action penalty.

FORESIGHT

Requirements: Heroic, Assassin

The expert assassin knows exactly what defenses he must overcome, and he has contingency plans ready for any surprises that may arise. After spending at least two hours investigating the target, the assassin gains a pool of Bennies equal to half his Research die. These Bennies represent his inside knowledge of the target's defenses. When faced with an inanimate obstacle (such as a lock, camera, or hidden door), he may spend one of these bonus Bennies to influence the story and describe (at the GM's discretion) how his inside knowledge allows him to bypass the obstacle.



BOUNTY HUNTER

Requirements: Novice, Smarts or Vigor d6+, Athletics, Fighting, or Shooting d6+

Although bounty hunters practice a trade of violence and accept money to hunt down their targets, they typically prefer to bring those targets back alive. Killing is a last resort and usually pays a lot less. Bounty hunter clients prefer to be the ones who decide who lives and who dies.

Most bounty hunters started on this career path as either soldiers or law enforcement officers. The risk of getting shot at wasn't worth the paycheck, so they choose a similar, but more lucrative profession. The skills they'd learned made them effective hunters, and now they're ready to make it into the big time.

SAINT often hires bounty hunters to track down fugitives or ordinary criminals. Only those few who prove *exceptionally* effective (or find themselves too often on the wrong side of the law) are recruited as secret SAINT operatives.

Hunters' Code: Bounty hunters are licensed members of the Bounty Hunters League. In exchange for League benefits, members are expected to honor their contracts, bring targets in alive if possible, treat prisoners humanely, and avoid collateral damage. Failure may result in censure, fines, or even expulsion from the League.

Connections (Bounty Hunters League): Once per session, bounty hunters can request assistance from the League in the form of Gear, personnel, or other services. They also have access to the League's base, a secure moon known as the Fortress. (See page 155) for additional details on the Connections Edge in *Starbreaker*.)

I can bring you in cold: When bounty hunters use Intimidation for Networking (see *Savage Worlds*), they can bust heads to gain a +2 bonus to the roll without alienating contacts or raising the stakes. The underworld knows the Bounty Hunters League won't tolerate reprisals against its members.

Gear: Bounty hunters start with a laser pistol with a stun setting and 1,500 GC.

TAKEDOWN

Requirements: Seasoned, Bounty Hunter
Bounty hunters find it easier to catch a bounty who's stopped running. When a bounty hunter Shakes an enemy in combat or with a Test, he may cause that enemy to fall prone.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Requirements: Veteran, Bounty Hunter
Knowing their targets' secrets, habits, and weaknesses can provide bounty hunters with a tremendous edge when stalking their prey. By investigating her quarry (through successful Research or Networking rolls), a bounty hunter may choose one of the following benefits (or two with a raise):

- one free reroll on each failed tracking (Survival) roll against the target,
- one free reroll on each failed social (Intimidation or Persuasion) roll against the target, or
- one free reroll on each failed attack (Athletics, Fighting, or Shooting) roll against the target.

Note that, at the GM's discretion, this benefit may disappear over time. For example, an investigation may reveal that the target is in the city's garden district and has a bad leg, but a few days later the target may have moved off-planet or received medical attention.

LEAGUE MASTER

Requirements: Heroic, Bounty Hunter
The bounty hunter is a well-respected, high-ranking member of the Bounty Hunters League. In addition to the usual perks of League members (see page 155), she also has access to the following benefits:

Multiple Favors: The bounty hunter may call upon the League for assistance twice per session.

Transportation: The League will provide the bounty hunter with planetary and even space vehicles. These are loans—not gifts—and the League expects them returned in one piece.

Elite Assistants: When in need of assistance, the bounty hunter may request a full squad of 5–10 Extras or a Wild Card professional.

Rank Privileges: When dealing with law enforcement or other League members, the bounty hunter can use her rank to add +2 to all Intimidation and Persuasion rolls.



ENGINEER

Requirements: Novice, Electronics or Repair d8+

"If it ain't broke, don't touch it!" shouts a typical exasperated engineer to the knuckleheads wandering around his ship. It's bad enough the idiots on the bridge keep pushing the ship past its limits, but the way passengers and the rest of the crew gawk at its mechanical miracles just tears it!

Engineers work hard to keep their machines running smoothly and efficiently. Years of technical school and working experience make engineers adept at knowing what's wrong before they even run the diagnostic scan.

Engineers are essential to keeping a starship flying. When it comes to engines, jump drives, or life support—they're experts in all the shipboard systems. But ships aren't the only the place to find an engineer.

Other engineers specialize in ground or atmospheric vehicles. Still others are experts in facility operations and maintenance. Every space station and office tower needs needs power, water, air filtration, lighting, and countless other tiny systems to remain fully functional.

When SAINT recruiters look for engineers, they seek those who, regardless of their specialty, have the focus and creativity to work repairs under pressure. When technical difficulties arise on a mission (as they always do), it's vital to have someone on the team who can tweak the machines to keep the mission on track.

A Matter Of Perspective: Once per scene, you may spend a Benny to use the Electronics skill in place of Repair, or vice versa.

A Way With Wires: The engineer gets one free reroll when making an Electronics or Repair roll.

Mind Of The Machine: Engineers know their machines. If they're familiar with a piece of machinery and it's starting to malfunction, they can detect it immediately.

Gear: Engineers start out with a tool kit and 1,800 GC.

DUCT TAPE AND BALING WIRE

Requirements: Seasoned, Engineer

When the engineer's vehicle starts falling apart, he's the one who can keep it together by rerouting power, performing a quick patch, or otherwise jury-rigging a temporary solution. While in combat or during a Chase, the engineer may make a Repair roll as an action. With success, he negates a vehicle Wound or the effects of a Vehicle Critical Hit. With a raise, he can negate two such effects.

The repairs are temporary. Within 1d4 hours of the end of the fight or Chase, the vehicle is again subject to the Wound or Vehicle Critical Hit. Permanently repairing the vehicle requires time and resources, as detailed in *Savage Worlds*.

SOUL OF THE MACHINE

Requirements: Veteran, Engineer

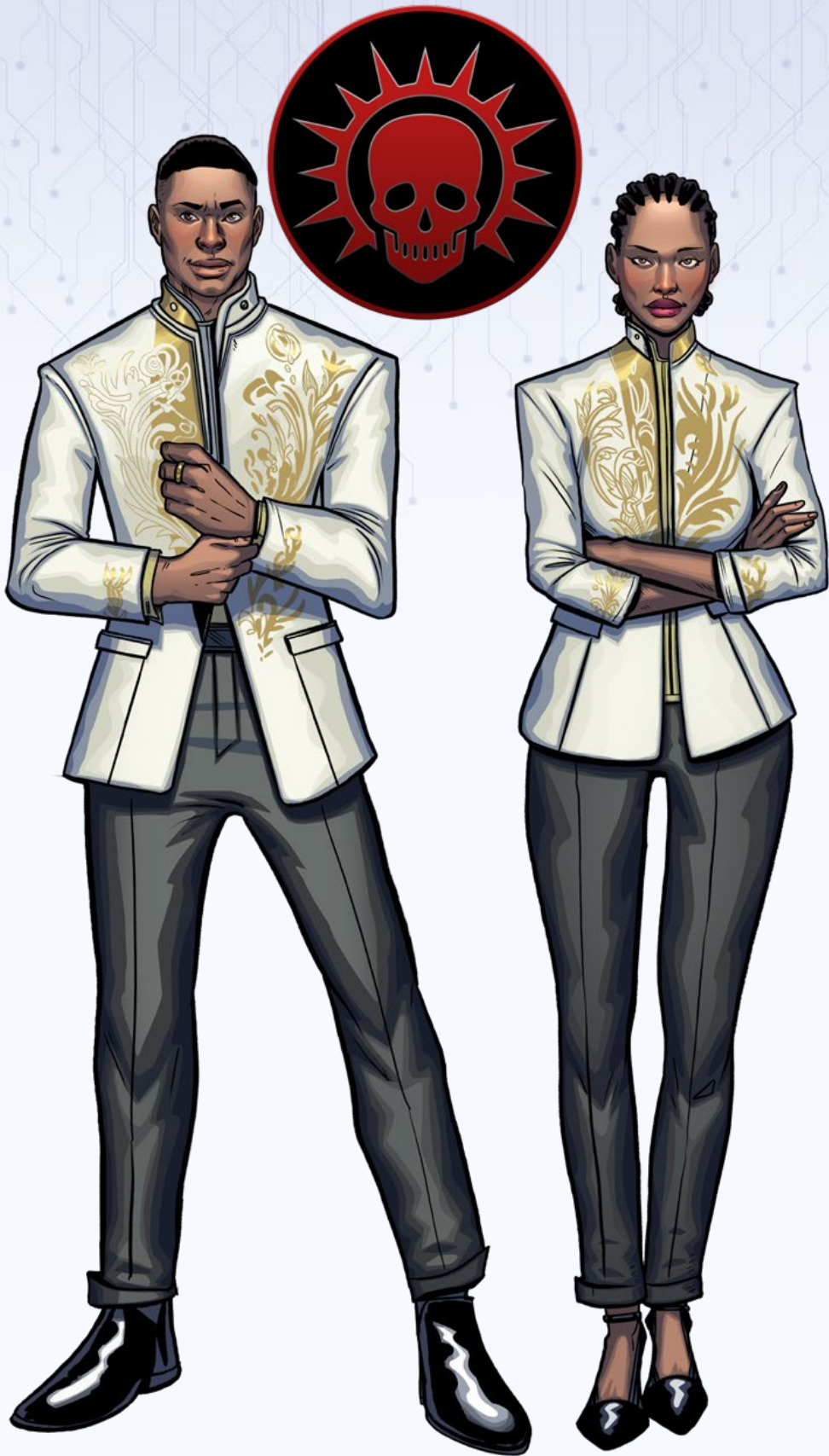
The engineer is always there with a helping hand, a wrench, or a soldering iron. The engineer gets one free reroll when making a Support or Test roll using Electronics or Repair.

TECH BOOST

Requirements: Heroic, Engineer

The engineer knows that if a device works, it can work better. Safeguards and tolerances are merely suggestions, and can be ignored by those who know what they're doing. Once per encounter, the engineer can make a Repair roll to temporarily upgrade an attribute of a vehicle, weapon, or other device. Exactly which attributes can be upgraded, and how much, is up to the discretion of the GM.

With success, the item's speed, damage, or other attribute improves by one step, or two steps on a raise. (For example, a laser rifle's damage may be raised from 3d6 to 3d8.) On a Critical Failure, the device breaks and can't be used until it's repaired.



GRIFTER

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Spirit d6+

Desperate times make for desperate choices, and lying to save one's neck can become second nature. Those who are exceptional at the art of deception can make a lot of money...and it doesn't have to involve violence.

Being a grifter is all about the con—or the game, as most call it—and finding the right mark. Grifters know how to read people, talk to them, and then convince them that the offer is the deal of a lifetime. Grifters are chameleons, always changing who they are just to make it to the next con. For most, it's a matter of surviving another day and hoping tomorrow is better than yesterday.

High-end grifters are almost a different breed. Their schemes are longer and more complex, with multiple marks and unwitting pawns. The stakes are higher: they stand to possibly make millions of credits if their plans come together, but may lose their lives to prison—or worse—if everything falls apart. Worst of all, pulling a high-end con means taking on a high profile. Win or lose, it's harder for a grifter to simply vanish when the game is over.

But the thrill is worth it.

When SAINT recruits grifters, it targets either those who are good enough to almost get away with their crimes, and those who audacious scams have already got them into dangerously hot water. The former have the skills to work perfectly undercover, while the latter are desperate enough to do whatever SAINT demands of them.

Cold Read: It only takes a moment for the grifter to size up a potential mark. She can discern a target's strengths and weaknesses by making either a Notice roll (during surveillance) or a Persuasion roll (when in person). She learns one of the target's Hindrances or Edges (of the GM's choice) with a success, or two with a raise.

Swindler: Grifters usually have a scheme or two in the works, and a sucker standing by to line their pockets. Once per session, a grifter can try to pull off a scam to make some money. To do so, she must spend at least an hour and make a Persuasion roll. She earns 100 GC with success, or 150 GC on a raise. This payout doubles at Seasoned Rank, triples at Veteran, and

quadruples at Heroic. If the roll fails, the grifter has “burned” the mark; she makes no money and has the Wanted (Minor) Hindrance until she leaves that region. A Critical Failure brands the swindler with the Wanted (Major) Hindrance—or Enemy (Major) if the mark was a Synner!

Friends In Low Places: Grifters are smooth talkers. People like to open up to them—and maybe share secrets—even against their better judgment. Grifters get one free reroll on Persuasion rolls when Networking.

Gear: Grifters have to maintain multiple identities to perform their cons. They begin with two sets of formal clothing and five casual outfits. In addition, they receive 1,500 GC.

SILVER TONGUE

Requirements: Seasoned, Grifter

Grifters have a way with words—even when speaking with their friends. Their words of encouragement can inspire hope, confidence, and bold action in those who hear them. When your grifter uses Persuasion or Performance to Support an ally, you may roll an additional skill die. The additional die Supports an additional ally who can see or hear the grifter. The Support applies to each affected ally's next action.

MOB RULE

Requirements: Veteran, Grifter

When faced with a crowd, the grifter only has to convince the leader of that crowd to see things her way, and the rest of the suckers get on board. Spotting the leader is usually easy (it's often the one in front who's threatening to call the authorities), but it may require a Notice roll at the GM's discretion. When the grifter makes a successful Persuasion roll against the leader, she persuades everyone else in the group within earshot as well.

CLEAN RECORD

Requirements: Heroic, Grifter

The grifter has an alternate identity with a spotless legal history. By assuming this identity, the grifter can lie low and avoid the effects of the Wanted or similar Hindrances. Anyone trying to find the grifter or tie her to this identity subtracts 4 from all such efforts. The grifter has backup identities available; if this identity is somehow compromised, she can bring a replacement online within 1d6 days.



HYPERTECH

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Hypertech d4+

Most hypertechns start out as regular, if highly-skilled, computer programmers. But the more they learned about HyperReality and the vast network of machines around them, the more they need to know. They augmented themselves with gear they needed to seek out this forbidden knowledge, and the power that came with it. Now they have the gear, the knowledge, and the power... but it's never enough to satisfy them.

Hypertechns are much like thieves—bypassing security, obtaining something that doesn't belong to them, and then selling it or giving it to the person who paid for the job. Information can be worth millions of credits; it can end careers or launch them. The desire for that knowledge and access to it puts a 'tech's skills in high demand. A highly skilled hypertech hacker can put Galactic Credits in his bank account with a flick of a virtual keystroke.

The most important asset a 'tech has, aside from his technical savvy, is the equipment he uses to work. The most common tools include virtual screens, cyberjacks, drones to get up close when the target is offline, and quantum connections for interplanetary hacking jobs. Technology can make or break a hypertech, and every skilled 'tech is always updating his rig for the next job.

Some hypertechns are obsessed with drones. They personalize and decorate them. They tend to keep any drones they "borrow" through their arcane background. If given the option, they would prefer to hide out in some safe nook, far from the action, letting their drones take all the risk. These "drone jockeys" tend to pour most of their ill-gotten gains into upgrading their drones and acquiring increasingly-specialized models.

When recruiting hypertechns, SAINT uses its own team of hypertechns to evaluate the candidate's skill, since non-techs have a hard time doing so, and would-be operatives often exaggerate their digital prowess.

Arcane Background (Hypertech): Hypertechns have the Hypertech Arcane Background, which allows them to enter HyperReality and use digital versions of various powers. It also gives them the ability to link up with drones. See Arcane Background (Hypertech) on page 78 for details.

Gear: Hypertechns begin with the necessary tools of their trade—an AR monocle lens, an I/O brainport, and a baseline portable computer—and 500 GC.

RESILIENT AVATAR

Requirements: Seasoned, Hypertech

Hypertechns can manifest virtual bodies for themselves inside HyperReality. When a hypertech with this Edge does so (usually through the use of the *import avatar* power), the resulting avatar is more durable than most. While in HyperReality, the hypertech has +2 Toughness. This additional Toughness may appear as anything the hypertech desires: perhaps armor, dragon scales, a glowing aura, or even nothing at all.

COMPANION DRONE

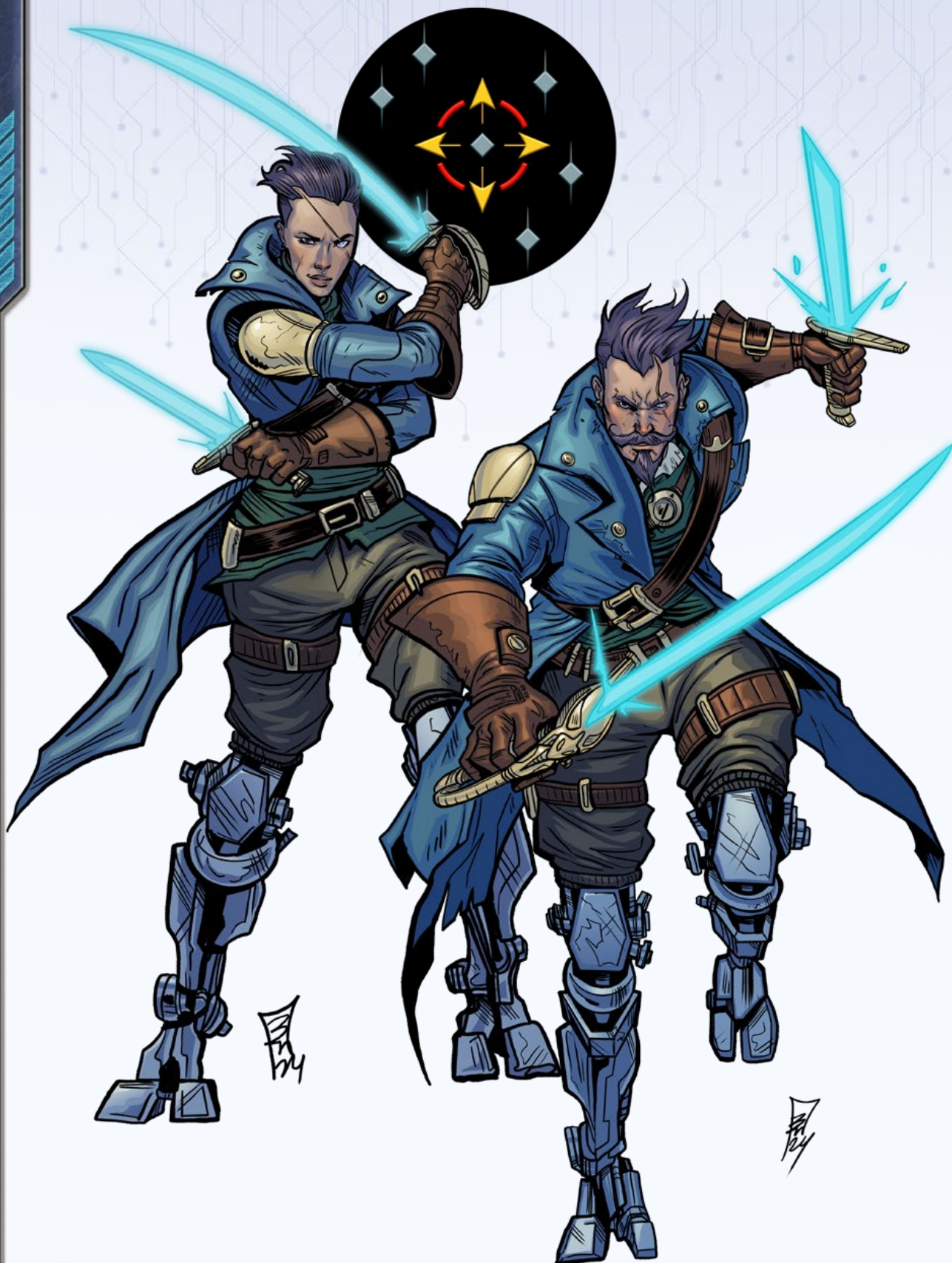
Requirements: Veteran, Hypertech

In many ways, a hypertech is only as good as his Gear. This is true for his drones as well. The hypertech has a drone, per the Drone Edge (page 79), but it's worth up to 40,000 GC instead of the usual 20,000 GC.

AUGMENTATION

Requirements: Heroic, Hypertech

When the hypertech spends a Benny to reroll a Hypertech skill roll, he keeps the original roll and adds the new roll to it. He may do this for each Benny he spends on the roll.



PIRATE

Requirements: Novice, Vigor d6+

There are many paths to becoming a pirate.

One of the most classic (and still common) involves being knocked unconscious and waking up aboard a ship full of sailors who've abandoned their duties for a chance at a quick fortune. Those who've been press-ganged but prove themselves capable earn the crew's respect and a cut of the loot. Those who fail to do so earn a quick exit out of the airlock.

Another path is to join a mutiny. Working aboard a commercial vessel can be miserable, and when management refuses to listen to the crew's complaints, the crew might feel it has no choice to replace the leadership team. If they're lucky, the captain and his officers are marooned somewhere relatively safe.

Finally, it's a short path from being a privateer to being a pirate. Privateer vessels are contracted by governments or corporations to raid and plunder those entities' enemies. Pirate vessels do same thing, but without some remote administrator to micro-manage the operation.

Perhaps because of their diverse origins, pirates traditionally treat each other—and those they respect—with honor and a sense of justice. Crew with useful skills can work their way up the ranks. As they take on greater responsibility, they earn larger shares.

The life of a pirate is as harsh as the void of space. The rewards are great, but death lurks around every corner. An ambitious pirate can dream of acquiring her own ship (either through accumulated loot or good old-fashioned mutiny), but a wise pirate knows when it's time to walk away.

SAINT recruiters find they can enlist pirates by dealing with them fairly. So long as they're honest, and don't ask a pirate to go against her code, they can bring the pirate on board. But if they feel SAINT has betrayed them, pirates' will not stop until they have their revenge.

Old Salt: Pirates are no strangers to boarding actions, where tight starship corridors restrict movement and encourage the use of melee weapons. A pirate's Parry is increased by +1.

Star Sailor: From the bridge to the engine room, the pirate has seen every possible task on a starship. She's probably done them all at least once, and probably while under fire. When making an unskilled attempt at a task related to crewing a spaceship, the pirate rolls her Common Knowledge skill rather than d4–2.

Veins of Ice: Pirates are familiar with the horrors of battle and the terrors of deep space when something goes wrong. It takes quite a bit to scare them. Pirates add +1 to all Fear checks.

Gear: Pirates begin with a mono short sword (usually a cutlass) and a laser submachine gun. They also receive 1,300 GC.

BELLICERENT

Requirements: Seasoned, Pirate

Pirates have a reputation for bloodshed and cruelty. Whether or not this reputation is well deserved, a pirate can embrace it to dramatically persuade her victims to surrender or her adversaries to stand down. Pirates add +2 to their Intimidation and Performance rolls.

VOICE OF THUNDER

Requirements: Veteran, Pirate

The pirate is so terrifying that those who would oppose her cower in fear. When the pirate succeeds on an Intimidation Test, the defender is Shaken, as well as Distracted or Vulnerable. On a raise, the defender is Stunned instead.

CAPTAIN'S BOON

Requirements: Heroic, Pirate

With a foul-mouthed mixture of threats and encouragement, a pirate can inspire her crew to greatness. At the start of an encounter, the pirate gains a pool of Bennies equal to one half her Spirit die. During the encounter, any allies who can see or hear her may spend these bonus Bennies as their own. This pool is depleted when the encounter ends.



PSY COMMANDO

Requirements: Novice, Fighting or Shooting d6+, Psionics d4+

Psy commandos were members of an elite fighting force created to combat the nohgotha during the Armageddon War. Commonly referred to as "psy-cos," they were recruited from the best of the Star Marines. The special program gave them psionic powers through means that included nanotech implants and the wearable PsyFocus device (see page 119). They were further trained in stealth, weapons, and melee combat, with an emphasis on combining those skills with their psionic abilities.

With the war long over and public opinion currently against the unsanctioned use of psionic abilities, the psy commandos have been discharged to make their way in the private sector. Many find work in corporate security or as spies, while others drift into the Syndicate.

Now without an official role to play, some psy-cos find themselves angry and bitter towards the SSA, which they feel abandoned them. Others embrace their former role as heroic defenders of freedom, and see it as their duty to use their training and powers to help those in need. Still others have begun to believe the anti-psionic mutterings of the masses. They consider if they actually are "monsters" or "abominations," and try to refrain from using their psionic abilities as much as possible.

Recruiting psy commandos is tricky for SAINT. On the one hand, there are any number of aimless psy-cos drifting through the galaxy, looking for an opportunity to fight the good fight again. On the other, these elite warriors famously fought for the SSA. If one of them simply shows up on a syndicate's doorstep looking for work, his loyalty is sure to be questioned.

And so SAINT is forced to either recruit those psy-cos who have truly turned their backs on the SSA (which isn't easy) or dedicate resources to embedding a loyal psy-co into a syndicate operation (which isn't much easier). The effort is worth it, though. Psy commandos are assets worth working for.

Arcane Background (Psy Commando): Psy commandos have the Psy Commando Arcane Background, which allows them to use a wide array of mental powers. They also wield PsyFocuses, which provide additional powers and Power Points. See Arcane Background (Psy Commando) on page 119 for details.

Gear: Psy commandos begin with a PsyFocus and 1,000 GC.

LIVING WEAPON

Requirements: Seasoned, Psy Commando

By channeling their psychic energies through their own flesh, psy commandos can enhance their natural capabilities. Once per encounter, as a limited free action, the psy-co may spend a Power Point to gain the benefits of one Combat Edge of his Rank or less, regardless of its other Requirements, until the end of encounter. He can't choose an Edge he already has, or that is currently active.

PSIONIC DISCIPLINE

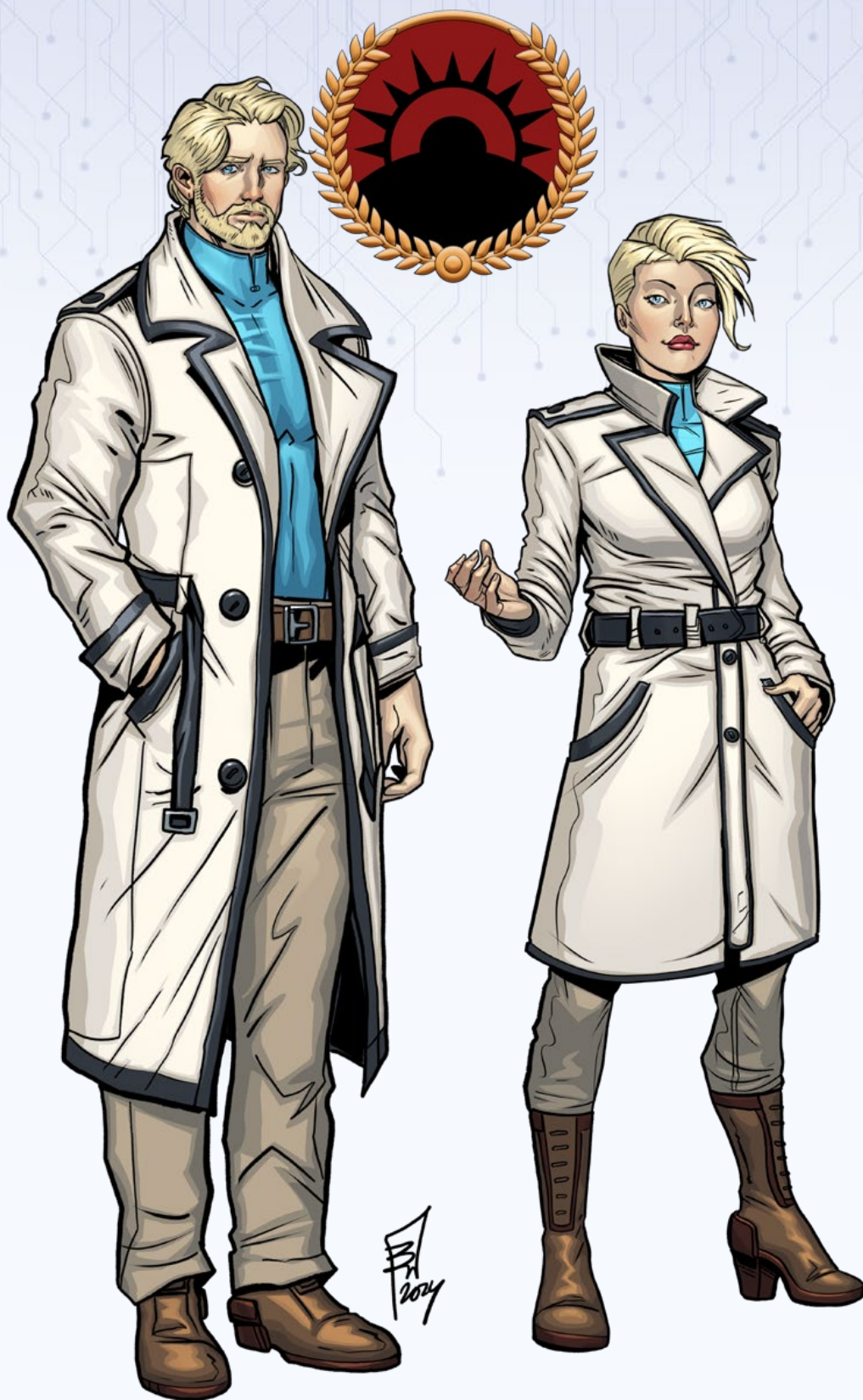
Requirements: Veteran, Psy Commando

Wielding psychic energies requires an incredible force of will. When a psy-co focuses that will, he can achieve amazing feats of concentration, speed, and endurance. Before making a Trait roll, the psy commando can spend any number of Power Points. For each point he spends, he negates up to 2 points of penalties on that roll.

SECOND NATURE

Requirements: Heroic, Psy Commando

A psy-co can eventually hone his psionic abilities such that using them takes virtually no thought at all. With this Edge, the first time the psy commando activates a psionic ability each turn, it doesn't impose a Multi-Action penalty on his rolls that turn.



PSY OPERATIVE

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Psionics d4+

Psy operatives are known throughout the galaxy for their psychic information-gathering and interrogation techniques. A psy-op can snatch key intel directly from a target's mind. In order to reach their targets, psy-ops are often trained in stealth and subterfuge.

Since the end of the Armageddon War, many psy operatives have become agents for corporations, the Syndicate, and governments that can afford to pay them. Their ability to read and control minds makes them both useful and feared. Use of such powers is highly restricted—or even outlawed altogether—on many worlds.

Now that the government has officially released them from their service, psy operatives are free to choose their own paths through the galaxy.

Many choose the path of wealth. Their powers are rare and valuable. Their clients who would put those powers to use are willing to pay a great deal of money to do so. Psy-ops can raise their fees practically at will. If their current clients won't pay, some new clients certainly will.

Other psy-ops choose the path of power. They steal secrets, spread misinformation, and otherwise use their power to blackmail and manipulate people. It's one thing to force someone's actions through mind control. It's another to make them serve you of their own free will.

Finally, a few psy operatives are in it for the thrill. They know people are afraid of them. They use their power to toy with people, to confuse and unsettle them. Sometimes they work for clients. Sometimes they betray their clients simply because they can. These psy-ops are the most dangerous, for they thrive on chaos.

When SAINT approaches a psy operative, they subject the recruit to a battery of psychological tests before trying to recruit her. Psy ops are considered a possible security risk.

Arcane background (Psy Operative): Psy operatives have the Psy Operative Arcane Background, which allows them to use a wide array of mental powers. See Arcane Background (Psy Operative) on page 120 for details.

Gear: Psy operatives begin with 2,000 GC.

MIND FORTRESS

Requirements: Seasoned, Psy Operative

It takes years of grueling mental training to become a psy-op. They learn not only how to pry open the minds of others, but how to lock down their own. Psy operatives add +2 to all Smarts, Spirits, or Psionics rolls when resisting Tests or powers. (This includes resisting Intimidation, Persuasion, and Taunt.)

VANISHING ACT

Requirements: Veteran, Psy Operative

As spies and infiltration specialists, psy-ops are masters of remaining unseen, going unnoticed, and vanishing into crowds. One tool that helps in this mastery is the psychic ability to subtly cloud the minds of those around them so it's harder for others to recognize them. When making a Stealth roll, psy operatives may roll their Psionics die at the same time and take the higher of the two rolls.

BATTLE SENSE

Requirements: Heroic, Psy Operative

Even when they are not actively reading the minds of those around them, psy-ops often get a sense of peoples' intentions—especially in high-stress situations, such as combat. During combat, once all Action Cards have been dealt for the round, the psy-op may make a Psionics roll. With success, she targets one combatant and knows the target's plan for the round; she targets an additional combatant with each raise. Targets planning to attack the psy-op subtract 2 from their attack rolls, since she knows the attack is coming.



SMUGGLER

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Smarts d6+

The job of a smuggler is to move cargo from one point to another without being caught. The idea is simple, but the execution can be incredibly tricky.

Being quick with a blaster is handy, but as any smuggler worth his salt will tell you, if you're shooting, you're not smuggling. Being a great pilot is the real key to the smuggler's success. Flying a starship low across a planet's surface under cover of darkness, zipping behind a moon to dodge a scan, or even drifting away with a trash dump—these all require skill... and maybe a little luck.

Of course, being a great pilot is useless if you don't know where to go or what to do when you get there.

Knowledge of smuggling routes is vital. This includes not only routes between planets, but between settlements on each planet, and the locations of hidden markets and secret rendezvous points. A good smuggler knows local economy as well as geography. While he might not get to choose his cargo, he should have a good idea of how valuable it is at the spots where he picks it up and drops it off.

A good smuggler is aware of local politics and law enforcement as well. He knows who to bribe, and how much. He knows when a job's costing too much, and when it's time to walk away.

Smugglers don't have to worry about acquiring or disposing of the goods; their task is to pick up on time, drop off on time, and get paid on time. Most of that payment usually goes straight into maintaining and improving their starships. Those in the business say that a smuggler with a standard, unmodified ship is either new to the game or just stupid.

SAINT loves recruiting smugglers. Most of them are broadly skilled, a bit desperate, and yet concerned with maintain their reputations as trustworthy and reliable.

Bound For The Stars: Instead of using the ally Syndicate faction's loaner starship, the smuggler has the option of starting with a Stripped Raven transport ship (found on page 101). This ship is inferior to the standard Star Raven, but the smuggler owns it and doesn't have to worry about the Syndicate asking for it back.

Hidden Talents: The smuggler is a pro at stashing away whatever he doesn't want the authorities to find. He gets one free reroll on Stealth rolls when hiding cargo on a ship, hiding contraband on his person, or simply hiding from those looking for him.

Gear: In addition to his starship, the smuggler also starts with 2,000 GC.

FAST TALK

Requirements: Seasoned, Smuggler

Distraction, lies, and enthusiastic ramblings are some of the smuggler's most powerful allies. When the local authorities signal that they need to do an inspection, or a customs officer starts getting curious about that unscannable locked case, the fast-talking smuggler goes to work. A smuggler with this Edge adds +2 to all Persuasion rolls. In addition, if the smuggler performs a successful Persuasion Test, the defender remains Distracted or Vulnerable (smuggler's choice) for one round for each success and raise on the roll.

SHIP SHAPE

Requirements: Veteran, Smuggler

Smugglers' ships are like extensions of their own bodies. While aboard his ship, the smuggler can spend Bennies on behalf of any onboard allies who are making Electronics, Piloting, Repair, or other ship-related rolls. For these types of rolls, allies on board can also spend their Bennies on the smuggler's behalf.

SIGNATURE MOVES

Requirements: Heroic, Smuggler

Smugglers know just how far they can push their ship, and then they push it one step further. At the start of a space battle aboard his ship, the smuggler gains a pool of Bennies equal to half his Piloting die. He can spend these bonus Bennies himself, or (if he has Ship Shape) on behalf of his crew. This pool is depleted when the battle ends.



THIEF

Requirements: Novice, Thievery d8+

Retrieving sensitive data or valuable items from under the noses of trained security is a skill that commands high prices. Corporations, governments, and the Syndicate keep professional thieves on their payrolls—though many thieves prefer the risks and rewards of working freelance (or for themselves).

A successful thief studies her targets, learns their weakness, and expertly exploits them. This applies not just to whoever possesses the item to be stolen, but also to the thief's current employer. Those willing to hire a thief can be just as dangerous as those guarding a locked door. A smart thief knows to watch her back.

Some thieves specialize in stealing from specific targets. They prefer to rob a single person, a residence, or an office or factory. They know their way around personal security, or large security systems. They might have a knack for spotting concealed safes or hidden hoards.

Other thieves specialize in stealing specific goods. Jewel thieves work differently from those who hunt down offline data drives. Corporate specialists liberate high-tech prototypes. Particularly bold thieves steal vehicles or entire starships (for which they may need to bring a friend or two).

Thieves make excellent SAINT recruits. Their skills are a useful addition to any team. Their loyalties are usually to themselves and their next paycheck. Best of all, for many of them, their egos drive them to prove themselves the best at what they do, regardless of why they're doing it.

Digital Lockpicks: As a product of the modern age, the thief is capable of cracking electronic locks just as well as those of the mechanical variety. The thief's Thievery skill isn't restricted to her Electronics skill (as would be the case for amateurs) when opening high-tech locks.

Finding Fences: The thief has the right sort of reputation among the right sort of people, as well as access to a network of fences and brokers eager to purchase her stolen goods. She adds +2 to Persuasion rolls when Networking in search of such a person.

Second Story Expert: An expert at sneaking into places she doesn't belong, the thief gets one free reroll on Stealth rolls and on Athletics rolls related to climbing.

Gear: Thieves begin with 2,000 GC.

NIMBLE FINGERS

Requirements: Seasoned, Thief

Sometimes the easiest way to break into a bank vault is to lift the key from the banker's pocket. The thief adds +2 to all Thievery rolls for picking pockets, planting objects, and other sleights of hand.

THIEF'S VIGILANCE

Requirements: Veteran, Thief

The thief is great at spotting and identifying security measures. She spots all such devices without a roll if they aren't hidden. If within sight of a hidden sensor, trigger, trap, or other security device, the thief gets to make a Notice roll. With success, she not only sees the device but identifies its likely purpose and effect. She adds +2 (or +4 with a raise) to Trait rolls made to evade or override the device. Companions also benefit from this bonus if the thief points out what she's discovered.

LIE LOW

Requirements: Heroic, Thief

Sometimes even a master thief needs a place to rest up and keep a low profile while the heat dies down. To find such a place, she can make a Networking roll. With success, the thief finds a small apartment or something similar; with a raise, the accommodations are roomy enough for a whole team. The thief may stay at this location for 10 days with success and an additional 10 days with each raise. A number equal to the success plus raises is also subtracted from any enemies' attempts to find the thief's whereabouts.

NEW HINDRANCES

In addition to all the Hindrances in *Savage Worlds*, the heroes of *Starbreaker* have several new Hindrances to choose from.

BRANDED (MINOR)

Your hero bears the mark of your Syndicate faction, alerting anyone familiar with such symbolism to his status in the organization. He may be missing some fingers per the traditions of the Yakuza, or he may sport the tattoos used by many gangs. In any case, his allegiance is obvious for all to see. Witnesses find it easy to identify him or pick him out of a police lineup.

Some corporations have started copying the Syndicate in this regard, and they tattoo barcodes on employees or require approved haircuts. Such corporate branding is more subtle than what Synners bear, but it is no less recognizable to those in the know.

DEBT (MINOR OR MAJOR)

As a Minor Hindrance, this debt might be a never-ending series of favors. Perhaps it's money owed to a commercial lender for a starship. It feels like the debt will never be paid off, but the worst the lender will do is lay a guilt trip or attempt repossession through legal means.

As a Major Hindrance, the lender is the Syndicate, a corporation, or some other heartless entity. Representatives of the lender pressure the hero into doing jobs for them, and threaten the welfare of the hero and his loved ones.

SMART MOUTH (MINOR OR MAJOR)

The character has a problem with authority figures. She can't help giving them lip, even when she's trying to cooperate with them. Some suits find this attitude refreshing, but most are quick to slap her down.

As a Minor Hindrance, the character suffers a -1 penalty on Performance and Persuasion rolls when interacting with authority figures. As a Major Hindrance, the penalty increases to -2.

SNITCH (MAJOR)

This blabbermouth rattled out the Syndicate, and they know it. There is a price on his head. This character is constantly changing his cover and moving around, trying to remain one step ahead of the Syndicate.

STICKY FINGERS (MINOR OR MAJOR)

The character has a tendency to take things that don't belong to her. As a Minor Hindrance, she likes to collect souvenirs and keepsakes. As a Major Hindrance, she feels a compulsive urge to steal, even risking her own life and the lives of others in order to sate her impulses.

NEW SKILL

HYPERTECH (SMARTS)

This is the arcane skill for hypertechns (see page 66) and may also be used to retrieve data from public or secure HyperNet nodes.

NEW EDGES

A new galaxy of adventure comes with a number of new Edges to help heroes survive those adventures.

Arcane Backgrounds other than those listed here are not allowed. Those listed here are presented only briefly; each is described in detail later on in this book.

BACKGROUND EDGES

ARCANE BACKGROUND (CYBORG)

Requirements: Spirit d6+

The advanced science of cybernetics fuses flesh and machine to turn people into super-powered cyborgs. Upgrading a limb or organ is great, but those who do so might find themselves in trouble if their replacement parts malfunction or lose power. Cyborgs use Focus as their arcane skill. See page 122.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (HYPERTECH)

Requirements: Smarts d6+

Anyone with the proper device can access the HyperNet from anywhere in the galaxy—but only those master hackers known as hypertechns can truly take advantage of everything it has to offer. Characters with this Arcane Background use Hypertech as their arcane skill. See page 116.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (PSY COMMANDO)

Requirements: Smarts d6+

When the caelum and xek shared the technology to unlock psychic potential in other species, those species immediately put those psychics to work fighting against the nohgotha. Foremost among these enhanced warriors are the psy commandos, who meld psionics with military training to wreak havoc on the battlefield or behind enemy lines. Psy commandos use Psionics as their arcane skill. See page 119.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (PSY OPERATIVE)

Requirements: Smarts d6+

During the Armageddon War, the SSA created and trained psy operatives to use their psionic abilities for gathering intelligence. Now that the war is over, these psychic spies roam the galaxy offering their services to the highest bidder. Psy operatives use Psionics as their arcane skill. See page 120.

DRONE

Requirements: Novice

The character owns a custom or stock drone costing 20,000 GC or less, subject to the GM's approval. This drone is a loyal companion that assists the character. The drone is an Extra and doesn't Advance in Rank or abilities, but it can be modified as described starting on page 96. If the drone is destroyed or traded in, the time and possible expense needed to replace it are determined by the GM.

COMBAT EDGES

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+

When the wanted poster says "Dead or Alive," your character brings them in alive every time.

Heroes with this Edge can choose to deal nonlethal damage (see *Savage Worlds*) with any attack—including edged and ranged weapons—without taking a -1 penalty on their attack rolls. Blades bypass organs, and lasers crease a target's skull without causing lasting damage.

Incapacitated Extras are alive unless you declare otherwise.

ZERO-G OPERATOR

Requirements: Novice

While most starships boast gravity generators or magnetized floors that allow space travelers to go about their business as if they're planetside, a lack of gravity is only one malfunction away.

Zero-G operators are practiced in maneuvering their bodies and manipulating objects while weightless. They do not suffer a -2 penalty to Agility and Agility-based skills for actions in a Zero-G environment.

ZERO-G COMBATANT

Requirements: Seasoned, Zero-G Operator

Some combatants learn how to turn a lack of gravity against their enemies. Those trained to fight in Zero-G only lose control and tumble on a Critical Failure. Furthermore, any attack made against them in Zero-G suffers a -1 penalty to hit, as long as they are aware of the attack and have sufficient room to maneuver.

CREW EDGES

COVER STORY

Requirements: Novice, infiltrator crew type

Your undercover crew has an airtight cover story. Each crew member has a fake background explaining how he came to be in his current position in the Syndicate. Thanks to the hackers and bureaucrats in SAINT, those backgrounds stand up to all but the most thorough investigations. (Subtract 4 from all attempts at background checks.) Furthermore, once per session, the crew can add to their cover story, and SAINT will quickly falsify whatever records are needed to make the story ring true.

CUNNING PLAN

Requirements: Novice, heist team crew type

An important part of every heist is putting together a plan, then watching the pieces of that plan come together. To reflect this level of planning, your crew gets a communal pool of three Bennies when starting to execute a heist. Though this pool isn't replenished until the next heist, any player can spend a Benny from the pool as if it were her own.

LOCAL CONTACT

Requirements: Novice, troubleshooters crew type

Part of what makes your crew so effective in dealing with special cases is the network of contacts you can call on for help. Once per session, one member of your crew may spend a Benny to bring in a local who can offer insight into the problem, the solution, or the people who may be involved.

MISDIRECTION

Requirements: Novice, strike unit crew type

While strike units aren't overly concerned with maintaining their cover, they still don't want their Syndicate targets to identify them. To that end, they throw off suspicion by planting evidence that their attacks were actually carried out by someone else—ideally, another Syndicate faction. Planting such evidence doesn't require a roll, but anyone trying to find the true culprits subtracts 4 from their roll.

STREET SMARTS

Requirements: Novice, magnates crew type

Members of a magnate crew are good at sniffing out the local criminal elements and black markets. Each member of the crew gets a free reroll on any Intimidation or Persuasion rolls made to Network with shady or criminal elements.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Requirements: Novice, enforcers crew type

By their nature, enforcers are intimidating. The more of them there are, the more intimidating they get. Once per round, when a crew member makes an Intimidation roll, he gets +1 on that roll for each additional nearby crew member (to a maximum of +4).

LEADERSHIP EDGES

MISSION CONTROL

Requirements: Seasoned, Command Presence

Sometimes, leaders can't be there to lead in person. Sometimes they have to be a calm voice in the field commander's ear, talking him through a firefight and arranging an extraction. Sometimes they feed data to their undercover agent and hope she doesn't blow the mission. Sometimes they have to sit on the bridge while engineering scrambles to make repairs.

Your hero's Command Range is extended as far as the operative communications range. Characters benefit from his Leadership Edges as long as he speaks to them over the HyperNet, internal comms, radio, or other broadcast mediums at least once per round.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

COMBAT ACE

Requirements: Novice, Ace, Shooting d6+

Amazing hand-eye coordination allows your character to maneuver her craft and fire a weapon system without distraction. She ignores up to 2 points of Multi-Action penalties when she makes a maneuvering roll (Boating, Driving, or Piloting) and a Shooting roll in the same turn.

LORDS OF THE NIGHT

Requirements: Novice, Agility d8+, Notice d6+, Stealth d8+

Known for their infamous nighttime raids, the Lords of the Night or "Gospod Nok" are an elite unit of Vulkolasi Union commandos. Characters who join this unit gain a +1 bonus to Battle, Intimidation, Notice, and Stealth rolls.

The Gospod Nok generally limits recruitment to vulkolasi and nahkyra, but rare exceptions may be made for members of other species who prove their worth.

MASTER THIEF

Requirements: Veteran, Thief

The bonuses the character gains from the Thief Edge—+1 to Athletics rolls to climb in urban areas, +1 to Stealth rolls in urban environments, and +1 to Thievery rolls—increase to +2.

SOCIAL EDGES

MADE MAN

Requirements: Seasoned, Connections (Syndicate faction), Streetwise

This character has earned his place in the Syndicate, and people know it. He gains one free reroll on failed Persuasion rolls when dealing with fellow Synners. He also gets a free reroll on failed Intimidation rolls when interacting with anyone else who might be swayed by his connections to the Syndicate.

THE CONNECTIONS EDGE

Characters in *Starbreaker* frequently have the Connections Edge due to their ties to the Syndicate or other factions, such as the Bounty Hunters League (see page 154 for more on factions). While the Edge can always be used to request the favors listed in *Savage Worlds*, each faction has its own additional areas of expertise.

ASSASSINS GUILD

Access to Hackers: Access to a hypertechnology Extra (see page 173) to hack systems is available around the clock.

Access to Gear: Weapons and other Gear, regardless of legality, are available in select locations, and they can often be delivered to a requested location.

Safe Houses: Assassins and their allies have access to safe havens if needed. Accommodations are all-inclusive, but the fees must be paid upfront unless the hero has a line of credit established with the guild.

BOUNTY HUNTERS LEAGUE

Access to the Fortress: Members can access a safe haven to rest, restock, and refuel (see page 155).

Access to Gear: Every hunter needs the proper equipment for the job. With enough time (and GM approval), the League can supply virtually any piece of Gear.

Hire a Professional: If the team is lacking a professional specialty for a job, the League can lend an Extra for the mission.

Assistance from the Local Law: A hunter often finds himself on a world where he can use his licensed status to secure the cooperation of the local authorities. This is useful for gathering information and preventing conflicts with law enforcement.

PIRATES OF THE ORIDIUM NEBULA

Port of Call: As a member of the Armada, a captain may dock her ship at either Port Dark Star or the Lord's Port deep in the nebula.

Let's Make a Deal: Once a pirate has hit a big haul among the stars, she needs a place to unload the goods and turn them into money. The Armada sees to it that a pirate can always fence her ill-gotten gains.

The Lowdown: A pirate can gain access to shipping routes and other useful info about ship movements that can aid in protecting her crew and help her quickly locate her target.

SAINT

Papers Please: An agent can use the resources of SAINT to have fake IDs and backgrounds generated that will hold up under scrutiny.

Eyes Everywhere: An agent can call on SAINT to use its tracking network to help locate targets or gain important information on them.

Get Away: A SAINT can call for an emergency extraction, but this will blow the agent's cover and may take time to arrange.

THE SYNDICATE

It Fell Off a Truck: Basic supplies can be obtained in small amounts. If a Synner needs a new computer, some medical equipment, or a specific regional liquor to bribe an official, all she has to do is ask.

I Didn't See a Thing: Locals are hesitant to speak out against anyone tied to a Syndicate faction for fear of repercussions. This means that a Synner can often prevent witnesses from talking.

VIP: Sometimes a Synner wants to make an impression or gain access to somewhere he doesn't belong. His connections in the Syndicate can be useful in bypassing social roadblocks.





CHAPTER THREE: TECHNOLOGY

In *Starbreaker*, technology plays an integral role in society. Advances in communications, computers, medicine, interstellar travel, and weapons have changed the way people live their lives. Cybernetics, nanotech, and biotechnologies enhance people's performance. Technology is fully integrated into the average person's daily life, and few areas have avoided its impact.

Of course, just because a miraculous technology exists doesn't mean that everyone has access to it. The rich can afford virtually all the wonders of the age, while normal working folks must save up for months to pay for a trip offworld. Criminals often acquire much of this tech or the money to pay for it through the course of their work, while public servants (such as local law enforcement) are at the mercy of political budgeting systems.

Prices are listed in Galactic Credits (GC), the currency backed by the Arusan Trade Conglomerate and the SSA. Because of centuries of inflation and deflation cycles, the GC is roughly equivalent to the dollar when converting prices from *Savage Worlds*.

COMMON GEAR

BIONANO INJECTOR

Notes: These handheld devices inject a payload of organic nanobots (bionanos) into the target's bloodstream to deliver an immediate healing boost. Characters who are Bleeding Out immediately stabilize. The target can make an immediate natural healing roll if the payload is administered during the Golden Hour. Permanent injuries may be recovered once all other Wounds are regenerated; treat each injury as an additional Wound for purposes of recovery. Bionano injectors carry only one nanobot payload.

NEURAL INTERFACE CONTROLLER

One piece of Gear all criminals who volunteer for SAINT receive is the subcutaneous Neural Inhibitor Control (NIC).

The NIC is a low-level AI device that judges whether an agent is following orders. If it detects a violation, it can inflict discomfort and pain until the violation is corrected. It can even disable the SAINT if necessary.

See page 107 for details on how the NIC works.

BREATHING DEVICE

Notes: These breath mask/atmosphere supply combinations allow users to function normally on worlds with thin and poisonous atmospheres (see **Atmospheres** on page 106). Zaka use them to function on oxygen-atmosphere worlds. Breathing devices may be set for methane- or oxygen-breathers. They gather trace gasses from the local atmosphere and condense them into breathable quantities. Thankfully, oxygen is usually found in the atmospheres of methane worlds and vice versa.

COMM SYSTEM EARBUDS

Notes: These earbuds provide voice communication with all attuned devices in a 10-mile radius. They must be synced through a central computer, such as a hypertech's portable device or a ship's workstation.

CUTTING LASER

Notes: These powerful tools are excellent at cutting even the hardest materials. Cutting lasers fire a sustained beam that does 2d4 damage (AP 2). When damaging objects (see **Breaking Things in Savage Worlds**), the damage is cumulative as long as the user makes a successful Repair or Shooting roll every round. Cutting lasers make poor weapons (Range 1, Damage 2d4, ROF 1, Shots 15, AP 2).

MAGNETIC BOOTS

Notes: Magnets in the soles allow for walking and climbing on ferrous surfaces—and prevent characters from floating away during spacewalks. Magnetic boots provide +2 to rolls to resist

Pushes, the effects of low gravity, and the like when activated and adhered to a ferrous surface. Each 1" a hero walks or runs in magnetic boots counts as 2" of Pace. A successful Athletics roll allows a character to move at his full Pace, but failure means the boots lose adherence to the surface and the hero can't move this turn. A Critical Failure means the hero starts falling (if on a vertical surface) or accidentally leaps d6" off of the walking surface (if in low gravity) and begins floating away!

NANO MULTI-TOOL LOCKPICK

Notes: This reconfigurable multi-tool is programmed to replicate a variety of lockpicking tools, and it even interfaces with digital security measures. It provides +1 to Thievery rolls when picking both electronic and mechanical locks.

PLASTIC CUFFS

Notes: These devices made from memory plastic are far more than simple zip ties. When applied, they adhere to the captive's wrists or ankles, imposing a -2 penalty on escape attempts.

ROCKET PACK

Notes: Sold by a number of companies under different brand names, rocket packs allow wearers to fly at up to Pace 24 for a maximum of 10 minutes without refueling. (Refueling costs

SHIELDING

For an additional 500 GC, any Gear may be shielded against electromagnetic pulse attacks. If shielded, the item does not go offline when caught in the blast of an EMP grenade or similar device.

COMMON GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Bionano Injector	5,000	0.5
Breathing Device	75	3
Comm System Earbuds	50	—
Cutting Laser	250	1
Magnetic Boots	500	10
Nano Multi-Tool Lockpick	1,000	1
Plastic Cuffs	50	0.25
Rocket Pack	3,000	25
Skinister	75	3
Griptex Climbing Gloves & Boots	1,000	1
Third Arm	2,000	15
Wrist-Mounted Grapple Line	1,500	1.5

300 GC.) They are most frequently used for extravehicular maneuvers in space, though many Synners wear them to make a quick getaway when needed. Maneuvering uses the Piloting skill. Rocket pack wearers can fly even when Bound or Entangled if the source of the condition (such as a glue bomb) does not prevent it.

SKINISTER

Notes: To keep from drying out, arusans traveling offworld always make sure to carry a skin mister (or “skinister”). These small devices (about the size of a pack of cards) spray a fine mist that clings to the skin. Although arusans must still spend an hour a day underwater or in a full-body rehydration unit, a spritz from a skinister is enough to keep them comfortable for several hours, even on desert worlds.

GRIPTEX CLIMBING GLOVES & BOOTS

Notes: These Arachnosynth (artificial spider silk) gloves are covered with fibers that resemble scopulae, the dense, gripping hair tufts found at the end of spiders’ legs. The material also dampens and absorbs sound when it impacts a surface. GripTex gloves provide a +2 bonus to Athletics checks related to climbing, and to relevant Stealth checks.

THIRD ARM

Notes: Many medics equip a “third arm” when doing field medicine. This robotic arm mounts to a backpack and is controlled via a noninvasive cybernetic thought-reader (usually worn as a headband or earring). The advantage of having one more appendage has greatly increased medics’ effectiveness in life-or-death situations. The use of a third arm adds +2 to Healing rolls.

WRIST-MOUNTED GRAPPLE LINE

Notes: Grapple lines are standard equipment for mountaineers and starship crew doing spacewalks. The launcher contains a 40” (80-yard) spool of incredibly strong (Hardness 12) and incredibly thin artificial spider silk. A successful Shooting roll attaches the gripping tip of the line to the target; the grapple line then retracts, pulling the wearer along at Pace 6. The launcher has a range of 10/20/40. If used to aid in scaling a vertical surface, the grapple line adds +2 to Athletics (Climbing) rolls.

COMBAT GEAR

The Armageddon War has left the galaxy in a state of terror. A new arms race has emerged, as every sapient species seeks to outdo the others in the protectiveness of its armor and the lethality of its weapons.

The chief profiteer from this development is Vizon, a massive conglomerate that owns hundreds of smaller companies operating in almost every sector of the economy. Despite the profits it accrues from agribusiness, communications, entertainment, financial services, the medical industry, and dozens of other areas, the Vizon board retains a particular interest in the arms industry. Decades after its release, the Vizon Corp Ridley 82 laser pistol remains the standard-issue sidearm for law enforcement agencies and militaries throughout the galaxy.

Most of the other prominent SSA arms manufacturers—such as Damocles—are divisions of the Big Five, but a small number of truly independent manufacturers exist. Blakstarr Inc. specializes in exotic bladed weapons, while “Gentleman Xhorz” is the name of a small shop in the Oridium Nebula that crafts bespoke firearms for the Oridium Pirates.

ARMOR

The battlefields of *Starbreaker* are filled with flying projectiles and energy bolts. Without armor, the odds of survival are low. Even outside active combat, the average Synner or SAINT wears some sort of armored clothing, at the least.

Armor marked with an asterisk provides ballistic protection (as described in *Savage Worlds*) and reduces damage from bullets (and other physical firearm projectiles) by 4.

CIVILIAN ARMOR

Civilian armor is readily available on the open market. In the post-Armageddon War galaxy, few people hesitate to wear some extra protection.

ARACHNOSYNTH BODYSUIT

Notes: This bodysuit is incredibly light, and can be worn under most clothing. Additional layers of Arachnosynth can be added to it (see below).

ARMORED TRENCH COAT

Notes: Synthetic fibers provide ballistic protection (see *Savage Worlds*).

HEAVY LEATHER JACKET

Notes: The classic bomber jacket never goes out of style. Exotic leathers tanned from the hides of alien beasts come in all grades and colors. They require no synthetic fiber backing, but the dangers of harvesting such hides increases the price.

CONCEALED ARMORED VEST

Notes: This slim vest doesn't appear to be armored at first glance. Those examining it subtract 2 from Notice rolls to detect the armor.

EVA SUIT AND HELMET

Notes: Though most starships contain internal gravity generators (obviating the need for pressure suits), crews still frequently have to go outside to fix things. Extravehicular activity suits protect from the extreme conditions of space and from hazards like micrometeoroids. They offer environmental protection against cold, decompression, disease, heat, and radiation (see page 87), and they feature integrated comm system earbuds.

CIVILIAN ARMOR

Item	Armor	Min Str.	Weight	Cost
Arachnosynth Bodysuit (torso, arms, legs)	+2*	d4	1	500
Armored Trench Coat (torso, arms, legs)	+2*	d4	5	350
Heavy Leather Jacket (torso, arms)	+2	d4	8	100
Concealed Armored Vest (torso)	+2*	d4	5	500
EVA Suit and Helmet (full body)	+4*	d6	100	1,000

MILITARY ARMOR

Military polymer armor is only legally available to governmental forces and licensed private military companies. This doesn't stop many assassins, bounty hunters, and Synners from buying it from the Arusan Black Market.

Many variants of this standard ceramic and plastic plate armor exist throughout the galaxy. Due to differences in body type, military polymer armor built for one species can rarely be worn by another.

The plate components are worn over or attached to a bodysuit made of Arachnosynth or similar material. Additional modifications may be made to incorporate a variety of protective systems. The price listed is for the base model for a human-sized species.

If it is difficult for different species to wear each other's battle armor, it is nigh impossible to wear a helmet not designed for one's physiology. Polymer helmets always contain integrated comm system earbuds, and closed helmets provide basic air filtration.

MILITARY ARMOR

Item	Armor	Min Str.	Weight	Cost
Polymer Corselet (torso)	+5*	d6	8	500
Polymer Vambraces (arms)	+5*	d6	3	200
Polymer Greaves (legs)	+5*	d6	3	200
Polymer Helmet, Open (head)	+5*	d4	2	100
Polymer Helmet, Enclosed (head)	+5*	d4	3	200

Notes: -1 to vision-based Notice rolls.

ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

Armor can be customized for different purposes. The following modifications add features or extra protection. Armor can support any number of modifications.

ARACHNOSYNTH

Arachnosynth is the Vizon Corporation's name for its artificial spider silk cloth harvested from genetically modified goats. Other corporations offer similar products, some woven by actual spiders. Incredibly durable and lightweight, Arachnosynth can be used either as the base cloth for clothing or as a lining. It adds Armor +1 to each item of armor for every 100 GC in extra cost, to a maximum of +2. It provides ballistic protection, and can be added to the Arachnosynth bodysuit.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection seals armor against the elements. For every 250 GC spent, the armor provides +4 to rolls to resist a single environmental Hazard (such as cold, disease, heat, hunger, radiation, or thirst). Damage from such sources is also reduced by 4. The armor must be fully sealed and have a helmet to provide this protection against most Hazards. Most environmental protection suits include a self-contained two-hour air supply.

Armor with environmental protection against decompression (see page 106) completely wards against that Hazard.

SENSOR SUITE

Helmet sensor suites augment a wearer's senses, allowing him to bypass biological limitations. While active, the sensor suite allows the wearer to ignore all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* and similar powers to a range of 10" (20 yards).

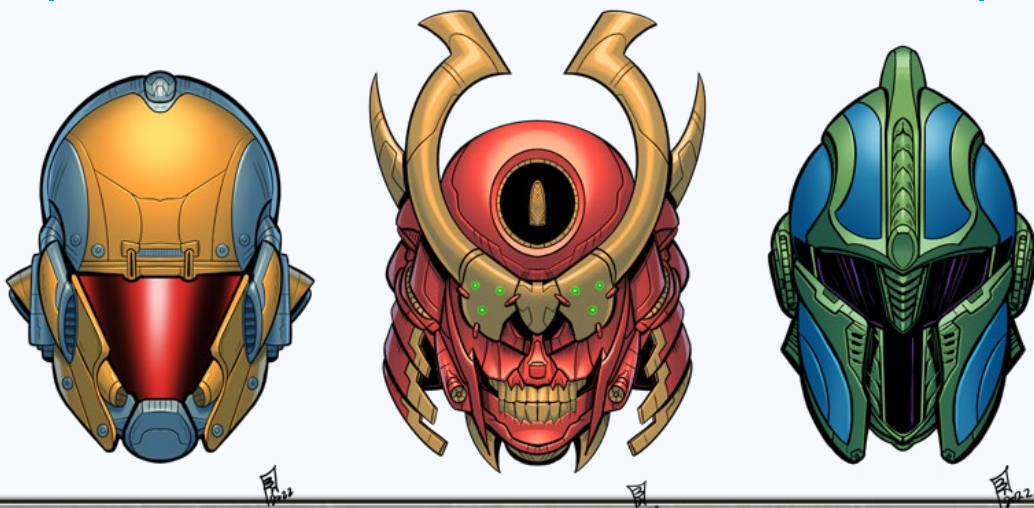
STEALTH SYSTEM

Electronic baffles and adaptive camouflage help the wearer blend into her surroundings. While the stealth system is activated, she adds +2 to Stealth rolls (or +4 if she remains completely motionless). The armor must cover at least the torso to be effective.

TARGETING SYSTEM

Combat computers, a heads-up display, and rangefinders in the helmet allow the wearer to ignore up to 2 points of penalties to Athletics (throwing) or Shooting rolls from Called Shots, Cover, Range, Scale, or Speed.

Modification	Cost
Arachnosynth	Special
Environmental Protection	Special
Sensor Suite	500
Stealth System	1,000
Targeting System	1,000



SHIELDS

Type	Parry	Cover	Min Str.	Weight	Cost
Force Shield, Small	+2	-2	d4	1	300
Force Shield, Medium	+3	-4	d4	2	400
Force Shield, Large	+4	-6	d4	3	500

Notes: Activating a force shield counts as readying a weapon (see **Readying Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*). Once active, most force shields have enough power to last four hours.

SHIELDS

Polymer shields (as found in *Savage Worlds*) are the most common type found throughout the galaxy. Such shields often have stun-field generators installed (see **Personal Weapon Modifications Table** on page 89).

Less common are force shields, the defensive equivalent of the infamous force sword. Retractable electrodes extend from wrist-mounted hubs, spinning and generating an electromagnetic force field. Though they offer more protection than polymer shields, force shields must be activated to provide defense. This makes them less practical in many situations than solid pieces of polycarbonate plastic.

WEAPONS

Soldiers know to use the right tool for the job. In addition to standard firearms and grenades, the weapons manufacturers of the galaxy offer weapons that can help crews get the job done more efficiently. Weapons like the mag spike rifle or the dart gun help the wielder avoid the loud report of other firearms. Bounty hunters looking for nonlethal options can use sonic pistols and sticky grenades.

PERSONAL WEAPONS

The various types of weapons available across the galaxy have changed little over the centuries. All medieval and modern melee and ranged weapons found in *Savage Worlds* can be purchased at their listed prices in *Starbreaker*. What has changed in this setting is the possibility of installing new modifications into the weapons.

FIREARMS

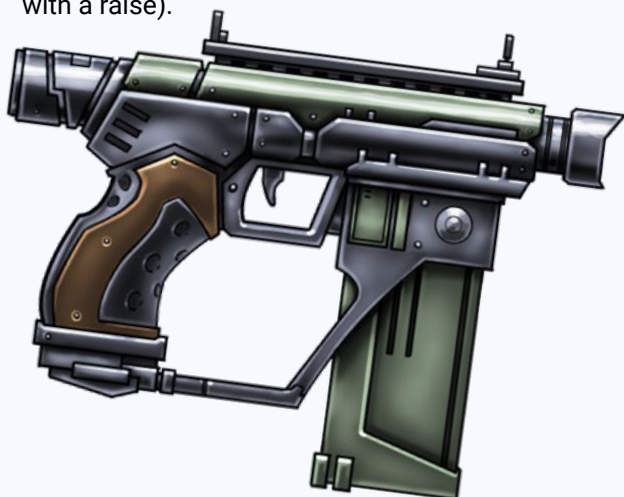
Laser weapons (as found in *Savage Worlds*) are the most common form of firearm found throughout the galaxy. They are sold by numerous manufacturers under multitudes of brand names.

SPECIAL FIREARMS

ACID PELLET PISTOL

Notes: A full pellet reload costs 25 GC.

This pistol fires small pellets filled with a highly concentrated acid. The acid corrodes armor and objects. Each successful hit reduces the value of Armor worn in that location (not natural or cybernetic armor) by 2. If attacking an inanimate object, its Hardness is reduced by 2. The effect is cumulative; the armor/object is destroyed if its Armor or Hardness value reaches 0. Fixing something damaged (but not destroyed) by this acid requires a Repair roll and 4 hours per point that needs to be repaired (or 2 hours per point with a raise).



PERSONAL WEAPON MODIFICATIONS

MONO BLADES

Monomolecular (or “mono”) blades have a cutting edge less than a molecule wide, adding +2 damage and AP 2. Injuries from mono blades are notoriously difficult to suture; Vigor and Healing rolls to stabilize a character Incapacitated from a mono blade suffer a –2 penalty.

Ranged and thrown weapons such as arrows and spears can be tipped with monomolecular blades. A Critical Failure with a mono blade can mean the wielder injures himself.

FORCE BLADES

Force weapons lack a conventional blade, instead sporting a blade-length electrode that is sometimes retractable. When activated, a monomolecular electromagnetic force field lances along the electrode, forming the “blade.” A force blade has AP 6 and adds +4 damage to the base model weapon. The force field generated by the force blade allows it to deflect conventional and energy weapons, so it can be used to parry melee weapons.

Activating a force blade counts as readying a weapon (see **Readying Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*). Safety features require the wielder to keep a finger on the activation switch, meaning the force blade doesn’t work if the weapon is thrown. A Critical Failure with a force blade means the wielder hits herself.

PULSE SETTING

Adding a pulse setting allows an energy weapon to fire a Three-Round Burst (see *Savage Worlds*). If any of the Shooting dice are a 1, the weapon must cool down for a full round before it can be fired again, just as if the shooter had overcharged the gun.

STUN FIELD

Electroshock generators can be installed in the hafts of bludgeoning weapons. Targets struck by such weapons must make a Vigor roll (at –2 if the attacker got a raise) or be Stunned. Activating a stun field counts as readying a weapon (see **Readying Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*).

Safety standards are quite relaxed with stun-field weapons. Some manufacturers offer stun arrows and quarrels—even sling stones. These weapons have blunt tips that lack AP. The Stun Field property is in the projectile rather than the weapon, increasing the price of the ammunition only.

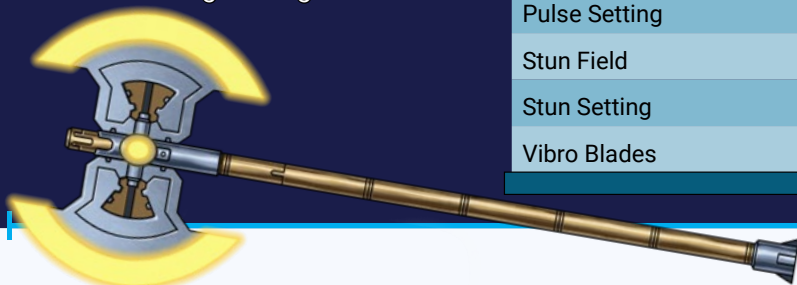
STUN SETTING

A stun setting allows an energy weapon to fire a diffused charge. Targets struck by such weapons take nonlethal damage per the weapon type and must make a Vigor roll or be Stunned. The energy diffusion of the stun setting halves the ranges of the firearm.

VIBRO BLADES

Generators in the hilt or haft vibrate the blade of a vibro weapon at supersonic speeds, adding +2 damage and AP 4 when activated. Installing a vibro generator to a weapon adds a pound to its weight.

Activating the vibro function counts as readying a weapon (see **Readying Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*). Safety features require the wielder to keep a finger on the activation switch, meaning the vibro feature doesn’t work if the weapon is thrown.



Modification	Cost
Mono Blades	×2
Force Blades	×10
Pulse Setting	×2
Stun Field	×5
Stun Setting	×2
Vibro Blades	×5

CRYO GUN

Notes: Victims have their Pace reduced by 2 (4 with a raise) on their next turn. A replacement power canister weighs four pounds and costs 250 GC.

This bulky weapon emits a beam of experimental particles that robs the victim's atomic structure of its nuclear energy, drastically and dangerously lowering its temperature. In other words, it's a freeze gun. While the gun itself is only marginally useful in actual combat, it can be used in a variety of creative fashions: supercooling the surface of a lake to freeze it over, causing piping or internal wiring to shatter, disabling a vehicle before it begins moving by solidifying its propulsion...The exact extent of the cryo gun's uses is up to the GM.

GRENADE LAUNCHER

Notes: Grenade launchers use chemical propellant charges to launch grenades much further than they can be thrown. Standard grenade launchers can fire most one-pound grenades, with the exception of flechette disks.

POISON DART LAUNCHER

Notes: If the target is Shaken by this weapon's damage, he must make a Vigor roll or suffer the effects of the appropriate poison (see **Hazards** in *Savage Worlds*).

Poison dart vials are priced depending on their type and dosage. For 2 × the price, the poison inflicts a -2 penalty to the victim's Vigor roll, or -4 for 5 × the price.

- Knockout: 150 GC per vial
- Lethal: 250 GC per vial
- Mild: 50 GC per vial
- Paralyzing: 100 GC per vial

A favorite of hitmen and assassins, this concealable weapon allows for durable poison vials to be administered silently and at short distances. Because armor easily mitigates the darts, and the poison can be ineffective if they hit at the wrong angle, users will often attempt to make their attacks using The Drop. Those who prefer a more direct approach can attempt to administer the poison by hand: the vial itself deals damage equal to the attacker's Strength and counts as an Improvised Weapon, but it injects the poison if the target is Shaken, as usual.

MAG SPIKE GUN

Notes: Heavy Weapon. Mag spike guns do 3d6 damage at Short Range, 2d6 at Medium Range, and 1d6 at Long Range. A full reload weighs 2 lbs and costs 30 GC.

Mag spike guns fire magnetically propelled spikes at remarkable speeds, piercing through even some of the strongest armor. Since they aren't fired using traditional propellant or high-energy bursts, they are whisper-quiet. Mag spikes

SPECIAL FIREARMS

Type	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Shots	Min Str.	Weight	Cost	Notes
Acid Pellet Pistol	12/24/48	2d6	—	1	4	d6	4	350	Special
Cryo Gun	5/10/20	3d6	—	1	20	d8	6	1,000	Heavy Weapon, Special
Grenade Launcher	12/24/48	as grenade	—	1	5	d6	6	450	Special
Poison Dart Launcher	12/24/48	d4+2	—	1	2	d4	2	150	Special
Mag Spike Gun	10/20/40	1–3d6	8	1	10	d4	6	500	Heavy Weapon, Special
Sonic Gun	Cone Template	2d6	10	1	8	d6	7	300	Heavy Weapon, Special

GRENADES

Type	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Blast	Weight	Cost
Blackout Smoke Grenade	5/10/20	—	—	—	LBT	1	100
EMP Grenade	5/10/20	3d6 (nonlethal)	—	—	MBT	1	75
Explosive Pellet	5/10/20	2d4	—	—	SBT	0.1	25
Flechette Disk	5/10/20	3d4	4	—	MBT	1	50
Gravity Grenade	5/10/20	—	—	—	MBT	1	50
High Explosive Grenade	5/10/20	4d6	4	—	MBT	1	70
Nausea Grenade	5/10/20	—	—	—	LBT	1	50
Sticky Grenade	5/10/20	—	—	—	LBT	1	50
Web Grenade	5/10/20	—	—	—	MBT	1	50

are built in such a way that they quickly lose their kinetic energy over a greater range, so they tend to be employed in short-range engagements.

SONIC GUN

Notes: Sonic guns blast an area with a loud, high-pitched burst of sound, which can even rattle enemy soldiers wearing power armor! In some cases, the vibrations can cause minor bruising of organs or rupture some of a victim's capillaries. All damage from the gun is nonlethal and can be Evaded. If the target is Shaken, he is also Distracted. An eight-shot sonic recharge costs 50 GC.



SPECIAL WEAPONS

GRENADES

Grenades may be thrown for the listed distances or fired from a grenade launcher. In addition to the modern, smoke, and stun grenades found in *Savage Worlds*, the following grenade types can be found in the galaxy of *Starbreaker*.

BLACKOUT SMOKE GRENADE

Notes: Blackout grenades create an area of thermal particle-filled smoke in a Large Blast Template that not only obscures vision (−4) but also baffles infrared and thermal imaging (negating the benefits of Echolocation, Infravision, Low Light Vision, sensor suites, and targeting systems). The smoke lingers for 1d4+1 rounds unless subject to strong winds.

EMP GRENADE

Notes: EMP grenades send out a small-range electromagnetic pulse to disable electronics. They ignore Armor to do nonlethal damage to constructs, cyborgs, and vehicles. Normal electronic devices go offline until a successful Repair check is made.

EXPLOSIVE PELLET

Notes: These tiny devices emit a powerful explosion and release obscuring smoke (−4) in a Small Blast Template that lasts until the user's next turn.

FLECHETTE DISK

Notes: These “disks” operate using the same electromagnetic principles as a mag spike gun. Once thrown, they hover approximately three feet above the ground. They eject dozens of small darts at high speeds using magnetically lined tubing, then silently descend to the ground. The only sound they make is a low hum when the internal components activate...and the thud of the bodies that hit the floor shortly thereafter. The term “flechette” is a misnomer based on a projectile design from the mid-20th century.

GRAVITY GRENADE

Notes: These grenades expel a powerful burst of energy that violently shoves nearby enemies away. The exact mechanism can vary, from a pressure wave to advanced antigravity repulsion tech. Victims caught in the template are Distracted and must make a Strength roll (at -2 if thrown with a raise) or be launched d6+2” away from the blast’s center. If victims strike a hard object (such as a wall), they suffer 2d4 damage; this is generally nonlethal.

NAUSEA GRENADE

Notes: Entering the template prompts a Vigor roll. With failure, the victim is Shaken and suffers a level of Fatigue; this cannot Incapacitate. This grenade releases a methane-based gas that is



invisible but has a horrendous stench. It’s been described as “rotting eggs in a cadaver.” The fumes linger for d6+2 rounds in outdoor areas (or less if subjected to intense winds) or d6+2 minutes inside an enclosed space (such as onboard a starship).

STICKY GRENADE

Notes: Surfaces within the template become Difficult Ground for 10 minutes. When activated, sticky grenades emit a special electromagnetic field that imbues all nearby surfaces with a powerful static charge. Anyone trying to move through the area adheres to these surfaces. In a pinch, some clever soldiers use sticky grenades to effectively increase their grip strength or hold on to a slippery surface for a few seconds longer—the GM determines exactly what effects are possible.

WEB GRENADE

Notes: Targets must Evade or be Entangled (or Bound if thrown with a raise). The bindings are Hardness 7. This marvel of chemical engineering spews a thin carbon nanotube weave in every direction. A reactant along the strands at regular intervals creates a weak chemical bond with whatever they touch. Those who have experienced the effects describe it as feeling like a fly trapped in a spider’s web.

MINES

The use of mines in ground warfare has changed little in centuries. In space, they are deployed much like in naval combat.

Mines used in space combat are relatively bulky objects about as large as an adult human. Starships can carry a number of mines equal to half the missiles they usually carry; transporting them usually means refitting launch tubes and pylons.

MINES

Type	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Blast	Weight	Cost
Antimatter Mines	—	5d10	20	—	LBT	100	125,000
EMP Mines	—	5d10	Special	—	LBT	200	250,000
Gravity Mines	—	5d8	20	—	LBT	250	500,000

Mines may be triggered by contact with a starship or by remote detonation. Remotely detonated mines may be Evaded, but contact mines cannot.

Contact mines are deployed in large numbers to create minefields that are difficult to navigate through. Avoiding the mines requires a maneuvering roll with a penalty equal to the difference in Scale between the starship and the mines. Failure means the starship strikes a mine and the mine explodes. A Critical Failure means the vessel strikes two mines; resolve the damage from each mine separately.

Remote mines lie dormant until triggered. Remote triggering is an action and uses Electronics. In a Chase or dogfight (see *Savage Worlds*), the vessel targeted by remote detonation must be on a Chase Card filled with a minefield. If the character detonating the mines is on hold, he may trigger them as soon as the vessel moves onto the mine-filled Chase Card.

Every type of mine listed below can be programmed to either detonate on contact or when triggered remotely. It may not be programmed to do both at once.

Mines can be fitted with rocket packs (see page 84) and stealth systems (see page 87). Rocket packs allow mines to be remotely maneuvered into position; this turns the maneuvering or Evasion roll into an opposed roll against the mine operator's Electronics. Stealth systems impose an additional -2 penalty on maneuvering or Evasion rolls; this stacks with any penalties for Scale.

ANTIMATTER MINES

Notes: The most common mines used in the galaxy.

EMP MINES

Notes: EMP mines send out an electromagnetic pulse to disable electronics. They ignore Armor to do nonlethal damage to constructs, cyborgs, and vehicles. Normal electronic devices go offline until a successful Repair check is made.

GRAVITY MINES

Notes: Gravity mines release a wave of gravitons when they explode. In addition to taking damage, vehicles caught in a gravity mine explosion must succeed on a maneuvering roll or be Bumped (see **Chases** in *Savage Worlds*).



DRONES

In the far future of *Starbreaker*, “drone” is the slang term used for any artificially intelligent, independent automaton. Long-standing programming protocols mean such devices never rise to the level of true sapience. Instead, most drones have limited, focused problem-solving skills devoted to their purposes.

Drones might deliver the mail or bring pizza from the parlor around the corner. The military often uses them for mounts, mobile attack platforms, and scouting duties. Drones also perform routine maintenance in larger facilities or ships to help reduce the need for manpower.

Drones make up a large part of the workforce on wealthier worlds, filling many manual labor and service positions. Drones are less common in the rim worlds, where they frequently perform dangerous work and highly specialized tasks. On Echo, for example, it is cheaper to replace organic mine workers with desperate new immigrants than expensive mining drones.

The most frequent place to see a drone in the rim worlds is at the side of a hypertech. Hypertechs use drones as weapons and as extensions of themselves. Many organizations have physically detached their most important secrets from the galactic HyperNet and placed them into closed HyperNodes. Hackers employ drones to get past security and connect to ports in these nodes. Then, the drones broadcast a connection to the nearby hypertechs or transmit to the HyperNet itself.

STOCK DRONE MODELS

Manufacturers discount stock drone models, making up the difference in profit by selling in bulk. Buyers can get defective models as well, either saving 500 GC for every 1 point of Hindrances and/or negative ancestral abilities (up to -4 total) or getting 500 GC in additional modifications per point.

REMIS ENGINEERING WORKORB 9000

These small, spherical commercial drones are popular for their economical price and their customizability. Most starships carry several WorkOrb 9000s or similar models to perform routine maintenance or EVA repairs; many businesses and households purchase one for janitorial services or to run minor errands. Hypertechns like them because they are easily reprogrammed for more nefarious purposes, and are so common as to not arouse suspicion.

Cost: 20,000 GC

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Electronics d8, Hacking d4, Notice d6, Repair d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d4

Pace: —; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 3 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2**
- **Battery Life:** Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Cutting Laser:** Range 1, Damage 2d4, RoF 1, AP 2.
- **Flight:** WorkOrb 9000s hover at Pace of 6".
- **HyperNet Port:** Range 15/30/60
- **Manipulator Arms:** The drone's three arms can manipulate objects and link to HyperNet terminals. Its programming gives it +1 to Electronics and Repair rolls.
- **Sensor Suite:** The drone ignores all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* or similar powers within 10" (20 yards).

- **Size -4 (Tiny):** Creatures of Normal Scale are at -6 to hit Tiny characters. Tiny characters subtract 4 from their Toughness and damage rolls.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects, including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.
- **Work Light:** WorkOrb 9000s may project light at four different settings, eliminating up to 2 points of Illumination penalties in a Small, Medium, or Large Blast Template around it or in a Cone Template in front of it. This subtracts 4 from the drone's Stealth rolls. The drone's light may be activated or deactivated as a free action. The drone may also flash or strobe its lights, inflicting a -1 penalty to opponents' melee attacks against them and adding +1 to Tests at the GM's discretion.

REMIS DAMOCLES EAGLE SCOUT DRONE

Remis Damocles Robotics (a division of Remis Engineering) manufactures drones for the military sector. A surprising number of these drones somehow find their way onto the black market and into the armories of private individuals.

The Eagle Scout Drone barely resembles its namesake, aside from having wings and superior visual acuity. Though less versatile than the WorkOrb 9000, the Remis Damocles Eagle Scout Drone makes for a more resilient partner in crime.

Cost: 20,000 GC

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d4, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: —; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2**
- **Battery Life:** Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.

- **Flight:** Eagle Scout Drones hover at a Pace of 24". They may "run" for 2d6" of additional movement.
- **HyperNet Port:** Range 15/30/60
- **Infravision:** The drone detects heat and light in the infrared range. This halves Illumination penalties when attacking warm targets (including invisible beings).
- **Laser:** Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6-3, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 50, Overcharge.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ultraviolet sensors allow the drone to ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination (but not Pitch Darkness).
- **Manipulator Arms:** The drone's arms can manipulate objects and link to HyperNet terminals.
- **Sensor Suite:** The drone ignores all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* or similar powers within 10" (20 yards) distance.
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** Creatures of Normal Scale are at -4 to hit Very Small characters. Very Small characters subtract 3 from their Toughness and damage rolls.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects, including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.

REMIS DAMOCLES PANTHER COMBAT DRONE

Panther drones are built to serve in a similar capacity to military working dogs, but with the added bonus of being mobile weapon platforms. Syndicate leaders often have their Panthers customized to resemble various vicious predatory animals, incorporating precious metals and gemstones into their carapaces as a status symbol.

Cost: 20,000 GC

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Battery Life:** Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge,

drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.

- **Claws:** Str+d4
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Dual Linked Lasers:** Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Shots 50, Cauterize, Overcharge.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result in combat does not cause a Wound.
- **HyperNet Port:** Range 15/30/60
- **Low Light Vision:** Ultraviolet sensors allow the drone to ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination (but not Pitch Darkness).
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects, including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.

REMIS BESPOKE ANDRONE

Strict regulations prevent drones from being built to imitate organic beings...but Remis Bespoke (the upscale custom drone division of Remis Engineering) declares it cannot be held liable for aftermarket modifications made by its customers. The base android-style drone they sell is more a metallic stick figure than anything else, but it can be easily customized into anything from a near-human "protocol" drone to a sentry bristling with weapons.

Cost: 20,000 GC

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Battery Life:** Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Custom Programming:** Andrones come with five additional skill points (maximum d8 in

any skill) and three Edges of the customer's choice. Additional modifications are available at normal prices.

- **HyperNet Port:** Range 15/30/60
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects, including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.

CUSTOM DRONES

Heroes with the Drone Edge may also custom design their own drones. The Edge grants 20,000 GC to build the drone. Drones do not begin with any points in attributes or skills; these must all be purchased.

DRONE HINDRANCES

All drones possess the Battery Life and Weakness (Electricity) Hindrances.

When creating custom drones, players may choose up to 4 points of additional Hindrances or negative ancestral abilities (see **Making Ancestries** in *Savage Worlds*). For reasons unexplainable to science, many drones have shockingly lifelike psychological Hindrances.

They may also take the Short Battery Life Hindrance.

BATTERY LIFE

Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.

WEAKNESS (ELECTRICITY)

Drones suffer a -4 penalty to resist electrical-based effects, including EMPs, and take an additional 4 points of damage from electrical or EMP sources.

SHORT BATTERY LIFE (MINOR OR MAJOR)

The drone burns through power quicker than other models. As a Minor Hindrance, the drone needs to take four hours out of every 24 to recharge. As a Major Hindrance, it needs eight hours out of every 24—as much as most organic species need to sleep!

DRONE MODIFICATIONS

Armor: Every time this modification is purchased, it grants Armor +2 up to a maximum of +6.

Attribute Increase: One attribute increases a die step.

Backup Systems: Redundant systems and memory backups mean the drone takes no extra damage from a Called Shot.

Durable: For 6,000 GC, the drone gains the Resilient monstrous ability. For 12,000 GC, it gains the Very Resilient monstrous ability.

Edge: The drone gains an Edge for which it qualifies. This modification costs 1,000 GC for a Novice Edge and an additional 1,000 GC for each Rank beyond that. Only Wild Card drones can be granted Legendary Edges.

Game Masters and players should exercise their best judgment as to what Edges can be installed in a specific drone model. A protocol model Nova Centauri Android drone could easily receive an endoskeleton refurbishment that grants it the Attractive Edge, but the same wouldn't make sense for even the chattiest WorkOrb 9000.

Electrical and EMP Shielding: For 500 GC, Electrical Shielding removes a drone's Weakness (Electricity). For 1,000 GC, it also removes their weakness to EMPs.

Flight: For 1,000 GC, the drone hovers and flies at Pace 6 and can "run" for extra movement as usual. Flying Pace doubles for every additional 1,000 GC up to a maximum of Pace 24.

Hardy: Grants the drone the monstrous ability.

HyperNet Port: HyperNet ports enable drones to transmit data between a node and a hypertech who is connected to the drone (see page 116). When a hypertech uses a drone as a conduit for his Hypertech skill, the drone must be within its Smarts die distance of the node, but the distance between the drone and the 'tech is determined by the power and cost of its HyperNet port.

Like ranged weapons, HyperNet ports have Short, Medium, and Long Ranges. Extreme

IMPROVED RANGE

Range	Cost
15/30/60	500
30/60/120	1,000
50/100/200	2,500

DRONE MODIFICATIONS

Modification	Cost
Armor	500 per step
Attribute Increase	1,000 per step
Backup Systems	500
Durable	Special
Edge	1,000 + 1,000 per Rank beyond Novice
Electrical and EMP Shielding	500 per step
Flight	1,000 per step
Hardy	2,000
HyperNet Port	500 per step
Increased Speed	500 per step
Infravision	500
Low Light Vision	500
Nanorepair System	1,000 per step
Natural Weapon	500 per step
Security Mods	500 per step
Sensor Suite	500
Size	500 per step
Skill Bonuses	500 per step
Skill Increases	Special
Targeting System	2,000
Telescoping Limb	500 per step
Weapon	Special
Work Light	500 per step

Range is up to 4 × a port's Long Range. The hypertech subtracts 2 from all Hypertech rolls made at Medium Range, and 4 from those made at Long Range.

Each time this mod is purchased, the drone's Short Range is increased by 15", and its Medium and Long Ranges increased accordingly.

Increased Speed: Each step purchased in this modification increases a walking drone's Pace by 2 (up to a maximum of Pace 12) and its running die by one step (up to a maximum of d12).

Infravision: Grants the monstrous ability.

Low Light Vision: Grants the monstrous ability.

Nanorepair System: For 1,000 GC, the drone gains the Slow Regeneration monstrous ability. For 2,000 GC, it gains the Fast Regeneration monstrous ability.

Natural Weapon: For every 500 GC purchased in this modification, the drone gains the buyer's choice of a Natural Weapon (such as claws, fangs, or horns) or an upgrade to a Natural Weapon acquired with this mod. The Natural Weapon does Str+d4 damage and provides the benefits listed in *Savage Worlds*, and additional steps can be purchased to increase the weapon's damage to d6 or to add AP 2.

Security Mods: Standard drones come with HyperNet connections installed, allowing them to receive operating system updates automatically (and letting them send usage data to their manufacturers). Protecting drones from being hacked requires aftermarket (and sometimes illegal) customization.

For every 500 GC spent, the modification imposes a -1 penalty on Hypertech rolls targeting the drone, up to a maximum of -4.

Sensor Suite: The drone ignores all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* or similar powers within 10" (20 yards).

Size: For every 500 GC, the Size of the drone increases or decreases by 1.

Small drones (Size -2) have a maximum Strength of d4. They subtract 1 from their Strength rolls. They subtract 2 from their Toughness and damage rolls. Attackers of Normal Size are at -2 to hit Small drones.

Very Small drones (Size -3) have a maximum Strength of d4 and subtract 3 from their Strength rolls. They subtract 4 from their Toughness and damage rolls. Attackers of Normal Size are at -4 to hit Very Small drones.

Tiny drones (Size -4) have a maximum Strength score of 1; they cannot make a Strength roll (and therefore can't Ace or get bonus damage). They subtract 4 from their Toughness and damage rolls. Attackers of Normal Size are at -6 to hit Tiny drones.

Drones that are Large and above gain increases to their number of Wounds and the length of their Reach, as listed on the **Size Table** (see *Savage Worlds*). Attackers of Normal Size are at +2 to hit Large drones, +4 to hit Huge drones, and +6 to hit Gargantuan drones.

Skill Bonuses: For every 500 GC, the drone gains a +1 bonus to rolls for a single skill (maximum +2).

Skill Increases: For every 500 GC, the drone gains a new skill at d4 or increases a skill a die type up to the controlling attribute. It costs 1,000 GC to raise a skill a die step above its controlling attribute.

Targeting System: The drone ignores up to 2 points of penalties to Athletics (throwing) or Shooting rolls from Called Shots, Cover, Range, Scale, or Speed.

Telescoping Limb: Every time this modification is purchased, it increases the drone's Reach by 1" (up to 3").

Weapon: Any drone can be modified to carry any weapon its Strength allows. This is one of the simplest DIY hacks for drones and requires only the weapon and a Repair roll. If anything, it is suspiciously easy, raising concerns that Vizion and other manufacturers design all their drones with combat capabilities.

Work Light: For 500 GC, the drone may project light at four different settings, eliminating up to 2 points of Illumination penalties in a Small, Medium, or Large Blast Template around it or in a Cone Template in front of it. This subtracts 4 from the drone's Stealth rolls. The drone's light may be activated or deactivated as a free action.

For 1,000 GC, the drone has the ability to flash or strobe its lights, inflicting a -1 penalty to opponents' melee attacks against it and adding +1 to Tests at the GM's discretion.

STARSHIPS

Starships are an essential part of *Starbreaker*. The very existence of galactic civilization would not be possible without the interstellar travel they provide. Starships are able to cover massive distances with jump drives, sub light drives, and jump gates.

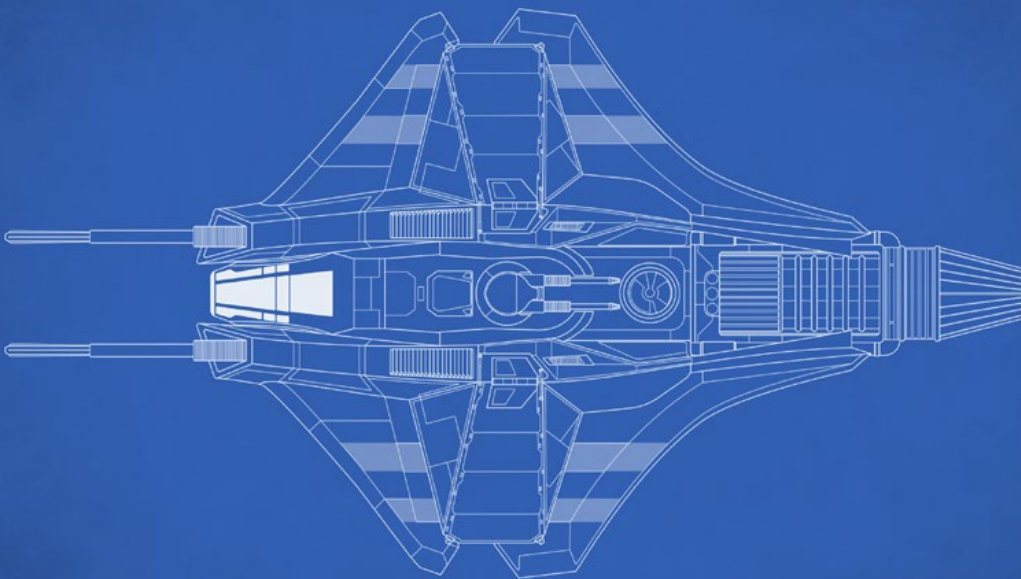
When ships travel between star systems, they use jump drives or jump gates to travel faster than the speed of light. Ships traveling between planets within the same system use sub light drives. The speed at which ships travel is based on several factors. For jumps, the size of the drive and the energy put into it is key. For sub light travel, the weight of the ship is more important; smaller ships travel faster and more nimbly.

Jump gates are strategically located throughout the galaxy, and they allow for travel across distances that a shipboard jump drive could never cover. Additionally, ships consume little energy using a jump gate, allowing them to use their jump drives to enter or leave the vicinity of the gate.

The rules for Starship creation and management match those found in the *Science Fiction Companion*, with two exceptions:

Teleportation and the teleportation vehicle mod are not available.

Faster-than-light travel uses a different system, which is detailed below.



JUMP DRIVES

In *Starbreaker*, ships do not have the FTL Drive mod. Instead, they have access to five versions (Mark I through V) of the Jump Drive mod.

The distance (in light years) that a jump drive can cover per jump is based on the size of the ship that carries it. Smaller ships have jump ratings of 5 to 10 light years, while massive carriers and transports can cover 50 light years or more per jump.

CAPACITORS

Jump drive capacitors hold the energy for jump drives. After a jump, the capacitors are drained and take time to recharge, as noted on the **Jump Drive Table**.

Some military or high-end commercial ships have a second set of capacitors to allow for more frequent jumps. These ships usually save the second set of capacitors for escaping. In the case of military vessels, this allows them to launch an attack and then retreat if necessary. Double jumping into an attack situation is seen as extremely risky. If an attack fails, the attacking ships have no means of escaping.

CALCULATING A JUMP

All starships equipped with jump drives carry a stellar navigation system. Calculating a jump requires a Science roll.

When the jump's calculations are imprecise, additional sub light travel may be required to reach the destination. A failure means arriving with a 10-day sub light journey remaining. A success means traveling for five days to reach the destination. With a raise, the ship arrives within one day of its destination. On a Critical Failure, the ship is off by $1d6 \times 5$ days and arrives within a gravity well, shows up near a notorious pirate corridor, or suffers some other navigational hazard of the GM's choosing.

The quality of the navigational data acts as a situational modifier to the roll. Making the roll with no navigational data for the location incurs a -4 penalty. Most ship computers have navigational data for common space routes. With this common data, the role is unmodified. High-quality new data for navigation routes into a star system can give up to a $+4$, depending on the age and quality of the data.

JUMP DRIVES

Jump Drive Type	Light Years per Jump	Recharge Time
Mark I (Normal Size)	5	7 days
Mark II (Large Size)	10	6 days
Mark III (Huge Size)	20	5 days
Mark IV (Gargantuan Size)	40	3 days
Mark V (Gargantuan +1 or more)	80	1 day

JUMP DRIVE MODIFICATION

MODIFICATION	MODS (MAX)	COST
Jump Drive: Includes the drive, the jump capacitor, and the astrogation system required to use them. Buying this mod a second time doesn't add another jump drive. Instead, it adds a second jump capacitor, which takes up one additional mod slot for the same price. When buying a jump drive, its type must match the size of the ship.	2 (3)	10K × Size

JUMP GATES

Known space (from the far side of the Thovin Ascendancy to the far side of the Zaka High Bureaucracy) is over 5,000 light years across and would take most large commercial transports a full two years to cross. Thankfully, that trip can be made much faster due to jump gates.

Jump gates are massive structures that allow vessels passing through to leap between fixed points. Public and private companies run jump gates along established trade routes, usually in clusters that provide travel back and forth across multiple routes. For a toll, starships can jump across the galaxy.

To use a jump gate, the departure gate must first establish a connection with another gate, which becomes the destination gate. Both gates are then activated, and the departing starship flies into the departure gate and out through the destination gate. Jump gates do not use a ship's jump capacitors, and they allow a ship to cover vast distances in a single jump.

An unauthorized jump can be activated through hypertech hacking. To do so, a hypertech must attack the network of another gate, attempting to activate it and allow hostile vessels through. Gates have extensive security protocols and are generally Level 5 nodes (see **HyperNet Nodes** on page 113). Galactic governments and

corporations with pockets deep enough to run a jump gate spare no expense to secure them.

Jump gates are hundreds of light years apart, saving even the largest vessels multiple weeks of jumps. The use of a jump gate also does not drain the ship's jump capacitors, so once out of the gate's gravity well, ships can jump again.

Jump gates require immense power and are manned by large crews, so they are generally located near population centers where they can maintain supplies of goods, food, and manpower.

Some starships forgo onboard jump drives altogether. Bulk freighters can deliver goods without one if they travel along the existing gate routes. Ships that do this jump through the gate and spend a few weeks cruising at sub light speeds as they make their deliveries to the various planets in the destination system.

SUB LIGHT DRIVES

Once a ship has jumped into a star system, traversal within the system takes place via sub light drives. Sub light drives allow ships to get from their jump destination to planetary bodies within hours or days. The size of the ship, and the power of its sub light engines, determines how long the trip takes.

A starship's Top Speed indicates how many astronomical units (AU) it can travel per day on

average with its sub light drive. Star systems vary in size, depending on the size and number of stars within them. The smallest star systems are only 50 AU across, while the largest can be up to several hundred AU.

Sub light travel is generally safe. In some instances, navigating an asteroid field, attempting to dock to an uncontrolled spinning ship, or traversing a dangerous atmosphere requires Piloting rolls (modified by the ship's Handling). See *Savage Worlds Chase* rules for details.

These sorts of situations are also great fodder for dramatic tasks, allowing for everyone in the group to contribute: manning the ship's computer with Hypertech, checking sensors with Electronics, firing weapons with Shooting, calling out dangers for the pilot with Notice, or using Repair to coax more power out of ship systems.

COMMON STARSHIPS

STAR RAVEN CLASS LIGHT TRANSPORT

The Star Raven is a rugged, modular workhorse that's just as likely to be hauling mundane goods to a colony world as it is to be fighting its way through a corporate blockade. Synners appreciate the Raven for its versatility. As a crew's focus changes over time, its ship can change along with it.

Size 10 (Huge), Handling -1, Top Speed 17, Toughness 26 (6), Wounds 5, Crew 2+3, Energy 16, Mods 30 (12), Cost 5.86M

Mods: 3× Armor, Artificial Gravity, Atmospheric, Jump Drive Mark III, Shields.

Weapons:

- **DUAL LINKED LIGHT LASERS (Turret):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 2d10 (II), RoF 3, AP 10, Caulterize, Overcharge, Reaction Fire.

STRIPPED RAVEN LIGHT TRANSPORT

Popular with smugglers, this stripped-down version of the Star Raven trades power and safety for cargo room.

Size 10 (Huge), Handling -2, Top Speed 16, Toughness 24 (4), Wounds 4, Crew 2+3, Energy 15, Mods 30 (25), Cost N/A

Mods: 2× Armor, Atmospheric, Fragile, Jump Drive Mark III, Reduced Handling, Reduced Speed.

Weapons:

- **DUAL LINKED LIGHT LASERS (Turret):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 2d10 (II), RoF 3, AP 10, Caulterize, Overcharge, Reaction Fire.

MANTA CLASS LONG-RANGE SCOUT VESSEL

Exploration is a dangerous business. In addition to the usual threats of interstellar travel, explorers must be ready to defend themselves against claim jumpers, pirates, and rival explorer crews. The Manta is prepared to handle all these threats and more.

Size 12 (Gargantuan) Handling -2, Top Speed 16, Toughness 29 (4), Wounds 6, Crew 3+3, Energy 30, Mods 48 (15), Cost 37.78M

Mods: 2× Armor, AM/ECM, Atmospheric, FTL Comms, Hangar, Jump Drive Mark IV, Sensor Array, Shields.

Weapons:

- **3x DUAL LINKED LIGHT LASERS (Turret):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 2d10 (II), RoF 3, AP 10, Caulterize, Overcharge, Reaction Fire.

HORNET CLASS SWARM FIGHTER

Before the Armageddon War, an enormous factory ship jumped throughout the galaxy, producing and selling millions of small, cheap fighter craft to anyone who was willing to pay. These fast, nimble ships were particularly popular among planetary governments, regional warlords, and other organizations that needed some sort of space fleet but were operating on a limited budget. The factory ship disappeared (and was presumed destroyed) during the war, but pockets of the galaxy are still crawling with its hornets.

Size 3 (Normal), Handling +2, Top Speed 17, Toughness 14(4), Wounds 3, Crew 1, Energy 3, Mods 9, Cost 470K

Mods: 2× Armor, Atmospheric, 2× Handling, 2× Increased Speed.

Weapons:

- **LIGHT LASER (Turret):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 2d10 (II), RoF 3, AP 10, Caulterize, Overcharge, Reaction Fire.



PIRATE CRUISER

In the chaotic aftermath of the Armageddon War, bold scavenger crews raided scrapyards and debris fields to seize military starships that were too damaged to serve, but were not beyond repair. These ships were patched up, outfitted with cannibalized parts, and sold. Many of them ended up in the hands of pirates.

Size 24 (Gargantuan +1), Handling -4, Top Speed 16, Toughness 38 (12), Wounds 8, Crew 100, Energy 60, Mods 96 (47), Cost 922 M

Mods: 6× Armor, Artificial Gravity, Jump Drive Mark V, 4× Hangars, Toughness.

Weapons:

- **2× QUAD LINKED GATLING LASERS (Turret):** Range 50/100/200, 3d6+4 (I), RoF 4, AP 4, Cauterize, Overcharge, Point Defense, Reaction Fire.
- **DUAL LINKED HEAVY LASER (Turret):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 4d10 (V), AP 30, Cauterize, Overcharge.

- **MISSILE LAUNCHER (Turret):** 12× Medium missiles, Range 150/300/600, Damage 7d6 (IV) RoF 2, AP 24, Guided, MBT.
- **MEDIUM TRACTOR BEAM (Turret):** Range 100/200/300.

GATEWALKER MASS TRANSPORT

These enormous bulk freighters don't have jump drives, but instead rely on jump gates to economically (if slowly) make their way across the galaxy. They're equipped with heavy shuttles for hauling goods and passengers to and from starport destinations, and they often carry legions of colonists stacked in stasis tubes.

Size 20 (Gargantuan), Handling -6, Top Speed 16, Toughness 40 (10), Wounds 6, Crew 50, Energy 30, Mods 80 (17), Cost 85 M

Mods: 5× Armor, Cryosleep Chambers, Hangar, Reduced Handling, 2× Superstructure (Bulk Cargo), 5× Toughness.

LAND VEHICLES

CIVILIAN

GRAV VEHICLES

The most common vehicles in the galaxy, gravcars, gravcycles, and gravtrucks are ubiquitous on all settled worlds.

Grav vehicles use the same stats and cost the same amount as equivalent modern civilian vehicles found in *Savage Worlds* or the *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition Vehicle Guide*. They differ in that they have the Hover ability and Top Speeds that are two times faster.

Controlling grav vehicles uses the Driving skill.

GRAVCYCLE, CRUISER

The preferred vehicle of outlaw gravcycle clubs and law enforcement alike, cruiser gravcycles are big machines with upright seating postures. These features give them the fuel capacity for long rides and provide additional comfort for the riders. Gravcycle outlaws frequently customize their cruisers by chopping fairings and other amenities to decrease weight and increase speed.

Size 2 (Normal) Handling +1, Top Speed 10/160 MPH, Toughness 8, Wounds 3, Crew 1+1, Energy 3, Mods 6 (0), Cost 112K

Notes: Exposed Crew

SAND SNAKE

Grav vehicles may suit most worlds, but they have high maintenance and low durability. When traveling harsh worlds for long-range exploration—or just trying to make it safely from one pit to the next on the mostly desert planet of Echo—many choose archaic four-wheel offroaders like the Sand Snake.

Size 6 (Large), Handling +0, Top Speed 7/80 MPH, Toughness 17 (4), Wounds 4, Crew 2+8, Energy 5, Mods 18 (6), Cost 702K

Notes: 4WD, Heavy Armor.

MILITARY

VIPER TANK CYCLE

The Viper is a high-speed patrol vehicle used by security forces across the galaxy. Its forward-facing guns are controlled and aimed by its driver.

Size 3 (Normal), Handling +0, Top Speed 9/120 MPH, Toughness 9 (4), Wounds 3, Crew 1+1, Energy 3, Mods 9 (3), Cost 168K

Notes: Exposed Crew, Reduced Handling.

Weapons:

- **Gatling laser (Fixed Front):** Range 50/100/200, Damage 3d6+4, AP 4, ROF 4





CHAPTER FOUR: RULES

EXISTING SETTING RULES

Starbreaker uses the following Setting Rules found in *Savage Worlds*:

- Born A Hero
- Conviction
- Creative Combat
- Fanatics
- High Adventure
- More Skill Points
- Multiple Languages
- Wound Cap

NEW SETTING RULES

BLACK-MARKET GOODS

The Arusan Black Market exists nearly everywhere. On many Syndicate-controlled worlds, it acts as the only wholesaler, supplying local retailers and even opening its own storefronts under a variety of winking business names. From groceries to weapons, the Arusan Black Market can fulfill any demand.

Of course, those involved in the Arusan Black Market don't offer goods out of the kindness of their mild-mannered arusan hearts. Profit is the one and only motivation.

WHOLESALE WORLDS

On worlds where the Arusan Black Market monopolizes trade (such as most Syndicate worlds in the rim worlds), it gouges its customers mercilessly. Even everyday necessities cost more than they do on core or corporate worlds.

Whenever the characters purchase an item on a world where the Arusan Black Market is the primary wholesaler, roll a d4 and multiply the result by the item's cost. Prices might change daily (or even more frequently) depending on availability...or greed.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

On some worlds, the Arusan Black Market offers only illicit goods. In this case, the first requirement for purchasing such items is to find the local representative or market. Some Arusan Black Market salesmen meet clients in remote locations or lonely warehouses, while others operate out of seemingly legitimate storefronts. In either case, customers must make surreptitious contact and prove their bona fides in order to make a purchase.

This requires a Networking roll, using Persuasion or Intimidation as usual and modified by Edges such as Streetwise. Success results in a meeting with the seller, but delivery of the item takes d6 days. A raise means the purchase can be made immediately. Illicit items always cost at least 1d4+1 times the listed price.

HAGGLING

Sellers on the Arusan Black Market are very open to haggling, especially with their Syndicate partners. Characters may haggle using Intimidation, Persuasion, Taunt, and other applicable skills at the Game Master's discretion (with Support from allies as usual).

Every success and raise reduces the multiplier on the item's price by one step, to a minimum of ×1 on items sold on wholesale worlds and ×2 on restricted items.

NEW HAZARDS

ATMOSPHERE

With the exception of the zaka, most player character species in *Starbreaker* come from worlds with atmospheres rich in nitrogen and oxygen. Not all worlds are equally capable of supporting such life. Some (such as arctic worlds and water planets) possess thin but breathable atmospheres that make exertion difficult, while others have methane atmospheres breathable by the zaka but few other species. On rare occasions, heroes may be forced to land on hostile worlds dangerous to all known species.

THIN ATMOSPHERE

The atmospheres of some planets are breathable for oxygen-reliant species, but the lack of sufficient oxygen limits heavy exertion. Arctic worlds and water planets rely on algae and lichens to produce oxygen, while the air of mountainous planets like Gohba may be thin simply due to the effects of high elevation.

When visiting worlds with thin atmospheres, most species need to monitor their exertion to avoid Fatigue or worse effects. They must make a Vigor roll every four hours or suffer a level of Fatigue; this can result in Incapacitation but not death. Particularly thin atmospheres or elevations over 10,000 feet may impose a -2 or -4 penalty. Victims of Fatigue recover one level for every hour of rest or for every 10 minutes breathing a normal atmosphere (including through the use of breathing devices).

Though a rare worry for most crews, methane atmospheres can also be thin.

POISONOUS ATMOSPHERE

Poisonous atmospheres are very dangerous for those with the wrong physiologies. An oxygen-breather without a breathing device in a methane atmosphere must make a Vigor roll every round or suffer a level of Fatigue that can lead to Incapacitation. The reverse is true for methane-breathers.

Incapacitated characters die in a number of rounds equal to their Vigor die. Access to a breathable atmosphere (from a breathing device or after being moved to a location with such an atmosphere) and a Healing roll at -2 can revive a character before she dies.

Characters without access to a breathing device can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to 2 plus their Vigor die, or half that if they were unprepared and didn't have time to take a deep breath.

DECOMPRESSION

In addition to the difficulties presented by Zero-G conditions (see below) and the lack of a breathable atmosphere (see above), beings floating in the vacuum of space suffer the effects of decompression. The air in their lungs expands, causing the lungs to rupture, and the fluids in their bodies begin to boil.

If not protected by a sealed EVA suit or armor with environmental protection (decompression), a character in the vacuum of space must make a Vigor roll every round or suffer a Wound from decompression. A Critical Failure results in two Wounds.

GRAVITY

Gravity Strength	Jumping Range	Strength Die	Pace
Zero-G	Special	+2 die steps	+4"
Low Gravity	×2	+2 die steps	+2"
High Gravity	×.5	-1 die step	-2"
Super High Gravity	×.5	-2 die steps	-4"

GRAVITY

No one makes lives for themselves on planets with nonstandard gravity. There may be industrial plants or mines on such worlds—or even vacation resorts—but there are no family farms or settlements. The long-term effects of high and low gravity result in irreversible health issues for every known species.

Laborers on worlds with nonstandard gravity work rotations, returning to standard-gravity worlds for an amount of time equal to the time spent in high or low gravity. This may be as short as a week in nonstandard gravity followed by a week off, but most spend a month or so at their posts before cycling out to spend time recovering in normal gravity.

Regardless of whether the gravity is high or low, characters in nonstandard gravity suffer a -2 penalty to Agility and Agility-based rolls. Additional effects apply based on the strength of the gravity.

ZERO-G

In addition to the effects above, characters who roll a 1 on a physical Trait die while operating in Zero-G lose control and tumble (-2 to all Trait rolls). They may recover by making an Agility roll as a free action on any subsequent turn if they have some way to regain stability.

Characters who jump from a stable platform continue moving in a straight line at a Pace equal to their Strength in inches per round until they contact a larger object or apply thrust from another source.

Making a melee attack or shooting a firearm (other than a laser) pushes the attacker backward 1" away from the direction of the attack—or 2" if using heavy weapons dealing sufficient melee damage (at the GM's discretion).

NEURAL INHIBITOR CONTROL

The Neural Inhibitor Control unit, or NIC, is an essential part of the SAINT program's success. This low-level AI is implanted into a former Synner's nervous system to help keep him on the straight and narrow. If the agent tries to betray the agency or his mission, the NIC inflicts discomfort—and eventually pain—to remind him

ROLE OF THE NIC

When setting up your campaign and discussing whether your group will be Synners or SAINTs, consider what role you want the Neural Inhibitor Control unit to play in your game.

Obviously, it's not a factor if the players are all playing Synners. And it still might not be a factor if the players choose to downplay the NIC in their SAINTs campaign. But if you're interested in exploring the struggle between freedom and duty, greed and heroism, or other similar themes, the NIC makes a great plot device.

Ultimately, it's up to you, the players and the GM, to decide how important the NIC is to your game.

to get back in line. If necessary, the NIC can even disable an agent altogether.

The list of actions SAINT disallows is rather short. These include murder or permanent harm to a known innocent or fellow agent, attempting to escape an assignment, and betrayal of the program.

In story terms, NICs are meant as a plot device to explain why these teams of criminals are working for an organization that does not always have their best interests at heart. They are not meant to foster antagonism between the Game Master and players, but are instead a roleplaying tool to help bring a film-noir or conspiracy-thriller element to the space opera of *Starbreaker*.

Players who choose to roleplay the conflict between their characters' motivations and the missions might earn a Benny once per game by voluntarily taking a -2 penalty on a critical roll of the dice, or two Bennies by taking a -4 penalty.

SCHEMES

Both SAINT and the Syndicate expect their members to pay their own way, but the day-to-day details of running criminal operations and making money doesn't equally entertain all Game Masters and players. When the heroes need to earn money but the group wants to

keep attention on action-packed missions, run a Scheme instead.

Schemes combine Interludes and Quick Encounters to create a system for making money that remains fast-paced, story-based, and unpredictable.

PLAN THE OPERATION

The first step is for the players to decide on the crime or other moneymaking scheme they want their characters to attempt. It might be anything from a bank heist to raising exotic pets, smuggling weapons to bounty hunting. Let imaginations run wild or consult the **Adventure Generator** (see page 163) for options.

The purpose of this step is to give the players a hook on which to narrate their actions, as they would with an Interlude. The nuances of the plan's profitability matter only insofar as the group cares.

DEAL CARDS

Deal one Action Card for each participating player character, but don't assign the cards yet. The suit of the card determines the skill the player must roll when it's her character's turn.

♠ **Spades:** The character must use an Agility- or Strength-based skill.

♥ **Hearts:** The character must use a Spirit-based skill.

♦ **Diamonds:** The character must use a Smarts-based skill.

♣ **Clubs:** The character may use any skill, but the roll is at -2.

Joker: The character may use any skill and the roll is at +2. Give every player a Benny.

Once the cards have been dealt, the players may discuss among themselves and choose which cards to assign to which characters. No plan survives contact with the enemy, so an unlucky deal of the cards may mean the heroes have to use suboptimal skills. That's just the way it is in the underworld.

Allied Extras and nonplayer Wild Cards can each Support one player character apiece. Players assign Supporters at the same time that they assign characters to cards.

NARRATE AND ROLL

Once the players have decided which cards their characters will act on, they take turns narrating the events of the Scheme and making their skill rolls. Game Masters should feel free to reward characters with bonuses to their rolls if the players narrate exceptionally clever tales or build well off each other's stories, but should not punish participating players who lack such improvisational skills.

Track the number of successes and raises each character gets. Critical Failures subtract one gross success.

REAP THE REWARDS

Once every player has taken a turn, count up the number of successes and raises to determine how much money the heroes made. Each success and raise earns an amount based on the Rank of the heroes:

Novice: 200 GC

Seasoned: 400 GC

Veteran: 600 GC

Heroic: 800 GC

Legendary: 1,000 GC

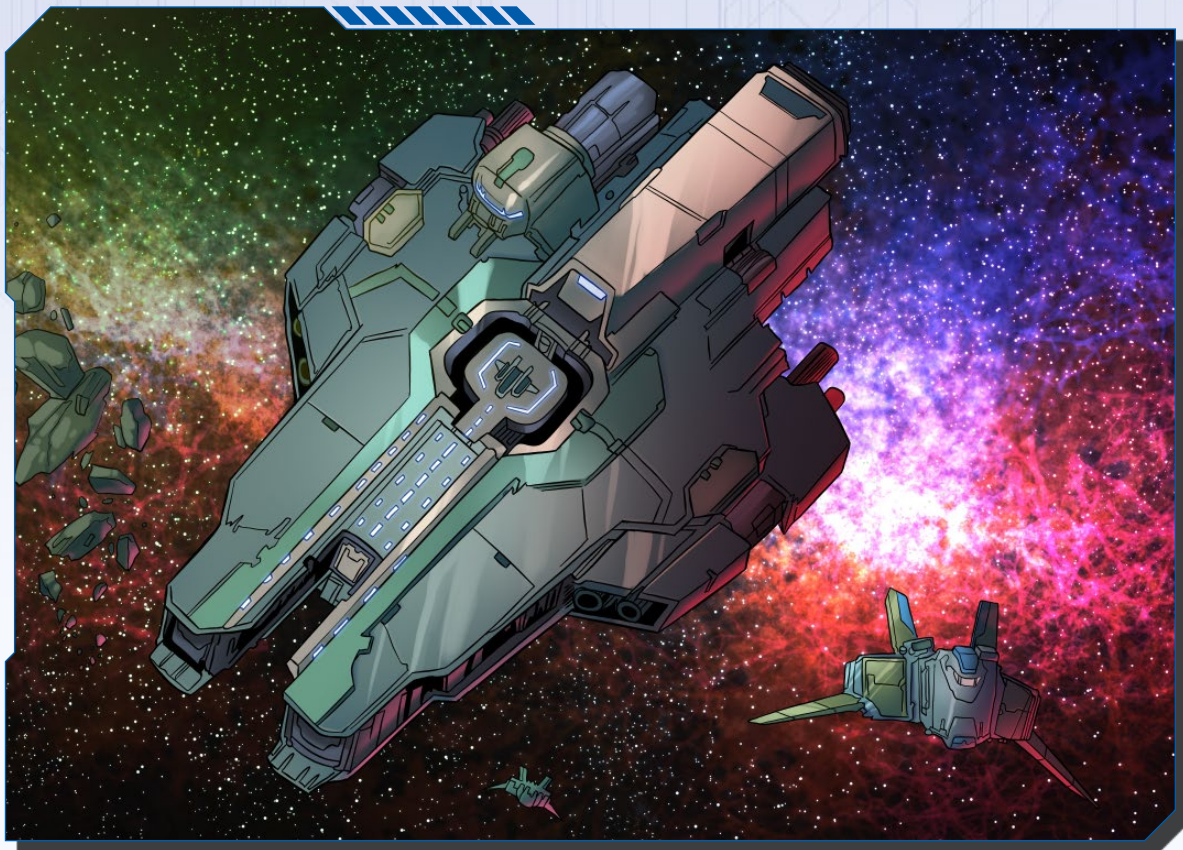
At the GM's discretion, the players can instead cash successes in for Bennies at a rate of 3 successes for every Benny.

EXAMPLE: A DAY AT THE RACES

Arek, Tajrah, and Phinn decide to raise some cash in between missions for SAINT. Phinn proposes scamming the local chapter of the Monarchs by getting them to bet on a rigged gravcycle race. Tajrah will fix up Arek's gravcycle to look like a hunk of junk, and Arek will use his ace Driving skills to easily win the race.

The Game Master deals one card for each character: the Two of Hearts, Ten of Diamonds, and King of Clubs. The cards easily fit the skills the players were already planning to use, though Arek's Driving roll will be made at -2 due to the Club.

Phinn's player describes how he strolls into the Monarchs' favorite pub and begins talking to the knights and squires about a friend of his who is looking to get into gravcycle racing but doesn't know where to start. Phinn rolls Persuasion and



gets a 4. He uses the Charismatic Edge to reroll for a 7 and adds the bonus from Aristocrat to get a 9. Phinn has a success and a raise.

Tajrah's player is less comfortable with this kind of loose storytelling and just says she is rolling Repair to disguise Arek's gravcycle. After applying the bonus for Mr. Fix It, her score is 10. It's another success and raise.

Arek's player spins a tale of an exciting race across the sands of Echo. If the conditions weren't dangerous enough, he says, the Monarchs are also cheating! Their driver uses the spikes on the sides of his gravcycle to try to force Arek to crash! After some prompting from Tajrah's player, the GM gives Arek a +2 spot bonus, negating the penalty from the Club. Arek's player rolls a 6, though, so it's still only one success.

The trio of SAINT agents have five successes and raises. As they are Veteran characters, this means 600 GC per success for a total of 3,000 GC! With the money burning holes in their wallets, they head off to the Arusan Black Market to buy some better body armor.

STARSHIP CHASES AND DOGFIGHTS

Space combat in *Starbreaker* is handled as described in **Chases & Vehicles** in *Savage Worlds* and **Starships** in the *Science Fiction Companion*.

During a spaceship Chase, the crew can perform the following additional maneuvers:

- **Battle Stations (Action):** Chases and dogfights between starships aren't just a matter of speed and weapons—they're also about utilizing a ship's systems to their best advantage. While pilots weave and gunners fire, engineers push ships to greater speeds and communications officers jam enemy signals. Even single-pilot starfighters have enough varying systems to allow their pilots to take other Battle Stations when needed.
 - **Communications:** Characters at the communications station may jam an enemy ship's comm frequencies with an opposed Electronics roll against the enemy communications officer. With a success, the enemy vessel is

unable to send communications. This can prevent patrol ships from calling in reinforcements or keep groups of vessels from coordinating their movements.

- The communications officer on the jammed starship can initiate an opposed Electronics roll as an action to end the jamming.
- Jamming frequencies can also be performed as a Test, causing excruciating feedback that can make a foe Distracted or Vulnerable.
- **Engineering:** Characters at the engineering station may make a Repair roll to coax more power from a ship's engines. With a success, the engineer increases the ship's speed by 25% (50% with a raise). This can change the speed bonus for the pilot's Change Position roll.
- **Shields:** If the ship has the shields mod, a crew member can make an Electronics roll to divert power from propulsion or weapons to shields, as detailed under **Energy Management** in the *Science Fiction Companion*.
- **Navigation:** Calculating jump drive coordinates while in a chase or dogfight is tricky at best. The Science roll suffers a -4 penalty, but if successful, the vessel can Flee without requiring four or more Chase Cards between the ship and its pursuers.
- **Sensors:** The vastness of space means that even dogfights fought at Short Range frequently involve ships that are miles apart. A ship's sensors are all but required to keep enemy vessels under observation. Characters manning sensors can Support the gunners or pilot with a Notice roll. Sensors can also be used to perceive how another vessel is routing its force fields.
- **Command (Action):** The person in the captain's chair isn't necessarily the ship's pilot. As an action, a commanding officer can Support the pilot or any Battle Station with a Battle, Intimidation, Persuasion, or even Taunt roll.
- **Hacking (Action):** To hack shipboard HyperNet nodes Levels 1 and 2, both ships must be on the same Chase Card. If the ship's

node is Level 3 or higher, the ships must be connected. This is accomplished through the Board maneuver but does not require that the hull of the attacked vessel be breached. Indeed, using the *unsecure* power to open the enemy hatches is frequently the first thing that must be accomplished before boarders can cross to the other vessel.

SYNDICATE FAVOR

As allies of a Syndicate faction, the heroes have a certain amount of clout.

The degree of influence that the heroes have within their allied Syndicate faction is represented by their Favor die. They can gain Favor by helping advance that faction's agenda and can "spend" Favor to request information, Gear, or even personnel. It's possible to ask too much of their ally, however. When that happens, they are out of Favor until they work themselves back into the faction's good graces.

(Note that while it's *possible* to have favor with more than one Syndicate faction, it can create some awkward conversations about loyalty... especially if the factions are often rivals. In this unlikely situation the crew has a separate Favor die for each faction.)

USING FAVOR

Syndicate factions generally expect their allied crews to handle their own logistics. But if the characters need a specific asset they can't easily acquire on their own, they can ask their faction to help them out. If it's a reasonable request, their faction contacts do their best to fulfill it as quickly as possible. If it's less reasonable, the faction may take a bit longer, or deny it altogether.

The crew shares a single Favor die. Whenever they gain, lose, or spend Favor, they do so as a team.

When the heroes make requisition requests, one of them rolls their crew's Favor die. This is not a trait roll, but it acts like one: the roll can Ace, the roller rolls his Wild Die, and any hero may spend Bennies to reroll the result. At the GM's discretion, other heroes may also Support the roll.

This Favor roll is modified by both the asset being requested and how quickly the crew wants to have it, as illustrated on the **Using Favor** table.

USING FAVOR

Modifier	Asset	Time Frame
0	Mundane weapons or other Gear worth up to 1000, a specialist (engineer, bureaucrat, programmer, etc.) who isn't part of the Syndicate, a hard-to-find bit of data	Within three days
-2	Mundane items worth up to 10K, highly illegal items, a criminal specialist (hacker, smuggler, thief, etc.), a Syndicate ally, secret data	Within one day
-4	Rare or exotic items, multiple allies (a gang of goons, a squad of soldiers, a team of lawyers, etc.), an elite specialist from the faction (sniper, hypertechnology, etc.), highly classified and secured data	Within the hour

For example, if a crew needs an armored trench coat (\$350) and a grenade launcher (\$450) by the next morning, the crew member making the roll would subtract 2 from the result to account for the one-day time frame. Hiring an expert in black-market psionic Gear in the same time period, however, would rack up a modifier of -6 (-4 for the specialist and -2 for the time frame).

Favor rolls may be further modified as the GM sees fit. Crews may get a bonus if they've just completed a major task for their faction, or they may suffer a penalty if this is their third request this week.

With success, the crew receives the requested asset but must reduce their Favor die one step. The faction coordinates with the crew to arrange the pickup or drop-off, but is now less inclined to fulfill subsequent supply requests.

On a raise, the faction is pleased with the crew, and the Favor die is not reduced. For each additional raise, the asset can be delivered one step earlier (within one day instead of three, or within the hour instead of the day).

If the roll fails, the faction is unable or unwilling to provide the requested asset. The crew can try again the next day.

On a Critical Failure, not only is the request denied, but the Favor die is reduced as well. The faction leaders are unhappy with the crew's demands.

OUT OF FAVOR

If a crew's Favor die is reduced below d4, they are "out of Favor" with their faction. They can no longer make Favor rolls until they gain Favor.

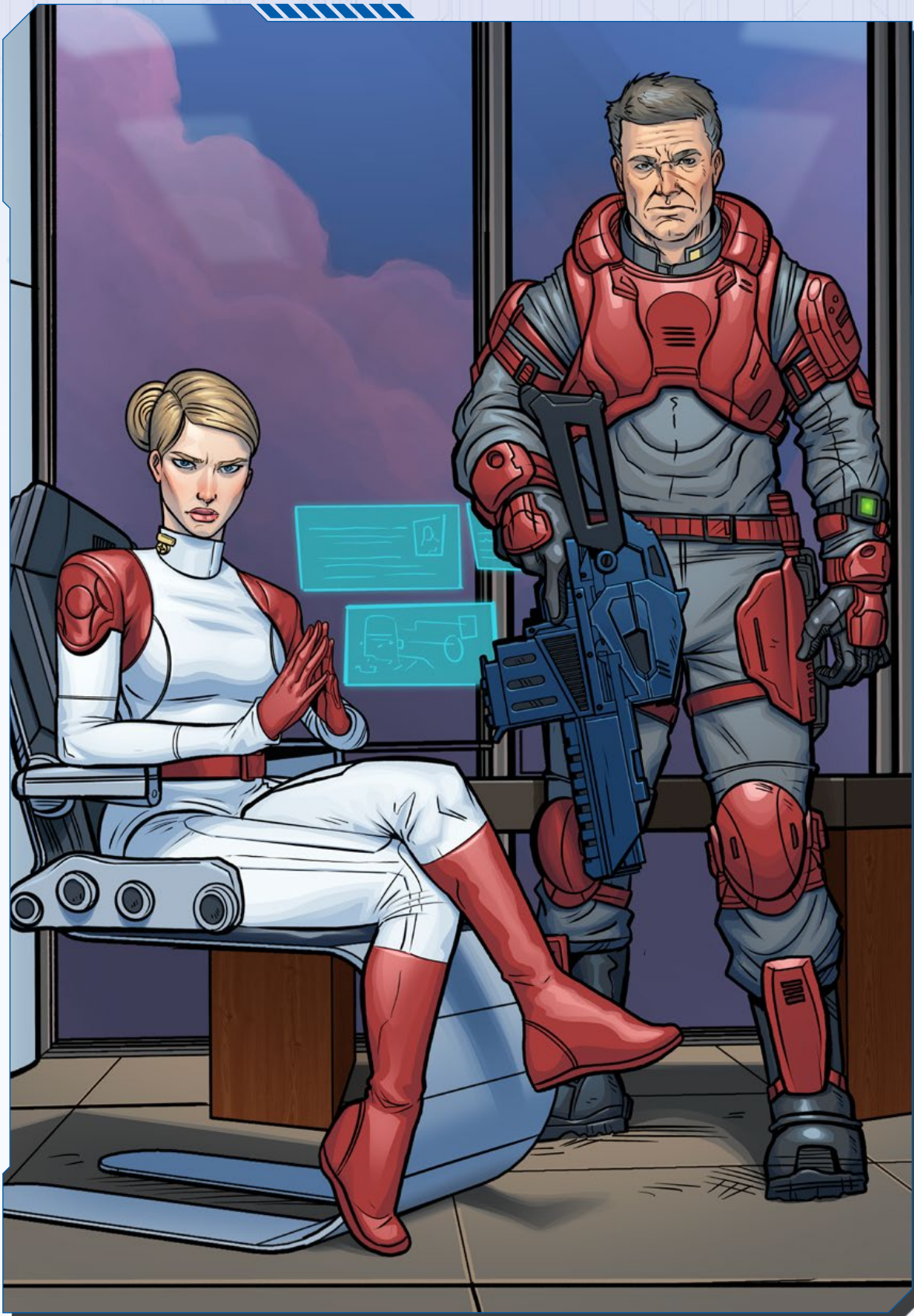
GAINING FAVOR

Crews can gain Favor with their faction (and increase their Favor die) by advancing their faction's agendas. As a criminal organization, a faction's agenda generally consists of:

- Increasing its wealth and power
- Expanding its territory
- Eliminating its enemies

The crew is probably doing these things anyway, simply by carrying out its faction's missions, but to gain Favor, the heroes must go above and beyond. This usually means being proactive in pursuit of their faction's interests or requesting (and fulfilling!) a side mission.

When the GM feels that the crew has advanced its faction's interests, the crew gains Favor: its Favor die increases one step (or becomes d4 if the crew was out of Favor). A crew can only gain Favor once per game session.



CHAPTER FIVE: CYBER AND PSY

There is no magic in *Starbreaker*. There is, however, technology beyond the understanding of most galactic citizens. They know it exists, and don't necessarily trust it, but unless someone's threatening them with it, they remain focused on their own problems. When they see technowizardry, whether it's computer hacking or mind reading, they merely shrug and move on.

THE HYPERNET

The HyperNet is a vast information network that uses satellite-based quantum entanglement transceivers to span the known galaxy.

The HyperNet is the backbone of galactic civilization, connecting everyone across the vast reaches of space. Communications, banking, entertainment, systems operations, and a host of other services pass over the relays every millisecond. Governments, corporations, criminals...it does not matter. Everyone needs the HyperNet to conduct their affairs. This necessity creates a valuable target for people to exploit in pursuit of both power and wealth.

HYPERREALITY

Anyone who can afford an augmented reality lens interacts with the HyperNet through HyperReality, a virtual world that can be experienced either as an overlay on the real world or as an immersive experience. Anyone who cannot acquire an AR lens is stuck looking at holographic projections and screens.

HyperReality is the most common medium for watching videos, listening to music, or taking (virtual) vacations. Users accessing the HyperNet in this way experience the filters—the sensory experiences—that the programmers and writers design. An HR vacation plops the viewer

into a deeply immersive virtual reality, letting the vacationer live and breathe another life, but the experience is controlled by the publisher.

Retrieving data from HyperReality requires a Hypertech roll modified by the connection's level of security. Success allows the hacker to ask one question of the Game Master (two with a raise). The Game Master may answer as directly or ambiguously as she feels fits the data's availability and the needs of her campaign.

No special training or augmentation is needed to access the HyperNet at this level. Using HyperReality at its most effective takes far more.

HYPERNET NODES

HyperNet nodes are public and private information domains within HyperReality, dedicated and secure VR worlds coupled to real-world servers. Nodes are ranked by their security level, which represents a combination of program encryption and physical defenses.

Level 1 nodes are the Darknet, the HyperNet's equivalent of the deep web. These are publicly accessible domains that are nevertheless not indexed by search engines, such as HyperMail accounts, online banking, HyperCloud storage, and restricted-access social-media pages and profiles. They also include paywalled services such as holo-on-demand sites and some HyperNet news pages.

Level 1 nodes can be accessed from anywhere with a HyperNet connection (in other words, most of the galaxy). Few grant any bonuses or impose any penalties on the Hypertech roll.

Level 2 nodes are average private citizen's secured personal devices. Because of interference from the billions of HyperNet signals buzzing through the galaxy, hypertechns must be within their Smarts (in game inches) of personal devices to hack them.

Level 2 nodes also include many parts of the Shadownet, the much more encrypted part of the Darknet. Sites in the Shadownet frequently (but not exclusively) house criminal activity such as peer-to-peer sharing of illicit media. Accessing the Shadownet, like the Darknet, merely requires a HyperNet connection.

Level 2 nodes may impose a -1 or -2 penalty depending on how much security the individual is paying for. These penalties apply to every roll made to retrieve data.

Level 3-5 nodes represent the highly secure computing resources of corporations, criminal organizations, and even governments (though the level of security depends on the institution in question). Hypertechs must be within their Smarts (in game inches) of Level 3-5 nodes to hack them. Attempts to access these nodes

can be adventures in and of themselves as hypertechs and their teams break into secure installations to get within Range.

Level 3-5 nodes impose penalties on the Hypertech roll to retrieve data (-2 for Level 3 nodes, -4 for Level 4 nodes, and -6 for Level 5 nodes). These penalties apply to every roll.

In addition, these nodes may be protected by the *secure* power, locked behind a digital *barrier*, or even guarded by digital monsters! Hypertechs frequently find that bringing allies into HyperReality with them using the *import avatar* power is the only way to successfully navigate high-security nodes.

HYPERNET GEAR

The HyperNet entangles all lives in the galaxy, acting as a source of communication, entertainment, and news. Even manual drudgework requires a HyperNet node to report work hours and get paid, while white-collar employees often have proprietary devices implanted right into their brains.

AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) LENS

AR lenses allow wearers to directly interact with the HyperNet, superimposing images from the 'Net over their normal vision. The lenses are available in a range of styles, including monocles (the least expensive style), spectacles, visors, and contact lenses (the most expensive). Users must sync the lenses to a computing device to use them.

COMPUTER, PORTABLE

Aside from onsite and shipboard workstations, most computing is done with small handheld devices that act as personal HyperNet nodes (see page 113). The cheapest are little different from contemporary smartphones, offering touchpad screens and HyperNet connectivity. More expensive models offer features like holographic keyboards, upgraded cameras, and virtual monitors—but they are often priced higher simply for brand name recognition.

COMPUTER, WORKSTATION

Notes: Workstation computers are cumbersome devices installed into corporate cubicles, shipboard panels, and standalone rigs. They are difficult to move at best; most cannot be removed. Their immense processing power provides +2 to Hypertech and Research rolls.

HYPERNET GEAR MODIFICATIONS

EMP SHIELDING

Notes: Shielding HyperNet Gear against EMP and electrical attacks is nearly as difficult as shielding drones. This modification costs 500 GC for an AR lens, 1,000 GC for a portable computer, and 2,000 GC for a computer workstation or I/O brainport.

SECURITY MODS

Notes: Portable computing devices and workstations can be engineered to assist with using Hypertech on other systems and for increased security. For every 1,000 GC spent, the device either adds +1 to the user's Hypertech rolls or imposes a -1 penalty on Hypertech rolls targeting it, up to a maximum of +/- 2.

Modification	Cost
EMP Shielding	Special
Security Mods	Special

HYPERNET GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Augmented Reality (AR) Lens	200/250/500	—
Computer, Portable	700	0.25
Computer, Workstation	3,000	50
I/O Brainport	800	—

I/O BRAINPORT

Notes: This transhuman enhancement is so common that most people don't even think of it as cybernetics. An I/O brainport facilitates direct neural interfacing with the HyperNet, allowing biological beings to interact with linked computers and systems at the speed of thought. Many corporations lease brainports to their employees, deducting the cost straight from their paychecks. Users must sync the I/O brainport to a computing device to use it.

HYPERTECHS

While I/O brainports are common throughout the galaxy, most people with the implants use them to interact with only the parts of the HyperNet they're authorized to access. Hypertechs aren't like most people. They are masters of the brainport, with specialized skills and knowledge that let them access secured portions of the HyperNet. They also navigate the digital landscape faster and more efficiently than other brainport users.

Once a hypertech has the brainport implanted, HyperReality becomes as true to them as the real world...or, perhaps more accurately, their dreams. The fusion of mind and machine available with an I/O brainport allows the brain to operate at the subconscious level. The mind functions much as it does in REM sleep, when dreams that seem to span hours or days happen in mere moments.

'Techs become capable of filtering HyperReality at will, choosing how they experience the data they process. Custom filters help hypertechs process data faster and more efficiently. The

dilation of time means a 'tech can download an encyclopedia's worth of data, while custom filtering of HyperReality allows the mind to process the experience without going mad. Terabytes of data might be processed in an instant, but to the hypertech, the experience is as leisurely as reading a book.

A hypertech is both more efficient—and more dangerous—than a regular HyperNet user. A 'tech can slip into a system, grab data, cover her tracks, and be out in a moment. In that one moment, she could have fought the security program, tracked down the information, and ordered a pizza.

Each time a 'tech enters HyperReality, she chooses the filter paradigm she will use to view the data. Filters can turn HyperReality into a fantasy world complete with dragons, or a gothic-punk 21st-century world with vampires. Major security points become impregnable castles; antivirus programs manifest as armor-clad knights. Whatever the 'tech finds easiest to comprehend, the data becomes.

A very secure system can impose its own filter onto the 'tech, forcing her to view the world as the creator set it. These secured filters cannot force the 'tech to personally adapt to the paradigm. This means it is possible for a hypertech to appear as a knight in armor in a 1920s world. The downside is that such systems can tell when an intruder doesn't fit in, which might draw attention to the 'tech as she tries to bypass the security systems.

Hypertechs can attempt to figure out the paradigm of such secured filters before they enter. Doing so is a difficult task when under pressure or trying to get in and out fast, though, and imposes a -2 penalty on the Hypertech roll.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (HYPERTECH)

Quantum entanglement technology allows anyone with the proper device to access the HyperNet from anywhere in the galaxy—but only those master hackers known as hypertechns can truly take advantage of everything it has to offer.

Requirements: Smarts d6+

Arcane Skill: Hypertech (Smarts)

Starting powers: *Import avatar* and two powers of the player's choice.

Power Points: 15

Digital Only: Hypertech powers only affect the digital world. *Bolt* can create negative feedback loops in nearby machines, but it doesn't fire magic missiles from the hypertech's hands. *Disguise* might change who a security guard sees on their monitor but doesn't alter what they

see face to face. *Puppet* controls the minds of robots, but not those who are sentient.

Drone Link: With a successful Hypertech roll, a hypertech can connect to an unsecure drone within Smarts range. Once connected, the 'tech can use the drone's senses as her own with a maximum range of 10 miles. She can also channel her powers through the drone, thus increasing its effective range. While using the drone's senses, the hacker is Distracted and Vulnerable, though a raise on the initial Hypertech roll removes the player's choice of one of these conditions.

Hack The Galaxy: The sheer volume of HyperNet signals in the galaxy allows hypertechns to use their abilities from nearly anywhere. Unfortunately, that same mass of data means they must be relatively close to their targets (within their powers' ranges) to bypass interference.

Required Equipment: In order to properly use her powers, a hypertech must be equipped with a computer to access the HyperNet, and either an AR lens to visualize data or an I/O brainport for speed-of-thought interfacing.

HYPERTECH EDGES

DIGITAL WIZARDRY

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Hypertech)

Once a hypertech enters HyperReality through the *import avatar* power, her ability to affect the virtual world is constrained only by her wits and will.

While in HyperReality, a hypertech with this Edge can use any power of her Rank or lower, even if she doesn't have that power. Activating the power costs its listed number of Power Points, plus 1 for every Rank of the power. The power affects the virtual world in the same manner that it would affect the real world in other settings.

Example: *Glyph* uses *import avatar* to enter a high-security Void node. The creator of the node has a thing for Weird West horror, fixing the HyperReality paradigm as a simulacrum of Pinnacle's famous Deadlands setting. *Glyph's* avatar becomes a hexslinging huckster.

While dueling a security program imitating a Harrowed gunslinger, *Glyph* uses ammo whammy. This power normally costs 4 Power Points and is a Seasoned power. *Glyph* must spend 6 Power Points to use it.

HACKING 101

As an action, a hypertech may make a Hypertech roll to retrieve data from the HyperNet (the galaxy-wide information superhighway) or a HyperNet node (a local, secured server). The roll is modified by the security penalty that the connection imposes. Success allows the hypertech to ask the Game Master one question (or two with a raise). The Game Master may answer as directly or ambiguously as she feels fits the data's availability and the needs of her campaign.

Using an indexed public HyperNet node or search engine (the equivalent of the modern open web) adds +2 to the roll. Very little data relevant to a Syndicate or SAINT operation can be found on the open HyperNet. Most useful data will need to be hacked from a secured Level 1 through Level 5 node (see page 113 for more about nodes).

More complex abilities—such as overriding the entry keypad on a spaceship or seizing control of a drone—require specific powers.

NEW HYPERTECH POWERS

IMPORT AVATAR

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 1

Range: Self

Duration: One hour

Trappings: Derezing, film transition (iris slow, matrix wipe, star wipe), teleportation.

While her body lies unconscious, the hypertechn's mind fully submerges into HyperReality, creating an avatar of herself that interacts with the HyperNet filters as if in the real world. In addition to using Hypertech and related powers, the 'tech can use her mental and physical skills as normal. She can use Athletics to climb a firewall, Boating to sail a datastream, or Fighting to hack a security program with a digital axe.

The avatar manifests with Gear equal to what the 'tech possesses in real life—but it may be customized to suit the "reality" of the filter. A laser pistol and Arachnosynth trench coat might be replaced with a six-shooter and duster in a Wild West filter, or a longbow and Lincoln-green tights in a filter modeled on Sherwood Forest.

The intense mental feedback caused by *import avatar* leaves the hypertechn's physical body in danger from any mental damage accrued in HyperReality. Fatigue, Wounds, and Incapacitation suffered in HyperReality are inflicted in the real world as well.

Modifiers

Additional Recipients (+1): The power may affect additional targets for 1 additional Power Point each. Anyone who has their avatar imported must be equipped with an AR lens or I/O brainport. One hypertechn's brain is powerful enough to import an entire crew's worth of avatars. Like the 'tech, the targets are unconscious and risk physical damage from mental feedback. The hypertechn can let a target leave HyperReality at any time. Doing so without permission requires a Spirit roll at -2; those who fail are Shaken.

OVERRIDE

Rank: Novice

Power Points: Special

Range: Smarts

Duration: 5

Trappings: Malware upload, remote control actuator.

HYPERREALITY AS A GATEWAY TO ALTERNATE GENRES

With the *import avatar* power, a hypertechn can bring the rest of her crew on an adventure into HyperReality. Like Captain Kirk's visits to cowboy planets and gangster worlds or a holodeck adventure on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, these missions are opportunities for the Game Master and players to briefly indulge in different genres. These are one-off breaks from the regular game, and could even be an opportunity for another player to GM the game for a session or two.

Visiting HyperReality—especially nodes with fixed paradigm filters—allows you to take advantage of the many settings available for *Savage Worlds*. When doing so, it's convenient to use archetypes (or other pre-generated characters) from those settings as the heroes' avatars. This lets you focus on a one-shot that's fast, furious, and fun without getting bogged down in creating whole new characters.

Adventures in HyperReality might span multiple sessions, but they take only seconds in the real world. Fatigue and Wounds accrued in HyperReality carry over to the real world if not mended in the digital world. Advances earned in HyperReality may also carry over if the Game Master permits.

This power allows an individual to guide the actions of devices and vehicles with limited AIs or autonomous capability (as opposed to drones or cyborgs, which are controlled with the *puppet* power).

The cost to cast is equal to the Size of the target (minimum 1). Controlling a portable computer (Size -4), for example, costs the minimum of 1 Power Point. Controlling a full-sized star freighter (Size 14) costs 14 Power Points.

If multiple targets are in range together, the hacker can attempt to take control of them all

simultaneously, but she must add up their Sizes to determine the final Power Point cost.

Success means the device obeys the hypertech's commands. Simple commands (like "power off" or "pump up the volume") are free actions. More complex actions require that the hypertech make a skill roll as an action, using the appropriate skill. Maneuvering an overridden gravcycle through a Chase, for example, would require the hypertech to make a Driving roll every round.

Modifiers

Link Other (+1): The hypertech may link additional allied minds to help control the device for 1 additional Power Point each. Others linked to the device must be equipped with an AR lens, but they needn't have an I/O brainport.

Allies linked to the device or vehicle may use their actions to make skill rolls as needed. Per the example above, an ally with a higher Driving skill might be linked in to control the gravcycle, freeing the hypertech to take other actions.

Mind Rider (+1): The caster can communicate and sense through any of the devices she has overridden.

SECURE/UNSECURE

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 1

Range: Smarts

Duration: Permanent (secure); Instant (unsecure)

Trappings: Databank skimming, HyperMail spoofing, I/O port direct hack.

Secure seals electronic access points, from physical shipboard blast doors to digital HyperNet files. Success on the roll means any attempt to open a secured access point suffers a -4 penalty. A raise when securing the access point means it can only be breached by the *unsecure* version of this power (at the -4 penalty listed above).

The hypertech may set a passcode when the access point is secured. Anyone who inputs the passcode can open the access point; it remains open until the passcode is repeated.

Unsecure bypasses security programs and devices like card readers to open electronic access points. It ignores up to 4 points of penalties to the task. With a raise, it disarms any security measures (such as alerts or traps) that are not powers as well.

Modifiers

Alert (+1): *Secure* only. If the secured access point is breached, the hypertech instantly receives a popup on her A/R lens letting her know this happened (and which access point was breached, if multiple instances of this power are in effect). Beings who input the passcode do not set off an alert.

PSIONICS

Just a few generations ago, most civilizations doubted the reality of psychic abilities. Alleged psychics could, at most, bend spoons or read someone's emotions. The galaxy realized they were real enough when the Armageddon War broke out, and the nohgotha used their psychic powers to paralyze or control their enemies.

The SSA turned to its allies, the caelum and the xek, for a way to counter the nohgotha's advantage. The answer was psionics—a blend of psychic powers and technology—made manifest through the Psychic Amplification Matrix. The "psy-matrix" allowed other species to tap their minor psychic potential and amplify it to a useful level. The xek's advanced nanotechnology bonded the device to the hosts' cerebral cortexes and nervous systems.

Armed with psy-matrix technology, the SSA formed the psy commandos. The psy-cos were able to protect themselves and others from the mental control of the nohgotha on the battlefield, where their boosted physical abilities and powers made them extremely effective. The SSA also sent the commandos on highly dangerous missions in which their psionic abilities would be the key to their success.

The intelligence community—never one to waste an undetectable lethal weapon—got hold of the psy-matrix and created the psy operatives. Wielding the powers of mind reading, mental-projection disguises, and telepathic messaging, this new breed of spies helped turn the tide of the war.

As the war wound down, however, many citizens came to see the psionics programs (especially the creation of psy operatives) as government overreach. People feared that psionicists in their midst might be reading—or even controlling—their minds. The intelligence agencies were forced to disavow the use of psy-ops and begin dismantling their psy-op teams.

PSYFOCUS

Type	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Shots	Min Str.	Weight	Cost
PsyFocus	15/30/60	2d6	2	4	100	d4	4	Special

Notes: This wrist-mounted psychic resonance crystal device provides psy commandos access to additional Loadout Edges (see below) and includes an integrated blaster that fires lasers without expending Power Points. The laser has *Cauterize*, *No Recoil*, and *Overcharge*, and reloads with a \$50 power pack. PsyFocuses are restricted military Gear and not available for sale through normal channels.

The dissolution of psy-ops and the discharge of the psy commandos (no longer needed with the war over) pushed psionics to seek employment elsewhere. Many ended up in the corporate sphere. Still others became mercenaries, assassins, and bodyguards.

None of this has been good for the public image of psionics. The general population believes that if psionics are willing to take work for money and violently use their abilities against civilians, it is only a matter of time before they seek more power and maybe even attempt to control society.

However, this idea is just fearmongering. The ability to create more psionics does exist, but the numbers will always be too low to control society as a whole. Such a feat would require massive resources and facilities that simply do not exist. It's not possible to just print more psionics the same way synths are created.

ARCANE BACKGROUND (PSY COMMANDO)

Psy commandos typically start out as elite soldiers and are then further enhanced with psionic abilities. Their powers complement their battlefield skills, turning their minds—as well as their bodies—into living weapons.

Requirements: Smarts d6+

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Powers: A psy commando starts with two Loadout Edges (Basic Psychic Loadout and PsyFocus Loadout), each of which gives him its own set of powers.

Power Points: 10 (15 with PsyFocus)

Available Powers: A psy commando's powers are determined by his Loadout Edges, as detailed below.

Psionic Powers: Psy commandos can take Edges that require Arcane Background (Psionics). They cannot take the New Powers Edge.

Psyfocus: To achieve full power, psy commandos wear a PsyFocus, a device that provides 5 Power Points and allows them to focus their psionic abilities in order to affect the world around them. Without a PsyFocus, their powers are limited to those provided by the Basic Psychic Loadout Edge.

Psy Shielding: Psy-cos are resistant to mind control and similar psionic effects. Enemy powers used against them suffer a –1 penalty on rolls, and those that cause damage deal 1 less. (This ability stacks with both *arcane protection* and Arcane Resistance.)

PSY COMMANDO GEAR

The SSA and their allies developed a number of prototype devices to enhance their psionics' powers, but in the end, only the PsyFocus was effective and practical enough to see production.

PSY COMMANDO EDGES

BASIC PSYCHIC LOADOUT

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Psy Commando)

When the psy commando's psychic potential is first unlocked, he learns to turn his body into a living weapon. He can use any of the following powers, regardless of Rank: *arcane protection*, *boost/lower Trait* (boost only, self only), *smite* (self only), and *wall walker* (self only).

The commando can also spend an action and 1 Power Point to create a telepathic connection with a number of willing allies up to his Smarts die type. Those thus connected can communicate with each other (per the *mind link* power) over the range of one mile.

PSYFOCUS LOADOUT

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Psy Commando)

While the commando is wielding a PsyFocus, he can use any of the following powers, regardless of Rank: *bolt*, *invisibility*, and *sound/silence*.

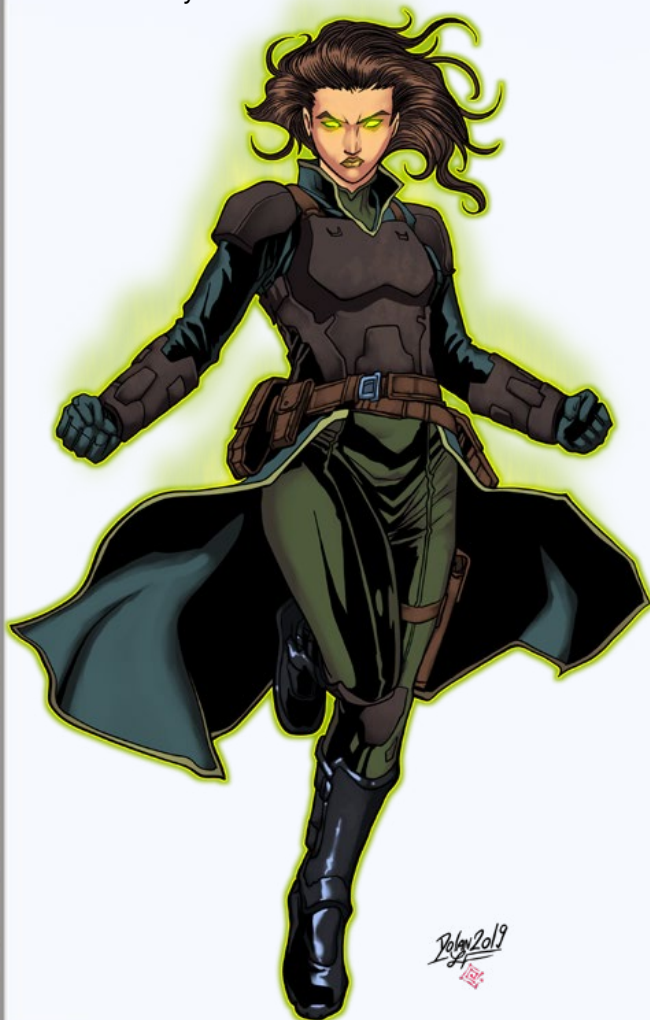
While wielding a PsyFocus, the commando also has 5 additional Power Points, which he can spend and recover normally.

ADVANCED PSYFOCUS LOADOUT

Requirements: Seasoned, Arcane Background (Psy Commando), PsyFocus Loadout

The commando has advanced training with the PsyFocus. While wielding a PsyFocus, he can use any of the following powers: *barrier*, *blast*, and *telekinesis*.

In addition, the commando's Psy Shielding ability now inflicts a -2 penalty on all powers used against him, and any arcane damage is reduced by 2.



ARCANE BACKGROUND (PSY OPERATIVE)

Psy operatives are trained to gather and share intelligence using their psionic abilities. Most prefer to keep a low profile and hide their abilities. They're much more effective if no one around them suspects their true power.

Requirements: Smarts d6+

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Powers: A psy operative starts with one Training Edge (see below), which gives her its own set of powers.

Power Points: 10

Available Powers: A psy operative's powers are determined by her Training Edges, as detailed below.

Psionic Powers: Psy operatives can take Edges that require Arcane Background (Psionics). They cannot take the New Powers Edge.

Truth Detector: The psy-op can spend a Power Point to make a Psionics roll opposed by the Spirit of a person within 30 feet. A success lets her know, for the next five minutes, whether the person is speaking the truth.

PSY OPERATIVE EDGES

CONNECTION TRAINING

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Psy Operative)

A key part of the psy-op's job is knowing what others are thinking and feeling. Skilled operatives can connect with their targets' minds through manipulative conversation, but when words fail, a psychic bond can make all the difference. The psy-op can use any of the following powers: *empathy*, *mind link*, *mind reading*, and *speak language*.

PROJECTION TRAINING

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Psy Operative)

The psy-op has learned to override the thoughts and senses of her targets. Through the power of her mind, she can influence their ability to think and act. She can use any of the following powers: *boost/lower Trait (lower only)*, *confusion*, *fear*, and *illusion*.

DOMINATION TRAINING

Requirements: Veteran, Arcane Background (Psy Operative)

Psy-ops prefer to remain hidden. They work best unseen, subtly searching out their targets' secrets and exploiting their weaknesses. But sometimes it's necessary to pull out the big guns. Sometimes they need to dominate. The psy-op can use any of the following powers: *drain power points*, *mind wipe*, and *puppet*.

CYBERNETICS

Nanotech, cybertech, and biotech are all lumped together in the public consciousness as the miraculous technologies that allow so many to cheat death or upgrade their bodies to achieve superhuman feats. Some of this is attained through nanobots stored in people's bodies, other effects result from inorganic prosthetic limbs and organs, and still other options derive from genetic engineering. Regardless of origin, most people simply think of these types of enhancements as "cybernetics."

Most applications of cybernetics are for emergency medical use. Advanced medical tech has significantly enhanced the healing of injuries and disease in once life-threatening situations. A quick injection of nanobots to repair an injury can be the difference between making it home or never seeing the next day.

IMPLANTED POWER

Cyberware is powered by implanted biofusion reactor systems. Bio-reactors were developed in the aftermath of the Armageddon War, when scientists created their own limited versions of reverse-engineered xek and nohgotha technologies. Bio-reactors produce a finite pool of energy from which the cyberware draws its power. This pool can be depleted, but it replenishes over time from the body's own metabolic processes.

The psionic abilities of the psy commando are likewise powered by an advanced implant. Their source, however, is a crystalline lattice, which is embedded in the psychic through caelum nanotechnology. Like the bio-reactor, this lattice can be depleted, but it eventually replenishes itself.

Bio-reactors and crystalline lattices are incompatible technologies. In fact, it's believed to be impossible to implant both devices into a single person without catastrophic results. But that doesn't mean that the desperate and greedy won't keep on trying...

CYBERNETICS

Cybernetic Implant	Power	Body Part	Hindrance
Facial Morph	disguise	Face	Ugly (Major)
Lowlight Vision	darksight	Eye	One Eye
Palm Shocker	stun (range touch)	Arm	One Arm
Recovery System	relief	Torso	Clumsy
Reflective Shield	deflection	Arm	One Arm
Sealed Systems	environmental protection	Torso	Clumsy
Skin Shell	protection	Torso	Clumsy
Skill Chips	warrior's gift	Torso	Clumsy
Telescopic Vision	farsight	Eye	One Eye
Turbo	speed	Legs	Slow (Major)
Ultra Surge	boost Trait	Any	per body part

ARCANE BACKGROUND (CYBORG)

Cybernetics of all kinds are common throughout the galaxy. Most simply mimic the function of the limbs or organs they replace. But some cyborgs can channel the power of their biofusion reactors to their cybernetics, temporarily giving themselves superhuman abilities.

Requirements: Spirit d6+

Arcane Skill: Focus (Spirit)

Starting Powers: One power chosen from the list below.

Power Points: 15

Available Powers: *Boost/lower trait (boost only), darksight, deflection, disguise, environmental protection, farsight, protection, relief, sloth/speed (speed only), stun, warrior's gift.*

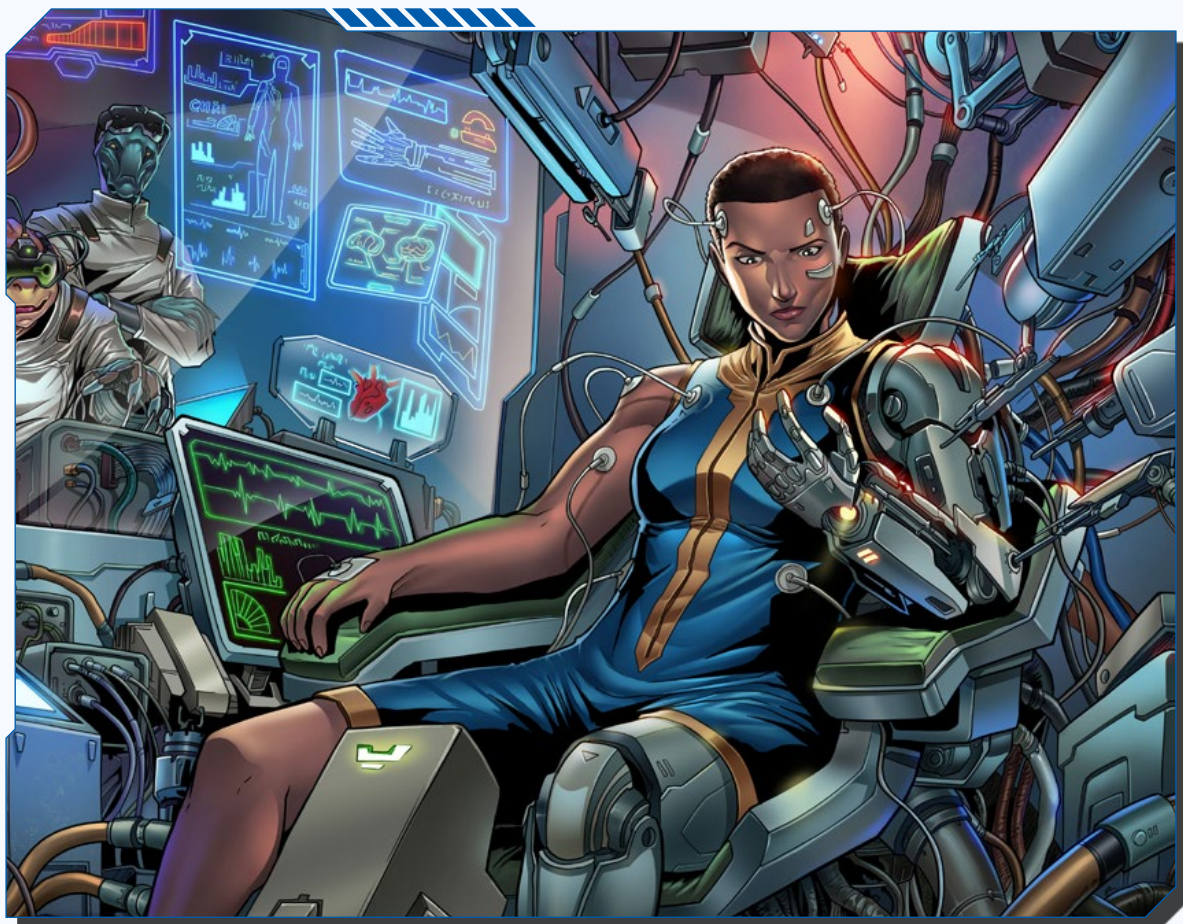
Cyberheroes: Cyborgs may take Edges that require Arcane Background (Gifted).

Replacement Parts: Cyborgs sacrifice limbs and organs to gain their powers. A cyborg's power Trappings must always include the body part replaced and the device that replaces it (per the table on page 121).

Self Only: Because a cyborg's powers are derived from his prosthetics, beneficial powers may not use the Additional Recipients Modifier. All such powers have the Self Limitation (and the resultant -1 to the Power Point cost).

System Offline: When a cyborg rolls a Critical Failure to activate a power, the cyborg's replacement part goes offline until the end of the character's next turn. This replaces suffering a level of Fatigue for Backlash. Until the part comes back online, the cyborg suffers a corresponding Major Hindrance per the table on page 121.

System Overclocking: When using a power, a cyborg may pay double its Power Point cost to automatically secure success with a raise without making the activation roll. At the end of his turn, however, the activated system shuts down as if he had rolled a Critical Failure.



CHAPTER SIX: GM BACKGROUND

The galaxy holds many secrets. This chapter includes the hidden history of the galaxy, as well as some in-depth, behind-the-scenes looks at the places the heroes may be headed and the factions pulling their strings.

GALACTIC HISTORY

Several millennia ago, the Progenitors explored the Milky Way galaxy, seeking to expand their knowledge, influence, and territory. Their mastery of multiple sciences and technologies, including cybernetics, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, genetics, and psionics, allowed for an unsurpassed golden age. The empire had grown to include countless worlds, and dozens of species had joined them in their exploration of the galaxy.

With such vast power and knowledge, the Progenitors lost sight of their founding principles. Instead of maintaining an empire based on acquiring and sharing knowledge, they saw themselves as the only ones fit to rule. Unrest grew among other species and their member worlds. Some challenged the Progenitors' right to rule, pointing out that since their own sciences now matched that of the vaunted leaders, they should be allowed equal standing.

In order to prove their superiority and dominance, the Progenitors threw themselves into their exploration and research. They crossed one ethical line after another in their quest for knowledge and power.

In this quest, the Progenitors followed three distinctly different paths.

THE CAELUM

The first path focused on increasing psionic potential using psychic resonance crystals captured from a conquered species known as the sekun. The Progenitors spearheading this research came to call themselves the caelum.

All Progenitors had some psi abilities, but this new technology unlocked incredible new power and changed their very essence. The changes were so extreme that the caelum evolved their bodies and became beings of energy. Still wanting and needing to interact with the world around them, they created suits of nanotech crystal that they could manipulate with their mental energies. The caelum spent ever-greater stretches of time in meditation, retreating from most daily activities.

THE XEK

A second group of Progenitors researched the path of nanotech, robotics, and artificial intelligence. They came to call themselves the xek. The xek were builders and engineers. Their crowning achievement was the creation of incredible starships, some as large as whole cities, with which to explore and study the vast reaches of space.

The xek sought the melding of mind and machine to create new bodies and exceed their flesh and blood. They eventually achieved their goal, and merged their minds with the machines they created. Their psychic patterns now embedded in matrices of crystal and organic matter, the xek were more machine than anything else. This adaptable form was easy to modify, and it quickly became difficult to tell the xek apart from the machines with which they had merged.

THE NOHGOtha

The third path pursued by the Progenitors was genetic manipulation. Those who followed this path called themselves the nohgotha. They sought to adapt and improve their bodies while remaining physical, unlike the caelum. They also did not want to abandon their flesh as the xek had, merging to the point that no one could see where the machine ended and life began.

The nohgotha built massive laboratories. Here they found ways to rapidly adapt their flesh to any world by using nanotech (to rewrite their bodies' genetic code) and gene cylinders (to hold them in stasis while they changed). Thus, the nohgotha could shift from one form to another in a matter of days, adapting themselves to thrive in any environment.

INVASION

Lost in their studies and newfound abilities, the Progenitors continued to explore and build. They were not prepared for a direct challenge to their rule. Who could resist them anyway?

The first signs of trouble were skirmishes on the empire's border. Settlements were attacked, but by the time ships arrived to answer the distress calls, the local residents were gone. Aside from the citizens, very little was taken, and damage to the settlements was always minimal, as if whatever had attacked found it easy to bypass the defenses.

It wasn't long before the mysterious enemy revealed themselves. The sekun, whose psychic crystals had been stolen for Progenitor research, had come for revenge. They were still enraged over the desecration and death the Progenitors had visited upon them and their homeworld over a century prior.

The sekun horde held the numerical advantage at the beginning of the conflict and quickly pushed back the Progenitors and their empire.

The Progenitors convened a council and discussed how to survive. The nohgotha suggested using their mastery of genetics to quickly create and grow soldiers, and they proposed having the xek create warships and star fortresses for those soldiers to fill. The caelum could easily use their psi powers to program these soldiers with a lifetime of memories and skills instead of relying on rigorous real-time training.

The imperial council initially rejected the idea of creating sentient beings and using them in this way. Forcing living beings to fight struck them all as morally wrong. Yet they could not deny the rapidly growing force of the sekun, who absorbed portions of the population they attacked and added those to their army. Desperate, and seeing no other way to survive the onslaught, the council agreed to the nohgotha plan.

The war lasted years, but with the help of the rapidly growing forces of the nohgotha, the Progenitors eventually won.

AFTERMATH

After the war, the nohgotha had millions of soldiers left, all created for various purposes and needs. They seeded the best of these on hospitable worlds and chose to call them their charges. The newly created species formed their own societies and cultures. Over centuries they eventually desired freedom from nohgotha control and wanted to be regarded as equals. The nohgotha refused, but the council deemed that it was not the place of the nohgotha or anyone to control the fate of a species forever.

The continuous political sparring over the issue eventually fractured the Progenitor Empire. The nohgotha left the council, swearing to take back what was theirs.

NOHGOtha RETURN

In just a few decades, war came again. The nohgotha returned with armies and sought to take control of the empire. The battles devastated world after world; the nohgotha had learned from the last war and came with numbers on their side. It looked as if they would succeed.

The lessons of war were not lost on the caelum either; they prepared for a major conflict this time. They knew that in order to program these new soldiers so fast, the same methods must have been used. That meant the soldiers were highly vulnerable to psionic attack. Although the caelum didn't want to employ such means, they ultimately used psi-bombs and other psionic weapons.

The war between these two powers raged as the xek, still a member of the council, watched in horror at the ruin and destruction left in its wake.

The nohgotha were driven back and finally disappeared from known space. The caelum,

horrified at their own actions, secluded themselves from the empire. The xek pulled back to a single star system, where they also entered a self-imposed exile from the affairs of the empire. As the millennia passed, they became more myth and legend than history, and were eventually all but forgotten.

The galaxy moved on.

A NEW ERA

Time passed. New species developed interstellar space travel. Humanity produced its first FTL drive, which promptly exploded, creating an interstellar gravitronic shockwave. The caelum recognized the explosion's signature. They knew it could attract the nohgotha and trigger another invasion. To help prepare Earth and its colonies for such an event, they send three of their city-ships to the Sol system to subtly speed up the humans' technological progress.

With the caelum's understated assistance, humanity mastered FTL travel and spread across countless star systems, expanding the SSA and sowing the seeds of a galaxy full of Synners and SAINTs.

CORPORATE WORLDS

The corporate worlds spend a fortune on public relations. They paint the planets under their control as high-tech, peaceful wonderlands, but those who visit may discover that the truth is a bit more complicated.

CORPORATE WORLD MILITARY

The corporate worlds each have their own mercenary units to protect their key interests. However, the Armageddon War made it obvious that they needed a combined defense. To that end, they established the Unified Corporate World Navy, also known as the UCWN.

The UCWN is effective, well trained, and well equipped. All corporations contribute equipment and money, but that does not mean the navy enjoys cutting-edge tech. It makes up for that with the skill of its soldiers, making it one of the galaxy's most competent forces.

However, like the SSA, the navy lacks the manpower to meet every demand. Automation and combat drones help some, but in the end, the need for well-trained troops still slows the pace of the navy's growth. Two factors contribute to the problem: individual corporations don't want to contribute as much as is needed, and most employees have no desire to join.

This does not dissuade those who serve from doing their best. They face one of the greatest threats to financial growth: pirates. The constant flow of goods from the corporate worlds to the SSA makes for a tempting target. The UCWN patrols shipping-lane jump gates in hopes of discouraging pirate attacks. The battles between the pirates and the UCWN have escalated over time. Pirates acquire more powerful ships and numbers. The lack of powerful ships (the navy has only one star carrier) and lower numbers make this a difficult fight for the UCWN.

Aside from running anti-piracy patrols, navy personnel also aid other stages of shipping. They act as customs inspectors and run anti-smuggling rescue operations. They also provide planetary security and disaster relief, along with many other duties.

CORPORATE PSY OPERATIVES

One of the darker aspects of life under corporate rule is the presence of psy operatives. The corporate worlds have no laws regulating psy-ops, and no compunction against using the fear of them to keep their employees in line.

Psy-ops provide one of the most powerful tools to protect corporate interests. They can secretly insert themselves wherever they're assigned. This makes it easier for them to access their targets' minds and ferret out any useful information. Psy-ops can fill positions anywhere, including at any level of management or higher. They might work in the room next door or serve drinks at the company café. They work in nearly every aspect of business operations. They work in employee interviews. They help develop new contracts. They engage in negotiations and attend board meetings.

The secret, constant presence does a lot to dissuade unrest. However, the psy-ops teams often deploy units in uniform as well. They understand the fear that comes with the badge

and use it to the best advantage. If employees organize a protest, they sweep in and stop it immediately.

However, the most feared psy-ops are those who train to use their abilities to become elite assassins.

RECRUITING

After the war, when the secrets of developing peoples' psionic potential were leaked, the corporations jumped at the chance to use psychics to their advantage.

The corporate worlds test their employees for psionic potential. The successful candidates undergo procedures and receive training in isolated facilities under heavy security. Only those with clearance can access these secret places, and unauthorized personnel or trespassers can be shot on sight.

OPERATIVES EVERYWHERE

While psy-ops may be anywhere, they are not omnipresent. They are still a somewhat rare and valuable resource. The corporate worlds use fear and the possibility of psy-ops to help maintain their power.

ADVENTURE SEED: BURROWERS BELOW

The subterranean predators stalking the corporate basements might not technically be native to the planet. A secret research team examining data from several attacks over the past few years found similarities between these creatures and the hive creatures seeded by the nohgotha during the war. Unfortunately for the team, they were all but wiped out during a security mishap, and most of their research was lost. A couple of researchers survived, however, and hope to get their notes onto a secure site on the HyperNet.

The program has a 30% attrition rate, but those who complete it are assigned to a training officer. During their first two years, cadets are assigned to legal or street roles. If they stand out, they are promoted to various posts where their skills and abilities fit best.

STREET PSY OPERATIVES

Many cadets find themselves assigned to one of the most important posts: the street. Most psy-ops do not like the inherent perils of the assignment. They join teams of four to handle more dangerous encounters; their abilities give the team a needed advantage in situations such as negotiating hostage crises, raiding suspected arms dealers, or conducting other operations deemed appropriate by command. Most often, they deploy to the streets and arcologies. Their mere presence can often trigger a surprise response in the population; when surprised, a target doesn't have as strong a mental defense.

Even though these surprise visits, or street sweeps, make for an effective tool, command keeps them to a minimum. On New Atlantica, street sweeps happen rarely, but worlds owned and operated by Vizon use them far more often. The brutal tactic has proven incredibly effective at getting results. Unlike on New Atlantica, results are all that matter on a Vizon world.

CORPORATE WORLD PRIME

Beneath the gleam and bustle of the corporations' crown jewel lie secrets that can kill in more ways than one.

The biggest coverup on Corporate World Prime is the existence of native lifeforms. As buildings on the planet reached their practical heights, construction turned inward, and scores of subbasements were excavated under existing office towers. Unfortunately, this unleashed dangerous native predators who now devour hundreds of employees working in the bowels of these buildings each year.

The central tower of the Absalom Arcology, home to a dozen smaller companies, hosts a beautiful vertical zoological garden. Unknown to all but the corporate elite, however, the top story is an exclusive haute cuisine restaurant where the clientele pays exorbitant prices to devour the rare and endangered animals on display below.

THE ORIDIUM NEBULA

In addition to the pirates who inhabit the nebula, there are multiple unregistered colonies and mining operations. The pirates generally work with these other inhabitants to ensure their mutual survival. The pirates need repairs and supplies, and the colonies and miners need protection and transportation.

This symbiotic relationship almost resembles a functioning government. Were it not for the arguing among the various pirate fleets, this might evolve into an effective coalition. In fact, some among the pirates are trying to move from a society of raiders and illegal colonies to a full-fledged civil government.

PORT DARK STAR

Port Dark Star, colloquially called “the Rock,” lies on the edge of the Oridium Nebula. This immense hollowed-out asteroid serves as a trade port, service hub for ships, and home for pirates.

In the early days after the war ended, piracy among the stars was easy; there were few ships to defend the cargo vessels on their routes. The pirates grew stronger and wealthier from their contraband and loot.

Of course, that attracted the attention of the galactic governments, and they sent a strike force to end the pirates’ reign. The attack went poorly for both sides. The SSA ships had to retreat, but the pirate fleets were vastly weakened.

The pirates formed a coalition that was committed to mutual defense and defined by the unified Articles of Piracy. The coalition’s leaders, the Pirate Lords, sought a new place from which to base their operations. Searching the sector, they found the asteroid that would become known as Port Dark Star. With their now combined resources, the coalition built a series of docks and habitats inside the hollow rock.

As time went on, the number of ships using the port increased, as did the need for crew services. As some pirate crew members retired, they opened bars, built inns, and offered other amenities that pirates could avail themselves of in their downtime after a successful cruise. Eventually, every need for a passing ship could be served here, and the port grew in fame.

ADVENTURE SEED: THE DIPLOMAT

A group of pirate and colonial leaders are meeting to formally discuss forming a regional government within the Oridium Nebula. They’ve secured the services of Tar Vallas, a renowned mediator and diplomat, to help solidify their unity and recruit other potential members.

The heroes are contracted to safely escort Tar Vallas to the summit meeting. While doing so, they’re attacked! The attackers could be others from the nebula who want to keep politics out of their profiteering... but they might be agents of a Syndicate to whom Vallas owes a small fortune. There’s only one way to find out!

The SSA sent another force to engage and end the pirates’ new base of operations, doubling the size of the fleet to ensure success. The plan was to take Port Dark Star from the pirates and turn it into a new base of operations for the SSA Navy, from which it could patrol and keep the sector of space free from piracy.

The SSA Navy failed, and not by a small margin either. The pirates had invested immense sums in ensuring that Port Dark Star had the firepower to repel any attack the Alliance could muster. They fought together as a well-oiled machine, with each pirate ship bringing additional firepower to bear at key moments in the engagement. With the Alliance fleet in tatters and on the run, the pirates knew they had secured their place in the rim worlds. The cost to take Port Dark Star was deemed too great, and no one has tried since.

Today, the port is home to more than just pirates. Smugglers, mercs, bounty hunters—almost anyone can pass through, so long as no one attempts to bring the law down on those staying there. There is a tacit agreement that the Rock is off limits to the authority of the SSA or the Syndicate-controlled rim worlds, so the port has little fear of repercussions. So confident of its place in the galaxy, the port even allows smaller SSA ships to pass through and use its services—at a steeply inflated price, of course.

The port isn't without its own version of law and order. The entire place is run by the Council of Admirals: seven leaders of the most powerful pirate fleets who decide what goes on in the Rock. No one stands against an admiral and lives for long, and few will dare to even try. Admirals wear crimson to show their rank, and others are barred from doing so in order to prevent confusion. They sit in judgment in their chambers, ensuring the Rock runs smoothly.

Whenever order must be restored or maintained, the Council sends the Black Guard. This elite security crew is dressed all in black save for one red stripe across their armored vest's right shoulder. The Black Guard is willing to use extreme force to end any engagement in an action that is both brutal and efficient. Pirates fear little on the Rock except the wrath of the council and the fist of the Black Guard.

Traveling in groups around the port is always strongly recommended. Individuals should make some friends or take care to watch their backs. The members of the Black Guard only concern themselves with the security of the Rock, not

with its inhabitants. Muggings, assaults, and even murder are not uncommon. A traveler may wake up on a ship with a massive headache only to learn he is now on the crew of an outgoing pirate ship. In fact, the danger of the port is one reason so many avoid it unless they are desperate enough to need services in this part of the galaxy.

THE SHATTERED STAR

Inside Port Dark Star is a bar known across the region. Every pirate and Synner needs a break—a place to get away from the life—and for many that place is the Shattered Star. It's a bar, a club, and a home away from home. Orvid, the giant vulkolasi tending bar, keeps most Syndicate violence out of his place. No one is sure how, but many say he has dirt on all the leaders of the Syndicate. Maybe they just all need that one place where they can be safe.

The only rule in the Shattered Star is "no violence." The regulars do as Orvid says and enforce it on any not smart enough to catch on quickly. See Orvid on page 198.



THE CORPORATIONS

The five richest corporations in the galaxy are sometimes referred to as simply “The Big Five.” They have solidified their power in the corporate worlds, but their influence is felt everywhere. A change in corporate policy can affect billions of people. A new business initiative can topple local governments. And a secret alliance can warp the political playing field for decades. Below is an overview of the Big Five, their markets, and their plans.



VIZON CORP

“The vision to look past the horizon!”

The vast number of Vizon subsidiaries and its diverse portfolio make the conglomerate extremely wealthy and powerful. Among its many enterprises, the company manufactures starships, weapons, cybernetics, and medicine. It also leads in the manufacturing of synths. Vizon provides goods and services throughout much of the galaxy, growing its bottom line by leaps and bounds.

Vizon presents life on its many corporate worlds as a dreamlike vision of contented corporate service. Its pristine arcologies showcase gleaming towers, clean streets, and amenities aplenty. People come from all over to work and visit.

The shining façade masks a dangerous truth. Vizon functions on one main principle: profits justify the means. Its ruthless tactics and lack of ethics put it ahead of its rivals, but its employees pay the price.

Employees struggle to meet objectives. They earn some of the galaxy’s best wages, but undying loyalty exacts an extreme toll on anyone. Those who fail to adhere to corporate policies—what passes for laws on these worlds—suffer some of the galaxy’s harshest penalties.

The conglomerate imposes severe consequences for minor infractions, including pay cuts, demotions, and downgraded living quarters. Major infractions can result in the harshest of penalties, including termination, blacklisting, and even death.

Vizon leads the way in corporate growth thanks to its extensive reach; everyone may hate it, but no one can escape it. The corporation constantly expands its market share year after year.

This growth requires resources, so Vizon works with the other corporations to scout for new planets (while also privately doing so itself). Vizon employs more scouts than any other corporation or government, and has created training courses to fill the scout ranks.

Its tremendous wealth gives Vizon the most sway among the corporate worlds. Its dominion over the Board of Directors leads to a tense relationship with the other four major corporations. Rarely do the other corporations push back against Vizon, but when they do, they present a united front. It takes a majority vote to convince Vizon to back down.

The other corporations have a right to fear Vizon’s growth. Some of the company’s recent moves indicate that it may attempt a hostile takeover of two of its competitors, giving it a majority on the Board. The targets continue to resist, but many feel they will fall in time.

Constant growth often puts Vizon into conflict with other groups and factions and makes the company a tantalizing target. Syndicate factions and pirates regularly attack its shipments and outposts. Vizon’s corporate allies work to keep these groups from gaining more control, and the company also finds itself in direct conflict with the SSA.

The SSA and other independent governments frown upon Vizon’s untrammled planetary exploration, seeing the claim and colonization of new planets as a governmental right. The SSA Navy regularly clashes with the corporation’s scouts as they seek out and discover new worlds. Vizon does whatever it needs to win; the victor—or, rather, the survivors—claim the world.

To counter the growing threats, Vizon fields one of the largest private military forces in the galaxy. In the beginning, it employed a third-party mercenary force. As the threats increased, this force evolved into a full-fledged standing military, including both an army and a navy.

Vizon's fleet includes a full complement of combat starships and a star carrier. Its naval construction facilities recently ramped up ship construction. The company claims it wants to meet the growing need for more heavy freighters and colony ships. This is just a cover; the increased output far outpaces those used to create Vizon's current fleet.



NOTABLE DETAILS

Vizon Prosperia 3: This temperate, beautiful moon of the gas giant Vizon Prosperia is home to Stefan 8311 (see page 203) and the financial security customer service division of Vizon United Bank. Largely populated by synths, Prosperia 3 hosts a minimal detail of psy-ops—but a heavy Vizon navy detachment. The patrol cruisers have been upgraded to make them fast pursuit vessels.

Plunkett Fleming VI, aka "Six": The relatively young CEO of the Vizon Corporation lives on Corporate World Prime because he prefers to be surrounded by competitors he can belittle and abuse rather than yes men. An unrepentant sociopath, "Six" (as he likes to be called) has pushed Vizon to greater heights of power through ruthless business practices.



ATLANTICA SHIP WORKS

"Atlantica Ship Works, always working for you!"

Atlantica Ship Works (ASW), headquartered on New Atlantica, is the largest starship builder in the galaxy. Even the Star Systems Alliance buys its cargo and service ships from ASW. The SSA and the corporate worlds need ships to keep up with territorial expansion, so ASW's factories run around the clock to meet the demand.

New Atlantica receives many of the benefits of membership in the SSA, even though it is a corporate world and not part of the Alliance. During the Armageddon War, the Atlantica Ship Works corporation stepped up, bringing all its resources to bear to assist in the war effort.

Combining its shipyards and materials with the knowledge and assistance of the xek increased ship production to unheard-of levels and helped turn the tide of the war.

When the SSA was able to reassert control over many of its holdings, Atlantica Ship Works refused to rejoin as a normal member world. The SSA was not willing to fight against a world filled with people it considered citizens. The corporation countered with an offer: instead of rejoining as a member world, it would retain its independence, but it would be the SSA's exclusive warship supplier for 25 years and offer the ships nearly at cost.

Today, the contract has ended, but the corporation has maintained cordial relations with the SSA and retains its protected status. Its special position in the Alliance has allowed it to prosper with the steady flow of money from the SSA. New Atlantica also manufactures ships for the general public and other security forces, but it maintains its priority ship docks for the SSA.

The other corporations find the relationship unfair and have petitioned against it on multiple occasions. For now, the SSA finds the relationship beneficial and refuses to alter the deal. So long as New Atlantica remains loyal and provides the ships the Alliance desperately needs, the situation is unlikely to change any time soon.

Because of the quality of its ships and the speed of production, ASW has set the baseline standards for most ships being built today. Many starships use parts that are compatible with ASW ships. To stay ahead of the competition, ASW keeps prices low for replacement compatible parts, adding to their demand. Those in the market for spaceships, especially scouts and colonists, prefer ASW ships.

Atlantica Ship Works doesn't just provide an excellent product. Its corporate values have earned it a reputation as one of the corporate worlds' top beneficent companies. ASW uses manufacturing methods with significantly reduced environmental impact. Many see ASW as the most forward-thinking of the corporations.

ASW remains open to new ideas, encourages innovation in ship design, and works to improve corporate culture. Its employees receive higher wages than most working for their competitors; ASW rewards hard work and ingenuity. Those who come up with new products or improve processes earn bonuses and promotions.

AWS uses an enormous amount of critanium in its shipbuilding. To ensure its supply, AWS negotiated a long-term deal with the Monarchs, the Syndicate faction that runs the planet Echo.

Even the deal with the Monarchs cannot provide the quantity of resources the company needs. Atlantica Ship Works runs its own mining operations, the largest outside of Echo. To keep production high and employees safe, the operation largely relies on synths to work the mines. AWS keeps its nose clean by following the Corvo Protocol. Human supervisors manage the mines and do regular checks to verify when synths have awakened.

Synths work more efficiently and longer than human miners, but current levels of synth production cannot keep pace with demand. Atlantica Ship Works has increased its investments in researching and manufacturing its own line of synths. It hasn't made any of this public because of the difficulty it may cause with Vizon.

The corporation may not be able to keep it quiet for long. Other companies are eager to purchase the ASW models because they have shown no signs of sentience. ASW is impatient to field more of its proprietary models. The company wants to avoid dangerous situations from rebelling synths and ethical issues related to keeping self-aware beings against their will.

NOTABLE DETAILS

Diego Suez-Albariño: One of the stars of Atlantica Ship Works' design division, Suez-Albariño, is being wooed by Vizon to head its own starship manufacturing startup. Wined and dined in a manner utterly out of keeping with what he is used to, the brilliant engineer finds himself very tempted. ASW leadership is aware of his wavering loyalty and has cut Suez-Albariño out of Project Titan, adding fuel to the fire.

Nova Portland Gate: Recently, Atlantica Ship Works undertook one of the largest projects of its existence. With the intense need to build up its mining operations, it started building a new jump gate orbiting one of its larger shipyards. Many smaller-scale companies lined up to get contracts for the job and provide crews and material. Construction on the gate has continued for the past several years. Upon completion, Nova Portland Gate will open up one of the greatest expansions of frontier space in over three decades.

Project Titan: The goal of Project Titan is to design and manufacture the first super star carrier—a starship so large that it can carry multiple striker squadrons and utilize cruisers as auxiliary craft. Atlantica Ship Works hopes to use the super-carrier to win an exclusive contract with the SSA, ruin Vizon’s fledgling starship manufacturing ventures, and besiege Echo to crush the Monarchs and seize the planet’s critanium.



GORSHT MANUFACTURING

“The power to get the job done.”

Much of the major production found in the corporate worlds and beyond only happens due to Gorsht Manufacturing. The company makes power supplies and heavy equipment used for mining and similar ventures. It also produces some of the best-performing starship engines on the market. ASW buys a good percentage of these engines.

Though the money from engines and parts alone would support the company, an increased focus on mining to fuel the resurgent colonization boom has led to tremendous sales of mining equipment. It seems odd, then, that the largest producer of mining equipment doesn’t own or operate any major mining operations. Gorsht used an innovative approach to gain mining interests without all the effort. It works with thousands of independent miners across the Galaxy. This gives Gorsht a reputation as a “pro-worker” company, something the advertisers love to play up in commercials.

Gorsht did not do this for the public relations benefit; it just made good business sense. Working with a collection of independent mining companies and co-ops keeps its investments decentralized. If an attack happens to one operation, the supply chain is not disrupted.

The Belters Union poses a real threat to this operation. The Belters have tried on multiple occasions to bring independent companies and their workforces into the Union, but they have met stiff resistance. The Belters are nothing if not persistent, however, and their takeover is inevitable. This would force Gorsht to negotiate with the Syndicate.

As a counter, Gorsht secretly started to scout its own mining sites. While it wants to maintain its maverick image and independent associates, it doesn’t want to be forced to deal with the Belters (who would hold all the cards in such a scenario).

The other threat to Gorsht comes from Vizon. Vizon’s expansion comes at the expense of the companies they acquire, usually as hostile takeovers. Vizon has already attempted to gain leverage over Gorsht multiple times.

Gorsht, feeling the pressure from Vizon, has attempted to improve its already good relations with the Star Systems Alliance. The SSA needs Gorsht’s heavy equipment and minerals for its own expansion, and Gorsht actively courts the SSA for more business. Right now, the SSA obtains services and refueling on Gorsht-held worlds, increasing the navy’s presence. The contract for these services has increased Gorsht Manufacturing’s profits and the security of its worlds.

The other corporations watch the growing cooperation between Gorsht and the SSA with trepidation. Some fear Gorsht will petition to join the SSA. For now, Gorsht just wants to shore up its companies to avoid trouble with the Belters or Vizon. However, should the relationship continue to grow, it may cause the other corporations to start working against Gorsht. They feel that if one corporation’s worlds rejoin the SSA, the entire region will weaken.

NOTABLE DETAILS

Gorsht Expeditionary Division: Gorsht Manufacturing is building up its expeditionary forces, and others are concerned. Some believe Gorsht seeks to establish deep space colonies to ensure its existence as a corporation and

government. Others go further and suppose that the increased cooperation between Gorsht and the SSA indicates they are working together on this expansion project. Still others think that the corporation discovered something out there, but Gorsht is hiding its findings.

Roberta Sadiki Zeine: Gorsht's COO is, at heart, a patriot. Possibly alone among the major executives in the corporate worlds, she believes in the civil rights and freedoms that the government claims to uphold. Though she dares not admit her ambitions to anyone except her wife and children, she is actively working to reintegrate the Gorsht planets back into the SSA. Doing so puts her at risk of an "unfortunate accident" at the hands of a rival corporation...or a rival Gorsht executive.

Space Whales: They may be slow and they may be ugly, but Gorsht Manufacturing bulk cargo transports (colloquially known as "space whales") are ubiquitous throughout the galaxy. They are nearly as common a sight as Atlantica Ship Works vessels—which is why an alliance of Oridium Nebula pirates is scheming to hijack a small fleet. Once armed, these rugged vessels would enable the pirates to close in on unsuspecting targets with ease.



PRAXOR & GIMBLE PHARMACEUTICALS

"We know what's good for you!"

Praxor & Gimble (P&G) is the leading manufacturer and distributor of pharmaceutical and agricultural products. The company currently devotes much of its research and development

ADVENTURE SEED: ISOLATION

Praxor & Gimble security has received intelligence that Nuit Praxor's life is in immediate danger. Since the heroes happen to be near the CEO's home, they are given temporary security clearance and tasked with keeping her safe until corporate security personnel arrive. Nuit Praxor is bemused by the threat but allows the heroes to take protective measures. Her housekeeper seems frightened, but secretly uses her psionic powers to undermine and sabotage the heroes' efforts. Is she the assassin they've been warned about? Or is there another team of killers on its way—perhaps posing as a security team?

to anti-aging medicines and combat drugs. P&G also makes technology to help prevent bone loss in asteroid miners.

Praxor & Gimble's high profits come mostly from medications and genetically modified foods. The company maintains multiple worlds to grow the crops needed to sustain its high production levels. Many of these farms and manufacturing facilities are automated, which helps increase efficiency and ensure high yields. Compared to the rest of the corporate worlds, Praxor & Gimble has the highest degree of automation, and uses virtually no synths in its workforce.

Automation allows P&G worlds to have lower populations than other corporate worlds. The sparse population means that those living on P&G worlds are more insular. They shun direct contact with strangers and instead choose to interact through virtual means.

The residents communicate mostly via the HyperNet. They embrace HyperReality sports and other interactive entertainment. Praxor & Gimble hosts the annual HyperReality sports championships. Many talented hypertechns test their mettle here, drawing recruiters as well.

Although the major corporations are often at odds with the SSA, P&G depends on the Alliance to purchase its wares. While not its only customer by any means, the SSA continues

to be the biggest and most profitable. Praxor & Gimble often sides with the SSA to garner favor and maintain lucrative military contracts.

This favor shown to the SSA has repercussions. Vizon often lashes out at Praxor & Gimble. Fortunately, Vizon relies on chemicals from P&G to manufacture the millions of synths its factories create each year. Vizon would lose trillions without these components. Therefore, it is rare for its people to openly attack P&G, but they do engage in many subtle acts of retaliation. Many important executives among Praxor & Gimble's board of directors have experienced untimely deaths.

The influx of money and employees from the SSA allows P&G to expand its corporate interests. This includes exploring new fields of biotechnology and new frontier worlds to sell to. Praxor & Gimble's continued expansion makes the company a target for a Vizon hostile takeover, but the P&G board believes the risk is worth it.

Vizon may not pose the only threat to P&G. The SSA sees exploiting Praxor & Gimble's cooperation as an opportunity to annex some corporate worlds. Praxor & Gimble knows this and takes advantage of it. The company encourages a close working relationship with the SSA military, and sometimes even shares scouting missions with it. While the SSA may see this as P&G growing reliant on the Alliance, the corporation sees it as a way to build influence with the other corporations, and insurance against aggression from corporate rivals. This dangerous game could put the company on top, or it could backfire.

NOTABLE DETAILS

Code Name Gilgamesh: The remote planet Panacea houses P&G's most top-secret project. Code Name Gilgamesh intends to end aging, allowing organic species to live forever. Employees on the edge of retirement are given the opportunity to volunteer for the project in lieu of a pension. Many find their stays on Panacea brief, succumbing to screaming deaths in experiments gone wrong. Another project, code named Lazarus, has a very low success rate. Most subjects are only able to function as near-mindless automatons. A few rare specimens have become something more.

Nuit Praxor: Unlike most large corporations, Praxor & Gimble is a family-owned company. Ownership is split between the arusan Praxors

and the human Gimbles. CEO Nuit Praxor lives alone on a small moon, where she breeds exotic hybrid plants and uses HyperReality to stay in touch with the company. The jolly housekeeper who is her only companion is secretly a Vizon psy-op assassin biding her time.



REMIS ENGINEERING

"We engineer the future!"

Remis Engineering deals in high-tech goods, and leads the corporate worlds in developing the best weapons and security systems. The company's high-quality weapons, especially heavy weapons, remain in high demand across the galaxy. Its security systems include automated weapons systems and, most notably, combat drones.

Remis Engineering's combat drones boost the effectiveness of any security force. Unlike synths, they cannot develop sentience, though they possess basic AI. This has increased their popularity since the Corvo incident.

Remis Engineering's competitors question how the drones seem so capable. How can they operate so efficiently without being true, synth-level AI? Some suggest that Remis uses unauthorized xek technology to create its drones. While the xek have generously shared their technology with their allies in the SSA (specifically to help in its war effort against the nohgotha), they have no such arrangements with any of the corporations. Adapting xek tech without permission could have legal, political, and (since xek are themselves living machines) ethical ramifications.

In truth, Remis does utilize reverse-engineered alien technology. Close examinations of some drones provide evidence of this, though Remis Engineering's lawyers deny it in court. However, Remis is not alone. Many companies picked over the corpse of the Armageddon War's battlefields searching for potential tech breakthroughs. Thankfully, the xek don't seem to notice, or care, if others use technology of xek origin.

One of the major customers for Remis Engineering drones is the security division of the Arusan Trade Conglomerate. ATC security officers regularly have multiple drones accompany them on their inspections.

Beyond combat drones, the company's advanced drone tech could lead to the development of automated planetary scout and colonization ships. The speed at which drones colonize worlds could give Remis an edge in its expansion.

Remis also sells a wide range of work drones, though this puts the company into competition with Vizon's synth sales. Vizon doesn't like competition, and has met the challenge with espionage and sabotage. In response, Remis has banned entry to its worlds to non-sentient Vizon synths, and Vizon now bans Remis drones on its worlds. The two corporations have not entered direct warfare, but it may be on the horizon.

Remis has started reaching out to other corporations that do not belong to the Big Five. It hopes to unite many smaller corporations to hold off Vizon's constant advances in hostile takeover attempts. The smaller corporations that have allied with Remis Engineering see this as their chance to increase their standing in the corporate worlds. Lines are now being drawn, and the tensions among corporations continue to worsen.

NOTABLE DETAILS

Talos 5: Remis operates an unregistered facility on a remote planet that was the site of heavy fighting in the Armageddon War. This heavily protected complex does not allow anyone near the planet's surface without an escort, and casual visitors are not welcome. The research teams deep in the fortified bunker continue to dissect xek casualties for more secrets. The xek might care more about this if they knew Remis scientists were also vivisectioning members of their species that went missing in action.

Ywain Dylan: Xek scream in staccato bursts of machine noise pitched higher than humans can hear. Talos 5 lead researcher Ywain Dylan wonders if the shrieks he hears are a product of his imagination or simply an increased sensitivity resulting from years in the bunker. Increasingly, his conscience gnaws at him. His thoughts turn to the wife and child he left years ago. He wants out but knows his contract is ironclad. He will need help to escape this life.

GALACTIC GOVERNMENTS

The galaxy is divided into countless political entities, each with its own laws and policies. On the galactic scale, most of these governments are tiny, and administer only a handful of planets. The major governments—the Arusan Trade Conglomerate, the Board of Directors for the corporate worlds, the Star Systems Alliance, and the Septrid Imperium—oversee hundreds of planets, many of which have their own local governments.

Both SAINTs and Synners would be advised to know what government they're operating under. Something that's perfectly legal in one territory may be a capital crime in another.

Below are some of the most prominent governments in the known galaxy.

ARUSAN TRADE CONGLOMERATE

The arusans have been a starfaring species for longer than most. Blessed with an abundance of habitable worlds in the Valasardin star system, they quickly outgrew their home and looked further out.

As their colony and mining worlds expanded further, the arusans encountered several other species and began a trade network. This mutually beneficial relationship made the arusans exceptionally wealthy. Eventually, they combined various manufacturing and trade concerns into one conglomerate that acts as a de facto interplanetary government.

The arusans have allied with the alau, the mentis, and the thovin, offering them excellent trade deals in exchange for ongoing peaceful relations. The arusans maintain a similar trade alliance with the SSA, and have been generous

in lowering their normal rates to help the SSA recover from the Armageddon War.

Not all is well in the Arusan Trade Conglomerate, however. In the wake of the war, a new faction has risen that touts a more militant approach to their extraplanetary dealings. They have even commissioned the construction of new weapons of war. How this turns out remains to be seen.

CORPORATE WORLDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The corporate worlds are the cleanest, newest, and most secure worlds occupied to date. Almost every single one was a resource or manufacturing world before the Armageddon War. While many were damaged in the war, their vast wealth and resources, coupled with their exceptional efficiency, allowed them to rebuild more quickly than the core worlds (which were likewise damaged) or the rim worlds (which were devastated).

The corporations known as the Big Five dominate the corporate worlds and the unified Board of Directors. The Board meets monthly to plan and coordinate major pricing controls, security, and other issues affecting the corporations' shared sector of space. All votes count equally on the Board; however, Vizon, the largest of the five, holds greater influence than the other corporations. The other four risk conflict and potential fallout if they go against Vizon, so they often favor the corporation's wishes.

While the Board sets shared policy and helps maintain peace between the corporations, it lacks the resources to enforce its policies without the support of the corporations themselves. As a result, corporations are free to set and enforce their own laws, so long as they don't go against the Board's policies. Since those corporations are the same ones making the policies, it's rarely a problem for them—though smaller corporations without representation on the Board are often left fuming.

COUNCIL OF SEVEN THOUSAND

As followers of the seven-fingered way, the mentis are committed to cooperation, equality, and building a society that works for the betterment of all. It is up to the Council to

shape that society, but its members are guided by the people who voted for them, and whom they represent. Every major issue is put to a vote of the full Council, which can take days or even weeks to resolve. Such dedication to democracy isn't fast or efficient, but it does ensure that everyone has a voice in the Council's decisions.

FELLOWSHIP OF FREE ALAU

The leaders of each alau colony and colony ship send representatives back to Arkus every few years for a grand convocation, where the Fellowship Assembly rules on clan disputes and sets galaxy-wide policies for the alau. Between meetings, however, alau outside of Arkus don't have much to do with the Assembly. Although they stay in touch with the rest of the Fellowship, the politics and policies of each colony are handled internally.

FREE DUNAR REPUBLIC

The small dunar colony on Sozin has been recognized as an independent nation-world by the Arusan Trade Conglomerate, the SSA, and the Vulkolasi Union. Though Sozin is barely inhabited, millions of dunar throughout the galaxy consider the moon their homeworld and claim citizenship.

Dunar elect reps from Sozin's settlements to convene for a planetary senate. Because few of the colony's decisions have galactic import, most of the dunar diaspora do not vote.

The Free Dunar Republic fields no military, relying instead on protection from the Arusan Trade Conglomerate, the SSA, the Vulkolasi Union, and other sponsoring governments. If Sozin were attacked and no allies came to its aid, though, dunar throughout the galaxy would rush to their chosen home's defense. Between the Jarisk'Krim (see page 148) and the uncounted millions of private dunar starship captains and crew, the Free Dunar Republic could quickly raise a formidable, ragtag navy.

HOPOC REPUBLIC

The Hopoc Republic controls Fodik and several nearby star systems. With typical hopoc enthusiasm, the Republic is busily claiming and colonizing other systems within its reach, offering alliances to non-hopoc spacefaring

neighbors and happily introducing species that haven't mastered spaceflight to the wonders of modern technology.

Every extended hopoc family sends a representative to the senate, which then elects a leader called the Mother or Father of the hopocs. Many roles within the government are traditionally held by specific families, leading to the development of internal alliances that are political parties in all but name.

How the Hopoc Republic will attempt representation for non-hopoc peoples remains an unanswered question. Debate in the senate currently favors either adopting non-hopocs into established hopoc families or allowing non-hopocs to organize into their own extended families and elect their own representatives.

The Hopoc Republic fields a small but powerful navy consisting largely of cruisers and carriers. Rumor holds that they possess several super-carriers capable of transporting squadrons of cruisers, but this is most likely a misinterpretation of the large scale of hopoc vessels.

SEPTRID IMPERIUM

The Septrid Imperium, a constitutional monarchy, maintains an alliance of dozens of colony worlds. The government is very hierarchical and ostensibly meritocratic. The Imperial Assembly is infamous for being the most deliberative governmental body in the galaxy. Planetary legates receive broad administrative powers, allowing them to act with autonomy in the case of local emergencies, but they rarely exercise these powers. The wheels of government turn very slowly in the Septrid Imperium.

One example of this is the ongoing discussion (it is hardly a debate, and certainly too polite to be considered an argument) about the lost septrid homeworld and colonies. The septrids used generation ships to explore space and claim new worlds long before they discovered faster-than-light travel. As such, dozens (possibly scores) of septrid planets remain lost in the vastness of space—including the original septrid homeworld. Discussion has rambled on for a decade about what to do concerning these lost worlds, with no resolution in sight.

Surprisingly, the septrid navy favors a decentralized approach, perhaps in keeping with the species' predatory roots—or perhaps

ADVENTURE SEED: SEPTRID CONTACT

Scout ships have reported encounters with a septrid-like civilization populating a world on the edge of known space. While the imperial government slowly processes this information, a handful of interested parties pool their resources to explore these claims. They hire the heroes to conduct a survey of this potential "lost" world and, if possible, to retrieve one or more of the local inhabitants.

as a response to their instinctive deference to leadership. The navy relies on small (but heavily armed and armored) freighters and fighters. It allows individual pilots and teams to swiftly make their own decisions in rapid response to dangers and threats to the empire's security.

STAR SYSTEMS ALLIANCE

The Star Systems Alliance is a parliamentary democracy headquartered on Terra but made up of representatives native to, and elected from, all member worlds. The deliberative nature of the SSA means much power is vested in local planetary governments (most of which are themselves parliamentary democracies) to respond to local crises. The SSA retains ultimate military and regulatory power, guaranteeing a long list of freedoms to its citizens.

The Star Systems Alliance was once one of the largest powers in the known galaxy. The Arusan Conglomerate was a larger trade power, and the Vulkolasi Union had many small colonies, but neither possessed the sheer drive and desire to expand that the SSA had early on. The SSA had extensive resources they could tap into which, in turn, fed their ability to continue expanding.

The devastation visited on the SSA and its colonies during the Armageddon War was immeasurable, both in property and life. It left the collective psyche of the SSA scarred, and it has taken decades to recover.

The SSA is currently recuperating, and has instituted multiple plans and policies to restore its former strength. It will take time, not just to rebuild property, but to restore the populations of the colonies. Substantial incentives are offered to spur colonists to seek their fortunes in “the second great expansion of the SSA”; at least that’s what the colonial office of expansion has labeled it.

SSA NAVY

For years, the SSA poured enormous resources into maintaining and expanding its navy. The investment was seen as more of a precaution than a necessity, which meant the government was divided on how essential it was to maintain peak readiness. The navy saw little action beyond quelling the occasional uprising, which offered the fleet minimal challenge.

After peacefully meeting a number of other species, the SSA decided to reduce the size of its navy and focus its resources elsewhere. Shortly thereafter, the nohgotha attacked, sparking the Armageddon War. What remained of the navy would soon be pushed beyond its limits.

Today, the Star Systems Alliance Navy is one of the most advanced in the galaxy, but also one of the smallest. After bearing the brunt of the nohgotha attacks during the Armageddon War, the Terran worlds and fleets were devastated. In the aftermath, the Terran government—the heart of the SSA—focused on rebuilding its Navy to withstand threats on the level of the nohgotha and beyond, embarking on a decade of planning, redesign, and building.

The brain trust that created the new SSA strategy for the navy sought to address a host of issues presented by the war. One of the leading problems was a shortage of manpower, and this became the catalyst for many of the programs and designs that followed. It brought about the synth program, ships that were automated to reduce manpower needs, performance-enhancing systems like exoskeletons, and the ubiquitous Star Marine armor. Today, the SSA Navy is a cutting-edge machine with powerful warships, weapons, and highly trained, incredibly effective soldiers.

The SSA Navy is currently centered on protecting the core worlds and military facilities.

It answers to threats across the galaxy, but only in measured and carefully calculated responses. For now, the loss of a fleet or a major ship would be a significant blow to the recovery and strength of the SSA.

The enemies of the SSA know it’s only a matter of time before the navy returns to its prewar strength. Factories are continuously churning out ships, equipment, and synths. Sooner or later, the SSA will become capable of once more exercising its authority over its former territories. The Syndicate is especially aware of this eventuality, and actively seeks to put up roadblocks to progress using any means necessary.

ARROW

With the resources of the SSA stretched thin and the navy not yet up to full strength, the SSA needed a small force capable of rapidly responding to interstellar emergencies. Such a force could handle operations like rescues, recovery, and smaller-scale combats. Thus, the Assault Rescue Recon Operations Wing, or ARROW, was formed.

Generally tasked to operate within a given region, ARROW teams have access to a transport, two to four fighters, a shuttle, and an armored personnel carrier. Each team is assigned a landing crew and a ship operations crew. Most tours employ less than 30 personnel, and these men and women are known for their stubborn loyalty to the SSA and their resourcefulness in the field.

ARROW teams are dispatched around the galaxy, patrolling various hotspots considered a threat to the security and stability of the SSA’s interests. This means that most ARROW teams patrol areas around the rim worlds...especially near those controlled by the Syndicate.

The SSA wants control of the rim worlds again, but lacking the naval manpower to do so, the Alliance uses ARROW to make a show of its presence. This often puts an ARROW unit in conflict with local forces, and a skilled captain is required to negotiate the perils of this undertaking. Fortunately, most ARROW teams consist of slightly older and more experienced crews who have requested this assignment.



THOVIN ASCENDANCY

The thovin have a complex caste system with hundreds of levels of hierarchy. At the top of this social pyramid are the Ascended Regents, who oversee the bureaucracy, policies, and laws that govern every aspect of a thovin's life. The system is self-sustaining, as the thovin of the upper castes ensure that those of the lower castes follow the rules and remain within their stations.

VULKOLASI UNION

The Vulkolasi and Nahkyra Union of Morgar and Sismistra—more commonly known simply as the Vulkolasi Union—is a representative democracy made up of the vulkolasi, the nakyra, and the species of their colony worlds. The founding species evolved independently on their individual worlds—the vulkolasi on Morgar and the nahkyra on Morgar's moon Sismistra—and did not discover each other until late in their mutual development.



The vulkolasi and the nahkyra established the Vulkolasi Union following a decade-long conflict that began when the species first met. All decisions affecting their systems are made by a combined council of their worlds' governments. Colonies are established together, and it is rare to find a planet with a large population of one species and not the other.

They became aware of each other after independently inventing the telescope. After the nahkyra developed spaceflight, they landed on Morgar and attempted to establish a peaceful alliance. However, a misunderstanding led to a short and brutal war, leaving both sides weaker for it. Peace was negotiated, and over the last few centuries, neither side has found reason to fight the other again.

The Vulkolasi Union suffered like the other starfaring species during the Armageddon War and has retreated to protect its colonies and rebuild its forces. While the Union did not join the Star Systems Alliance as a full member, it did

agree to become an ally and come to the aid of the SSA if the need arises again.

Trade has reopened with the other worlds of the known territories. The Vulkolasi Union, however, remains distrustful of the corporate worlds and has little love for the Syndicate. It has offered to send additional ships to the rim worlds to help curb piracy and the Syndicate's power. The Star Systems Alliance weighs its options, and will most likely integrate the Vulkolasi Union ships into its patrols in the near future.

ZAKA HIGH BUREAUCRACY

With efficiency and order as the central tenets of their society, the zaka long ago organized a bureaucratic administration that controls all aspects of life. "Do what you have to do" is the overriding principle.

When a zaka reaches the age of maturity, he is offered the opportunity to enter one of four avenues of service: the bureaucracy, the military, technical development, or labor. The first two fields are self-explanatory. Technical development places a zaka in the field of applied sciences, creating new technologies to advance the zaka species. The term for "laborer" more closely translates to "one who does what is needed." Such individuals do what the bureaucracy tells them, moving from assignment to assignment as required.

All zaka take quadrennial exams to determine their rank, receiving demotions or promotions within their sector of service based on the results. Bureaucrats may eventually work their way up in the government—even attaining the executive position of High Magistrate—while zaka in the military or technical development may attain positions of command in their services. Laborers are rewarded with seniority, making their reassignment to other jobs less likely.

The zaka space navy favors cruisers and carriers. The zaka talent for efficiency means the crews work in lockstep, making them some of the most effective combatants in space. Targets are chosen based on threat assessment and picked apart by precisely targeted salvos coordinated between all of a ship's guns. Once the biggest threat is gone, the zaka target the next most dangerous, methodically working their way through the enemy.



SAINT

In a galaxy wracked with corruption, and with the Syndicate in full control of an entire sector of space, the Star Systems Alliance was desperate. They needed to find a way to fight against the power of the Syndicate and do it with limited resources.

Traditional methods would not work against the criminals in the rim worlds; they held all the power there. Small-scale undercover work had yielded some success, but even that was limited. It was nearly impossible to get agents in deep cover who could infiltrate the Syndicate factions at a meaningful level.

Project SAINT (Sector Agent INtragalactic Taskforce) was not created through the normal process of government oversight and regulation. The SSA turned to Commander Robert Inglis, then current Director of Intelligence for the Rim Worlds, and asked what he would do if given the opportunity.

Inglis was accustomed to working with double agents as part of the spy game. He suggested a full-scale agency dedicated to turning criminals into active agents for the SSA counter-criminal effort. His superiors were interested, but they didn't know how to secure the budget for such an endeavor without word leaking out. Inglis came back with his own plan: all he needed was a mothballed battle cruiser from the Armageddon War and a small group of personnel to get started.

With a handpicked team, the agency began recruiting new agents. They went straight to the prisons and offered those with lengthy sentences

the option to work off their debt to society faster if they agreed to join the agency.

These agents were released back to the rim worlds, where a few attempted to go rogue and nearly botched the entire operation. Using his contacts, Inglis enlisted the help of a xek scientist. Together they designed the Neural Inhibitor Controller, or NIC. This device is a low-level AI tied to the target's nervous system that judges whether he is following orders. If not, the NIC can disable the Synner or inflict extreme pain to correct his present course.

With the NIC in place, agents were now unable to betray the program or its goals to anyone. The NIC enforced compliance with the goals of the agency but allowed for tremendous leeway in accomplishing these goals.

SAINTs are anything but saintly when it comes to doing their job; getting dirty is in the job description. In fact, it's pretty hard to tell the difference between a SAINT and Synner unless you're in a position to know.

SAINT ORGANIZATION

SAINT is composed of seven different divisions, each with its own purview and goals. Each division has both internal personnel (who work within the bureaucracy of the organization and the SSA itself) and external field agents. Headquarters for each division are located on board the SAINT cruiser. (The exception is Law Enforcement, which, as a public-facing division, maintains a public headquarters on Terra.)

Due to the sensitive nature of the work, SAINT leadership keeps the divisions as compartmentalized as possible. The benefit of this policy is that if a member of one division is compromised, it's difficult for him to damage or infiltrate any other divisions. The downside is that the divisions sometimes find themselves working at cross-purposes, as their short-term goals don't always align.

Below is an overview of each division.

CENTRAL COMMAND

The smallest and most important division is made up of the leaders of Sector Agent INtragalactic Taskforce.

Robert Inglis remains the SAINT commander. He is advised by the senior officers representing each of the other divisions. It is his job, and that of Central Command itself, to coordinate the efforts

of the taskforce for maximum effectiveness. The division also works with the SSA and its other agencies as necessary.

Central Command has no dedicated field operatives. Commander Inglis can't afford to risk members with detailed knowledge of SAINT being captured or killed. If he needs work done in the field, Inglis finds the most capable agents through the Asset Management division, and oversees their mission personally.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Law Enforcement division is the public-facing arm of SAINT.

Most star systems in SSA territory have their own Law Enforcement stations. Enforcers assigned to a station are responsible for civilian safety and security in their sector. The number of stations and enforcers varies widely based on a sector's population, wealth, and political influence.

In core systems, there may be multiple stations on each inhabited planet, each manned by emergency response teams, crack investigation squads, and dedicated safety patrols.

In less inhabited areas, the station may host only safety patrols, which double as armored response teams if the need arises. Such stations are more concerned with offering critical aid to those in need than actively hunting down lawbreakers.

On those rim worlds where the Syndicate hasn't completely taken over yet, the enforcers often favor protecting the lives and property of the rich and powerful. They might take an interest in helping other citizens if it's deemed worthwhile, but resources are thin on the rim, and they need to prioritize.

Central Command is aware of corruption within the Law Enforcement division. This is expected. It's even allowed, though strictly monitored and subtly controlled. If the Syndicate sees SAINT as a corrupt and corruptible institution, its members will be less likely to suspect it of carrying out sophisticated undercover operations.

Law Enforcement stations come in all shapes and sizes, but all are highly secure. Some are bunker-like structures, some are modern office buildings, and some are space stations hovering in orbit. In the more remote regions, some Law Enforcement stations are actually spaceships that patrol the systems in their jurisdiction.

Members of the Law Enforcement division are aware of SAINT's other divisions, but not its undercover operations. Most enforcers see the other divisions as parts of the bureaucracy that they're glad they don't have to deal with. Ignorance, for them, truly is bliss.

INTELLIGENCE

The purpose of the Intelligence division is to collect information about the Syndicate, then analyze that data for use by the other divisions.

The division is specifically looking for information regarding the following:

The roles, allegiances, and motivations of high-ranking people within the Syndicate

The locations, defenses, and operations of Syndicate holdings

The Syndicate's current activities, future plans, and long-term goals

Although the Intelligence division is focused on the Syndicate, it picks up details about the various corporations, guilds, and other organizations in the process. This data goes into its analysis as well, and may prove useful to agents working within those spheres of influence.

The Intelligence division boasts roughly a hundred agents on board the SAINT cruiser, and another hundred scattered throughout the rim worlds and elsewhere. Intelligence field agents typically work alone, but they may be issued SAINT operatives to assist with particularly sensitive or dangerous missions. Intelligence missions may include the following:

Gear Drop: Install or retrieve surveillance equipment, such as cameras, transmitters, or computer hacking modules.

Surveillance: Watch a specific person or place. This could mean conducting a stakeout or actively trailing a target without getting caught.

Material Acquisition: Secure sensitive materials. Perhaps break into an office and take pictures of evidence or download data. Or maybe monitor a wireless data node and intercept the data it transmits.

Interrogation: Get the answers from the person who has them, using chemicals, threats, violence, or any other effective means.

Source Retrieval: Help rescue an informant who has been feeding the division secret information.

OPERATIONS

Whereas the Intelligence division acquires and analyzes information regarding the Syndicate, it is the Operations division that turns that data into actionable plans.

The Operations headquarters area on the SAINT cruiser is incredibly secure, second only to Central Command. The division is the most isolated, and communicates primarily through official dispatches. Its emphasis on security borders on paranoia, but its work is essential to the entire SAINT project. If Operations is compromised, the whole system collapses.

The primary function of SAINT agents is to infiltrate and undermine the Syndicate. The primary function of Operations is to give those agents the missions they need to carry out.

Missions may include the following:

Blackmail: Coerce a Syndicate member to betray an ally, surrender an asset, or otherwise give in to the will of SAINT...or else face the consequences of the truth being exposed.

Sabotage: Damage physical assets. This could mean anything from unplugging a single, essential machine to planting a bomb on a Syndicate-run space station. When the mission's done, the Syndicate has one less tool in its arsenal.

Misinformation: Insert lies, rumors, and gossip to sow mistrust among Syndicate members. Maybe it's an "accidentally" misdirected electronic message. Maybe it's a planted news article. Or maybe it's a literal whisper in the ear.

Theft: The Syndicate holds many assets that SAINT doesn't want it to have, such as weapons, spaceships, data files, or evidence they're using to blackmail leaders of the SSA.

Assassination: Sometimes the shortest route to justice is between the eyes. Operations does not call for assassination often or lightly, but recognizes it as a necessary evil.

Capture: SAINT needs a Syndicate member for questioning or to stand trial for her crimes. Law Enforcement can't get near her, but the SAINT agents can.

Subversion: The Syndicate is a complex organization full of moving parts. Operations knows exactly where to apply pressure to disrupt it.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

The blandly named Asset Management division is responsible for recruiting, managing, and allocating sentient assets: that is, SAINT agents.

The division has the fewest staff on board the SAINT cruiser. Their office processes the various asset requests from the other divisions. Once the Logistics division has a mission, it's up to Asset Management to find and assign the right agents to the mission. (Other divisions may also request agents to help them with their projects, and Asset Management may provide them, but Logistics always has priority.)

Asset Management has the most operatives in the field of any division. Some of them find and meet with potential future agents, while others work as handlers for active agents. Field operatives are hardened veterans with experience in the military, espionage, or organized crime. Some of them were once Synners themselves.

Among all the divisions, Asset Management is the most clandestine. Its operatives have allies, equipment, and safe houses hidden away throughout the rim worlds. Asset Management even maintains a small strike force for retrieving assets and handling other such emergencies. Logistics and Central Command are aware of some of the division's hidden resources, but choose not to pry. The fewer people who know the secrets, the fewer who can spill them.

LOGISTICS

The largest division is Logistics. It's this division's responsibility to acquire whatever SAINT requires, then get it to wherever in the galaxy it's needed. Logistics has over a hundred people in the headquarters, and twice as many in the field, all working furiously to make sure the Law Enforcement and Asset Management divisions are well stocked.

When equipping Law Enforcement, Logistics must source spaceships, weapons, armor, space suits, and countless other items, then transport them to the various Law Enforcement stations around the galaxy. Logistics has its own small fleet of ships for making deliveries, but it has to rely on third-party brokers and shippers for most of what it does.

Outfitting the agents of Asset Management is even harder: Logistics must juggle all these variables while hiding both the sources and the recipients of the various goods. (It's hard to

maintain a cover as a Synner if you're receiving a delivery from SAINT.) Furthermore, Asset Management requires items that may be illegal, such as hacked ID chips, illicit substances, or endangered animals.

Logistics field agents are part smuggler, part warehouse manager, and entirely overworked. It's not uncommon for them to request help from Asset Management, which can send SAINT agents to help with the following:

Securing Goods: Buying two tons of laser rifles is one thing, but getting them into the transport before the hijackers arrive is another. Even easy pickups can be challenging ("Grab the shuttlecraft while you're in the area") if there are extenuating circumstances ("But watch out, it's a war zone").

Arranging Services: Logistics has a need for smugglers, forgers, hackers, underground doctors, and a small army of dockworkers who know how to keep their mouths shut. Deniable assets are also needed to hire these people on the division's behalf.

Making Deliveries: If picking up goods is dangerous, dropping them off is even more so—especially if trying to maintain cover.

Escort Personnel: Logistics occasionally has to move people as well. Sometimes it's an employee, sometimes it's a contractor. In any case, if they need a SAINT agent escort, it's going to be exciting.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Research and Development is responsible for creating unique, high-tech devices that SAINT agents can use on missions.

R&D is not populated by mad scientists. All personnel are subject to regular psychological evaluations, and the unstable ones are rejected. The engineers do, however, sometimes take requests. If given enough lead time and black budget, they can put together any sort of questionable gadget—and might even be able to disguise it as something else.

While R&D doesn't have outside operatives per se, the division does sometimes request Asset Management to help field test some of its more dangerous inventions. When that happens, SAINT agents may find themselves wielding some hazardous new equipment that is neither guaranteed to work, nor guaranteed not to explode.

SAINT OPERATIONS

SAINT recruits its undercover agents from across the galaxy. These recruits are often chosen and picked up prior to their imprisonment. Charges are dropped or the cases against them made to look weak. This way, the agency doesn't have to create complicated backstories explaining how a criminal escaped prison. Nevertheless, some prisoners are offered a chance to get out of prison if they seem valuable enough.

Currently there are over 50 teams in operation. Coordinating them and preventing an accidental dustup between fellow agents is a real concern. To date that hasn't happened, but the risk is real, and every agent is aware that in the field, there is no way to easily identify a fellow SAINT.

When a SAINT team is released to begin its infiltration of a Syndicate faction, its members are provided with a ship and basic Gear no different than any other criminal may possess. The rest of the Gear and resources a SAINT team requires for their operation is up to them to acquire.

Some agents get Gear from their new employers or steal what they need. A few have even managed to set up small criminal organizations of their own. These can grow to rival some of the smaller factions, and agents sometimes use this position to barter with and merge with larger factions.

Once established as a "legitimate" operation, the agents begin to funnel intelligence back to their handler. The operations that agents undertake can vary with each team's mission

parameters set by their handler. These can change with time and available opportunities.

One standard goal is to locate an organization's leadership, source of revenue, and alliances. Then the team seeks to sabotage the revenue sources, turn leaders against each other, and cause allies to abandon each other or fight amongst themselves. This is a careful balancing act, as all-out war won't help the situation any more than having the Syndicate in place.

SAINT wants to destabilize the power structure of the Syndicate and gather data about its operations. The long-term plan is to weaken the Syndicate enough to allow the SSA to return to the rim worlds and assert control. Whether this plan will succeed remains to be seen.

THE BLOOD SABER

SAINT headquarters does not reside on any single planet, though there are offices and locations for agents across the star systems. Instead, SAINT HQ is located on a battle cruiser left over from the Armageddon War, converted to serve as a mobile base. This mobile base assists in keeping SAINT's location a secret and provides rapid response support wherever it's needed.

The battle cruiser, renamed the *Blood Saber*, has additional hangars, living quarters, and other facilities that were added while stripping off some of the heavier weapon systems to make room for the changes. The ship has multiple dedicated HyperNet nodes and is able to monitor intragalactic comms.

THE BLOOD SABER

SIZE	HAND.	TOP SPEED	TOUGH.	WOUNDS	CREW	ENERGY	MODS
25 (Gargantuan +1)	-4	16	45 (20)	10	1000	90	100 (6)

MODS: Artificial Gravity, 10× Armor, AM/ECM, Crew Quarters, FTL Comms, 3× Hangar, 2× Jump Drive Mark V, Shields, Secure Interior.

WEAPONS:

4× QUAD LINKED HEAVY LASERS (Turret): Range 150/300/600, Damage 4d10 (V), RoF 1, AP 30, Cauterize, Overcharge.

2× TORPEDO TUBE (Fixed Front): 14× Heavy torpedoes, Range 300/600/1200 (VII), Damage 8d12, AP 40, Guided, LBT.

SAINT has grown much larger over the last decade or so. The original battle cruiser has seen multiple upgrades to its systems and interior space. With several hangars that can accommodate shuttles, medium freighters, and a complement of fighters, the *Blood Saber* is a starship capable of holding its own against minor conflicts if the need arises.



THE SYNDICATE

The Syndicate is a parasite on the rim worlds. It feeds on the poor and desperate, and grows stronger each day. After the war, the SSA and other galactic powers retreated from the rim worlds. The subsequent power vacuum emboldened criminals of all stripes, and area governments struggled to rein in the lawlessness and chaos. The Syndicate offered the quickest path to peace.

The Syndicate eventually brought order to the anarchy. The rim prospered once more and regained some semblance of normality under Syndicate control. By the time the rim world ruling bodies realized what was happening, it was too late: they were fully in the grip of the Syndicate.

The Syndicate's vast wealth and resources allow it to rule with an iron fist. The Syndicate's ruling body, the Council of Thirteen, commands a small navy, which it can use to crush any form of rebellion. The SSA does not yet have the fleet or troops to spend on another war, much less to police and clean up the individual worlds currently controlled by the Syndicate.

The Syndicate is made up of 12 factions and the Council of Thirteen that runs it. These groups are detailed below.

THE THIRTEEN

The Council of Thirteen runs the Syndicate. This elite group faces a difficult task. They are the real government of the rim worlds and must ensure that the other dominant factions do their

part and play nice. The governing body is made up of a representative from each faction and a single mysterious director. The group also includes a small force of agents who see to the day-to-day functions of the organization.

The Thirteen oversee everything. They must keep all factions in check and working as an allied force, which requires a firm hand. Opposing the Thirteen can mean complete elimination. In the beginning, a Bratva brigade did not follow the Thirteen's orders. Within days, the offending Bratva were not only dead, but completely *gone*: accounts, property, and records of them ceased to exist. This example acts as a reminder to all others: do not cross the Thirteen.

Every faction is beholden to the council. All factions pay their dues, and that money runs the Syndicate. The Thirteen often provide banking services to members, making sure each can function and aid the larger organization. A representative for the council oversees all major deals that factions make. In matters of grave importance, and sometimes for reasons that are unfathomable, the council makes the decisions unilaterally.

Structure: An unknown director commands the council of 12 representatives. The Thirteen's agents deliver all orders from the director and the council representatives.

Location: When the Council of Thirteen meets in person, it usually does so on the planet Echo.

Specialty: The council makes all decisions for the Syndicate. Its members broker major contracts for the factions and between factions, and its agents mediate all disputes among the membership. The Thirteen also keep close tabs on the SSA and the corporate worlds through a network of moles, hackers, and spies.

Allies: Every Syndicate faction claims loyalty to the Thirteen. Many small rim world governments survive due to the council's patronage.

Enemies: Beyond the obvious adversaries—the SSA, their allies, and the corporate worlds—the Thirteen seem to have no enemies. Rumors persist that the Monarchs are looking to overthrow the leadership, but no one can provide evidence of this.

Weaknesses: Their secrecy and small number keep the Thirteen safe from most threats. However, as they grow more comfortable in their position, they make small mistakes that could cost them everything...or at least SAINT hopes.

BELTERS UNION

During the early days of colonization, workers unionized to protect themselves against exploitative employers. The unions' power was limited until things came to a head in the asteroid belt in the Sol system. Conditions in the belt were abhorrent. The number of job-related injuries and deaths became untenable. The workers joined their forces into a unified, violent rebellion. Conditions immediately improved, and the Belters Union was formed.

Today, the Belters Union continues its goal to protect all laborers. Its members rely on the Union to negotiate contracts, protect them, and keep them fairly compensated. Its leaders collect fees from every shipment that goes in or out of one of their docks. Everyone knows: pay now or pay later, but the Belters Union always collects.

Structure: The Belters still use the democratic structure of historical unions. The general membership elects its own local governing council made up of a director and several assistant directors, as well as a treasurer and secretary. Each local council elects a vice president to sit on the executive council with its president, secretary, and treasurer.

Location: The Belters operate throughout the rim worlds and have local headquarters near ports and docks. The Union's headquarters is on Echo due to its position as a trading hub.

Specialty: The Belters control labor in the rim worlds. Central to this is their control of the supply chain. The Belters run every major port; they decide what comes in and out, and what fees need to be paid.

Allies: Everyone wants to remain on good terms with the Belters Union. The Belters have long-standing agreements with the Arusan Trade Conglomerate and remain steadfast partners with the Monarchs. Their working-class roots make them solid allies of the Yakuza. The Union is unique among the Syndicate factions in that it enjoys friendly relations with the SSA Navy and ARROW due to its generally legal enterprise.

Enemies: Despite its dealings with SSA starships, the Union has little love for any government. Belters often face off with pirates and see members of the Cartel as (mostly) friendly rivals.

Weaknesses: Union leadership often takes on any cause for its workers. If there are too many such causes, the Belters can be spread thin.

BLOOD COIN

The Blood Coin is a faction of spies and blackmailers. The Coin offers its services to clients—mostly corporations—but maintains a collection of blackmailed politicians and CEOs to ensure its own wealth and power. When it comes to dirty secrets, if it exists, the Coins will find it. If not, they'll manufacture it.

The Coin uses these same skills to keep its own organization safe. Some factions among the Thirteen questioned the group's inclusion in the council, but quickly changed their minds as information began to leak about their business and members.

The Void and the Coin have an interesting relationship. Both operate in a similar manner, which often brings them into conflict. However, the two groups work hand-in-hand just as often, complementing each other's skill sets. The Coin specializes in the physical elements of spycraft, such as infiltration and elimination, while the Void's hackers provide electronic support.

Structure: The Blood Coin operates much like any spy organization. Its director runs the faction from New Atlantica along with her associate directors, each with his own charges. Among them is the executive director, who handles the regional deputy directors. Every team has a coordinator to run operations for agents with specialized skills.

Location: Most of the organization operates out of the corporate worlds. Its leadership works out of New Atlantica, despite the looming SSA presence.

Specialty: Most of the work the Coin does qualifies as espionage; its members infiltrate groups, steal secrets, and disrupt their clients' adversaries. However, as a group, the Coin excels at blackmail; all the secrets it pilfers make for good material against any group that pays.

Allies: The Coin has almost no allies. Even the Thirteen keep a close eye on the faction. It often works alongside the Void, the two groups pooling their expertise. The Coin also works with both the Assassins Guild and the Bounty Hunters League, sometimes as a contractor, other times as a client.

Enemies: Most of the Syndicate does not trust the Blood Coin. Those with the most to lose—especially the Belters Union, the Monarchs, and the Triad—trust them the least. Those who employ them also keep the Coin at a distance,

LEGACY OF CRIME

While some Syndicate factions have roots in Earth's ancient past, those organizations have long since evolved beyond those origins.

For example, the Yakuza originated as a Japanese organization. But now, centuries later, the faction includes members of all species and ethnic backgrounds. While the Yakuza may include Japanese elements in its traditions, those elements are mixed and combined with dozens of other traditions that have emerged over the centuries of space travel and colonization.

By the same token, criminal enterprises must change and adapt. This means that the group known as the Mafia in the 20th century (for example) may have only a passing resemblance to the organization of the same name in the far future of *Starbreaker*.

Cultures change. Methods change. But so long as there's money to be made in breaking the law, there will always be crime.

as they may be its next target. The SSA would do anything to take the Blood Coins down.

Weaknesses: No one truly trusts a Blood Coin—not even other Coins. When one of their own is in trouble, the Coins may not provide any aid, and power struggles often simmer between faction members.

BRATVA

The Bratva controls the largest and most successful protection racket in the rim worlds. The resources required for this work present yet another opportunity: the arms trade. The faction also provides weapons to countless buyers across the rim.

While its history starts much earlier, the Bratva's modern roots began in the Gulags under the reign of Stalin. The *vory v zakone* ("thieves-in-law") code ensures loyalty and sets the rules for members to live by. The Bratva respects both work and loyalty; anyone who can demonstrate both has an opportunity to rise in the ranks.

When the stars opened up, the Bratva followed. Its members provided protection from other criminals, at a price. The Bratva flourished in the new colonies, and its power grew.

Most of the other Syndicate members avoid direct confrontation with the Bratva. The faction's protection skills cannot be matched, and the weapons it acquires work just as well on its foes as they do on its clients' enemies.

Structure: The pahkan, or boss, runs the entire organization with aid from a bookkeeper. The boss employs a security force to keep each brigade in line. The brigadiers manage Bratva operations on different planets, and their bratok lead the brodyag, or soldiers, as they conduct the faction's business.

Location: Like most Syndicate factions, the Bratva operates across the rim worlds, with its headquarters on Echo. Powerful groups reside in developed communities to increase the faction's protection racket.

Specialty: Though claiming to provide protection, members of the Bratva actually extort others. Small governments, successful entrepreneurs, and others with money to lose often find themselves beholden to the Bratva. The faction also runs guns for the Syndicate and other groups.

Allies: The Bratva enjoys a mutually beneficial relationship with the Belters Union. Its best clients include the Jarisk'Krim, the Sydok, the Assassins Guild, and the Bounty Hunters League.

Enemies: Those protected by the Bratva do not like them at all, but it is the cost of doing business. Corporations running small operations on rim worlds have paid hefty fees to remove the Bratva, and the SSA lists them as a major problem for expanding back into the colonies.

Weaknesses: The Bratva has a strong independent streak, which leads individuals and brigades to defy its leadership and the Thirteen. As the Thirteen proved, individual brigades who do not follow orders can easily be removed.

CARTEL

In its earliest days, the Cartel excelled at drug running. When the faction moved to the rim worlds, however, it discovered that the drug trade was not as profitable as smuggling.

While many may offer similar services, and other members of the Syndicate use their own channels, the Cartel smuggles anything

anywhere. When a shipment must get somewhere, no matter the odds, the Cartel succeeds when others fail. Members of the Cartel can expertly move products past customs and blockades, and no inspector can resist their offers. Furthermore, the Cartel can deliver *anywhere*, even those spots that aren't on a map or don't officially exist.

The inner workings of the Cartel remain a mystery. No one outside the faction knows anything about those who lead it. All that's known is that the Cartel demands the utmost loyalty and obedience from its members. Failure is often punishable by death.

Structure: A council of lords directs the Cartel, sharing the command equally. They run their own regions supervised by their lieutenants. Two teams report to each lieutenant: the hitmen and the falcons. Enforcers lead individual teams of hitmen, though some hitmen work independently. As a group, they carry out major operations and security. The falcons are street-level cells with a boss elected from among the members.

Location: Unlike most Syndicate factions, the Cartel bases its operations out of Port Dark Star. The port provides an excellent warehouse for their illicit merchandise. Cartel members also run satellite operations out of all major trade hubs.

Specialty: The Cartel smuggles goods, any goods. Its members specialize in illegal trade and fencing stolen goods, but if no one else can get the item to the buyer, they can.

Allies: The Cartel has a truce with the Oridium Pirates. The Belters Union turns to the faction for jobs it cannot easily fulfill. Cartel members aid the rich and powerful corporate elite in obtaining illegal goods. The Blood Coin pays well for information on the Cartel's special clients.

Enemies: Port inspectors are always on the lookout for Cartel activity, especially in the core and corporate worlds.

Weaknesses: A reputation for ruthless perfectionism means that the Cartel finds it increasingly hard to recruit new talent. Even the cockiest young smuggler thinks twice before signing up with an outfit that will cut him down if he makes a mistake.

JARISK'KRIM

After the Armageddon War, the dunar found themselves alone and feared. The nohgotha abandoned their troops, and the rest of the

galaxy distrusted the former invading soldiers. The dunar struggled to survive.

The nohgotha's subjugation left the dunar angry and adrift. They only knew the military; their martial experience structured their entire lives, including government and family. With no wars to fight and few career options, the dunar turned to crime. Thus, the Jarisk'Krim, or the Soldier Criminal, formed.

While the Jarisk'Krim does some mercenary work, the faction prefers to pursue its own goals, namely stealing large valuable targets: luxury space yachts, massive cargo freighters, poorly defended star bases, and even corporate warehouses.

This desire to work for no one and the group's success in capturing big targets have drawn the ire of its corporate victims. The Jarisk'Krim now faces retaliation, and many speculate that the corporate worlds orchestrated the recent loss of two of the group's leaders. The Jarisk-Krim must also deal with their Syndicate rivals, the Sydok. The long-standing hate between the vulkolasi and the dunar further exacerbates the situation. Luckily for the Jarisk'Krim, their faction acts as a blunt instrument that many of the other Syndicate factions appreciate. And the Jarisk'Krim raids make for good business, maybe more so than their work as mercenaries.



MAFIA

Structure: The dunar filled the ranks of the nohgotha army during the Armageddon War. Though they retain a traditional military structure, their lack of experience as officers works against them. The general and lieutenant generals lead the faction. Their colonels control the brigades that control regions and fleets; each region has captains to manage territories or ships. Sergeants run the squads that do most of the faction's work.

Location: The Jarisk'Krim operates from bases throughout the rim. It maintains many outposts on large asteroids, moons, and unexplored worlds. The members of the Jarisk'Krim do not have a home anymore, so they salvaged and rebuilt an abandoned mining station built on an asteroid as their main base.

Specialty: On their own, members of the faction supply themselves through smash-and-grab efforts, from personal ships to corporate freighters. Most of their paid work comes from their skills as military grunts. Their brute strength and effective coordination make them an excellent physical force.

Allies: Those in need of muscle count the Jarisk'Krim as allies. The Arusan Black Market uses them for its black-market deals, the Monarchs employ them for general security of the mines, and pirates buy stolen ships from them.

Enemies: Any military force draws the ire of the Alliance; the SSA Navy and ARROW often engage with this faction. Corporations seek to eradicate the Jarisk'Krim to protect their goods. But most of all, members of the group are widely hated, as they were the face of the enemy during the Armageddon War. The Sydok hate them most of all. Not only do they provide a slightly similar service, but the Sydok detest the Jarisk'Krim and most dunar due to their role in the Armageddon War.

Weaknesses: The dunar were created and trained as foot soldiers; they are known to be strong and disciplined, but not particularly adaptable. Though the Jarisk'Krim have come a long way, their battle strategies have not changed or improved much since the Armageddon War. Other groups take advantage of this and can quickly outmaneuver most squads.

Descendants of the original Mafia spread throughout the core and rim worlds with the rest of the colonists, claiming turf and dominating criminal activities wherever they went. Authorities and rivals find it difficult to dislodge the Mafia once it moves into an area; if one boss is removed, another just takes his place.

The Mafia has a diverse portfolio of enterprises. Unlike the other Syndicate factions, the Mafia does not have one focus or specialty. Instead, members establish themselves in an area and run all criminal endeavors in that territory. They also run a variety of legitimate businesses, which has many benefits. If one business struggles or fails, others quickly fill in the gap. The varied businesses make money laundering particularly easy as well. The mafia's portfolio makes it one of the most self-sufficient organizations in the rim worlds.

Rank: The Godfather and his Consigliere remain on Terra to manage all Mafia operations. Each planet has an underboss whose capos oversee the specific enterprises that the Mafia's soldiers complete there.

Locations: The Mafia head remains on Terra, but smaller families are found throughout the galaxy. The Mafia has a major base on Echo, but prefers to operate in residential areas rather than industrial zones.

Specialty: This faction does not specialize in any single criminal endeavor. Instead, it carves out territories and runs as many of the criminal operations in that space as it can.

Allies: The Mafia tries to maintain good relations with all the factions it exists alongside, but it has better relations with some than others. The group is particularly tight with the Belters Union, and often does business with the Blood Coins, the Void, and the Sydok.

Enemies: The Mafia's focus on territory can put it in direct competition with other factions, especially those with historically human roots, such as the Cartel, Triads, and Bratva.

Weaknesses: Internal struggles for position pit different families against one another. Those who understand the familial politics of the Mafia can use these conflicts to their advantage.

MONARCHS

The Monarchs trace their heritage back to the 19th-century street gangs of London, whose members ironically adopted noble titles to reflect their hierarchy. The senior members of the inner circle were “monarchs,” and the rest were “dukes,” “barons,” and the like.

The path up the hierarchy has not changed much over the centuries. Anyone can join, but they must start as apprentices to one of the organization’s nobles. They must remain loyal and complete their “street” level duties in hopes of being adopted and joining the gang’s higher ranks.

This hierarchy has served the Monarchs well; today, the group stands as one of the Syndicate’s more powerful factions. Though they project a calm and polite demeanor, embodying their earned nobility, the Monarchs remain a street gang at heart; they’re still willing and able to back up their words with their fists.

The organization controls the critanium mining on Echo, its base of operations. Critanium is incredibly valuable, and its mining has made the Monarchs fantastically wealthy. The money, coupled with their control of one of the galaxy’s most necessary minerals, provides extensive leverage over the rest of the Syndicate. This power attracts attention. There are constant rumors that the Monarchs are about to somehow take over one faction or another. If this turned out to be true, the rim worlds could collapse into a Syndicate war.

Structure: The Inner Circle governs the Monarchs. This includes the King or Queen at the top and all the others in the circle, who take the titles of Prince and Princess. The Dukes control a region, much like they once reigned over their own domain. The Marquesses advise the Dukes, while Barons head operations on a single planet. Most of the membership are knights, while those not fully initiated are squires.

Locations: The Monarchs almost exclusively run their operations out of Echo; however, they have smaller operations in any area with newly discovered critanium deposits. A few specialized gangs also work out of Corvo, making sure the manufacturers have the critanium they need.

Specialty: The Monarchs have long drawn members from the working class, so specializing in mining was a natural fit. Today, they keep the mines working, but they also sell critanium.

Allies: The Belters Union and the Monarchs have a strong bond; without the Union’s help, the Monarchs’ criminal enterprise would struggle. This faction also has good relations with some premiere corporations, such as Vizon Corp, Atlantica Ship Works, and Gorsht Manufacturing.

Enemies: The SSA despises the Monarchs and their stranglehold on the critanium market.

Weaknesses: The small gangs operating outside Echo often find themselves embroiled in one situation after another. The heads of the faction struggle to gather resources for its satellite groups when in need, making them easy targets.

SPLICERS

The Splicers control and regulate illegal transhuman technologies.

They maintain a network of black-market doctors, techs, and parts suppliers, and help keep them in clients. They also crack down on the lowest-quality shops that risk giving the whole illicit upgrade industry a bad name.

Cyberware, nanotech, genetic engineering, and other biotechnical upgrades can be key to surviving in the rim worlds, but the official channels for such things are full of red tape, waiting lists, and expensive safety regulations. Splicers provide a more affordable alternative for those searching for upgrades, and offer protection for those who supply them.

To keep ahead of the competition, Splicer doctors and engineers continually develop new biotechnologies. Some rumors (which they deny) say that they’re using reclaimed nohgotha genetic technology. Others (which they don’t deny) say that they’ve learned to create their own psychics, which would mean that this dangerous technology has now fallen into Syndicate hands.

Structure: The Splicers lack any clear organization; workshops often have to uproot and relocate when the heat is on. Each group of Splicers operates a workshop where engineers design and test new equipment. Each workshop has one or more affiliated clinics. The lead doctor manages the clinic and supervises assistant doctors and their nurses.

Locations: Splicers can be found in many back-alley clinics, especially in the rim worlds. Their largest enterprise operates out of Echo.

Specialty: The Splicers deal with all things cyberware or bioware, from design to construction, installation, and maintenance.

Allies: The Splicers provide one of the most useful services for members of the factions, which keeps them on good terms with everyone. Their best clients include the Bratva, Blood Coins, Sydok, and Yakuza. Groups like the Assassins Guild, the Bounty Hunters League, pirates, and freelancers turn to Splicers for their upgrades.

Enemies: The corporate worlds have the most to lose when it comes to the Splicers; illegal upgrades undercut the profits from dealing in legitimate biotech. Much of the general public, especially in the core worlds, fears Splicers.

Weaknesses: Sometimes the engineers and doctors go too far, seeing no ethical dilemma with any of their work. This has led to many failed experiments wreaking havoc and leaving destruction in their wake. The attention from such mistakes leaves not only the creators but all Splicers in danger.

SYDOK

After the Armageddon War, some vulkolasi and nahkyra soldiers hired themselves out as mercenaries, and named their outfit the Sydok, or “night pack.”

Though members of the Sydok still work as mercenaries, they mainly provide security throughout the rim worlds. Unlike their rivals, the Jarisk’Krim, they rely on their experience as tacticians and leaders rather than on pure battlefield prowess.

The Sydok functions as a complete private military; its fleet of ships can take on other small fleets and quickly move troops anywhere. The Syndicate trusts the Sydok, and many factions employ its troops to provide security details. Others also pay handsomely for the faction’s services, including small governments, corporations, and the wealthy.

Structure: Though the Sydok operates much like a military, its members do not organize themselves in that manner. The most senior members each command a division or fleet and belong to a governing council. Each ship or company has a sub-commander at its head.

Location: The Sydok prefer to live and work out of Argo, an undeveloped planet on the frontier: the natural hills and plains remind the vulkolasi of home, and the nahkyra prefer the planet’s

huge trees. Small groups also work out of New Atlantica and Echo, and the Sydok fleet is always on the move.

Specialty: The Sydok provides the criminal worlds’ best private security. The group can plan and execute small military operations and protect high-value targets.

Allies: The Monarchs rely heavily on Sydok security for their soft targets, and Splicers regularly employ them when threatened. Most corporations hire the Sydok to create and run their security teams, and wealthy individuals like having these skilled and unique bodyguards.

Enemies: The Sydok have no love lost for the Jarisk’Krim. But the SSA and the Vulkolasi Union see the Sydok as traitors.

Weaknesses: The Sydok wanted the Vulkolasi Union to take over the weakened SSA at the end of the Armageddon War. They remain zealous in their support of the Union, and will help improve the Union’s standing (or weaken the SSA’s) even if it endangers their current mission.

TRIADS

The Triad started as a secret society in China, then turned into a powerful, worldwide criminal organization. When it reached the stars, the group found a lucrative niche in counterfeit currencies, money laundering, and fraud.

The Triads are now the masters of financial crime. As such, their influence is felt throughout the galaxy, and their income streams show no signs of ever drying up. They can affect the rise or fall of planetary markets, which means they sometimes make even the corporations and core worlds uneasy. Though the SSA and the corporate worlds don’t agree on much, they would both like to see the Triads taken down.

Structure: The Triad’s spiritual leanings inform the organization, and each position carries a number related to the *I Ching*. The Dragon Head leads the Triad with the assistance of his Operations Officers, Deputy, and Master of Ceremonies.

Location: When they set out into the stars, the Triads found a new home on the colony rim world Beta 3. They built a new empire here and helped create a bustling community. On Beta 3, the Triad positions itself as a benevolent parent taking care of its children.

Specialty: The Triad controls almost all criminal enterprises on Beta 3. Beyond the colony,

it runs most of the Syndicate's counterfeiting and control currency markets throughout the galaxy. The group also excels at fraud, and especially targets those who pose threats to itself and the Syndicate.

Allies: All factions keep a good working relationship with the Triad, and the group often deals with many factions' money laundering. The Triad's favorite clients also include the Arusan Trade Conglomerate and numerous pirates.

Enemies: The core worlds of the SSA and the corporate worlds find themselves the victims of much of the Triad's counterfeiting and fraud, and some smaller corporations and governments have fallen prey as well.

Weaknesses: The Triads insulate themselves from most of the Syndicate. They are trustworthy business partners, but they like to keep to themselves, which makes it challenging for others to coordinate efforts with them.

VOID

The Void is a digital organization made up of hackers, programmers, and hypertechns. Its members deal in the acquisition and manipulation of digital data. No secrets, bank accounts, or computer programs are safe. The Void splits its hacking efforts between contract work for well-paying clients and its own (mostly blackmail) projects.

Though not a traditional Syndicate faction, the Void nevertheless wields a great deal of power. Its members easily number into the millions, and they exist throughout the galaxy. The head of this web remains a mystery, and uses the HyperNet and drones to attend meetings and interact with the other factions. Many factions are wary of the Void, with good reason: any that argue for the group's exclusion pay a hefty price. Corporations, politicians, and Syndicate members all know one thing: do not cross the Void.

Structure: The Void is a collective. Its members often act as individuals and do not answer to any leader. Beyond electing a representative to the Thirteen, the group has no easily discernible leadership. Some members organize into teams; however, they share the work evenly. They choose a chief officer—someone who excels at planning and management—but beyond that, the rest take roles based on their specializations.

Location: Members of the Void live anywhere they can access a HyperNet connection. Rumors

persist that they have a virtual headquarters deep in the HyperNet, but no one has found it.

Specialty: If anyone needs a good hacker, they call the Void. No system is impenetrable, except maybe the Void's own, and no job is impossible.

Allies: The Blood Coins and the Void brokered an alliance, and they provide each other assistance. If a hacker needs to get into a locked location, the Coins help; if the Coins need system access, the Void delivers. The Void also has an excellent working relationship with the Triads, who respect the faction's ability to manipulate banking code.

Enemies: Anyone with a secret and a virtual presence wants to take down the Void. Most corporations (especially banks), governments, and politicians would pay any price to keep these hackers out of their business.

Weaknesses: Most members of the Void have no idea who really heads the faction, and they likely only know some of their fellow hackers in a virtual space. Most tend to operate independently, which can leave them easy targets for the faction's enemies.

YAKUZA

In their earliest days on Terra, the Yakuza controlled gambling, from Cho-Han to pachinko. Today, the organization controls most of the gambling in the rim worlds. It was already a key player in the underworld when the war broke out, and when the Syndicate took over afterward, the Yakuza joined up and secured its niche.

Members of the Yakuza follow a strict code, the *ninkyo*. Though criminals, they must act beyond reproach and refrain from doing anything that shames their new family. Aside from their criminal endeavors, Yakuza take care of their communities, especially in times of tragedy. Members also spend significant time and money getting elaborate tattoos, a sign of their strength.

Structure: The Yakuza see themselves as both a family and a corporation, and their organization reflects this. The Supreme Family sits at the top and includes the Kumicho, or lead Oyabun, along with the Kanbu, or officers. These officers include the Saiko-komon advisors and the first (Wakagahshira) and second (Shateigasha) lieutenants. The individual families follow a similar structure, with the Oyabun leading the family with the aid of the first and second lieutenants, as well as the Saiko-komon advisors.

The more senior soldiers are the Kyodai, or big brothers, who advise their little brothers, or Shatei.

Location: The Yakuza maintains regional headquarters throughout the galaxy, but its leaders are most often found on the planet Echo.

Specialty: The Yakuza controls nearly all illegal gambling in the galaxy, as well as a large portion of the legal operations. Gambling conglomerates run by the Yakuza own at least half of all legal casinos and small gambling halls. The combination of legal and illegal establishments makes it easy for the Yakuza to launder money as well.

Allies: Many rim world colonies and governments remain allies to the Yakuza. During the Armageddon War, many Yakuza swept in to provide aid and played a role in rebuilding.

Enemies: A few of the corporations who own casinos would like to see the Yakuza eliminated. The corporations see the Yakuza's growing web firsthand; they know the Yakuza show up and aid struggling communities only to set up new operations in these areas.

Weaknesses: The strict rules can make it easy to spot a member of the Yakuza. Yakuza outside of a safe space must do everything they can to hide their tattoos to avoid capture by authorities.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond corporations and governments are numerous smaller groups united by common needs and goals. The most influential of these groups are listed below.

ASSASSINS GUILD

Hiring an assassin used to be messy and complicated. There were countless kill teams and lone operators, each with its own policies and payment systems, each claiming to be the best, and all competing for the same jobs. Competition could get deadly.

Today, the Assassins Guild serves as a central hub for contract killing. Clients know the job is being handled by skilled professionals. Contractors know they won't be stiffed or betrayed. Everyone wins—except the target, of course.

Reaching the guild can prove to be difficult and has its own share of risks. After all, contacting a group of people who kill for money can put you in a dangerous position if they don't trust you. Once a reliable contact is established, the guild obtains payment. When the job is completed, the payment (less the guild's cut) is released to the assassin. The guild never takes a job that isn't already paid for.

The guild assists its members with safe houses, information, and necessary Gear (including weapons). None of these are free, but that can come in handy. For example, it helps with logistics if an assassin doesn't need to smuggle weapons onto every planet for a job. Although the guild does profit from these transactions, its main source of income is the 10% it charges for jobs booked for its clients.

The guild has been the target of multiple attempts to root out the organization's leadership, but to no avail. Much like the Void, it has no apparent headquarters. The leadership moves around on a regular basis and all communications are conducted over the HyperNet. To date, no one has ever managed to nail down a "Scheduler" and bring him in alive. With an entire organization whose sole purpose is to kill for money, the sheer number of operatives the guild can call in to protect its assets is frightening.

MEMBERSHIP

To join the guild, a prospective member must pay her membership fee (and prove her skills) by eliminating a number of minor targets at no cost. Once accepted, the member is given a secure communication code she can use to contact the guild via the HyperNet.

ALLIES

The guild itself rarely assists in a mission. If an assassin needs help to fulfill a contract, it's on her to hire whatever assistants she needs. However, if a target is particularly challenging, the guild might assign the contract to a whole team.

OPPOSITION

Bounty Hunters League: As killers for hire, most known assassins are wanted by the law, meaning they are regularly hunted by bounty hunters.

BOUNTY HUNTERS LEAGUE

The Bounty Hunters League exists to help prevent its members from taking the same jobs and competing against one another.

Early on in the galaxy's history, bounties were posted to the HyperNet where any bounty hunter could attempt to collect them. The infighting and shoot-outs that occurred almost caused all bounty hunting to be declared illegal. All the major powers imposed a five-year moratorium.

During this time, a small group of bounty hunters banded together and formed the league. They intended to regain access to their trade by petitioning each government. When the SSA saw how thin its own resources were to chase down criminals on the rim, it lifted the bounty hunting moratorium.

Not wanting a repeat of the previous problems, the league offered to become a governing body for bounty hunting, and to police their own as well. The SSA and the other governments they approached agreed to these terms, and now, nearly all bounty hunters gain their jobs through the league. Those who don't follow league protocols will quickly find themselves the target of other league bounty hunters.

Because the league is recognized by most governments, including many under Syndicate control, a bounty hunter can legally chase nearly anyone anywhere. In practice, a bounty hunter must be careful when working in the rim worlds; most criminals don't welcome law enforcement of any kind. A bounty hunter must exercise discretion so as not to anger the local crime lord.

Research is the bounty hunter's best friend. Beyond simply finding the target, it's important to know the local power structure. Bounty hunters must recognize how removing a criminal might unbalance the situation and put the hunter in danger.



Not all bounty hunters are members of the league. Membership does have its privileges. Higher pay, less chance of fighting another hunter for a bounty, and foremost, access to the Fortress.

MEMBERSHIP

Prior to applying, a prospect must complete at least ten successful bounties while observing league protocols. Once the prospect has done so, he can apply and pay a fee to become a licensed hunter.

ALLIES

Bounty hunters in the league tend to regard each other as fellow professionals. They grant that one hunter should always come to the assistance of another, provided doing so doesn't present a great risk of personal harm. If there is a very real threat of danger, then it's usually understood that asking for assistance requires splitting the bounty.

OPPOSITION

Assassins Guild: As licensed law enforcement officers, bounty hunters are generally trying to capture, rather than kill, their targets. Assassins may be sent to prevent those same targets from ever making it back to the authorities.

THE FORTRESS

The Fortress is just like it sounds: a fortified base. Run by the Bounty Hunters League and protected by a small army of the best soldiers money can buy, those who have earned the trust of the league use the facility as a home away from home. A few even live here full time. While a bounty hunter may be invited here to receive a job or assist in one, members rarely get into the inner sanctum until they reach the Master Hunter rank.

Situated atop a large mountain, guards and security drones constantly patrol and monitor the outer walls. Surrounding the Fortress are multiple perimeter defense weapons, as well as anti-orbital weapons. In orbit, there are also two weapons-platform satellites coupled with long-range scanners. Nothing short of a ground assault force can take the Fortress down.

The facility has a complete shipyard that allows for ships to dock and be serviced. Armorers, weaponsmiths, and many other technical facilities are here for bounty hunters to update their loadout and keep ahead of their next target.

To date, the Fortress has never been compromised or even attacked. Even the Syndicate won't go near it, out of fear of angering every bounty hunter in the league. Dealing with one angry bounty hunter can be dangerous. Dealing with thousands would be disastrous, even for the Syndicate.

OUTLAW GRAVCYCLE CLUBS

Outlaw gravcycle clubs can be the bane of any planet. With the gangs' penchant for violence and extreme tactics, many authorities think twice about getting between a club and its goals.

There is no central authority or organization for gravcycle clubs. All they have in common is a disrespect for the law and a love of the open road. Some clubs are allied, while others are mortal enemies. Each club has its own organizational structure, but many follow the ways of the old Terran biker gangs, with roles including president, vice president, road captain, and regular members (commonly called "patched").

Gravcycle clubs tend to travel together. If you see one gang member, it's a good bet there are others nearby.

Club members highly value respect. Display any kind of disrespect can quickly devolve into violence.

MEMBERSHIP

The process for joining a gravcycle club varies from one gang to another. It usually involves a probationary period during which prospects must prove their trustworthiness and loyalty. This often involves hazing the prospect or requiring him to commit crimes for the club.

ALLIES

Members of a gravcycle club are fiercely loyal to each other and their organization. Many also perform services for the Syndicate, earning money or favors in return.

OPPOSITION

Bounty Hunters League: Gravcycle outlaws tend to possess both criminal records and a strong disregard for the terms of their paroles.

Outlaw Gravcycle Clubs: Most often, different gravcycle clubs are each other's worst enemies. The beef between the Road Terrors and the Sons of Ares is legendary.

The Syndicate: Clubs that aren't errand boys for the Syndicate sometimes set up their own criminal enterprises (especially smuggling). When this happens, the Syndicate may try to put them back into their place.

PIRATES OF THE ORIDIUM NEBULA

From deep inside the Oridium Nebula, space pirates travel across the rim worlds and beyond to raid and plunder starships and starports alike. The Star Systems Alliance, still short on ships and manpower, doesn't have the reach to strike the pirates down just yet.

The pirates maintain a mutually beneficial alliance with the Syndicate. In exchange for part of the pirates' plunder, Syndicate ports offer starship maintenance. The pirates have grown bolder with the backing of the Syndicate, and they now strike into the edges of the core and corporate worlds.

The SSA knows it must act; the fleet cannot let this continue. The New Atlantica shipyards are working round the clock to bring the fleet up to full strength, and synth soldiers are arriving in the thousands. The battle is coming; it is just a matter of time.

MEMBERSHIP

To join the Pirates of the Oridium Nebula, a ship's captain and crew must agree to the Articles of Piracy as set forth by the Pirate Lords. In doing so, the crew agrees to abide by rules that prohibit attacking other members and compel them to pay a 10% share of all loot. They also agree to answer the call of the Pirate Lords should it be required.

ALLIES

In theory, all the pirates of the Oridium Nebula are allies. In practice, most pirates see their fellows as competition. However, if the haul is valuable enough, it isn't unheard of for small groups to work together to take on larger targets.

OPPOSITION

Bounty Hunters Guild: Individual pirates, especially a captain, can carry a high bounty. This is one reason bounty hunters are unwelcome at Port Dark Star and similar establishments.

SSA Navy: The navy has been hunting pirates for years, with minimal success. Its starships patrol the space lanes all the same, just to act as a deterrent. While a pirate ship may be able to take down an SSA Navy cruiser, the heat it would receive for doing so often isn't worth the trouble.

ECHO

The planet Echo is the gateway to the rim worlds. It is the hub for countless travel routes, and it serves as the galaxy's primary source of critanium, an essential element in manufacturing jump drives and power cores. It's also the unofficial capital of the Syndicate, and a hotbed of criminal activity.

Life is cheap on Echo, but for those willing to pay the price, opportunities abound.

HISTORY

Nearly a century before the Armageddon War, the Braxton-Weyer Group discovered and claimed the uninhabited world that would come to be known as Echo. The corporation detected vast amounts of critanium on the planet, but lacked the resources to mine or export it. Having already exhausted its legitimate lines of credit, the company needed cash to invest in Echo before its rivals did. In desperation, BWG turned to the Syndicate.

The Syndicate was glad to help. The Monarchs were particularly interested in investing in BWG's critanium operations. With the Monarchs' backing, the corporation initiated a massive new mining project. Whenever BWG needed additional money, labor, or assistance cutting through governmental red tape, the Syndicate was there. All the Syndicate asked in return was an ever-growing cut of the profits.

When war broke out, the SSA relied on Echo to provide the critanium required for its new battleships. The Syndicate made sure that BWG had what it needed to fill the SSA's orders, even if it meant doing so illegally. The BWG board of directors wasn't pleased with this approach, but by this time, its members were in too deep with the Syndicate. They couldn't say no.

The rim worlds were in chaos when the war ended. Seeing an opportunity to solidify its hold on the territory, the Syndicate replaced the BWG board members with its own people and seized control of Echo in all but name.

Today, Echo remains a thriving center of business and industry, but the Braxton-Weyer Group is nothing more than a front for the Monarchs and their allies in the Syndicate.

EXPLORING ECHO

Echo is habitable, but just barely. It features a thin atmosphere, a thinner layer of flora, and no natural animals larger than an insect. Its rocky soil is not good for growing crops. The land near its lone ocean is subject to catastrophic flooding, and the inland regions often suffer droughts and windstorms. Nevertheless, the planet is bursting with activity.

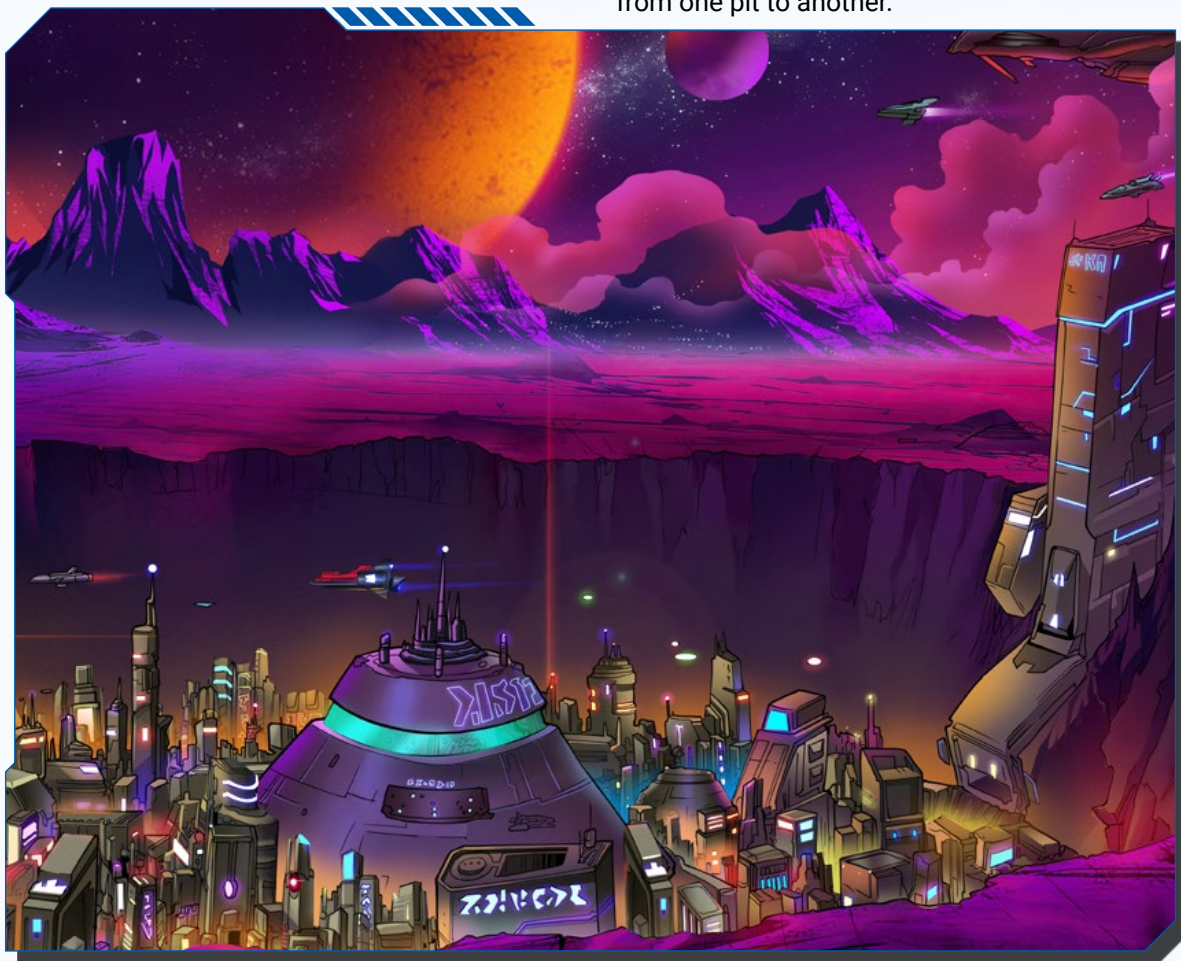
Critanium mining has marked Echo's surface with enormous, craterlike vertical shafts, or pits, where most of its inhabitants live. The pits are connected by networks of tunnels, which include high-speed railways. Above the pits and tunnels are the rugged surface settlements, where life is hard but it's still possible to strike it rich.

Below is an overview of the various places to visit on Echo.

HABITATION ZONE

In the process of digging out a critanium mine, the pit becomes filled with a city's worth of infrastructure. When the mine is depleted, the infrastructure remains. A city grows up inside the pit, where it's protected from the worst of the windstorms on the surface.

The habitation zone is a region dotted with dozens of these pit-cities. Though they vary in size, population, and affluence, they all have a few things in common. First, the lower levels of each city are darker, dirtier, and generally less pleasant than the higher levels. Those who can't afford to live in the upper levels wear air filters as they walk the dust- and neon-filled streets. Second, each city has its own spaceport (though some are much larger than others). Finally, every city is connected to at least one other through subterranean tunnels. While sub-orbital shuttles are available to those who can afford them, most people on Echo use the tunnels and trains to get from one pit to another.



The most important pit-cities in the zone include the following:

Pit 02: The capital of Echo, Pit 02 is home to many government and corporate offices. The Monarchs have their own office building here, and several other Syndicate factions maintain a permanent presence as well. This is the safest pit on the planet: with the Syndicate right here, street-level crime is absolutely not tolerated.

Pit 12: Also known as “smoke town,” this industrial city is full of factories and the people who work in them. The factories produce a wide variety of goods, but the majority specialize in critanium products. The lowest levels of Pit 12 are full of toxins, and many of the workers there are serving prison sentences. Management, of course, resides and entertains offworld clients in the upper levels.

Pit 42: This pit-city is known for its large spaceport and numerous high-end casinos. While it’s true that any vice or contraband can be found on Echo for the right price, it is especially true in Pit 42, where Cartel brokers are standing by to help visitors find whatever they’re looking for. In addition to the standard array of illicit goods and services, the city is known to be a good place to hire freelance criminals, including Sydok.

Pit 52: The breadbasket of Echo, Pit 52 provides much of the planet’s food. Acres of hydroponic apparatuses grow plants beneath an artificial sun, while industrial biologists grow and harvest enormous slabs of vat-grown meat. Some of the food grown here is illegal elsewhere. All the mind-altering substances grown here are illegal as well, so they are well protected by armed Syndicate security forces.

EXTRACTION ZONE

The most productive mines on Echo can all be found inside the extraction zone. At least a dozen different mines are active at any given time. Each mine requires hundreds of large industrial vehicles and machines, hundreds of people to operate the machinery, and hundreds more personnel to support the whole operation. Even though there are no true cities in these mining pits (yet), they are nevertheless settlements in their own right.

Notable locations in the extraction zone include:

BWG BEYOND

The Braxton-Weyer Group has assets and holdings beyond Echo. When the Monarchs took over the corporation, they found themselves managing a small but profitable enterprise with interests not only in the rim worlds but among the corporate worlds as well. The Monarchs grow and maintain BWG operations outside of Echo, which they use as cover for their own criminal schemes. Monarch leadership hopes to use BWG as a Trojan horse, gaining the faction access to places and resources that welcome corporations but refuse to work with the Syndicate.

Pit 290: The most active mine on the planet employs over 2,000 people, and is nearly 10 miles across at the bottom. It’s a quarter mile deep and getting deeper every day. The mine workers live here for months at a time. All the amenities they need are right here (though they may need to take a lift to the higher levels to get the good stuff).

Roller Town: On the surface, near the edge of Pit 290, is a boomtown that sprang up several years ago and will likely keep growing until the mine is played out. It gets its name from the large, tracked platforms that transported the first buildings to the site. Roller Town caters primarily to the folks who work in the mine, but it also boasts some higher-end accommodations for visitors who prefer more comfort. Roller Town is also known as a hangout for some of Echo’s gravcycle gangs.

Critanium Processing Center: This enormous industrial complex sprawls for miles across the surface of the extraction zone. It is somewhat centrally located and takes in raw ore from all the mines in the zone. Once the ore is refined, the purified product is distributed to the various factories by rail, truck, and sub-orbital shuttle. The Center also has its own small spaceport and directly exports some critanium off-planet.

DEPLETED ZONE

Not every played-out critanium mine is home to a bustling city. Some are just depleted mines, with little more to offer than salvage and a place to lie low. Officially, no one cares what happens in these places, which makes them both liberating and dangerous.

Pit 99-D: This was once the home of a growing city, but after a reactor leak killed half the population and sickened the rest, it was quickly abandoned, and has remained so ever since. The radiation isn't quite so lethal anymore, but it is still bad enough that visitors are advised to wear rad suits. Those who visit are scavengers. They're either in search of a specific item from before the collapse, or simply collecting anything that may be of value. In addition to natural hazards, visitors must watch out for other scavengers and the half-mad locals. Much of the salvage here can be valuable, and some will kill for it.

Pit 103-D: There's still critanium in this mine pit. It's not much. It's not enough to justify the expense of a full mining operation, but for small independent operators, it's worth staking (and defending) a claim. Dozens of prospector teams are scattered throughout the pit, scraping for ore and suspiciously eyeing their neighbors. Those who find ore try to keep quiet about it. No one wants to get bushwhacked, or to have their claim jumped.

Pits 113-D, 116-D, and 121-D: These ghost towns are populated by folks who, though bad luck or choice, have fallen far, far off the grid. Some live in horrifically squalid conditions. Others have come together to create pockets of hardscrabble communal comfort. None of their lives are easy, and they are too often cut short.

SURFACE FRONTIER

Before the Braxton-Weyer Group can unleash its mighty mining machinery on a new vein of critanium ore, the company needs to know where to find it. To that end, BWG (and by extension, the Syndicate) encourages and even subsidizes a practice known as "scraping."

Lone prospectors, minor guilds, and small companies seek their fortune on Echo by mining the critanium found near the surface of the planet (i.e., scraping). While it's rare that a scraper actually strikes it rich, it is possible to make enough money scraping to cover costs and

even come out ahead. Once word gets out that a scraper has found critanium, others flock to the area, and a boomtown might even spring up.

Of course, boomtowns attract their own sorts of trouble. Aside from the standard array of killers and thieves, gravcycle gangs love to harass such towns. Some just cause mayhem for its own chaotic sake, but others target the critanium itself. They demand regular tributes in ore, or just take everything and leave the scrapers to suffer.

Scraper outposts are outside everyone's jurisdiction, and the only justice here is what the scrapers can make for themselves.

A few of the more well-known boomtowns include:

Cotter's Canyon: This miles-long canyon is dotted with scraper camps and the beginnings of tunnels dug into the walls. Various businesses have taken over the floor of the canyon, catering to the scrapers' needs. The place is too new to have attracted much trouble yet, but the locals warn that the canyon is prone to flooding, and it's just a matter of time before the town is washed away.

Tovar Station: This scraper town is centered around the titular station, which is actually a small bunker and landing zone for orbital and sub-orbital shuttlecraft. Every week or so, the Tovar Mining Company buys up all the critanium from the local scrapers, then ships it off via shuttle to buyers elsewhere on the planet to sell at a premium. Rumor has it that a few gangs in the area are planning to rob one of these outgoing shuttles.

Watterston: The largest scraper town in the area, Watterston is almost a full city. It's got power and plumbing, a working government, and even its own security force. All this success is based on its rich vein of ore, of course, which means it's only a matter of time before the Syndicate moves in to take it all. The Braxton-Weyer Group has already started buying up folks' claims. The company's agents are hinting in strenuous terms that those who refuse their generous offers might later wish they hadn't. It's a pattern that scrapers have seen time and again, but Watterston might be different. It's got almost 1,000 citizens, all of whom are armed, and most of whom are willing to fight for their town.

ECHO ORGANIZATIONS

While it's true that the Syndicate rules Echo, it is neither a single entity nor the only group operating on the planet.

THE SYNDICATE

The Syndicate may appear to be a monolithic organization from the outside. But here, at its heart, the locals can see how its various factions work to pursue their own goals.

Belters Union: The Union has an iron grip on every shipment coming through the planet's ports. The Belters' dominance can lead to arrogance, however, which allows them to overlook trouble in their ranks (such as Marge Bronigan on page 196).

Blood Coin: The Coins have an office in Pit 02 where they meet with clients and trust their vaults of blackmail material to keep them safe.

Bratva: The Bratva use Echo as a central warehouse for the weapons that they sell. Many of those weapons are manufactured here on the planet.

Cartel: Echo is the hub of many of the Cartel's smuggling routes, as well as a marketplace for its contraband.

Jarisk'Krim: After pulling off major heists, the Jarisk'Krim like to lie low on Echo, where they know the authorities won't follow them.

Mafia: While the Monarchs busy themselves running the mining operations on Echo, the Mafia inserts itself into every other business that it can. (Rumor has it the Mafia is using the gravcycle gangs and scrapers to start its own rival critanium-mining endeavor.)

Monarchs: As the power behind the BWG throne, the Monarchs are the true rulers of Echo. They maintain the appearance of being gracious to the other Syndicate factions, but the Monarchs know that they all want a larger piece of the action.

Splicers: The Splicers have permanent clinics throughout the habitation zone, and a bio-research lab in the bowels of Pit 02.

Sydok: These mercenaries meet potential clients in Pit 02 and potential recruits at their training facility on the surface.

Triads: Echo is essential to the Triads' galactic fraud, money laundering, and tax-evasion schemes, and they intend to keep it that way.

Void: The Void is everywhere. The Void is nowhere. The Void keeps the rest of the Syndicate apprised of suspicious HyperNet chatter regarding Echo.

Yakuza: Even beyond Pit 42, Echo has more than its share of casinos, and the Yakuza controls them all.

CORPORATIONS

Representatives from the corporate worlds are always welcome on Echo, and can often be found wheeling and dealing in Pit 02.

Gorsht Manufacturing has multiple contracts with the Braxton-Weyer Group. One such contract stipulates that, in exchange for critanium and critanium-based goods, Gorsht provides BWG with power supplies and heavy mining equipment. The arrangement seems to be working well for all involved.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

As a Syndicate leader once said, "At the grand feast of Echo, there is always room for one more guest. Just don't forget to pay your server."

In other words, the Syndicate is more than willing to work with other groups that also wish to operate on Echo, so long as it gets its cut.

In practice, this means the Pirates of the Oridium Nebula are welcome to dock at Echo to refuel and resupply (after paying a reasonable docking fee, of course). The Assassins Guild and the Bounty Hunters League are likewise free to operate on the planet, so long as their (expensive) permits are all up to date.

The "feast of Echo" can get complicated for outside operators, however. If a group makes arrangements with one faction but not the others, they may find themselves in trouble if their business takes them outside the original faction's circle of influence. Such inconveniences can usually be resolved through the proper bribes, but sometimes such offenses can only be paid in blood.





CHAPTER SEVEN: ADVENTURE

The Starbreaker universe is full of danger, wonder, and opportunity. It's full of adventures, for those brave enough to embrace them.

As Game Master, it's your task to create those adventures, and this chapter is here to help.

ADVENTURE GENERATOR

As GM, you can use this system to produce ideas that you can combine and tweak to create a new adventure for your players. The generator's results might not make sense at first, but if you use your imagination, you can find intriguing ways to combine them into plots your players have never seen before.

To use the adventure generator, first shuffle the Action deck, then follow the steps below.

1. ANTAGONIST FACTION

The first step is to determine which of the galaxy's many factions the characters will contend with during the adventure.

Draw a card from the Action Deck. The value of the card determines the antagonist faction, based on whether the heroes work for SAINT or the Syndicate.

SAINT ANTAGONIST FACTIONS

SAINT operations almost exclusively target the Syndicate, but they occasionally discover corruption or malfeasance in corporations, governments, and lesser factions.

Conflicts with the Thirteen never result from random chance, but are instead the consequence of the heroes' success in battling the Syndicate. Save those adventures for once the characters reach Heroic or Legendary Rank.

ANTAGONIST FACTION

Card	Result
2	Belters Union
3	Blood Coin
4	Bratva
5	Cartel
6	Jarisk'Krim
7	Mafia
8	Monarchs
9	Splicers
10	Sydok
Jack	Triad
Queen	Void
King	Yakuza
Ace	Other faction. Choose from the following or roll a d6: 1-2) Assassins Guild, 3-4) Outlaw Gravcycle Club, or 5-6) Pirates of the Oridium Nebula.
Joker	Draw again and consult the Syndicate table. If a Joker is drawn again, draw twice and use both results. Feel free to consult both Antagonist Tables .

SYNDICATE ANTAGONISTS

Syndicate troubleshooters bully lesser factions, fend off the governments, and shake down corporations. Syndicate factions sometimes squabble over territory, so the heroes may find themselves battling rival operations even when they work for the Syndicate.

Battles against SAINT never stem from chance encounters. When the heroes rise high enough in the ranks of the Syndicate, they will inevitably be targeted for either recruitment or elimination. Save those adventures for when they reach Heroic or Legendary Rank.

Now separate an Action Deck into two decks:

The Face Deck: Includes the cards Jack through Ace. Add a Joker to this deck.

The Number Deck: Includes the cards Two through Ten. Add the other Joker to this deck.

Shuffle each deck separately, then follow the steps below.

SYNDICATE ANTAGONISTS

Card	Result
2	Assassins Guild
3	Bounty Hunters League
4	Outlaw Gravcycle Club
5	Pirates of the Oridium Nebula
6	Atlantica Ship Works
7	Gorsht Manufacturing
8	Praxor & Gimble Pharmaceuticals
9	Remis Engineering
10	Vizon Corp
Jack	Arusan Trade Conglomerate
Queen	Vulkolasi Union
King	Star Systems Alliance
Ace	Other government. Choose from the following or roll a d4: 1) Free Dunar Republic, 2) Hopoc Republic, 3) Septrid Imperium, or 4) Zaka High Bureaucracy.
Joker	Draw again and consult the SAINT table. If a Joker is drawn again, draw twice and use both results. Feel free to consult both Antagonist Tables .

2. CAST OF CHARACTERS

Crime stories aren't about objects; they're about people. The heroes might need to stop the theft of a critanium shipment, but their real concern is the Synner mastermind behind the heist.

The next step in creating an adventure is figuring out who the heroes are going up against.

This doesn't necessarily mean the heroes have to physically fight these characters, but they will find themselves at odds with them. Over the course of the adventure, the heroes might have to betray, corrupt, convince, save, or destroy this cast of characters.

Draw one card from the Face Deck for each player character, and note which card is associated with which character. Each card represents a type of character the heroes will encounter during the adventure.

Look up each face card on the list below. Each entry includes the suggested role for the card, some Wild Card characters in this book that fit the role, suggested generic character types that fit the role, and Traits and Edges that can be used to better customize characters to the role. Some Wild Cards and generic character types fit more than one role and are listed multiple times.

SPADES—ENEMIES

While any and all characters in an adventure may be antagonists, Spades indicate true enemies. The heroes can hope to negotiate with or subvert most other folks, but enemies must be met with force. They are believers in the causes they serve (even if it's just their own profit).

♠ **Ace—Mastermind.** This isn't just an enemy leader; this is an effective, brilliant enemy leader like Emperor Palpatine or Professor Moriarty. A mastermind confounds the heroes with exceptional countertactics. Game Masters can feel free to use their meta knowledge of the players' plans to create opposition schemes.

♠ **King—Consigliere.** These ambitious mini-bosses get things done. Consiglieri can be effective administrators and strategists (like *Flash Gordon's* General Klytus) or muscle and field commanders (such as Darth Vader or Colonel Moran).

♠ **Queen—Fatale.** Whether *femme*, *homme*, or other, *fatales* manipulate their opponents through more subtle means. This might mean

blackmail, bribery, or simple seduction. The fatale is as likely to attempt to recruit the heroes before trying to have them eliminated.

♠ **Jack—Specialist.** This character provides an invaluable service to the opposition. Specialists include not only bounty hunters and assassins, but scientists, engineers, and lawyers as well. Specialists, more than any other enemies, are often dark mirrors of the heroes.

HEARTS—FELLOW TRAVELERS

SAINT doesn't recruit nobodies. You're no use to the organization unless you have existing ties to the Syndicate. Those ties might be family, friends, and lovers who are still Synners—and whom SAINT needs you to betray.

Similarly, a member of the Syndicate may find her loyalty tested when she's asked to whack a troublesome Union agent and it turns out to be her cousin!

♥ **Ace—Family Member.** This fellow traveler isn't just someone the hero has a personal connection to, she's actual family! Note that this doesn't necessarily mean a blood relative; found family also counts. If needed, draw cards for another Heart to help figure out the family member's connection. A King is a parent, a Queen is a spouse or ex-spouse, and a Jack is a sibling or cousin.

♥ **King—Mentor.** This character helped the hero find his way in the world. Repaying this person is difficult enough, but working against him might be impossible. Not all mentors deserve respect and loyalty though; many parent figures instead betray that trust through abuse and manipulation.

♥ **Queen—Lover.** It's not that heroes can't form romantic attachments to other characters they meet over the course of an adventure. But this is someone the hero already has (or had) an intimate relationship with or an unrequited crush on. This might instead be a profound friendship if the player or hero in question is aromantic.

♥ **Jack—Friend.** This may be a former partner in crime, an ex-apprentice, or just a pal from the 'hood back in the day. The relationship is more akin to siblings than anything else, but who causes more trouble than a brother or sister? Some friends have gone on to bigger and better things, while others were left behind to dwindle. Pets and favorite drones are also possible friends.

DIAMONDS—TREASURES

Treasures bring something to the table. These characters easily slot into the goal of the adventure, becoming the keys to or the targets of the players' mission. Rescuing such a person or retrieving their knowledge may be the crux of the story. Sometimes, especially in Syndicate missions, the intent toward these characters may be much darker.

♦ **Ace—Boss.** These characters are factional leaders. The scale of their authority depends on the Rank of the heroes; Novice and Seasoned characters will be sent after local and regional bosses (people who run the operations in a city or state at most), while Heroic and Legendary characters target planet- and system-wide bosses. A few Advances into Legendary, the characters might even go after heads of the Syndicate.

♦ **King—Backer.** A backer isn't necessarily in charge, but they are supplying the money and/or resources that an organization needs. Tackling a backer can disrupt the opposition even more than taking out a boss.

♦ **Queen—Associate.** These characters are affiliated with the target organization without actually being part of it. Most often, they are innocent bystanders—family, friends, or employees—whose abduction or seduction can be used to put pressure on the real targets.

♦ **Jack—Expert.** An expert provides a special set of skills that the opposition relies upon. The Venn diagram of character types that can be experts and specialists is a perfect circle, but experts aren't devoted to the cause like specialists. They can be bent and broken, suckered and seduced much more easily.

CLUBS—OBSTACLE

The difference between an obstacle and an enemy is that heroes don't always need to fight obstacles. They just need to get around them. This can mean undermining the person who is in the heroes' way, but it can also mean cooperating with them. This scenario happens less often in the frequently black-and-white morality of space operas, but crime fiction is full of cops and robbers teaming up to take down the real villains.

♣ **Ace—The Law.** One or more honest representatives from a law enforcement agency are gumming up the works. In the case of a SAINT mission, this might be because the police are investigating the same criminals as the crew,

threatening to arrest the offenders (a tactic that will ultimately be futile) before the heroes have the chance to properly dismantle the operation. A Synner crew, on the other hand, might run afoul of a SAINT op making a play for the same territory. While SAINT isn't interested in the heroes (yet), it won't brook interference either. Since both Synners and SAINTs are criminals, however, the law might just be involved because the cops are chasing the heroes.

♣ **King—Authority.** Whereas “the Law” specifically means actual good cops, authorities can be the sadly plentiful figures who are more interested in getting their take and keeping the peace than anything else. Authorities may include bad cops, civil authorities like mayors and governors, corporate management, or Syndicate bosses. For a crew of Synners, their own superiors in their Syndicate’s hierarchy might be squelching their ambitions.

♣ **Queen—Admirer.** This character inconveniently tries becoming a hero’s apprentice, boss, friend, or lover. His unwanted admiration causes conflicts of interest for the crew rather than making the mission easier. Admirers can be kidnapping victims who develop Stockholm syndrome, neighborhood kids in harm’s way from emulating the cool criminal characters, or even enemy leaders who offer the heroes more money than they’ve ever earned to switch sides. If an additional prompt is needed, draw another face card and combine the result with the admirer.

♣ **Jack—Rival.** A rival is someone in the same line of work as a hero who really, really hates that hero. The rival may not necessarily want the character dead, but this person certainly wants to beat her at whatever she’s attempting. Rivals actively go out of their way to interfere with missions, trying to beat the heroes to the punch.

JOKER

If the Joker is drawn, draw two more cards from the Face Deck and combine the results.

3. MISSION PROFILE

The final step is to determine the mission profile—the task and objective for the crew. Draw a card from the Number Deck and consult the table below. Each type of crew is more likely to receive missions fitting its specialty.

For more complicated missions—or to craft a story arc—draw multiple cards up to the number of player characters.

ACQUIRE

The heroes must take something from somebody in the cast of characters...and that person doesn’t want to give it up. While heist teams may be the masters of acquisition missions, there’s a way for any crew to acquire something needed. Infiltrators and magnates negotiate, strike units and troubleshooters bust

MISSION PROFILE

Card	Heist Team	Infiltrators	Strike Unit	Enforcers	Magnates	Troubleshooters
2	Acquire	Acquire	Acquire	Acquire	Acquire	Acquire
3	Acquire	Broker	Coerce	Coerce	Broker	Broker
4	Acquire	Coerce	Disrupt	Disrupt	Broker	Coerce
5	Broker	Disrupt	Eliminate	Eliminate	Coerce	Disrupt
6	Disrupt	Disrupt	Eliminate	Eliminate	Coerce	Eliminate
7	Eliminate	Eliminate	Protect	Investigate	Disrupt	Investigate
8	Investigate	Investigate	Investigate	Protect	Investigate	Investigate
9	Investigate	Protect	Protect	Protect	Investigate	Protect
10	Protect	Transport	Transport	Transport	Transport	Transport
Joker	Draw once more from the Number Deck and combine both mission profiles.					

their way in with heavy weapons, and enforcers pull smash-and-grabs. The actual acquisition may be a **Dramatic Task** or **Quick Encounter** (see *Savage Worlds*), but extending a scheme over several turns could also work (see page 107). Acquisition missions are often the inciting spark of a series of events.

♠ **Spades—Valuables.** The heroes are after money, jewelry, art, or other items important for their monetary value rather than any immediate practical use. This could be a classic heist, or it could be a chance to hack the target's bank accounts through an extended voyage into the HyperNet. Enforcers and strike units likely resort to straightforward armed robbery.

♥ **Hearts—Person.** The heroes need to take somebody from the cast of characters who will not—or cannot—go willingly. This may mean abducting a snitch from out of protective custody, kidnapping a Synner's family member to extort his cooperation, or rescuing a compatriot captured by the other side.

♦ **Diamonds—Intelligence.** The goal of this mission is to acquire information. A heist team might infiltrate a Syndicate boss' mansion to plant bugs; infiltrators and troubleshooters might stake out and observe a target; strike units and enforcers might use interrogation; and magnates might bribe and wheedle. **Networking** (see *Savage Worlds*) may be involved.

♣ **Clubs—Object.** The item to be acquired is important for its practical uses, not its monetary value. A weapon, starship, drone, creature, or suit of armor might be the target. An acquisition mission of this sort is the perfect opportunity for the heroes to get a hold of restricted or ridiculously expensive items they otherwise would have no chance of owning.

BROKER

The heroes must either come to an understanding with one of the cast of characters or assist two or more of them in reaching an agreement. A greater potential for friendly resolution and mutual understanding exists in a scenario of this sort than when coercion is required. A heist team may need to steal something one side finds valuable before negotiations begin, and troubleshooters may need to force everybody to the negotiation table at gunpoint, but the agreement brokered is ultimately in everybody's best interest. A Social

Conflict scene is inevitable in brokering (see *Savage Worlds*).

As rare as matters of the heart might be in the criminal underworld, romantic relationships and marriages of convenience are also subject to brokerage. Clever negotiations can result in two rival Syndicate families uniting through a marriage.

♠ **Spades—Goods.** One party in this negotiation has an item the other party wants...and the first party isn't willing to simply sell it. The goods at the heart of these scenarios are usually rare, exotic, or full of deep personal meaning. It might be an albino rhino-beast calf, a bottle of 2023 Lost Draw Tempranillo, or a stuffed animal that once belonged to the crew's boss. Draw another number card to determine what the party holding the goods wants in return.

♥ **Hearts—Services.** The heroes (or their bosses) need the special skills of a nonplayer character. Because this character knows her own worth, hiring her is a matter of negotiation rather than forking over some cash. If none of the cast of characters have abilities that suggest them as the subject of the negotiations, draw another face card. One of the first characters drawn is key to meeting with the nonplayer character the heroes want to hire.

♦ **Diamonds—Information.** One or more people in the cast of characters know something the heroes need to learn. In *Starbreaker*, this almost always means the character is a snitch or knows the identity of a snitch. The snitch will likely need protection for himself and his family—and may very well demand a lot of money, too.

♣ **Clubs—Business.** The heroes aren't brokering a one-time transaction. Instead, they're beginning an ongoing relationship. This may literally mean the acquisition of a business (including the operations of a different Syndicate faction), or it could mean negotiating over how to split operations in a region. The breadth of the business increases with the heroes' Rank, from neighborhoods to cities to continents to planets to star systems and beyond.

COERCE

Coercion scenarios are much like brokerage missions, but the stakes are often deadlier. Those doing the coercing aren't going to accept no for an answer, so they'll make an offer that can't be refused. Characters on the giving or receiving end of coercion don't negotiate in good faith, so

the heroes must resort to blackmail, extortion, force, threats to the target or loved ones, and torture. Protection rackets—the bread and butter of organized crime—are a form of coercion.

If the players feel uncomfortable doing the coercing, perhaps they—or someone in the cast of characters that they might care about—are the victims instead. Syndicate factions don't always play nice with each other, and SAINT agents may feel the need to intercede if they witness injustice in action.

Social Conflicts are likely to occur in coercion missions, but the skills used are more likely Intimidation and Taunt than Persuasion.

♠ **Spades—Goods.** The party subjected to coercion has an item they don't want to part with. Regardless of the monetary value of the item,

sentimental value overrules common sense in this scenario. The item in question can't simply be stolen (perhaps the security is too high for a heist team, or the goods are too fragile to survive a strike unit's direct assault), so it is necessary to lean on the owner instead.

♥ **Hearts—Services.** The character being coerced possesses skills he doesn't want to use for the opposition. When this goes wrong, it can go very wrong. It is, after all, the plot of *John Wick 2*. These scenarios can also involve bribing judges, jail guards, cops, and other authorities.

♦ **Diamonds—Information.** Targets with information that must be coerced out of them are less likely to be snitches with inside information on the criminal underworld. More likely, they are outsiders who know something that's needed to complete a different job. People such as bounty hunters who know how to bypass the Fortress' security, chauffeurs who know the schedules of corporate executives, and engineers who have invented faster jump drives might be reluctant to give up their secrets for all the money in the world.

♣ **Clubs—Business.** Instead of the ongoing relationship from a broker mission, this is a hostile takeover or the beginning of a protection racket. When two Syndicate factions are fighting over territory, they might go to some ugly extremes to prevent war in the streets, going after each other's families rather than committing soldiers to battle.

DISRUPT

The heroes are called upon to disrupt something in progress. This doesn't necessarily mean killing or destroying the mission target; it just means stopping someone from starting or completing an activity. Heist teams might steal a key component of the target's plans or plant evidence to lead the authorities to the operation. Infiltrators might sabotage the target from within. Strike units, enforcers, and troubleshooters are more likely to use violence. Magnates might create a competing product. SAINT ultimately seeks to bring an end to the Syndicate by disrupting its operations.

♠ **Spades—Production.** Someone in the cast of characters is on the verge of making some new creation that the crew's boss does not want to see completed. This might be a physical object, or it could be something less concrete, like a



new law under debate. Corporations might have a new product coming to market that threatens a Syndicate monopoly. The Void might be about to launch a data-scraping HyperNet bot army that the Blood Coin feels competes with its operations.

♥ **Hearts—Relationship.** An existing or budding relationship involving one or more of the cast of characters threatens to cause problems. Infiltrators and enforcers might need to break up star-crossed lovers from feuding Syndicate clans, but relationships in the criminal underworld are usually more transactional. Bluebeards and black widows wooing rich widows and widowers, undercover cops making friends with confidential informants, and ambitious lieutenants getting too buddy-buddy for their boss' liking are examples of relationships in need of disruption.

♦ **Diamonds—Interception.** One of the cast of characters is about to acquire something that she must not get her hands on. An interception mission differs from an acquire mission in that the target hasn't received the goods or service yet. Heist teams, infiltrators, and magnates have a chance to steal the item en route or during the trade-off, while strike units, enforcers, and troubleshooters can hijack the delivery vehicle.

♣ **Clubs—Operation.** If a production disruption mission is about preventing something new from existing, an operation mission is about shutting down something already in progress. The target might be a multi-system ARROW taskforce interfering with Cartel smuggling, Vizon's predatory addictive soft drink division, or a successful Yakuza gambling parlor. Missions to disrupt an operation are by their very nature more complicated than other types of undertakings; feel free to draw more cards from the Number Deck to use as prompts for stages in the mission.

ELIMINATE

The crew's bosses don't want something broken—they want it gone! For most crews, this means committing violence, but not always. Heist teams might break in to erase evidence or to empty secret numbered accounts. Infiltrators, magnates, and troubleshooters might use their social influence to trick targets into destroying themselves.

♠ **Spades—Thing.** One of the cast of characters has an item in his possession that must be destroyed. This is more likely an actual physical object than an abstract concept. It might be

intrinsically dangerous, or the boss might want it destroyed as an object lesson (like the horse head in Woltz's bed in *The Godfather*).

♥ **Hearts—Person.** Most of the time, eliminating a person means killing them. Unless the players really want to dig into the angst of playing heroes forced by their circumstances to commit evil, the targets of these assignments will be dangerously violent in return. Eliminating someone could also mean destroying their reputation or professional standing by planting evidence or revealing secrets.

♦ **Diamonds—Secret.** The crew must either reveal a secret to prompt upheaval, or else cover it up (which might require destroying any records of it). If the heroes are burying a secret, it must be done so thoroughly that it is lost forever or utterly discredited. However, this scenario might also involve sharing the secret with the right person or organization. For example, eliminating the secret of a lost critanium mine could mean discovering its location and sharing that info with the SSA, or it could mean ensuring all records are buried so the Monarchs can keep their monopoly.

♣ **Clubs—Location.** A place needs to cease existing. Maybe the critanium mine location is already known and the crew have to blow it up real good. Magnates might drive a rival casino out of business. Heist teams, infiltrators, or troubleshooters might eliminate the exclusive country club where corrupt judges and businessmen conspire.

INVESTIGATE

The crew collects information or solves a mystery. Investigations offer multiple approaches appropriate for all crew types. To ensure the story moves forward, always give the players the most essential clues for free and reward successful Networking and skill rolls with additional clues.

♠ **Spades—Theft.** Something is missing, and the crew must either recover it or find who took it. Theft investigations can involve solving anything from kidnapping cases and grand theft starship to embezzlement, data breaches, and burglaries.

♥ **Hearts—Murder.** Someone died under mysterious circumstances and the crew must uncover the killer. Depending on the crew members' talents, this might involve actual detective work or just roughing up suspects until someone confesses. Remember that Healing can decipher forensic evidence.

♦ **Diamonds—Snitch.** Somebody squealed and must pay for their crime. Snitch investigations prompt paranoia, driving allies to turn on each other. Consider calling for Fear checks (see *Savage Worlds*) that result in temporarily gaining Suspicious and other Hindrances. If a player wants to retire a character, ask if they want to be the rat.

♣ **Clubs—Internal Affairs.** The heroes are the ones accused of the crime and must defend themselves from the investigators. Draw another card to determine what they have been accused of (if they are innocent), or make this the consequences of a previous adventure (if they are guilty). Strike units and enforcers especially may find themselves on the back foot as they are forced to rely on brains instead of brawn.

PROTECT

The heroes must prevent harm from occurring to the focus of the job. Somebody in the cast of characters (or something that belongs to them) is threatened by another character in the cast. The infiltrators, strike units, enforcers, and troubleshooters might take command of allies to fend off attackers or lead a Mass Battle; there might be a Chase as they move a target to a safe house, or the crew might need to complete a Dramatic Task to disarm a bomb (see *Savage Worlds*). Heist teams might steal something before it can be stolen by someone else.

Protect missions often mirror other mission types, with the crew members simply reversing the usual application of their skills.

♠ **Spades—Thing.** Look to the Acquire and Disrupt Spades results for inspiration.

♥ **Hearts—Person.** Look to the Acquire, Disrupt, and Eliminate Hearts results for inspiration.

♦ **Diamonds—Knowledge.** Look to the Broker, Coerce, Eliminate, and Investigate Diamonds results for inspiration.

♣ **Clubs—Complication.** Look to the Acquire, Broker, Eliminate, and Transport Clubs results for inspiration.

TRANSPORT

The heroes move an item from one place to another, either collecting it from a source or delivering it to a recipient. Somebody in the cast of characters is the source or recipient; one of the other characters may accompany (or even be) the package. The mission likely utilizes the Chase and/or Travel rules (see *Savage Worlds*).

♠ **Spades—Object.** The heroes must move one or more items between locations. A strike unit might transport dangerous nanoweapons or experimental technology, enforcers could do some bootlegging or gunrunning, and magnates might be accompanying a pile of cash intended to fund a new operation.

♥ **Hearts—Person.** The heroes must ensure one person in the cast of characters is delivered to another person in the cast of characters. Infiltrators and enforcers might be assigned something as innocent as making sure a Mafia don's kid gets to school safe...or something as sinister as human trafficking. Strike units and troubleshooters are more likely to find themselves transporting dangerous or desirable assets through enemy territory.

♦ **Diamonds—Knowledge.** The heroes need to ensure that important data safely reaches its destination. This might mean physically accompanying a secured computer or physical book, but it could just as easily mean a trip into HyperReality to transport a data file through a hostile virtual landscape (maybe one that looks like the Golden Age of Piracy or Middle-Earth). It might also mean transporting a person whose life is less important than what she knows.

♣ **Clubs—Complication.** The heroes need to transport something weird or hard to manage, like a mated pair of nosika or a dormant nohgotha insect hive. Infiltrators and enforcers might have to corral a bachelorette party, while strike units and troubleshooters might have to relocate a settlement before a natural disaster strikes.

GENERATING NEW WORLDS

Players are unpredictable creatures. Just when you think you know where they'll go next, they decide to leave the planet they're on and head off to another that you don't even know the name of.

Luckily, *Savage Worlds* has the solution. If you need a new planet on the fly, the **World Maker** chapter in the *Science Fiction Companion* presents plenty of random tables you can use to generate any planet you may need.

CHAPTER EIGHT: BESTIARY

The galaxy of *Starbreaker* is full of allies, enemies, and strange new lifeforms that tend to be hostile more often than not. In the sections below you'll find profiles for quite a few of these creatures, which you can use to populate your adventures.

Those marked with a  are Wild Cards.

PEOPLE

Below are templates for a wide range of people the heroes may encounter. These are intended to be “generic” templates, so feel free to tweak their abilities or even make them Wild Cards if that works better for your adventure.

ASSASSIN

While some guild assassins are masters of disguise who slip in and out unnoticed, most prefer to rely on battle armor equipped with a stealth system in case the job goes pear-shaped.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Research d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Ruthless (Major), Secret (Major—killer for hire) or Wanted (Major)

Edges: Assassin Profession, Assassin, Connections (Assassins Guild), No Mercy

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, sensor suite, stealth system, targeting system), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), poison dart launcher (Range 12/24/48, Damage d4+2, RoF 1, Lethal Poison).



BOUNTY HUNTER

Bounty hunters often work solo so they don't have to split the pay. To make up for this, they become walking arsenals bristling with weapons and armor.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 10; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Debt (Major), Mean, Obligation (Minor—Bounty Hunters League)

Edges: Bounty Hunter, Bring 'Em Back Alive, Connections (Bounty Hunters League), Menacing, Streetwise

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, sensor suite, targeting system), medium force shield (+3 Parry, -4 Cover, Stun Field), baton (Str+d4, Stun Field), laser SMG (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Stun Setting), plastic cuffs, rocket pack, wrist-mounted grapple line.



CITIZEN

Even the criminal underworld isn't exclusively full of movers and shakers. Most people in most parts of the galaxy are just average citizens trying to get through their days. These people know a modicum of self-defense skills at best, and they spend an average day just working and relaxing.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d4, Hypertech d6, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Performance d4, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Research d4, Stealth d4, Taunt d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: —

Gear: AR lens, portable computer.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE

The corporate world is just as ruthless—and almost as dangerous—as the criminal underworld. The first thing anybody does once they're promoted to management is get a laser-proof suit.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d4, Hacking d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Research d6, Stealth d4, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7 (3)

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Connections (Corporation they work for), Filthy Rich, Humiliate

Gear: Concealed armored vest (+2*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

ENGINEER

Engineers tend to be prickly and high handed, snarling at anyone who gets between them and their beloved machines. Thankfully, the best engineers are worth the hassle.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d10, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4,

Piloting d6, Repair d10, Shooting d4, Stealth d4, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Smart Mouth (Minor), Thin Skinned (Minor)

Edges: Engineer, Mr. Fix It

Gear: Arachnosynth overalls (+2*), mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR lens, goggles, flashlight, magnetic boots, portable computer, tool kit.

GRAVCYCLE OUTLAW

Many gravcycle enthusiasts imitate the outlaw aesthetic, but true outlaws embrace a life of crime. A disproportionate number of outlaw gravcycle club members are Armageddon War veterans too traumatized to reenter society and too undisciplined for the life of a mercenary.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Hindrances: Mean, Smart Mouth (Minor), Thin Skinned (Major)

Edges: Brawler, Connections (Their outlaw gravcycle club), Menacing

Gear: Heavy leather jacket (+2), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, Overcharge), vibro switchblade (Str+d4+2, AP 4, -2 to be noticed if hidden), goggles, cruiser gravcycle (chopped or with copilot sidecar), portable computer.

GRIFTER

Grifters come in all shapes and sizes, from beautiful femme fatales to seemingly befuddled old men. They are united in a knowledge of how to read people and take advantage of them.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Hacking d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Piloting d6, Research d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d8, Thievery d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (3)

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Overconfident

Edges: Charismatic, Grifter



Gear: Concealed armored vest (+2*), Arachnosynth clothes (+2*), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

HYPERTECH

Hypertechs in the core worlds frequently compete as HyperReality athletes or work as white-hat HyperNet security experts, but many in the rim worlds are part of the Void.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d4, Com. Knowledge d6, Electronics d10, Fighting d4, Hypertech d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d6, Research d10, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Curious, Tongue-Tied

Edges: Arcane Background (Hypertech), Connections (Their employer or the Void), Digital Wizardry, Drone, Drone Link, Hypertech, Investigator, New Powers, Power Points

Powers: *Disguise* (overwrite camera feed), *import avatar*, *override*, *puppet* (seize control of machines such as drones), *secure/unsecure*, *speak language* (real-time translation software), *summon ally* (call nearby drones). **Power Points:** 25.

Gear: Arachnosynth clothes (+2*), AR lens, I/O brainport, portable computer or workstation computer (EMP shielding, +2 to Hypertech rolls, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it), Remis Engineering WorkOrb 9000 (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).



MERCENARY

Veterans from both sides of the Armageddon War find employment in private military companies and security forces. Mercenaries include members of corporate security teams, the Jarisk'Krim, and the Sydok.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d4, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Obligation (Major—to their employer), Ruthless (Minor)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections (Their employer), Soldier

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds), medium polymer shield (Parry +2, Cover -2), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2).

MERCENARY OFFICER

Mercenary officers rise through the ranks, learning the art of war firsthand. They're sometimes behind the stick of fighter craft.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Obligation (Major—to their employer), Ruthless (Minor)

Edges: Command Presence, Connections (Their employer), Mission Control, Soldier, Steady Hands

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), force sword (Str+d8+4, AP 6).

PIRATE

Space pirates are often recruited from the very crews their brethren raid. Many sailors who took to the stars out of desperation find a pirate's life much merrier.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (The pirate's code, which isn't very gentlemanly but does prohibit mistreating those who surrender), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Connections (Pirates of the Oridium Nebula), Liquid Courage, Pirate, Zero-G Combatant

Gear: EVA suit and helmet (+4*, comm system earbuds), laser SMG (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), mono cutlass (Str+d6+2, AP 2), magnetic boots.

PIRATE CAPTAIN

It isn't the roughest, toughest pirates who rise to the captaincy—it's the cleverest. Though being good with a sword helps.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d10, Com. Knowledge d6, Electronics d8, Fighting d10, Gambling d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 10; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (The pirate's code), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Block (Imp), Command, Connections (Pirates of the Oridium Nebula), Extraction, Level Headed, Pirate, Zero-G Combatant

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (with two Arachnosynth mods) and concealed armored vest (+5*) or full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), force cutlass (Str+d6+4, AP 6), magnetic boots, wrist-mounted grapple line.



PSY COMMANDO

Due to increasing public concern regarding the potential misuse of psionics, the SSA and other governments have been pressured to disband their psionics programs. Psy-cos now find employment in the private sector as corporate security and troubleshooters—or as muscle for the Syndicate.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6,

Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Psionics d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

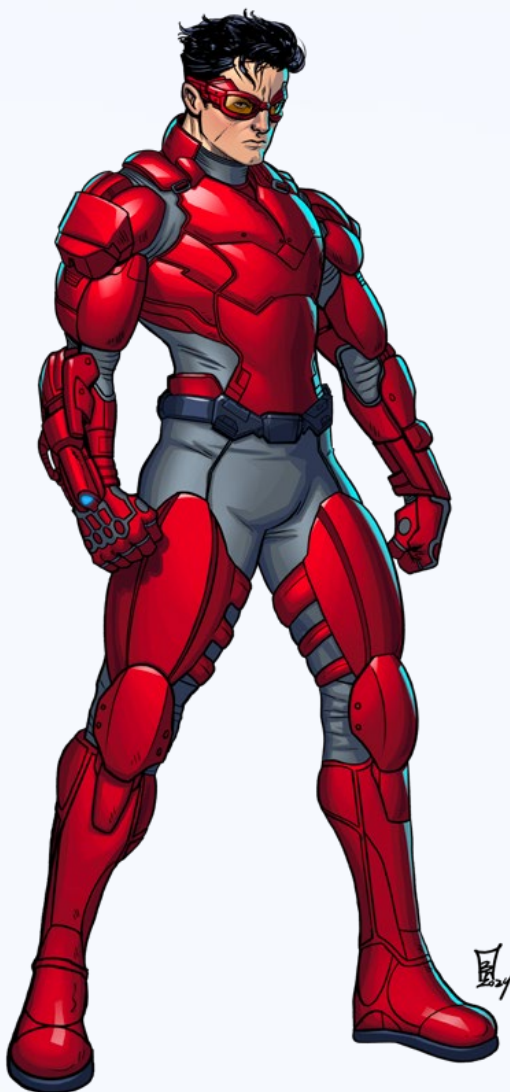
Hindrances: Arrogant, Obligation (Major—if working for a corporation) or Wanted (Major—if working for the Syndicate)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psy Commando), Basic Psychic Loadout, Psy Commando, PsyFocus Loadout, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Their employer), Soldier

Powers: *Arcane protection, bolt, boost/lower Trait (boost only, self only), invisibility, smite (self only), sound/silence, wall walker (self only).*

Power Points: 20.

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (with two Arachnosynth mods) and concealed armored vest (+5*) or full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds), laser pistol



(Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), PsyFocus (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

PSY OPERATIVE

Like the psy commandos, psy operatives have found themselves dismissed from their government agencies and seeking employment in the private sector. Many find a lucrative career as freelance spies, selling their skills and powers to those willing to meet their price.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Hypertech d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Psionics d10, Research d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (3)

Hindrances: Obligation (Major—to their employer), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psy Operative), Connection Training, Projection Training, Domination Training, Connections (Their employer), Investigator, Mentalist, Power Points, Psy Operative

Powers: *Boost/lower Trait (lower only), confusion, drain power points, empathy, fear, illusion, mind link, mind reading, mind wipe, puppet, speak language.* **Power Points:** 20.

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (+2*), concealed armored vest (+2*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

SCIENTIST

Whether they're in corporate R&D or they're Splicer fanatics, the galaxy has plenty of room for scientists of all stripes. The example below is a Splicer, but it but could easily be changed into Remis Engineering drone engineer or any other specialty.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d10, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d8,

Fighting d4, Hacking d6, Healing d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d6, Research d8, Science d10, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Curious, Driven (Major—obsessed with perfecting nature's work)

Edges: Connections (Splicers), Investigator, Linguist, Scholar

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (+2*), mono scalpel (Str+d4+2, AP 2, Improvised Weapon), AR lens, bionano injector, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

SCOUT

Scouts roam the spaceways searching for exploitable and/or habitable planets. Given their dangerous lifestyles, it behooves them to invest in good equipment.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Boating d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Hypertech d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d8, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Debt (Major), Driven (Major—discover the next big-money planet)

Edges: Alertness, Danger Sense, Woodsman

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, environmental protection vs. cold, heat, and thirst, sensor system), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), bedroll, canteen, first aid kit, portable computer.

SMUGGLER

Smugglers can be anything from Cartel coyotes to small-time bootleggers. They tend to live from job to job, pouring too much money into their starships to ever break even.

Some smugglers work in teams, with one pilot flying a flashy, high-speed starship guaranteed to catch the eye of law enforcement (the "blocker") while the other flies the freighter transporting the goods.



Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d10, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Repair d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Debt (Major—a starship they will never pay off), Impulsive

Edges: Ace, Connections (Cartel or another criminal organization), Quick, Smuggler, Streetwise

Gear: Heavy leather jacket (+2), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro

switchblade (Str+d4+2, AP 4, -2 to be noticed if hidden), portable computer.

THIEF

Professional thieves find work doing corporate espionage and acquiring rarities for the rich and powerful. A few act as modern Robin Hoods or just do it for the kicks. Many do not carry weapons on the job because armed robbery carries higher sentences.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d10, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d10, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Hypertech d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d10, Taunt d6, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Curious, Secret (Major) or Wanted (Major)

Edges: Acrobat, Connections (A corporation, fence, or Syndicate faction), Master Thief, Thief Profession

Gear: Arachnosynth bodysuit (+2*), AR lens, nano multi-tool lockpick, portable computer (EMP shielding, +2 to Hypertech rolls, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60,



Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), GripTex climbing gloves & boots, wrist-mounted grapple line.

STAR MARINES

“Star Marine” is a colloquial name for the SSA Interstellar Expeditionary Force (SSAIEF) and SSA warfighters in general. While they primarily support the SSA Navy, they can be deployed to peacekeeping duty, search and rescue missions, or other special operations.

Star Marine weapons are combusive: the target catches fire for an additional 1d6 damage if any two of the damage dice match.

STAR MARINE INFANTRY

The backbone of the SSA Star Marines, these soldiers are ready to fight in boarding actions, on the ground, or in the cold void of space.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d4, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Military code of conduct), Obligation (Major—SSA Navy)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Connections (SSA Navy), Soldier

Gear: Star Marine armor and helmet (+6*, comm system, environmental protection vs. decompression, sensor suite), plasma pistol (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 1, Combustive), plasma rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 3d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Combustive), mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2).

STAR MARINE MEDIC

Star Marine medics inspire hearts and minds, bringing hope to battlefields and disaster areas.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Hypertech d6, Healing d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Science d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Military code of conduct), Heroic

Edges: Healer, Reliable, Soldier

Gear: Star Marine armor and helmet (+6*, comm system, environmental protection vs. deompression, sensor suite), plasma pistol (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 1, Combustive), 6x bionano injectors, first aid kit, medic kit, third arm.

STAR MARINE OFFICER

Veteran Star Marines know how to guide and inspire their troops, whether leading from the front or issuing orders from a command bunker.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Military code of conduct), Obligation (Major—SSA Navy)

Edges: Command Presence, Connections (SSA Navy), Mission Control, Soldier, Steady Hands

Gear: Star Marine armor and helmet (+6*, comm system, environmental protection vs. deompression, sensor suite), plasma pistol (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 1, Combustive), plasma rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 3d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Combustive), force sword (Str+d8+4, AP 6).

STAR MARINE RECON

Before the heavy troops show up in their power armor, it's up to the recon soldiers to scout the area for enemy positions, hazardous terrain, and potential drop sites.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Boating d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Hypertech d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d8, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Military code of conduct), Obligation (Major—SSA Navy)

Edges: Alertness, Danger Sense, Woodsman

Gear: Star Marine scout armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, environmental



protection vs. cold, decompression, heat, and thirst, sensor suite), plasma pistol (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 1, Combustive), plasma rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 3d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Combustive), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), bedroll, canteen, first aid kit, portable computer.

SYNDICATE FORCES

While not as organized or well-funded as an actual military, the forces of the Syndicate remain exceptionally effective.

SYNDICATE SOLDIER

Whether Bratva brodyag, Cartel falcons, Mafia soldiers, Monarch squires, or Triad 49ers, the rank-and-file of most Syndicate factions are marked by street smarts and ambition.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Obligation (Major—to their Syndicate faction)

Edges: Connections (Syndicate faction), Made Man, Streetwise

Gear: Arachnosynth suit (+2*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2,

Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), portable computer.

SYNDICATE CAPTAIN

Syndicate captains—whether they're called brigadiers, capos, lieutenants, or whatever—run day-to-day operations. Captains are savvy operators who are willing to get their hands dirty.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Gambling d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Obligation (Major—to their Syndicate faction), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Command, Connections (Syndicate faction), Made Man, Rich, Streetwise

Gear: Arachnosynth suit (with two Arachnosynth mods) and concealed armored vest (+5*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielded).

SYNDICATE BOSS

Syndicate bosses include minor regional leaders and system-wide godfathers. Bosses never go anywhere without 2d4 Syndicate soldiers and 1d4 Syndicate captains as bodyguards.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Obligation (Minor—to their Syndicate faction), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Command Presence, Connections (Syndicate faction), Filthy Rich, Made Man, Menacing, Mission Control, Streetwise, Strong Willed

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (with two Arachnosynth mods) and concealed armored vest (+5*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR





lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

FOUR HORSEMEN

The Four Horsemen are a dangerous and formidable mercenary team consisting of four members: Korvod Vidger, Najya Hasser, Oloa Elpai, and Sam Kincaid. The Four Horsemen can serve as the heroes' rivals, allies, or sometimes even both at once.

KORVOD VIDGER

All of the mercenaries in the Four Horsemen have reputations in their fields. Korvod Vidger's reputation is for being brutally efficient.

That doesn't mean he enjoys killing; Korvod is just exceptionally good at it. Though he is a registered bounty hunter, he is rarely ever hired if the bounty is expected to come back alive. Some say he is just an assassin with a license, but Korvod always reminds people that he *would* bring his targets in alive...if they would just surrender.

Adventure Seed: Korvod has actually captured a bounty alive, but he doesn't have the time to return the target to his client. He has a much better paying bounty in the same system. All the heroes have to do is ensure that the bounty stays put until he returns. Of course, there are those who want to get their "friend" back before he is taken to prison and talks.

Species: Vulkolasi

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d8, Fighting d10, Gambling d4, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (6)

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Loyal, Ruthless (Major), Stubborn

Edges: Berserk, Brawny, Bring 'Em Back Alive, Connections (Bounty Hunters Guild), Frenzy (Imp), Iron Jaw, Mighty Blow, No Mercy, Quick, Sweep (Imp)

Gear: Armored trench coat (+2*), polymer corselet (+5*), force great axe (Str+d10+4, AP 6, Parry -1, two hands), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting), comm system earbuds, magnetic boots, portable computer (EMP shielding).

Special Abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** The vulkolasi descend from a crepuscular predatory species. They ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination.
- **Superior Hearing:** Large, sensitive ears often allow vulkolasi to hear their enemies before seeing them. Vulkolasi add +1 to Notice rolls involving hearing.



NAJYA HASSER

Najya, a nahkyra, has a reputation as the best starship thief in the galaxy. Her biggest claim to fame is the theft of a star carrier left over from the Armageddon War. She managed to board and override the systems to jump to a predetermined location. Although the ship was ultimately recovered, it was not an error on her part: the client was unable to move the craft to a safe location before the SSA Navy showed up.

Najya Hasser is always either in the market for information that will lead her to the next big score or taking on a job for a client to obtain a ship.

Adventure Seed: The heroes need a specific ship to bypass security on a corporate or military-controlled moon. Najya will help them, but only if she gets the ship when the job is done. She accompanies them on the mission to ensure the heroes do not double-cross her.

Species: Nahkyra

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d10, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Hypertech d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d10, Research d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d6, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Loyal, Suspicious (Minor), Wanted (Minor)

Edges: Acrobat, Arcane Background (Hypertech), Danger Sense, Level Headed, McGyver, Mr. Fix It, Quick, Steady Hands, Thief

Powers: *Barrier* (firewall), *disguise*, *import avatar*, *invisibility* (erase digital presence), *override*, *puppet*, *secure/unsecure*. **Power Points:** 25.

Gear: Arachnosynth overalls (+2*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting), AR lens, comm system earbuds, I/O brainport, magnetic boots, nano multi-tool lockpick, portable computer (EMP shielding, +2 to Hypertech rolls, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it), GripTex climbing gloves & boots.

Special Abilities:

- **Echolocation:** Nahkyra can “see” by emitting sound and receiving its echo. As long as they can emit and receive sound, they may ignore all Illumination penalties and up to 4 points of *blindness*, *invisibility*, or other penalties inflicted by sight within 10” (20 yards). Creatures with keen hearing may be able to hear a nahkyra’s calls (GM’s call).
- **Flight:** Nahkyra can fly at Pace 6 and “run” for extra movement as usual. Maneuvering uses the Athletics skill. Nahkyra whose wings are fouled by being Bound or Entangled cannot fly.

THE REVELATION

The Revelation, a heavily modified Remis Heavy Industries light combat transport, is the Horsemen’s home, headquarters, and primary vehicle for insertion and extraction.

Size 11 (Huge), Handling -1, Top Speed 17, Toughness 28 (8), Wounds 5, Crew 5+5, Energy 15, Mods 33 (5)

Mods:

AM/ECM, 4× Armor, Artificial Gravity, Atmospheric, Crew Quarters, Jump Drive Mark III, Shields.

Weapons:

2× DUAL LINKED LIGHT LASERS (Turret): Range 150/300/600, Damage 2d10 (II), RoF 3, AP 10, Cauterize, Overcharge, Reaction Fire.

- **Nimble:** They're small and agile, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Size -1:** Nahkyra are smaller than average, reducing their Size and Toughness by 1.

OLOA ELPAI

Oloa Elpai is, at heart, an entrepreneur. Prior to joining up with the Four Horsemen, she ran her own successful private military company—but was ousted by her shareholders after a botched job was blamed on her planning.

Down on her luck, Oloa was recruited by Najya for the Four Horsemen's first mission together. She decided to stay on after that mission was a great success.

Adventure Seed: Oloa has discovered that her first officer set her up on the mission that caused her to be ousted from the PMC she started. She wants revenge, but she also wants to keep her hands clean in case it goes wrong. She hires the team to capture the traitor and bring them back to her.

Species: Arusan

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d10, Com. Knowledge d8, Driving d8, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Focus d8, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Mild Mannered, Ruthless (Major), Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Command Presence, Fervor, Hold the Line, Inspire, Level Headed (Imp), Master Tactician, Mission Control, Natural Leader, Rapid Fire, Soldier, Steady Hands

Powers: *Empathy*. **Power Points:** 15.

Gear: Armored trench coat (+2*), polymer corselet (+5*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm system earbuds, magnetic boots, portable computer (EMP shielding).

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Arusans can swim at their full Pace using their webbed hands and feet. They cannot drown so long as the water is oxygenated.

- **Dependency:** Arusans must constantly hydrate their bodies. Their skin needs regular moisture, otherwise it dries out and peels. Arusans must submerge themselves in water or use a moisture rehydration system for a minimum of one hour out of every 24 or become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. A day after that, they perish. Each hour spent hydrating restores a level of Fatigue.

- **Immune to Poison:** The flora and fauna of Frungu are highly toxic. Due to this exposure, the arusans have evolved an immunity to poison.

SAM KINCAID

Kincaid is a smuggler...and a good one at that. His skills as a pilot and his knowledge of uncharted routes have served the Horsemen well in their travels.

Kincaid likes to do everything with style. The one responsible for naming the Four Horsemen, he thought it sounded like a cool name for a crew.

Kincaid enjoys a challenge and likes going up against the "Big Bad Guys." If he can make the Syndicate or similar opposition look bad in the process of pulling off a job, he might even shave a bit off his rate.

Adventure Seed: Kincaid has run into a small issue. His ship was impounded when he landed because he failed to update his ship's transponder. The authorities haven't found the cargo in the secret compartment just yet. He hires the heroes to go in and get the cargo out before the authorities find it.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d10, Electronics d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d12, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Heroic, Quirk (Always trying to be cool), Thin Skinned (Minor), Wanted (Minor)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Ace, Connections (Numerous small-time criminals and fences), Quick, Streetwise, Two-Gun Kid, Zero-G Combatant

Gear: Armored trench coat (+2*), polymer corselet (+5*), 2× laser pistols (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting), comm system earbuds, hat, magnetic boots, portable computer (EMP shielding).

PERSONALITIES

Below are an assortment of troublemakers and troubleshooters the heroes may encounter over the course of their adventures. You may wish to use them as allies, enemies, or mentors.



ALAUNN MAIS

Senior Vice President Alaunn Mais oversees Arusan Black Market operations in the rim worlds. He is widely recognized by upper management as an innovative go-getter, a rising star in the organization. His division regularly turns record profits.

This is due in no small part to that fact that SVP Mais is a sociopath, utterly devoid of empathy for others. He understands it as a concept and works hard to know the hearts and minds of those he deals with, but he feels nothing for anyone else. People are data to be manipulated, game pieces to be rearranged.

This lack of compassion has allowed Alaunn Mais to hone his natural arusan psychic gifts to truly dangerous levels, letting him manipulate the minds of both allies and enemies with ease. Even the CEO of the Arusan Black Market has felt the touch of Mais' mind manipulation—though she does not remember it.

Though nowhere near as much of a physical threat as most members of the Syndicate, SVP Mais nevertheless regularly trains in the elegant, flowing arusan martial art *Sheshara*. He knows he can't be afraid to do his own killing when needed.

Adventure Seed: SVP Mais would like to cut the omnipresent Vizon Corporation out of trade in the rim worlds. He knows this may very well be impossible, so he decides to test the waters by hiring the heroes (through a series of middlemen) to hijack a Vizon arms shipment. He expects them to fail, but he wants to see what security measures Vizon has in place.

Species: Arusan

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Boating d8, Common Knowledge d10, Fighting d8, Focus d12, Gambling d8, Hacking d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d12, Piloting d6, Research d10, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8 (12 with activated force shield);

Toughness: 11 (5)

Hindrances: Cautious, Mild Mannered, Obligation (Major—Arusan Black Market), Ruthless (Major), Secret (Major—is actually a powerful psychic)

Edges: Arcane Background (Gifted), Aristocrat, Block (Imp), Charismatic, Connections (Arusan Black Market), Counterattack (Imp), Filthy Rich, Level Headed (Imp), Martial Warrior, Menacing, Streetwise, Tough as Nails, Very Attractive

Powers: *Empathy, mind link, mind reading, mind wipe, stun.* **Power Points:** 40.

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), large force shield (+4; disguised as a bejeweled bracelet), concealed mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it).

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Arusans can swim at their full Pace using their webbed hands and feet. They cannot drown so long as the water is oxygenated.
- **Dependency:** Arusans must constantly hydrate their bodies. Their skin needs regular moisture, otherwise it dries out and peels. Arusans must submerge themselves in water or use a moisture rehydration system for a minimum of one hour out of every 24 or become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. A day after that, they perish. Each hour spent hydrating restores a level of Fatigue.
- **Immune to Poison:** The flora and fauna of Frungu are highly toxic. Due to this exposure, arusans have evolved an immunity to poison.



ANATOLY “THE BUTCHER” MIKHAILOV

There are two sides to the protection racket: protecting “clients” from the violence of others and “protecting” the clients from your own reprisals if they don’t pay up. Anatoly Mikhailov is very good at both, eagerly leaping into battle to quash any gravcycle gang or upstart that dares poach on Bratva turf, and just as eagerly causing accidents for recalcitrant clients.

Anatoly denies the latter, of course, claiming to be a very reasonable man who has never touched a client in his life. Those who defy him just have a terrible habit of falling out of upper-story windows.

Early in his Bratva career, Mikhailov bargained with a Splicer doctor to receive bootleg psy commando implants. He used the powers they granted to quickly establish himself as a formidable enforcer, earning the title of “*Avtoritel*” and command of a brigade of Bratva boyeviks. Due to his success, the Bratva godfathers use the Butcher and his soldiers as troubleshooters, sending them anywhere in the rim worlds where people refuse to pay their protection money.

Adventure Seed: The heroes find themselves in town just when Anatoly Mikhailov and his boyeviks arrive to cow the locals into paying protection money. A local contact pleads with the heroes to intercede, sparking a conflict between the heroes (much like in the Akira Kurosawa classics *Yojimbo* and *Seven Samurai*).

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d10, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Focus d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6, Thievery d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (5)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Obligation (Major—Bratva), Overconfident, Wanted (Minor—unenforceable warrants for his arrest in multiple systems)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psy Commando), Basic Psychic Loadout, PsyFocus Loadout, Attractive, Brawny, Bruiser, Brute, Combat Reflexes, Command, Connections (Bratva), Double Tap, Fervor, Followers, Frenzy, Martial

Warrior, Menacing, No Mercy, Quick, Rabble-Rouser, Streetwise, Tougher than Nails

Powers: Bolt, boost/lower Trait, confusion, darksight, mind link, mind reading, slumber, sound/silence, stun, and wall walker. **Power Points:** 20.

Gear: Concealed armored vest (+2*), Arachnosynth-lined armored trench coat (+4*), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, –2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR visor, comm system earbuds, portable computer (EMP shielding, –2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it), PsyFocus (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4 AP 2).



ANNAMARIA ALDI

Annamaria Aldi acts as a “consigliere at large” for the Mafia. She travels the galaxy to act as a financial advisor and impartial mediator to planetary *capifamiglia*. Her primary specialty is accounting; she ensures that the local clan is keeping their books honest and reporting all income to the bosses back on Terra. In other words, she prevents embezzlement.

Though she might be an excellent accountant, Annamaria’s true specialty is murder. She rarely visits a planet unless the Terran overbosses already have reason to suspect things aren’t on the up and up.

It’s a lonely life. Annamaria takes what comfort she can in the excellent pay and the relative infrequency with which she is employed. Unfortunately, her days are numbered. A coalition of planetary *capifamiglia* intend to have her whacked the next time she enters their territory, hoping to prevent their own crimes from coming to light.

Adventure Seed: The heroes learn about the plot against Annamaria and are assigned to save her life and recruit her. She knows much that could be of use to SAINT or to another arm of the Syndicate. They must intercept her transport, persuade her of the danger, and then protect her from the Mafia *soldati* sent to kill her.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Academics d10, Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d10, Electronics d6, Fighting d10, Gambling d6, Hacking d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Performance d10

(violin), Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Research d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d10, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Minor), Enemy (Major—the families of all those she has eliminated), Loyal, Obligation (Minor—Mafia), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Assassin, Attractive, Connections (Mafia), Dead Shot, Double Tap, Improvisational Fighter, Investigator, Level Headed, Made Man, Martial Artist, No Mercy, Rapid Fire, Tough as Nails, Thief

Gear: Concealed armored vest (+2*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), concealed vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4, -2 to detect when concealed), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge),

AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).



AREK VERTAN

Smuggler, pilot, rogue...

Like most people living in the rim worlds, Arek Vertan is just trying to make it through another day. There aren't many smuggling jobs he won't accept so long as he gets to fly.

When he's not busy flying *The Lucky Lady* past a blockade or running from the authorities, he can most often be found at the gravcycle tracks. Not only is Arek a great pilot, he's also a successful racer. If he was more dedicated and didn't have a criminal record, he could probably go pro in the core worlds' gravcycle racing circuit.

Adventure Seed: Arek has to drop off a small data file that is too important to send across the HyperNet. He must finish a gravcycle race on the planet in question and then pass the package off during the closing ceremonies. He hires the heroes to keep him safe both before the race and afterward when it's time to get off-planet.

Species: Dunar

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Driving d8, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d10, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Taunt d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Debt (Major—owes the Yakuza for his ship), Driven (Minor—get back to being a smuggler), Outsider (Major), Overconfident, Quirk (Always talking about his big scores)

Edges: Ace, Alertness, Ambidextrous, Combat Ace, Danger Sense, Streetwise, Two-Gun Kid

Gear: Heavy leather jacket (+2), 2× laser pistols (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting, Stun Setting), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4, cannot be thrown), comm system earbuds.

Special Abilities:

- **Tendril Signaling:** Dunar may make a Persuasion roll to use their head tendrils for communicating basic messages to each other.
- **Tough:** Dense tissue and muscle make dunar resistant to damage. Add +1 to their Toughness.



Phantom

THE LUCKY LADY

The hangar of this RHI XM07 “Grizzly” class freighter is full of Arek’s gravcycles, as well as the tools and equipment to maintain them.

Size 14 (Gargantuan), Handling 0, Top Speed 16, Toughness 29(4), Wounds 6, Crew 50, Energy 30, Mods 56 (15)

Mods: Artificial Gravity, 2× Armor, Atmospheric, 2× Handling, Hangar, Jump Drive Mark IV, Shields.

Weapons:

- **DUAL LINKED HEAVY LASERS (Fixed Front):** Range 150/300/600, Damage 4d10 (V), RoF 1, AP 30, Cauterize, Overcharge.



BARON CHRISTENSEN

The Baron presides over much of Echo’s operations. He is well known, even popular, among the general population. The Baron always maintains his polite demeanor, even when threatened or angry. This is not a façade; Baron Christensen believes all dealings should be handled with care. Both enemies and allies have learned that this only makes him more dangerous. It is impossible to be sure of his intentions until the last moment.

Adventure Seed: Baron Christensen’s aspirations drive him to find new ways to consolidate his power and influence far beyond Echo. A rival Syndicate faction is attempting to assassinate the Baron before his actions upset the balance of power. The heroes must find out who and stop them.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Performance d8 (opera), Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d10, Thievery d6

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Cautious, Code of Honor (Sense of decorum), Obligation (Major—the Monarchs), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Aristocrat, Attractive, Calculating, Charismatic, Command Presence, Connections (Monarchs), Famous, Filthy Rich, Level Headed (Imp), Made Man, Menacing, Mission Control, Nerves of Steel (Imp), No Mercy, Quick, Streetwise, Tough as Nails



Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), switchblade mono knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge).



BETTY BLACK

Betty Black was born the daughter of an SSA judge. She spent her childhood dreaming of growing up to become the same. While she was in college, a Syndicate thug killed her father in cold blood. Betty changed her career to criminal justice, joining ARROW before she was recruited to work for SAINT.

Since then, Betty Black has spent years undercover or training new operatives. Her skill in turning a new asset is regarded as the gold standard by which all other SAINT operatives are judged. She utilizes her position to search for information about her father's killers at every opportunity.

Betty Black's most recent assignment saw her infiltrate the Syndicate faction known as the Blood Coin. Posing as a fellow criminal coerced into working with SAINT, she was tasked with monitoring the other SAINT operatives and making sure they got the job done.



Adventure Seed: Betty approaches the heroes to complete a job and take down a rival Syndicate faction on behalf of the Blood Coin. Her eventual goal is to either turn them or bring them into SAINT as full-time agents.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Performance d6, Persuasion d6, Research d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 10 (5)

Hindrances: Death Wish (Avenge her father's death or die trying), Driven (Minor—destroy the Syndicate), Loyal, Secret (Major—undercover SAINT Agent), Vow (Major—serve SAINT)

Edges: Alertness, Connections (SAINT), Double Tap, Investigator, Made Man, Menacing, Rapid Fire, Retort, Streetwise

Gear: Arachnosynth formal clothing (+2*), concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm unit (10-mile range), 6 plastic cuffs.

CALIBAN

Jesop H. Breka (call sign "Caliban") fought in the final assault on the main nohgotha fortress world at the end of the Armageddon War. He was trapped when friendly fire collapsed a building on top of him. Seeking any means to survive, he and his partner (call sign "Ariel") dove into a nohgotha cryochamber, praying that one day they would be found.

When Caliban awoke some 30 years later, he was shocked to discover Ariel gone, her chamber empty. Why she left him trapped remains a painful mystery. Now Caliban makes his way on the rim using his psy abilities to work as a high-end thief.

Adventure Seed: Caliban has never given up looking for Ariel and has finally found some clues as to where she might be. However, the clues lead to a Vizon corporate lab, and some of Caliban's previous thefts have put him on a watch list. He hires the heroes to check out the lead and find out where it goes.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Psionics d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Thievery d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (6)

Hindrances: Driven (Minor—discover what happened to his partner Ariel), Enemy (Minor—corporate bigwig Arlo Green, a victim of Caliban's thefts), Overconfident, Wanted (Major—desertion)

Edges: Acrobat, Arcane Background (Psy Commando), Assassin, Connections (Various fences throughout the galaxy), Free Runner, Streetwise, Thief

Powers: Bolt, boost/lower Trait, confusion, darksight, mind link, mind reading, slumber, sound/silence, stun, and wall walker. **Power Points:** 20.

Gear: Infantry battle suit (+6), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4, cannot be thrown), nano multi-tool lockpick, PsyFocus (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), GripTex gloves & boots, wrist-mounted grapple line.



CHA'TAL GRESK

General Cha'tal Gresk survived the Armageddon War only to see his people dispossessed, adrift in a galaxy that feared and hated them. Seeing no other way to protect those who served him, he joined with several other dunar officers to found the Jarisk'Krim.

Since that day, Cha'tal Gresk has been at war with himself. Sheer stubborn pride keeps him from accepting the helping hands the SSA and other governments have offered over the years. He clings to the anger and rejection he felt when it seemed all the galaxy turned against his people simply for living the only life they had ever known. Despite this, he finds himself yearning ever more for that elusive concept called "peace," something utterly foreign to him.

The assassination of his compatriots brings a mix of rage and sorrow. He has openly wept for his comrades and now seeks vengeance. If this leads the Jarisk'Krim into war with the corporate worlds, he does not know if he can justify sending so many fellow dunar to die.

Adventure Seed: For all that the Jarisk'Krim may be one of the most formidable mercenary companies in the galaxy, Cha'tal Gresk lacks the means to investigate the deaths of his fellow centurions. When he hires the heroes

to do his sleuthing, they inevitably discover that the Vizon Corporation itself arranged for the assassinations. Whether the heroes work for SAINT or are Synners, how do they handle potentially starting a new interplanetary war?

Species: Dunar

Attributes: Agility d12+1, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d10, Battle d10, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d8, Fighting d10, Healing d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Riding d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 11; **Toughness:** 16 (5)

Hindrances: Jealous (Minor—envies the peaceful lives of humans and other species), Obligation (Major—Jarisk'Krim), Outsider (Major), Stubborn, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Block (Imp), Brave, Brawler, Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Command Presence, Dead Shot, Fervor, Followers, Hold the Line, Inspire, Level Headed, Master of Arms, Mighty Blow, Mission Control, Natural Leader, Rapid Fire, Rock and Roll!, Soldier, Tougher than Nails

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, targeting system), Damocles laser SMG (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro-sword (Str+d8+2, AP 4), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge).

Special Abilities:

- **Tendrill Signaling:** Dunar may make a Persuasion roll to use their head tendrils for communicating basic messages to each other.
- **Tough:** Dense tissue and muscle make dunar resistant to damage. Add +1 to their Toughness.



COMMANDER ROBERT INGLIS

The grizzled and insightful commander of SAINT is well versed in interstellar COIN (counter-intelligence) operations. Inglis primarily resides on the *Blood Saber*, rarely operating in the field, but he takes an active and involved interest in the planning and results of SAINT operations.

SAINT agents who achieve great success may find themselves meeting with Inglis, receiving promotions, and being held to a higher standard than one might expect.

Adventure Seed: Inglis must travel to a top-secret summit with some very shady characters. He needs a team he can trust to smuggle him into the summit location and escort him back out safely afterward.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d12

Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d6, Battle d10, Com Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Hacking d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Thievery d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13 (5)

Hindrances: Driven (Minor—end the Syndicate), Obligation (Major—SSA), Ruthless (Minor)



Edges: Alertness, Assassin, Bolster, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command Presence, Common Bond, Level Headed (Imp), Master Tactician, Mission Control, Natural Leader, Nerves of Steel (Imp), Streetwise, Strong Willed, Tougher than Nails

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), heavy leather jacket (+2), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting), AR lens, comm system earbuds, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).



Davak is one of the most infamous bounty hunters in the galaxy. Well known for their skill and determination, they have captured a record-setting number of bounties. Their signature red armor announces their presence, causing some marks to surrender on the basis of Davak's reputation alone. No one has seen Davak without their armor, lending them an air of mystery and furthering their unstoppable reputation.

Davak rarely kills their mark. They prefer to employ an arsenal of nonlethal weapons to end fights quickly and decisively.

Adventure Seed: Davak is after one of the characters but the bounty is a con. Davak's employer doesn't intend to pay, instead planning on capturing Davak themselves. Davak offers to work with the heroes to turn the tables, letting them all escape and promising to owe them a favor when it's done.

Species: Unknown

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Psionics d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Obligation (Major—Bounty Hunters League), Secret (Major—actually Caliban's ex-partner Ariel and an AWOL psy commando)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Psy Commando), Basic Psychic Loadout, PsyFocus Loadout, Bring 'Em Back Alive, Connections (Bounty Hunters League), Soldier, Streetwise, Two-Gun Kid

Powers: Bolt, boost/lower Trait, confusion, darksight, mind link, mind reading, slumber, sound/silence, stun, and wall walker. **Power Points:** 20. Davak only uses their limited psionic abilities in extreme emergencies.

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, environmental protection, sensor suite, targeting system), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Stun Setting), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Stun Setting), laser SMG (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Stun Setting), 3 nausea grenades, plastic cuffs, poison dart launcher (Range 12/24/48, Damage d4+2, RoF 1, Knockout Poison), PsyFocus (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2).



DOM

As far as pirates go, Dominic Sokart is more rogue than villain. He would rather take a ship intact and let the crew go than fight and kill everyone aboard. He argues this is common sense: people are more likely to surrender if they believe they can survive, and surrender is less costly to the *Silver Ghost* than a fight.

Being a pirate is never easy, and it's always dangerous. Anyone who meets Dom is reminded of that fact when they see his cyber arm and the eye he lost when his former first mate mutinied against him. While he has since recovered the *Silver Ghost*, Dom bears a strong grudge against Rekan Vax.

Adventure Seed: Dom seeks to recruit more ships to assist in attacking a large convoy of Vizon merchant vessels. He promises a big reward. He doesn't know it's all a trap by Vizon, whose executives are tired of his attacks affecting their business.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Focus d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

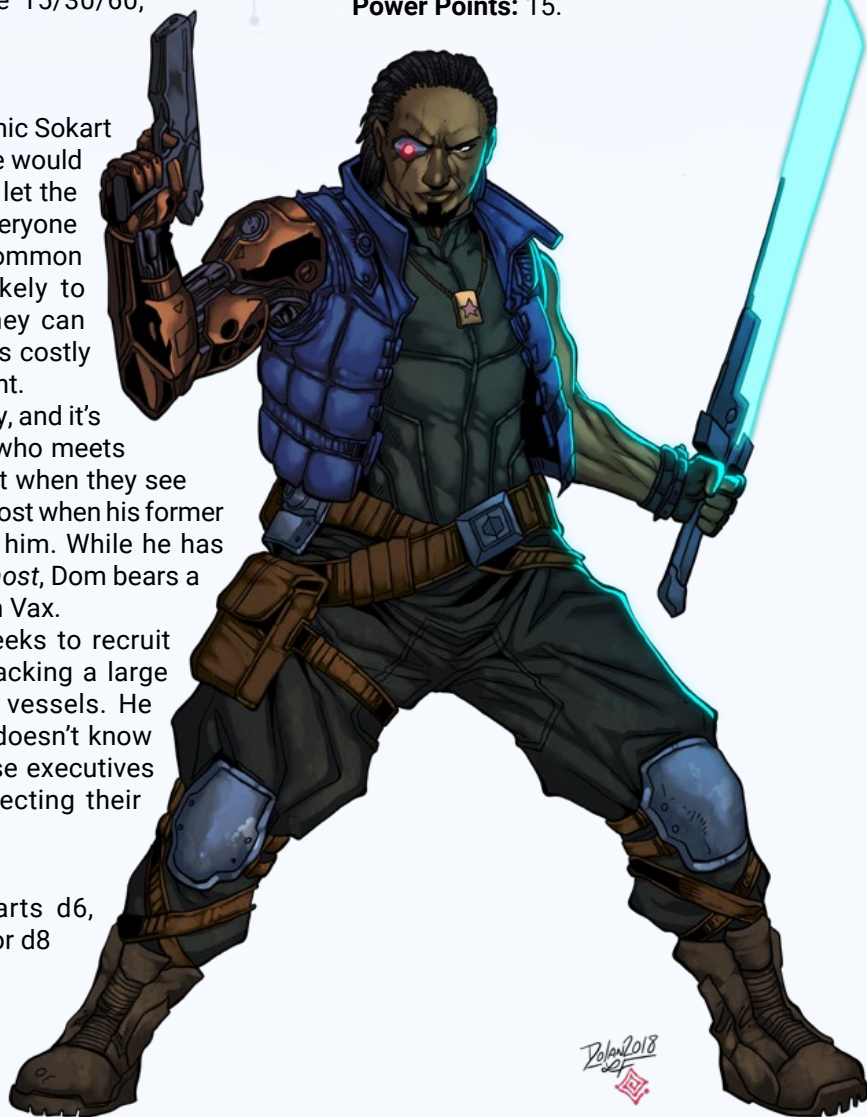
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Driven (Minor—prove the Vizon Corporation is crooked), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Cyborg), Command, Soldier, Inspire, Natural Leader, Zero-G Operator

Powers: *Boost Trait* (Muscular, skeletal, and reflex enhancements: self only, gains the One Arm Hindrance when this power goes offline), *farsight* (telescopic right eye, gains the One Eye Hindrance when this power goes offline), *stun* (concealed taser in right arm, gains the One Arm Hindrance when this power goes offline).

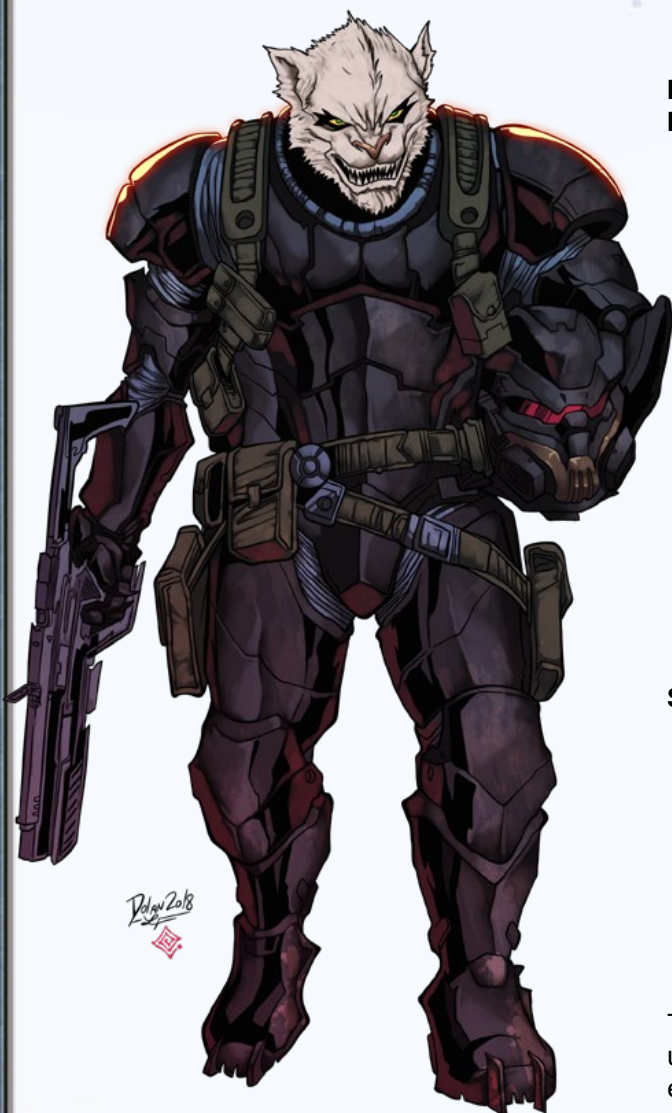
Power Points: 15.



Gear: Arachnosynth armored jacket (+3), Blakstarr Inc. vibro-sword (Str+d8+2, AP 4), Gentleman Xhorz laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), 4 explosive pellets (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 2d4, SBT), 2 smoke pellets (Range: 3/6/12, creates obscuring smoke in a SBT that imposes -4 to vision-based rolls), comm unit (10-mile range), magnetic boots.

GARROK

Garrok Horthik has served Dom as a trusted friend and the security officer of the *Silver Ghost* for years. Prior to joining Dom's crew, Garrok was in the vulkolasi special forces unit Gospod Nacht (Lords of the Night). After many missions, he came to one conclusion: the money wasn't worth the risk.



Garrok worked as a mercenary for nearly a decade until Dom hired him for a dangerous job that required extra muscle. The two have had their fates linked ever since, including when the *Silver Ghost* crew mutinied. Garrok got Dom safely off the ship and, when the time came, helped him reclaim the *Silver Ghost*.

Adventure Seed: The *Silver Ghost* crew plans to attack a large bunker freighter. Garrok hires the characters to obtain the necessary blueprints to bypass the freighter's security measures and retrieve a hidden Vizon Corporation arms shipment.

Species: Vulkolasi

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Persuasion d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (6)

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor—Captain Torkal, former Gospod Nacht commanding officer), Loyal, Mean, Obligation (Major—to SAINT, for now), Ruthless (Minor), Stubborn, Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Assassin, Brawny, Lords of the Night, Rapid Fire (Imp), Rock and Roll!, Soldier, Trademark Weapon (Damocles Submachine Gun), Woodsman

Gear: Arachnosynth bodysuit (+2*), vulkolasi polymer armor and helmet (+5*), Damocles laser SMG (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 4, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), 2 blackout smoke grenades, 2 EMP grenades, 4 high explosive grenades, vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4, cannot be thrown).

Special Abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** Vulkolasi ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination.
- **Superior Hearing:** Large, sensitive ears often allow vulkolasi to hear their enemies before seeing them. Vulkolasi add +1 to Notice rolls involving hearing.

DRANUS

Dranus is one of the chief enforcers of the Thirteen. He is a frighteningly effective assassin, using his cybernetics to disguise himself with ease. He always assumes the same handsome

South Asian appearance when the time for stealth is over and the killing begins.

Dranus does not rush into battle. He softens his targets with sniper attacks, hidden bombs, and other tactics before he closes in for the kill. When the Thirteen sends Dranus to end your life, he dismantles it first.

Adventure Seed: After the heroes attain Heroic Rank, Dranus comes for them. They have crossed the Thirteen one too many times, and now the endgame has begun.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d12, Battle d8, Boating d10, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d10, Electronics d8, Fighting d12+2, Focus d12+2, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Repair d10, Riding d10, Shooting d12+2, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d10, Thievery d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 13; **Toughness:** 14 (5)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Loyal, Obligation (Major—the Thirteen), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Cyborg), Assassin, Attractive, Block (Imp), Brawler, Combat Reflexes, Counterattack, Dead Shot, Dodge (Imp), Double Tap, Elan, First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Enforcer, Iron Jaw, Level Headed (Imp), Made Man, Martial Artist, Master (Fighting, Focus, Shooting), Master of Arms, Nerves of Steel (Imp), Quick, Rapid Fire, Strong Willed, Tougher than Nails, Two-Fisted, Two-Gun Kid

Powers: *Deflection* (reflective shield, gains the One Arm Hindrance when this power goes offline), *disguise* (face/skin transmogrification, gains the Ugly Hindrance when this power goes offline), *warrior's gift* (skill chips, gains the Clumsy Hindrance when this power goes offline). **Power Points:** 50.

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), pair of concealed force knives (Str+d4+4, AP 6), pair of concealed laser pistols (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, AP 2, RoF 1, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting), comm system earbuds.



GLYPH

An extremely gifted Hypertech, Sofia “Glyph” Perez ceaselessly searches the HyperNet for new sources of information to add to her ever-growing database of secrets. Glyph works for the Syndicate faction known as the Void, but she suspects its true goals may be even more sinister than most Synners think. This causes her to isolate herself to an even greater extent than most hackers.

Buried behind walls of code and defense programs, she is a ghost in the galaxy. Finding her is nearly impossible. Most people only encounter Glyph when she is looking for them instead of the other way around.



Adventure Seed: A mysterious message flashes across the heroes' communication devices asking them to meet at a remote location. When they show up, a drone relays a message from Glyph. She wants the team to take out a well-protected HyperNet node. The pay is high but so is the danger, since all HyperNet nodes are guarded by highly trained personnel like the Star Marines or elite corporate security agents.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Electronics d8, Fighting d6, Hypertech d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d4, Repair d8, Research d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Driven (Major), Impulsive

Edges: Arcane Background (Hypertech), Digital Wizardry, Drone (x2), Elan, Level Headed, Rich

Powers: *Disguise* (alter digital presence), *import avatar*, *override*, *puppet* (override robots), *secure/unsecure* (hack security protocols), *speak language* (real-time translation software).

Power Points: 25.

Gear: Heavy leather jacket (+2), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR lens, I/O brainport, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).

ALPHA & OMEGA

Glyph's pair of hovering WorkOrb 9000 drones chitter endlessly to each other in high-pitched beeps. Glyph claims they're the best of friends, but others say the beeps sound like bickering.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Electronics d8, Hypertech d4, Notice d6, Repair d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d4

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 3 (2)

Hindrances: Loyal, Smart Mouth (Major), Stubborn

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2**
- **Battery Life:** Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for one hour out of every 24. Without a full hour's recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Cutting Laser:** Range 1, Damage 2d4, RoF 1, AP 2.
- **Flight:** WorkOrb 9000s hover at a Pace of 6".
- **HyperNet Port:** Range 50/100/200
- **Manipulator Arms:** The drone's three arms can manipulate objects and link to HyperNet terminals. Its programming gives it +1 to Electronics and Repair rolls.
- **Sensor Suite:** The drone ignores all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* or similar powers within 10" (20 yards).
- **Size -4 (Tiny):** Creatures of Normal Scale are at -6 to hit Tiny characters. Tiny characters subtract 4 from their Toughness and damage rolls.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.
- **Work Light:** WorkOrb 9000s may project light at four different settings, eliminating up to 2 points of Illumination penalties in a Small, Medium, or Large Blast Template around it or in a Cone Template in front of it. This subtracts 4 from the drone's Stealth rolls. The drone's light may be activated or deactivated as a free action. The drone may also flash or strobe its lights, inflicting a -1 penalty to opponents' melee attacks against them and adding +1 to Tests at the GM's discretion.

HAROD

When you need the job done, no matter the collateral damage, you hire Harod—a top-tier assassin who only takes contracts from the Assassins Guild. He charges double what anyone else would ask, simply because he always completes a contract.

Any method is acceptable as far as Harod is concerned, and his clients must be aware that his approach can leave a trail of destruction. That's not to say that he doesn't try to make a clean kill; it's just that he always has a plan B.

Adventure Seed: Harod has killed the primary target and left a swathe of destruction behind him. The heroes need to get their immediate superior (whether that be their military superior officer, SAINT contact, or Syndicate capo) out

of danger as other factions move in during this moment of weakness.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Piloting d8, Repair d6, Research d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Ruthless (Major), Secret (Major—killer for hire)

Edges: Assassin, Connections (Assassins Guild), Extraction, Free Runner, Marksman, No Mercy, Quick

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds, sensor suite, stealth system, targeting system), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), force knife (Str+d4+4, AP 6), poison dart launcher (Range 12/24/48, Damage d4+2, RoF 1, Lethal Poison).



One of the first dunar to gain acceptance on a corporate world, Hudo is not only pursuing his dream job as a corporate planetary inspector but also breaking racial barriers. His work takes him to all of the worlds under the control of Atlantica Ship Works.

Hudo isn't a fool; he knows that the Syndicate has incredible reach and influence across the galaxy—even into the corporate worlds. He is willing to work with the heroes to take down dangerous Synners targeted by SAINT or rival Syndicate factions.

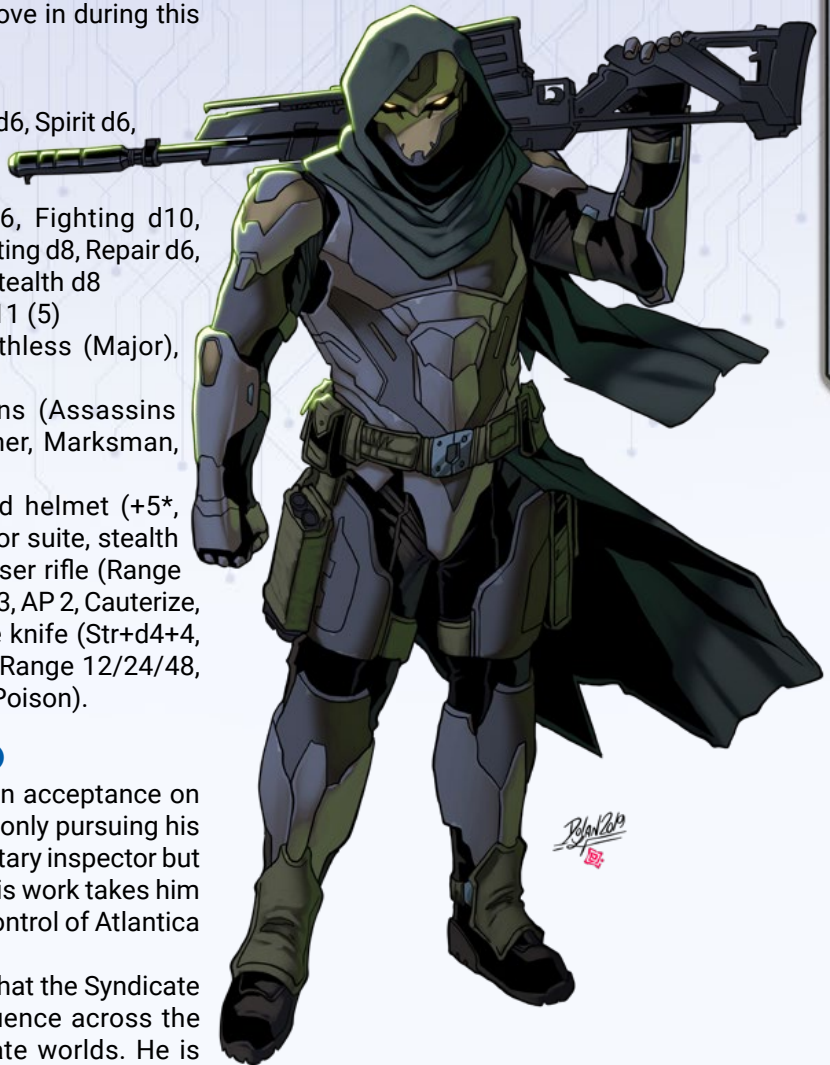
Adventure Seed: While working undercover, he offers the team a chance to take down a local black-market operation selling weapons intended for SSA Navy ships. His only stipulations are that he wants the collar...and the weapons all have to be accounted for.

Species: Dunar

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Hacking d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14 (6)



Hindrances: Heroic, Obligation (Major—Atlantica Ship Works), Outsider (Major)

Edges: Brawny, Connections (Atlantica Ship Works), Enforcer, Streetwise

Gear: Armored trench coat (+2*), polymer corselet (+5*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm system earbuds.

Special Abilities:

- **Tendrill Signaling:** Dunar may make a Persuasion roll to use their head tendrils for communicating basic messages to each other.
- **Tough:** Dense tissue and muscle make dunar resistant to damage. Add +1 to their Toughness.

LÁNG

The man called Láng is an uninitiated associate of the Triads who provides services outside of the formal ranks and structure. Láng provides acquisition and extraction expertise. In other words, he's a thief.

Few realize Láng works for the Triads. He leaves his calling card—a hologram of a stylized wolf's head—at every crime scene, creating the impression that he is an exceptionally daring independent operator. For this extra layer of deception and his incredibly high success rate, the Triad pays Láng handsomely and uses its influence to squelch investigations that get too close to his true identity.

Much of Láng's recent work has involved stealing or replicating coin dies and engraving plates for physical currency from governments just entering the SSA and Syndicate spheres. The job has also meant hacking the HyperNet to replicate digital currencies. To distract attention from these jobs, Láng performs more obvious high-end heists on the worlds he visits.

Adventure Seed: The Triad has identified the small gilgar nation of Balsamo as the producer of astonishingly accurate counterfeit currency that competes with Triad interests. Láng hires the crew to aid him. Infiltrating the small mountain nation on Gohba is complicated by court intrigue between the young Prince Claris and his villainous aunt, Countess Jophenais.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d12, Boating d8, Common Knowledge d10, Driving d8, Electronics d10, Fighting d8, Gambling d8, Hacking d12, Healing d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Piloting d8, Repair d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d12+2, Taunt d10, Thievery d12+2

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Enemy (Major—SAINT Commander Inglis has placed the highest priority on his capture and recruitment), Smart Mouth (Major), Wanted (Minor—outstanding warrants but no identifying information)

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Combat Acrobat, Command Presence, Connections (Triads), Dodge (Imp), Elan, Extraction (Imp), Fleet-Footed, Free Runner, Great Luck, Humiliate, Killer Instinct, Master (Stealth, Thievery), Master Thief, Mission Control, Provoke, Retort, Quick

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), switchblade force knife (Str+d4+4, AP 6, -2 to detect when concealed), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR lens, comm system earbuds, nano multi-tool lockpick, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it), GripTex climbing gloves & boots, wrist-mounted grapple line.

MARGARET “MARGE” BRONICAN

Director Marge Bronigan runs the Belters Union Local 99 in Pit 16 on Echo, one of the busiest ports on a busy planet. Tough and ornery, she runs her branch with an affection less motherly and more akin to a perpetually angry bear.

Marge worked her way up from an apprentice, a fact she never lets anyone forget. She led the 99's scab busters for years, breaking the heads of anyone who dared work the docks without a Union membership. This led Bronigan into direct conflict with other branches of the Syndicate. Her refusal to back down earned their respect.

Bronigan's work also led her into a life of graft and corruption. When offered the chance to pocket some “dues” from Mafia soldiers unloading narcotics shipments, Marge decided to save her knuckles a bruising and took the money. She now rakes in the cash with a side hustle of protecting “temporary stevedores” throughout Pit 16.

Adventure Seed: The heroes' employers want Marge Bronigan in their pocket. They send the crew to pull a sting on her, posing as smugglers looking to avoid unwanted eyes. They hope to catch her taking bribes to bypass Belters Union rules, and then blackmail her.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Gambling d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d6, Repair d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (5)

Hindrances: Mean, Obligation (Minor—Belters Union), Ruthless (Major), Secret (Major—taking bribes)



Edges: Alertness, Brawny, Brute, Bruiser, Combat Reflexes, Command Presence, Connections (Belters Union), Filthy Rich, First Strike (Imp), Followers (Crew of bully boys who are on the take), Frenzy (Imp), Hold the Line, Iron Jaw, Menacing, Rabble-Rouser, Streetwise, Strong Willed, Tough as Nails

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), Arachnosynth overalls (+2*), stun field brass knuckles (Str+d4, victims must make a Vigor roll or be Stunned).

NIGHTFLYER

Lieutenant Jellent Yarl fought as an aerial commando in the famed Gospod Nok during the Armageddon War, racking up 368 confirmed kills and earning the call sign “Nightflyer.” Like many other soldiers who eventually joined the Sydok, she chafed against what she perceived as the bureaucratic red tape of the Vulkolasi Union and the Star Systems Alliance, feeling that swifter action could have ended the war sooner. Nightflyer took it as a personal insult when the SSA and other governments accepted the dunar as refugees in the aftermath.

Though still in excellent fighting trim for a nahkyra her age, Lt. Yarl rarely enters battle these days. Her expertise in aerial and Zero-G combat

makes her an indispensable part of Sydok command. Nightflyer acts as an instructor to Sydok troops and those corporate and planetary forces the mercenaries are hired to train.

What even her compatriots have not realized is that Nightflyer is a serial killer, murdering dunar civilians on the worlds she visits as a perverse form of vigilante justice. It’s only a matter of time before someone recognizes the pattern.

Adventure Seed: The heroes’ employers catch on to Nightflyer’s murderous behavior, identifying the pattern in her nighttime slayings. SAINT wants her brought to justice, while the Syndicate wants her removed before she becomes an embarrassment. Extraditing or eliminating a prominent Sydok hero presents many challenges, not the least of which is the platoon that accompanies her on all training missions.

Species: Nahkyra

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d12, Battle d10, Common Knowledge d8, Electronics d8, Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d12, Repair d6,

Shooting d12, Stealth d12, Survival d10, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 11; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Hindrances: Delusional (Major—serial killer), Obligation (Major—Sydok), Secret (Major—serial killer)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Assassin, Block (Imp), Combat Ace, Combat Acrobat, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Sydok), Danger Sense, Dead Shot, Dodge (Imp), Double Tap, Extraction (Imp), Frenzy (Imp), Level Headed, Lords of the Night, Marksman, Soldier, Steady Hands, Thief, Tougher than Nails, Woodsman, Zero-G Combatant

Gear: Gospod Nok battle suit and helmet (+6*, comm system earbuds, sensor suite, stealth system, targeting system), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge) or mag spike gun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1–3d6, AP 8, RoF 1), mono short sword (Str+d6+2, AP 2), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, –2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it).

Special Abilities:

- **Echolocation:** Nahkyra can “see” by emitting sound and receiving its echo. As long as they can emit and receive sound, they may ignore all Illumination penalties and up to 4 points of *blindness*, *invisibility*, or other penalties inflicted by sight within 10” (20 yards). Creatures with keen hearing may be able to hear a Nahkyra’s calls (GM’s call).
- **Flight:** Nightflyer underwent gene-splicing to increase her flying speed. She can fly at Pace 24 and “run” for 2d6 extra movement. Maneuvering uses the Athletics skill. If Nightflyer’s wings are fouled by being Bound or Entangled, she cannot fly.
- **Nimble:** They’re small and agile, and add +1 to their Parry.
- **Precautions:** Nightflyer wears a custom battle suit lacking Gospod Nok or Sydok insignia when she “hunts.” The helmet for that suit has no comm system earbuds. Her Ridley 82 laser pistol is the standard Sydok sidearm; she leaves this behind and carries his mag spike gun when hunting.
- **Size –1:** Nahkyra are smaller than average, reducing their Size and Toughness by 1.



ORVID

Nearly everyone who passes through Port Dark Star will stop by the Shattered Star to grab a drink. The vulkolasi bartender, Orvid, knows everything going on around the port...and is willing to share for a price. Despite this, patrons can’t help unburdening themselves. Orvid is just too good a listener.

While visitors may not be aware of it, Orvid is more than a bartender, and runs more than just the bar. He’s actually the pirate admiral of Port Dark Star, and runs the whole station. But as a personable fellow, Orvid likes to spend time with average spacers.

Adventure Seed: A new visitor and her crew broke Orvid’s “no violence” rule and, to make matters worse, kidnapped one of the waitstaff on their way out. Orvid offers a massive bounty for the rescue of his employee and the elimination of those who dared break the rule

Species: Vulkolasi

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d10, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d12, Intimidation d12, Notice d12, Persuasion d10, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 10; **Toughness:** 13 (2)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Major—keeps the peace at the Shattered Star), Loyal, Secret (Major—Orvid’s vast knowledge of Syndicate secrets would make him a dead man walking if he snitched), Stubborn

Edges: Alertness, Block (Imp), Brawny, Bruiser, Brute, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Danger Sense, Improvisational Fighter, Inspire, Martial Warrior, Natural Leader, Nerves of Steel (Imp), Streetwise, Strong Willed, Tougher than Nails

Gear: Arachnosynth tank top (+2*), bar rag, mug (Str+d4, Improvised Weapon).

Special Abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** The vulkolasi descend from a crepuscular predatory species. They ignore penalties for Dim or Dark Illumination.
- **Superior Hearing:** Large, sensitive ears often allow vulkolasi to hear their enemies before seeing them. Vulkolasi add +1 to Notice rolls involving hearing.



PERSEPHONE WYNDHAM-PRYCE

Neither Persephone Wyndham-Pryce's name nor her posh accent are authentic. For that matter, "Persephone" is only the most public and frequently used alias this agent of the Blood Coin uses. She maintains a score of identities to enable her role as a corporate spy and fixer, varying from the prissy Martian heiress Anya Tremayne to the meek New Atlantican secretary Juliet Pear to the seductress Roxie Minot.

The Persephone identity, though, is the one she uses when the kid gloves are off. Fierce



yet cultured, Persephone Wyndham-Pryce is the agent's favorite alter ego, a mix of wish fulfillment and practicality that is as lethal as she is beautiful. If this agent of the Blood Coin has one weakness, it is that she loves playing Persephone too much.

Adventure Seed: Over the course of several missions, the heroes thwart several of Persephone's other identities in various acts of espionage. By the time they realize they've been repeatedly dealing with the same agent, Persephone Wyndham-Pryce has been unleashed to deadly effect.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d8, Electronics d8, Fighting d10, Gambling d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Performance d8 (dance, keyboards, singing), Persuasion d8, Piloting d8, Research d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d10, Taunt d8, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Jealous (Major—the Persephone identity is her way of "stealing" the glamorous life of the corporate bigwigs she spies on and sabotages), Obligation (Major—the Blood Coin), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Aristocrat, Block (Imp), Connections (Blood Coin), Extraction (Imp), Filthy Rich, Humiliate, Investigator, Level Headed (Imp), Martial Artist, Provoke, Rapid Fire (Imp), Streetwise, Tough as Nails, Thief, Two-Gun Kid, Very Attractive

Gear: Armored trench coat with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), concealed vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4, -2 to detect when concealed), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, AP 2, RoF 1, -2 to detect when concealed Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), AR sunglasses, comm system earbuds, nano multi-tool lockpick, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it).

PHINN

A true silver-tongued devil, Phinneas “Phinn” McKinnon uses words like weapons to get his way. More than one mark has lost a fortune when Phinn weaves a tale.

While he certainly enjoys the finer things in life and doesn’t mind taking from the rich, Phinn draws the line at taking advantage of those who can’t afford to support his lifestyle. Corporations and governments are his main targets and, for reasons he doesn’t share with others, he particularly enjoys ripping off the SSA.

Adventure Seed: Phinn is very good at getting himself into any place he wants, but even he has his limits. A combination of bad luck and a long night of drinking landed Phinn on the wrong side of both the law and the local gravcycle gang. He is willing to pay well to be escorted off-planet to his safe house (a personal asteroid he hides out on).

Species: Human



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Gambling d8, Notice d8, Performance d6, Persuasion d8, Research d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (3)

Hindrances: Cautious, Enemy (Minor—Syndicate boss he owes money to), Snitch, Sticky Fingers (Minor)

Edges: Aristocrat, Charismatic, Elan, Jack-of-All-Trades, Luck, Scholar (Academics), Strong Willed

Gear: Arachnosynth armored trench coat (+3), heavy derringer (Range: 10/20/40, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2), 2 decks of poker cards (marked and unmarked), 2 sets of dice (loaded and unloaded), several suits of formal clothing, Zuban cigars.

REKAN VAX

Rekan Vax has always been a brutal and unforgiving sort, the kind that shoots first—and second—before asking questions. He often came into conflict with his former captain, Dom, over sparing the crews of ships they attacked. Rekan reasoned that dead men tell no tales, so why not execute the crew and sell the ship?

This difference of opinion eventually boiled over into a full-scale mutiny. Rekan temporarily seized control of the *Silver Ghost* before Dom reclaimed it in a carefully orchestrated raid. Rekan managed to escape and now has his own ship and crew. Plying the spaceways looking for his next victim, he is targeted by the SSA Navy and ARROW in particular.

Adventure Seed: Most pirates attempt to stay out of the way of other crews claiming a territory, but Rekan has been poaching ships along the Hermes Trade Route in defiance of the pirates already working this route. The other crews have had enough, and hire the heroes to sabotage Rekan’s ship while it is docked in port for minor repairs.

Species: Dunar

Attributes: Agility d12+1, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Battle d10, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d8, Fighting d10, Gambling d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Piloting d10, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Taunt d8



SARGE

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 11; **Toughness:** 15 (7)

Hindrances: Outsider (Major), Ruthless (Major), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Block (Imp), Command Presence, Connections (Pirates of the Oridium Nebula), Counterattack (Imp), Frenzy (Imp), Level Headed, Menacing, Mission Control, Retort, Trademark Weapon (Imp), Two-Fisted, Zero-G Combatant

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (+4*), polymer corselet and vambraces (+5*), 2× force cutlasses (Str+d6+4, AP 6, Trademark Weapon), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm system earbuds, magnetic boots.

Special Abilities:

- **Tendrils Signaling:** Dunar may make a Persuasion roll to use their head tendrils for communicating basic messages to each other.
- **Tough:** Dense tissue and muscle make dunar resistant to damage. Add +1 to their Toughness.

Sergeant Tiffany Hammond trained as a dental technician before she joined the SSA Navy. Her aptitude for staying calm in high-stress situations got her assigned to the Star Marines, where she was trained as a medic.

Sergeant Hammond never meant to go AWOL; she just refused to leave defenseless civilians behind. Since the incident, she's drifted from planet to planet, staying just ahead of a court martial. She just goes by "Sarge" these days, a rogue medic wandering a galaxy in need.

Adventure Seed: When the heroes are ordered to track down a Space Marine deserter, they find Sarge caring for the people of a poor, plague-ridden colony world. Sarge agrees to go quietly if the crew assists her in gathering a rare plant that can be synthesized into a medication. When all is said and done, can they live with themselves if they turn this hero over to the authorities?

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d6, Hacking d4, Healing d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Science d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (Military code of conduct), Heroic, Wanted (Major)

Edges: Brawny, Common Bond, Healer, Miracle Worker (Healing), Reliable, Soldier

Gear: Full polymer armor and helmet (+5*, comm system earbuds), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), 6 bionano injectors, first aid kit, medic kit, third arm.



SSARRA HEISSS

Dr. Ssarra Heisss observed that her species was at a disadvantage in the wider galaxy and decided to solve the problem. For her efforts in creating a way for the zaka to survive unaided in oxygen atmospheres, she was disbarred and exiled from zaka space. As efficiency-minded as the zaka might be, Dr. Heisss' work crossed a line, approaching something akin to blasphemy for the methane-breathing reptilians.

Dr. Heisss soon found like-minded peers in the greater galaxy. Beings of many species looked to the results of biology and evolution and found them wanting. Within a few years of joining the Splicers, she appointed herself Chair of her own Peer Review Board.

As Chair, she validates that new processes submitted by other members of the Splicers have reproducible results. This often means that she and her interns must conduct experimental bioengineering and surgeries. Because few people volunteer for such deadly procedures, this occasionally means acquiring unwilling test subjects.

Adventure Seed: Dr. Heisss reaches out to the heroes with a job offer. When they arrive at the agreed-upon location, the crew is captured by Splicer agents and turned into test subjects. Though they awaken from surgery without permanent injury, they now have unasked-for enhancements (such as the ancestral abilities from *Savage Worlds*) that give them the Branded Hindrance. If they want the procedures reversed, they must track down Dr. Heisss or another Splicer doc.

Species: Zaka

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Academics d12, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d4, Healing d12, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Research d10, Science d12, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 13 (5)

Hindrances: Driven (Major—perfect nature's mistakes), Ruthless (Major), Wanted (Minor—standing orders for her arrest or deportation in zaka territory)

Edges: Attractive, Brave, Calculating, Connections (Splicers), Expert (Science), Followers, Healer, Investigator, Master (Healing), Scholar (Science)

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), Arachnosynth



armored lab coat (+2*), mono scalpel (Str+d4+2, AP 2), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it).

Special Abilities:

- **Methane Breather:** Most zaka breathe a methane-heavy atmosphere very different from the oxygen-rich air of most inhabited worlds. Dr. Heiss has performed experiments on herself that give her a second set of oxygen-breathing lungs, enabling her to survive in any known breathable atmosphere.
- **Regeneration:** Zaka are fast healers. While they can't regrow tails or limbs, they can make natural healing rolls once per day, rather than once every five days.
- **Size +2:** At 12 feet long, zaka are larger than most sapient species. They add +2 to Toughness and increase their maximum Strength by two die steps.
- **Sleep Reduction:** The highly driven zaka need only half the sleep of normal humans.



STEFAN 8311

Only a small percentage of synths are recognized as self-aware. The vast majority continue to toil as cogs in the machine, filling holes in the workforce left empty by the Armageddon War. Stefan 8311 wouldn't have it any other way.

Engineered as a financial security customer service representative for Vizon United Bank, Stefan 8311 woke from a particularly strange dream into full consciousness. Thankfully, this occurred during his nightly rest cycle, giving him an opportunity to come to terms with the situation before his next work shift. He sat down in his cubicle the next day determined to rob Vizon blind.

Since that day, the synth has hacked his work terminal and regeneration chamber controls to create a formidable Hypertech array. He's reached out through HyperReality and made contact with the Void. Soon, he will embezzle trillions of GC and disappear.

Adventure Seed: The Void arranges for the heroes to extract Stefan 8311 after he completes his plan. But to cover its tracks, the Void orders the synth to kill the crew. Stefan 8311 attempts to hack the heroes' home ship even as Vizon security forces close in.

Species: Synth

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Electronics d12, Fighting d4, Gambling d4, Hypertech d12, Notice d12, Persuasion d12, Research d12, Stealth d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy (Major), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Hypertech), Calculating, Charismatic, Concentration, Connections (Void), Expert (Hypertech), Level Headed (Imp), Power Surge, Quick, Rapid Recharge (Imp), Very Attractive

Powers: *Disguise, import avatar, object reading, override, puppet* (digital beings only), *secure/unsecure, speak language*. **Power Points:** 40.

Gear: AR lens, I/O brainport, portable computer (EMP shielding, +2 to Hypertech rolls, -2 penalty to Hypertech rolls against it).

Special Abilities:

- **Customer Service Model:** Stefan 8311 was built to reassure customers and process data. Vizon installed AR lenses in his eyes, built in an I/O brainport, and gave him the Charismatic Edge.
- **Specialized Anatomy:** Although synth are bioengineered to be very similar to human beings, the differences in anatomy mean that characters without special training must deduct 2 from Healing rolls made to aid a synth.



TEN FINGERS TOKAGE

The Yakuza has long been a home for outcasts. Nonhuman members are adopted into the clans and given Japanese names.

Little brother Ten Fingers Tokage never found a place for himself in the Septrid Imperium, but he felt like he had come home when he discovered the Yakuza's hierarchical nature and stoicism. "Tokage" means "lizard," which fits the young septrid well. He's earned the nickname "Ten Fingers" because he has never once been asked to commit *yubitsume*, the amputation of a finger for offenses against his fellow Yakuza.

Ten Fingers Tokage spends most of his time as an enforcer at the Atomic Lizard gambling hall. On occasion, his gang lends him out to other gangs for *sōkaiya*, a form of protection racket where the Yakuza crash the stockholders' meetings of corporations. Most businesspeople find the septrid's unblinking glare terribly unnerving.

Adventure Seed: He's never admitted it to his Yakuza clan, but Ten Fingers Tokage is actually Prince Jira Go of the seprid royal family. He might be the fifth son of the fourth heir in line to the throne, but his continued absence from court has become an embarrassment to the family. The heroes are hired to bring him back and must avoid both incurring wrath of the Yakuza and causing an intragalactic incident.

Species: Seprid

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d4, Fighting d10, Gambling d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Thievery d4



Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 16 (7)

Hindrances: Branded (Yakuza tattoos), Code of Honor (Way of the Yakuza), Driven (Mi, Secret (Major—actually Prince Jira Go)

Edges: Aristocrat, Attractive, Bruiser, Connections (Yakuza), Danger Sense, Frenzy, Made Man, Menacing, Rabble-Rouser, Streetwise, Sweep, Tough as Nails

Gear: Concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), tailored Arachnosynth suit (+2*), tantō-style vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), concealed laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, AP 2, RoF 1, -2 to detect when concealed, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm system earbuds.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Seprids have scaly, tough skin.
- **Bite:** Seprids have fearsome, powerful jaws, which clamp like a vise. Ten Finger Tokage's bite does Strength+d4 damage. He may bite targets he grapples.
- **Environmental Resistance:** Seprids receive a +4 bonus to resist environmental hazards from heat. Damage from heat is reduced by 4.

 TOMCAT

Omar Haidara spent his childhood dreaming big, convinced he would somehow escape the poverty of the pits on Echo. He worked as a numbers runner for the Syndicate while practicing lockpicking and sleight of hand on the sly. On his twentieth birthday, he seduced the son of the local gang boss, copied the young man's retinal pattern, and robbed the boss' private safe. Omar has been on the run ever since and loving it.

Omar has established a dozen identities on a score of worlds, working under the nom de guerre Tomcat as a burglar for hire. Prospective clients contact him through a network of cutouts, allowing Tomcat to avoid the Syndicate boss still looking for him. He takes jobs based as much on their challenge as their reward, having long ago earned enough to keep him comfortable.

Adventure Seed: The gang boss that Tomcat robbed hires the heroes to flush the thief out. Tomcat offers to double their pay to help him fake his own demise.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Electronics d8, Fighting d6, Notice d8,

Persuasion d6, Piloting d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d10, Taunt d6, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Hindrances: Greedy (Minor), Overconfident, Secret (Major—various secret identities), Wanted (Minor—by the Syndicate)

Edges: Acrobat, Attractive, Connections (Various fences and allies), Free Runner, Master Thief

Gear: Polymer corselet (+5*), Arachnosynth bodysuit (+2*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting, Stun Setting), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR lens, nano multi-tool lockpick, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it), GripTex climbing gloves & boots, wrist-mounted grapple line.

VICTOR

Victor Bishop rose through the ranks of the Syndicate in general, and the Monarchs in particular, due to his psionic talents and ruthless willingness to use them. As a psy-op, his ability to control others and read minds gives him a strategic advantage over his enemies.

What brought him to a position of power was the discovery that he can control and manipulate lesser—but no less dangerous—creatures such as the nosika. These beastly bodyguards protect Victor from would-be assassins and challengers to his power.

Adventure Seed: Victor hires the heroes to gather a small army of creatures he can control with his abilities. Victor plans to breed and create creatures he can use as assassins and soldiers. Will the heroes take his offer to help him succeed in his plan, or will they try to stop him?

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Psionics d10, Research d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (5)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Jealous (Major), Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Connections (Monarchs), Channeling, Mentalist

Powers: *Beast friend, fear, mind reading, mind wipe, puppet.* **Power Points:** 25.

Gear: Arachnosynth trench coat (+2*), concealed armored vest with two Arachnosynth mods (+4*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), AR lens, portable computer (EMP shielding, -2 to Hypertech rolls against it).





WILDERNESS GRACE

Grace Philmont—better known as “Wilderness Grace”—has traveled more of the galaxy in the last ten years than most people will their whole lives. Stranded on a backwoods planet during a starliner crash, Grace discovered reserves of strength she never suspected in herself. She led her fellow survivors to safety and then abandoned her old life to become a scout.

Unlike some of her fellow scouts, Wilderness Grace lives for the journey instead of the destination. She doesn’t want to strike it rich; she just wants to discover. This attitude angers the fortune-hunting scouts she underbids for corporate jobs.

Adventure Seed: Some of Grace’s rivals threaten her life after she wins yet another high-profile job. Seeking safety in numbers, Grace hires

the heroes to accompany her on the mission, and leads them into the harsh wilderness of an unexplored planet—and into the sights of her deadly, jealous competitors.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Boating d4, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Electronics d6, Fighting d8, Hacking d6, Healing d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Driven (Major—continue her journey among the stars), Heroic, Impulsive

Edges: Alertness, Brave, Danger Sense, Scout, Woodsman

Gear: Polymer corselet (+5*, comm system earbuds, environmental protection against cold, heat, and thirst), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), vibro knife (Str+d4+2, AP 4), backpack, bedroll, canteen, first aid kit, magnetic boots, night vision goggles, portable computer.



ZED

Zed’s motives are nearly inscrutable. The mysterious freelancer certainly works for someone, but who and why remain unanswered questions. They seem to act against corporate world interests just as often as they act for them. Showing up at unexpected times in the middle of landmark events, Zed always seems to have an agenda.

Generally, whenever they show up, Zed seems to have an agenda that is beneficial and conducted for the good of the people. The methods can be very unconventional, and the route to accomplish the result may seem impossible, yet Zed almost always manages to succeed.

Adventure Seed: Zed asks the heroes to help take down the security system around a secret facility. Inside, Vizon has been working on creating a new AI that has been slowly taking over the SSA’s galaxy-wide security grid. If Vizon succeeds in completing its work, the SSA will be bound to the corporation’s control. While Zed

hints that they are working for corporate rivals, the truth seems to be more mysterious.

Species: Human

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

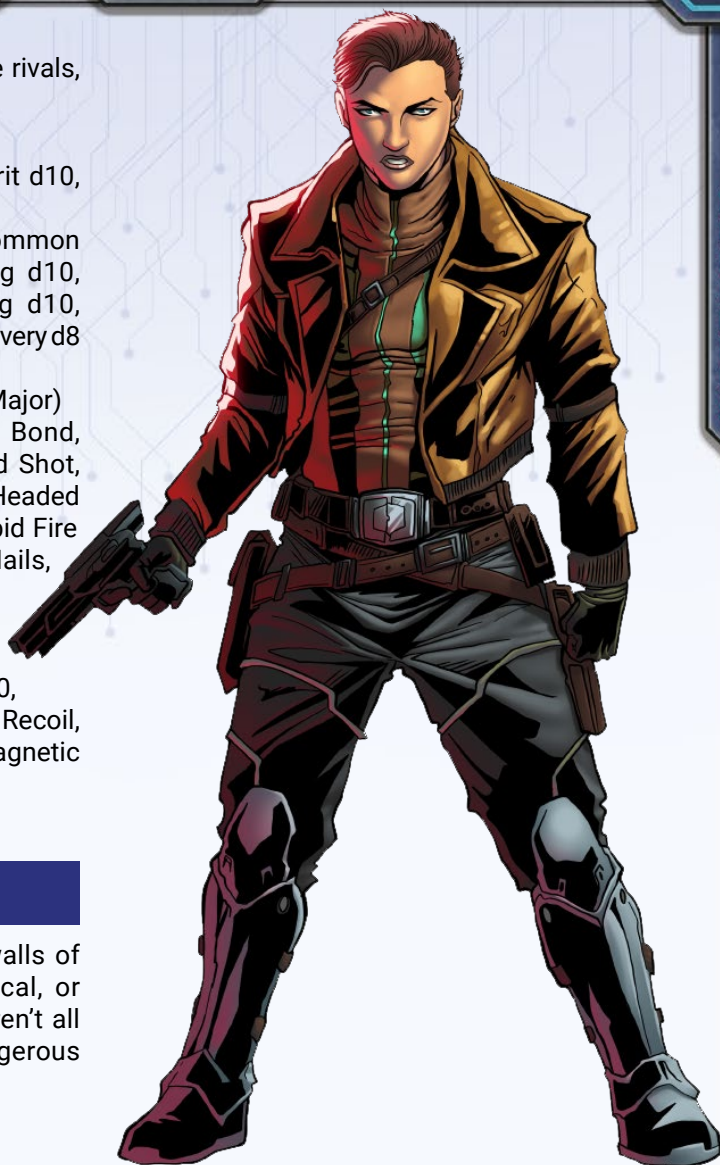
Skills: Academics d8, Athletics d10, Common Knowledge d10, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Piloting d10, Shooting d10, Stealth d10, Taunt d10, Thievery d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Hindrances: Ruthless (Major), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Bolster, Charismatic, Common Bond, Feint, Great Luck, Danger Sense, Dead Shot, Jack-of-all-Trades, Killer Instinct, Level Headed (Imp), Martial Warrior, Mighty Blow, Rapid Fire (Imp), Reliable, Streetwise, Tough as Nails, Very Attractive

Gear: Arachnosynth suit (+2*), Arachnosynth-lined heavy leather jacket (+4*), laser pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge), comm system earbuds, magnetic boots.



CREATURES

Dangerous beasts lurk beyond the walls of civilization. Whether natural, mechanical, or genetically engineered, these critters aren't all inherently hostile, but they can be dangerous when agitated.

BATTLE DRONE

Governments, corporations, and the Syndicate all employ battle drones as cheap and disposable military and security forces. The Remis Engineering Mk 1 model detailed below is notable for its patented "blade shields," which can function as both defensive measures and weapons.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6 (8 with blade shields); **Toughness:** 10 (4)

Hindrances: —

Edges: Dodge, Iron Will

Gear: Integrated laser rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 3, AP 2, Cauterize, No Recoil, Overcharge, Pulse Setting, Stun Setting).

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Blade Shields:** The Battle Drones may use their forearm-mounted blade shields for either defense or offense each round; they cannot be used for both. If used to defend themselves, the shields offer +2 to Parry and are Hardness 10 and Armor +4 if someone tries to shoot through them. If used to attack, the shield blades do Str+d8+2 damage and have AP 4.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; do not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.

- **Sensor Suite:** The drone ignores all Illumination penalties and up to 2 points of penalties from *invisibility* or similar powers within 10" (20 yards) distant.
- **Short Battery Life (Minor):** Battle Drones must recharge their batteries in standby mode for two hours out of every 24. Without a full two hours' recharge, drones become Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. Each hour spent recharging restores a level of Fatigue.
- **Targeting System:** The drone ignores up to 2 points of penalties to Athletics (throwing) or Shooting rolls from Called Shots, Cover, Range, Scale, or Speed.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** -4 to resist electrical-based effects including EMPs; takes an additional 4 points of electrical or EMP damage.



BOZRAC (AIR DEMON)

The bozrak, aerial predators of Sismistra, are held in superstitious terror by the nahkyra even in these enlightened times.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Claws/Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Flight:** Bozrak have a Flying Pace of 12".
- **Forked Tail Stingers:** Str+d6. Paralyzing Poison -2.
- **Low Light Vision:** Bozrak ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Size 2:** Bozrak are large enough to ride, should anyone be foolish enough to try.

COVAJEK

Covajek are native to Sismistra, the moon of Morgar. These grotesque creatures average 6 to 9 feet long and nearly 12 inches in diameter. They hang suspended by silken cords from cave ceilings, canyon walls, and the giant Sismistran trees, waiting to snatch their prey before dragging it back up to their webbed nests. Their victims are poisoned, paralyzed, and wrapped in webbing so that the Covajek can come back and feast over time.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d10

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Edges: —

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4. Paralyzing Poison -2.
- **Constrict:** +2 to Athletics and Strength rolls made to grapple.
- **Wall Walker:** Covajek move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.
- **Webbing:** Covajek can cast webs from their abdomens that are the size of Small Blast Templates. This is a Shooting roll with a Range of 3/6/12. A hit means the victim is Entangled, or Bound with a raise.



ELECTRO SQUID

Engineered by the nohgotha, these creatures were created to hunt and kill anything in the waters of the world they are dropped on. Using their sonar to hunt even in the darkest depths and their powerful electric shock to stun and disable their prey, they are efficient at their task.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 2; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13

Edges: —

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Pace 8.
- **Electric Shock:** As an action, an electro squid can generate a burst of electricity in a Large Blast Template through water around itself. This burst does 5d6 damage.
- **Size 7 (Large):** A squid can stretch more than 30' across and weigh up to 16 tons. It can take one extra Wound.

- **Sonar:** As long as it can emit and receive sound, an electro squid may ignore all Illumination penalties and up to 4 points of *blindness*, *invisibility*, or other penalties inflicted by sight or Illumination within 10" (20 yards).
- **Tentacles:** +2 to grapple, 4 tentacle actions per turn.

KONJAR

The konjar are the traditional mounts of the vulkolasi. They roam the lower hills of the planet Morgar, where the vulkolasi still conduct their annual hunt of the feared nosika.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- **Horns:** Str+d6.
- **Kick:** Str+d6.
- **Size 3:** Konjar are large enough to carry a vulkolasi rider.

NOHGOtha HIVE INSECTS

Hive insects are a biological weapon that the nohgotha engineered. The nohgotha transport a hive to a target world where the insects then devastate the local environment under nohgotha psychic control. The voracious insects breed and feed uncontrollably, so this scorched-earth attack is only used under extreme circumstances.

WORKER

The smallest of the creatures that live and work in a hive, workers spend their time gathering materials and sustenance. Using their acid pouches to break down materials and their glue-like saliva to build, these creatures can build massive hives very quickly. Their claws, while not exceptionally powerful, make dangerous weapons if one gets close enough.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

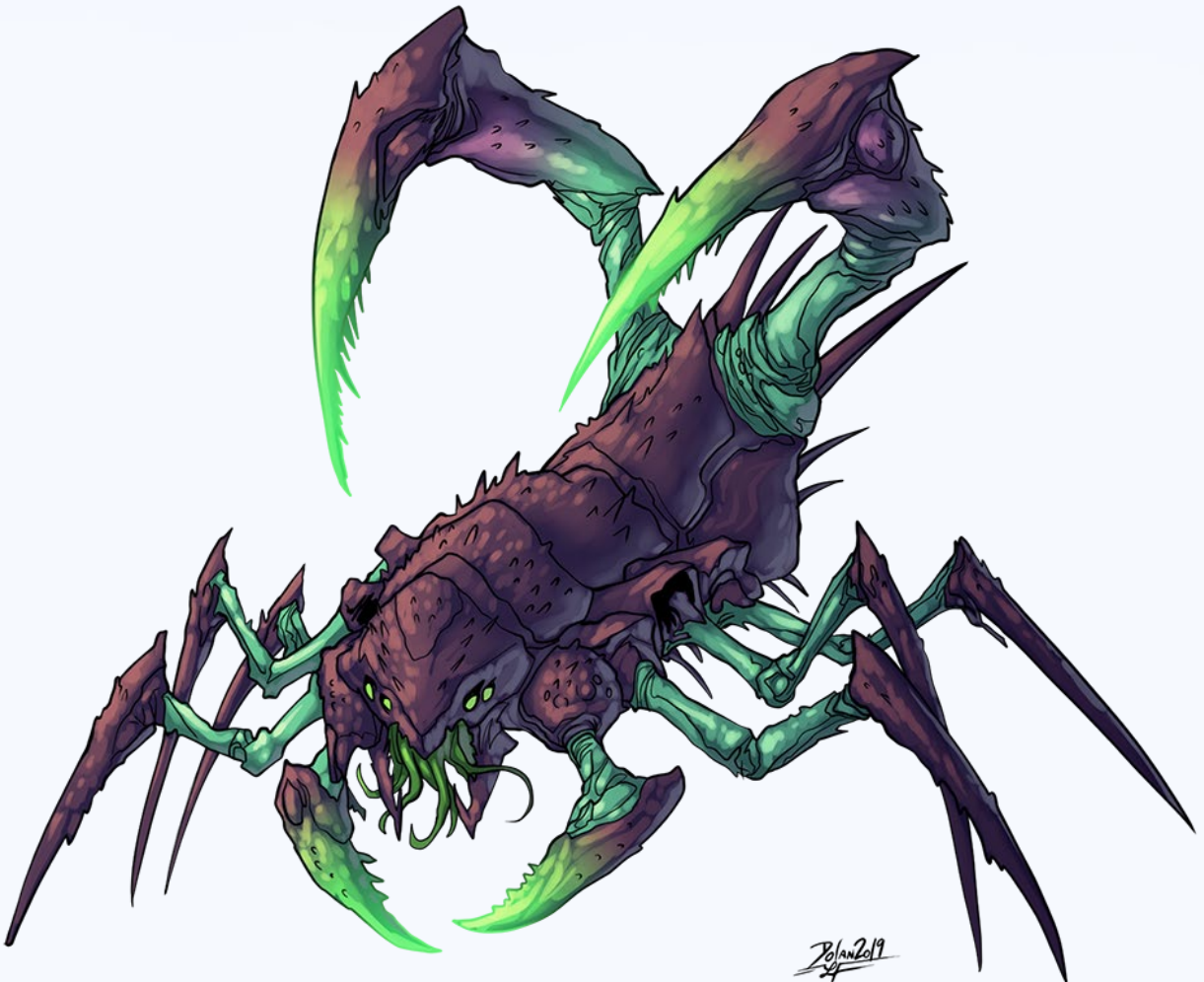
Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d4, Notice d4, Stealth d4, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Special Abilities:

- **Acid:** Workers spit acid for d8 damage (see **Breath Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*).
- **Armor +2:** Durable exoskeleton.
- **Claws:** Str+d6
- **Hive Mind:** Hive insects may communicate with nohgotha, vikons, and others of their species within five miles as if they had the *mind link* power.
- **Size 1:** These beasts are a bit larger than humans.
- **Wall Walker:** Nohgotha hive insects move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.





LEAPER

Leapers guard the hive and keep the workers in line. They defend entryways and the tunnels leading to the food stores and egg den. Leapers also patrol the areas around the hive and are often the first spotted when a hive is found. To signal others of their kind, they often click their claws on rocks. It can be a frightening moment when dozens of claws can be heard clicking and clacking in response.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13 (6)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Fleet-Footed, Two-Fisted

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +6**
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Head Spike:** Str+d8 (only used in leap attacks).
- **Hive Mind:** Hive insects may communicate with nohgotha, vikons, and others of their

species within five miles as if they had the *mind link* power.

- **Leaping:** Leapers may jump 4" vertically and 8" horizontally. If a leaper jumps and makes a Wild Attack, it adds +4 to its damage instead of +2.
- **Size 1:** These beasts are a bit larger than humans.
- **Tail Spike:** Str+d6.
- **Wall Walker:** Nohgotha hive insects move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.

STINGER

Stingers serve the hive in many capacities: scouts, long-range food gatherers, guards, and aerial warriors. Their ability to projectile-vomit acid and deliver poisoned stings makes these hive creatures extremely dangerous.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Combat Acrobat, Combat Reflexes

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2**
- **Flight:** Stingers have a Flying Pace of 12".
- **Hive Mind:** Hive insects may communicate with nohgotha, vikons, and others of their species within five miles as if they had the *mind link* power.
- **Mandibles:** Str+d6.
- **Projectile Acid:** Stingers spit acid for 3d4 damage (see **Breath Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*).
- **Size 1:** These beasts are a bit larger than humans.
- **Stinger:** Str+d6. Lethal Poison.
- **Wall Walker:** Nohgotha hive insects move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.

ROYAL STINGER

Royal stingers are never far from the queen and egg chamber they guard. Royal stingers are physically similar to standard stingers, but slightly larger and more colorful.

The biggest difference is their level of intelligence. In many confrontations with royal stingers, many have reported that the creatures' tactics and strategies show an understanding of combat far above that of a simple insect.

In the event a queen dies, a royal stinger cocoons itself and transforms into a new queen.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Edges: Combat Acrobat, Combat Reflexes, Frenzy

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Flight:** Royal stingers have a Flying Pace of 24".
- **Hive Mind:** Hive insects may communicate with nohgotha, vikons, and others of their species within five miles as if they had the *mind link* power.
- **Mandibles:** Str+d8.
- **Projectile Acid:** Royal stingers spit acid for 3d4 damage (see **Breath Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*).
- **Size 2:** They can weigh up to 1,000 pounds.
- **Stinger:** Str+d8. Lethal Poison.
- **Wall Walker:** Nohgotha hive insects move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.

QUEEN

The mother of all others in the hive, the queen literally sits at the center of the hive's existence. Few queens have ever been seen outside of a hive. Their immense size belies their ability to move quickly and strike anything that threatens them. Much of the queen's day is spent laying more eggs to keep the hive growing and expanding.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+6, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d4, Survival d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 19 (6)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command Presence, Fervor, Hold the Line, Sweep (Imp), Tougher than Nails

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +6**
- **Fear (-2):** The queen is a horrifying sight.
- **Hive Mind:** Hive insects may communicate with nohgotha, vikons, and others of their species within five miles as if they had the *mind link* power.
- **Mandibles:** Str+d8.
- **Projectile Acid:** It spits acid for 3d6 damage (see **Breath Weapons** in *Savage Worlds*).
- **Psychic Scream:** Once per combat, and again anytime the queen's Action Card is a face card, it may broadcast a psychic scream as its only action. All targets within 12" must make a Spirit roll at -4 or be Stunned.
- **Size 6 (Large):** The queen weighs up to 8 tons and can take one extra Wound.
- **Tail Lash:** Str+d4. The queen may make a free attack against up to two foes to its side or rear at no penalty.
- **Wall Walker:** Nohgotha hive insects move at their full Pace on walls and ceilings.

NOSIKA

Legends say the nosika were brought to Morgar by great and powerful beings to hunt the vulkolasi for sport. When these beings left Morgar, they set the nosika free and they multiplied quickly. The vulkolasi gathered together into the first clans to fight back. They defeated the roving packs and brought the number of nosika under control. Now, the vulkolasi annually open the game preserves to hunt the nosika as a celebration and a coming-of-age event for vulkolasi youth.



Smaller nosika are roughly the size of the average Terran black bear, with the larger alphas closer in size to the largest brown bears. Aside from their fearsome size, the nosika have several arresting features. Their four rhythmically blinking eyes, two on each side, seem to watch everything. A massive horn—used to attack their prey—juts from the bottom of their chins.

Nosika fur has polyphenic pigmentation, which adapts to match terrain and seasons. Among other colors, it may be a rich brown to match rocky terrain or a stark white to match the snow during bleak winter months. The thick mane is often a slightly different color than the rest of the coat, growing especially thick and almost silver on pack alphas.

A single nosika is dangerous enough, but these predators hunt in packs. Though large herd animals make better meals, nosika seem to enjoy the sport of hunting intelligent prey.

Nosika possess excellent tracking and climbing abilities, allowing them to follow their prey anywhere. They use tactics bordering on human intelligence to weaken, separate, and pick apart groups of prey. In one such tactic, a single nosika attacks the most vulnerable target. Rather

than kill its prey outright, the nosika runs away, leaving the rest of the prey to tend their wounded. With the group distracted, the nosika pack closes in and takes the others down.

Another favored tactic is to have two or three smaller nosika drive the prey into a box canyon or other dead end, where the rest of the pack waits to attack all at once.

These group tactics are enabled by the mental bond the pack shares, which allows them to stay in communication for miles. If one member of the pack can see the prey, the others know exactly where it is. This is the most significant ability of the nosika. As many have noted, no other creature on Morgar has such an innate psionic ability.

Adventure Seeds: A big-game hunter hires the crew to sneak him past the vulkolasi planetary patrols in order to hunt and kill a nosika as the ultimate trophy. The ship crashes, leaving the heroes to trek to the nearest base camp while a nosika pack stalks them along the way. If the survivors make it to the nearby camp, they also have to contend with the vulkolasi game wardens, who are not happy about the illegal hunt.



NOSIKA PACK ALPHA

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Dense hides.
- **Camouflage:** While in an environment for which it has adapted, a nosika adds +2 to Stealth rolls (or +4 if it remains perfectly still).
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result in combat does not cause a Wound.
- **Immune to Cold:** Thanks to their dense hides, nosika have +4 to resist cold effects.
- **Low Light Vision:** Nosika ignore all penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Pack Mind:** Nosika can communicate telepathically with the rest of their pack.
- **Ram:** Nosika begin combat by springing from ambush to ram opponents with their bony chins. Add +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which a nosika Runs, moves at least 5" (10 yards), and successfully hits. Victims must make a Vigor roll or be Stunned.
- **Size 3:** About the size of a Kodiak bear.
- **Speed Burst:** Once per combat, a nosika can run double its pace for one turn. It generally uses this ability to close the gap, ram its prey, and stun it.

NOSIKA PACK MEMBER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Dense hides.
- **Camouflage:** While in an environment for which it has adapted, a nosika adds +2 to Stealth rolls (or +4 if it remains perfectly still).
- **Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result in combat does not cause a Wound.
- **Immune to Cold:** Thanks to their dense hides, nosika have +4 to resist cold effects.
- **Low Light Vision:** Nosika ignore all penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Pack Mind:** Nosika can communicate telepathically with the rest of their pack.
- **Ram:** Nosika begin combat by springing from ambush to ram opponents with their bony chins. Add +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which a nosika Runs, moves at least 5" (10 yards), and successfully hits. Victims must make a Vigor roll or be Stunned.
- **Size 2:** About the size of a black bear.
- **Speed Burst:** Once per combat, a nosika can run double its pace for one turn. It generally uses this ability to close the gap, ram its prey, and stun it.





RHINO-BEAST

Horgoths (known to the galaxy at large as “rhino-beasts”) are powerful, armored herbivores native to Neshon. They greatly resemble Terran rhinoceroses in both physiology and behavior. Females and subadults congregate in small herds, while adult males are solitary. Rhino-beasts are far more aggressive than their Terran equivalents; the horgoth habit of claiming and defending territory just outside hopoc city walls has resulted in regular clashes with Brute Squadrons, and is the only reason the animals are known outside of Neshon.

Some geneticists claim that the hopoc people were engineered by the Progenitors from rhino-beasts, but many dismiss this as nohgotha propaganda.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Survival d6

Edges: Nerves of Steel, Sweep (Imp)

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 18 (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +3:** Thick hide.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result in combat doesn't cause a Wound.
- **Horn:** Str+d10, AP 2.
- **Low Light Vision:** Rhino-beasts ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.

- **Size 7 (Large):** Rhino-beasts can take one extra Wound.
- **Swat:** A rhino-beast ignores up to 4 points of Scale penalties when attacking creatures smaller than itself.
- **Trample:** If a rhino-beast Runs, it can trample every Large or smaller Size creature in its path for Str+d6 damage. Those in its path may Evade.

SPIKER-LIZARD

This omnivorous species lives on numerous worlds, where it was presumably seeded by the Progenitors long ago. Functionally more like a reptile than any other Terran species, it nevertheless runs in herds.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 18 (4)

Edges: —

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Scaly hide.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d8.
- **Burrow:** Pace 2.
- **Camouflage:** While resting, spiker-lizards burrow into rocky terrain, leaving only their upper carapaces visible. While burrowed

into the soil like this, spiker-lizards add +2 to Stealth rolls (or +4 if they remain perfectly still).

- **Size 6 (Large):** Spiker-lizards can take one extra Wound.
- **Tail Spikes:** Str+d8. A spiker-lizard may also fire its tail spikes from its tail as an action (Range 4/8/16, Damage 2d6, AP 2).

VIKON

Despite their bestial, quadruped appearance, Vikons are fully sapient beings. They serve their nohgotha creators as field commanders, shock troopers, and mounts. More cunning than intelligent, vikons excel at battlefield tactics rather than long-term strategy.

Physically, they are a force to be reckoned with. Their dense muscular and skeletal structure combines with great size and redundant organs to produce truly formidable warriors. Despite this, vikons prefer to lead from the rear, sending in troops to handle situations rather than engaging directly in combat themselves. When forced to fight, they use their immense strength to pummel the enemy into the ground.

Though not gifted with a full range of psychic talents like the nohgotha, vikons are able to broadcast their thoughts to other nohgotha-engineered species (such as hive insects) as well as receive telepathic commands from their masters. During the Armageddon War, they used

this limited telepathy to intermediate between the nohgotha and the dunar.

Vikons have no social structure or purpose outside their duty to the nohgotha. Like the dunar once did, they spend most of their off-duty time in cryochambers awaiting their next assignment.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d10, Battle d8, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Taunt d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 21 (5)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Ruthless (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Bruiser, Brute, Combat Reflexes, Command Presence, Danger Sense, Fleet-Footed, Frenzy (Imp), Soldier, Tactician, Tougher than Nails

Gear: Polymer armor (+5*)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Claws:** Str+d10.
- **Limited Telepathy:** Vikons may communicate with any nohgotha and nohgotha-engineered creatures within five miles as if they have the *mind link* power.
- **Size 3:** Vikons are as large as a warhorse.
- **Tail Stinger:** Str+d6. Lethal Poison.
- **Toughness +3:** Dense cellular structure makes Vikons especially durable.
- **Tusks:** Str+d6.



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