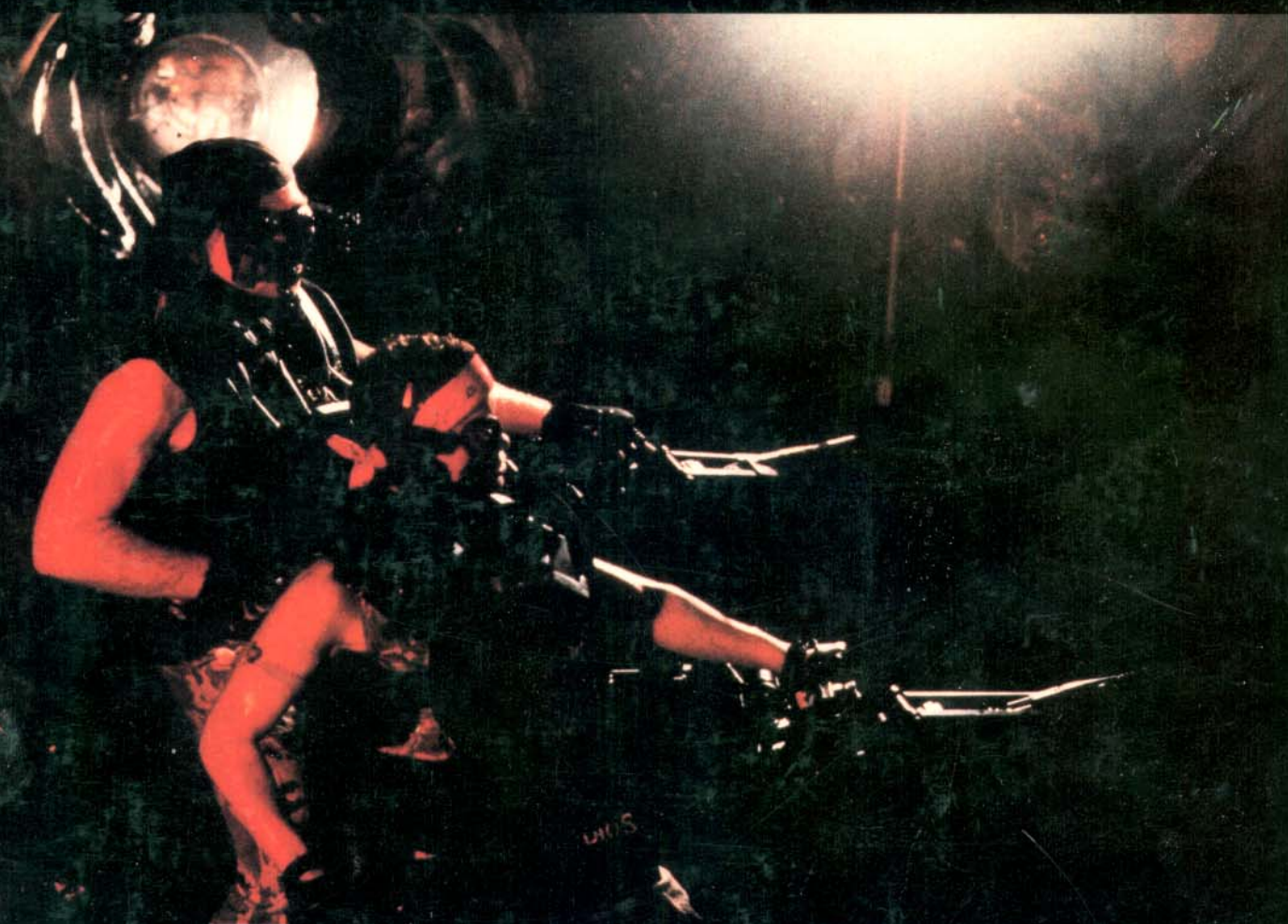


ALIENS™

ADVENTURE GAME



LEADING EDGE

G A M E S

A L I E N STM

ADVENTURE GAME



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Special Thanks to Jason, Marissa, and Corinna, and to Tim, Billy,
and the rest of our friends in Chico.

Also to everyone at Fox and Huttner Litho, of course,
and the many friends who have stood by us.

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Published by Leading Edge Games, Box 70669, Pasadena, CA 91117.

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INTRODUCTION

The **ALIENS™ Adventure Game** is a complete role-playing system. It includes all the rules necessary for recreating the kind of action shown in the movie, as well as guidelines that will take the players to meet challenges on dozens of strange new worlds.

The time of **ALIENS** is one of great adventure and great change. The nations of Earth have lost much of their power, and multi-national and multi-stellar Corporations have replaced them as the rulers of Humanity. Although large-scale warfare has been avoided, there is constant strife among the Corporations and Nations, and with the many Colonies that have been established. In the midst of the chaos, the Colonial Marine Corps stands as Humanity's peacekeeping force, moving among the stars and trying to keep Humanity safe from itself, and from the dangers of space.

And now, on a minor world, the greatest danger of all has been awakened; the Aliens. And unless the Colonial Marines can defeat the greed and power of the most unscrupulous Corporations of all, the Aliens will destroy Humanity.

The rules and the setting are laid out in eight Chapters, each of which is divided into Sections. This layout makes it easy for players to find specific rules when necessary. The tables used when playing the game are presented in the text. For ease of reference, the most important tables are also repeated at the back of the book and are numbered; the number appears in parentheses whenever the table is referred to in the rules.

At least three six-sided dice and one or more ten-sided dice (available in hobby stores) are needed for play. The ten-sided die is usually used to generate numbers from 0 to 99. To do this, roll the die twice; the first roll is the tens digit, and the second represents the ones. So a roll of 6 and 2 would be 62, and a 4 and 9 would be 49.

Welcome to **ALIENS**.

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		System Defense Frigate Spacecraft	
		Corporate Cruiser Spacecraft	
		Blank Character Sheet	

PREFACE

MISSION ORDERS - EYES ONLY

For U.S. Colonial Marines Strike Team V3-106-1C2

Mission Summary: Reconnaissance

Site Involved: Atmosphere Processing Station "Hadley's Hope"
System/Planet LV-426, "Acheron"

Mission Definition:

Contact was lost recently with the Atmosphere Processing Station on LV-426, and a Strike Team was sent to investigate. The Strike Team suffered high casualties, and surviving members are currently under ICC quarantine. All files regarding the Mission have been Classified by High Command and have been placed off-limits to the rest of the Colonial Marine Corps. The Corporation involved has refused to supply the Corps with information regarding the original Mission.

Best evidence available indicates that our Strike Team was sent to LV-426 to assist the Colonists at the request of the Weyland-Yutani Corporation, and that Corporate personnel had contributed in some way to the Colony's distress. All other recent information regarding status and history of LV-426 has been suppressed by Weyland-Yutani, although there is a reference to an early encounter with a xenomorph on the planet. This contradicts the available data on LV-426, which is without indigenous life.

The only information gathered by Corps Intelligence indicates that Weyland-Yutani sent a crew into a wilderness area shortly before contact was lost with the Colony. This is unusual behavior, and may provide data regarding the overall situation and the fate of the Strike Team.

Your Strike Team is directed to proceed to the Colony site, to investigate it, and determine what happened. Further action is at the discretion of the commanding officer. Priorities are as follows:

- Discover what happened to Strike Team
- Determine fate and condition of Colony
- Take steps to reduce threat to Colonial Marine Corps and protected facilities

Suggest extreme caution. In addition to the presence of whatever disrupted the Colony, it is assumed that Weyland-Yutani military forces are present. It is likely that they will be hostile to your Mission, although it is imperative that your Strike Team not initiate hostilities with Corporate forces. In addition, it is possible that other Corporations will be investigating LV-426; and it is even possible that there is a dangerous xenomorph present.

All of these factors, combined with the loss of the previous Strike Team and the fact that the Corps is operating without the support of the High Command on this Mission, mean that your Strike Team must be both extremely careful and exceptionally effective.

Good luck.

1

THE CHARACTER

This is a **Role-Playing Game**. That means it can be thought of as a running story, like a movie or book, except that the people playing the game take the parts of the characters in the story. One person, the **Gamemaster** (abbreviated **GM**), acts as referee, moderating the adventure and portraying everyone and everything that the characters encounter, and guiding the development of the plot.

There is an important difference between role-playing and a normal story, however. Where a movie or a book simply carries you along with it, in role-playing you have control over what happens in the story and how it ends. In fact, in an active, well-run campaign, the story may not end at all. The key to this is your representative in the game world, the **Character**.

Each Character starts out as a set of abilities and traits, representing what it knows and has experienced. This only supplies the basics, however, so at the beginning of a game the Character is pretty simple. With continued play the Character grows, until it becomes a realistic, full-fledged individual. As the player guides the Character through the game, there are many opportunities for him or her to deal creatively with challenges that are hardly imagined, and certainly never encountered, in the real world.

How each player shapes his or her Character is a purely personal decision. Many people create Characters who are very much like themselves, while others choose to give their Characters traits and attitudes that are very different from their own. There is room for almost anything in a role-playing game, because the only boundaries are those of your imagination.

"I work for the Company. But don't let that fool you. I'm really an okay guy."

Carter J. Burke

1.1

In **ALIENS**, each player begins by generating one **Character**. When a game is just starting, every Character will be a Colonial Marine, and the group of Characters together will be members of a single squad, or Strike Team. Together, this Strike Team will receive a variety of assignments that will take it throughout Humanity's empire; from Earth to the most distant Colonies, and from conflicts with Corporate forces to battles with the Aliens and other strange life forms.

Each Colonial Marine Character is created using the rules in the following Sections. The player decides what the initial Characteristics are, using Section 1.3, and then finds out what the early military experience of the Character has been, using Section 1.4. For beginning players and those who want to get play started quickly, a number of pre-rolled Colonial Marines are given in Chapter 8.

As the game develops, the players can use Characters who have backgrounds which are different from the Colonial Marines; guidelines for these Characters are given in Sections 1.4 and 3.7.

SETTING AND CHARACTERS

CHARACTERISTICS

The idea in role-playing is for the Character to be able, within the game, to do many of the things that a real person can do. To make this possible, each Character is defined by a number of **Characteristics** which represent human traits. In **ALIENS**, these numbers are grouped into five **Primary** and four **Secondary Characteristics**, which define physical, mental, and emotional attributes. In addition to these, each Character also has a variety of acquired skills and abilities; together, they provide the framework of a truly unique individual.

Figure 1 (on page 5) is a sample **Character Sheet**, showing the Characteristics, Skills, and Equipment for a sample Marine. A blank Character Sheet has been provided at the back of this book, and may be photocopied by players for their personal use.

Primary Characteristics

The first five entries in the left-hand column of the Character Sheet are for the Primary Characteristics. These represent the most important attributes of each Character. The value of each is generally between 3 and 18. The larger the value, the greater the Character's prowess, as shown in the following table. Each Characteristic is described below.

Characteristic	Description
18	Exceptional
16	Excellent
14	Good
12	Above Average
10	Average
8	Below Average
6	Poor
3	Extremely Poor

Strength: A measure of overall physical strength. As a guideline, an unskilled Character who has a Strength of 10 can dead lift about 200 pounds, and lift about 100 pounds overhead. At Strength 14, a Character can dead lift about 250 pounds and lift 115 pounds overhead, while at Strength 18 a Character can dead lift 400 pounds, and lift 185 pounds overhead.

Intelligence: Mental quickness and the capacity for reasoning and understanding. Intelligence is very important in determining how rapidly a Character learns, and influences how fast he or she makes decisions. Because of this, it is a factor in determining how capable a character is in a wide variety of activities. Note that Intelligence is not the same thing as education.

Will: Resolve and willpower, which determine courage in the face of danger, resistance to the pain of wounds, and the ability to concentrate. Will has a major influence on each Character's morale during a crisis and when injured.

Health: Physical health and the ability to recover from wounds and hardship.

Agility: Physical coordination and speed. Agility influences a Character's maneuverability and overall physical capabilities.

Secondary Characteristics

Secondary Characteristics round out the personal traits of the Character and are used for social and personal interactions in the game. Secondary Characteristics use the same 3 to 18 scale as Primary Characteristics, and a description of each follows.

"You were out there for 57 years. I think you're damn lucky to be alive, kiddo. You could be floating out there forever."

Burke



"There have been people there for over twenty years, and they never complained about any hostile organism."

Van Leuwen

Colonist Paralyzed by Facehugger

Charisma: Personal charm and the ability to interact well with others. It is composed of physical appearance and personality, and is used in such things as gaining employment and making friends.

Leadership: A mixture of a Character's 'presence' and his or her natural ability to command and lead.

Motivation: Long-term determination or persistence to achieve an end. It may be thought of as a desire to pursue a goal that may not yield immediate results, where Will, by comparison, is concerned with short-term activity.

Perception: Mental alertness. The greater the Perception, the greater the Character's awareness of his or her surroundings, and the ability to read the emotions and truthfulness of others.

1.3

There are two ways of generating the Primary Characteristics of each Character; by random roll, or by 'Building' the Character. Either method can be used, but inexperienced players will find that the random method greatly speeds Character generation. 'Building' a Character requires some familiarity with the effects of various Characteristics on play.

In the **Random Method**, just roll three six-sided dice twice for each Primary Characteristic, choosing the higher total. For example, the first Characteristic is Strength. The player would roll three dice and add them together. If the dice read 6, 4, and 3, then the total would be 13. Then the same dice are rolled again, and a new total is found; 4, 3, and 3, for example, equals 10. The higher of the two totals, in this case 13, becomes the Strength Characteristic. This is done for each Characteristic, one at a time, until all five Primary Characteristics have been found.

CHARACTERISTIC GENERATION

In the **Building Method**, Primary Characteristics are assigned from the **Characteristic Point Total**. The Characteristic Point Total is equal to the sum of four six-sided dice plus 48. The player divides these points among the five Primary Characteristics using the following rules.

1. Each Characteristic must have a minimum value of 3.
2. The number of Points needed for a given value in one Characteristic is found on the following table.

Characteristic	Value of Characteristic									
	3 to 12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Intelligence, Strength, Agility	equal	13	14	15	16	18	21	25	30	36
Will or Health	equal	13	13	14	14	15	17	19	22	25

3. The total Points used must be equal to the Characteristic Point Total. It cannot be more or less.

Example:

At the start of play, a player rolls up a Character and names him Hudson. He rolls 4 six-sided dice with these results; 6, 4, 3, and 2. Adding these to 48 gives a Characteristic Point Total of 63. The player wants Hudson to be a balanced character, so he assigns 12 to Strength, 15 to Intelligence, 12 to Will, 12 to Health, and 12 to Agility. The player could likewise have designed Hudson with Strength 9, Intelligence 18 (costing 21 points), Will 16 (costing 14), Health 10, and Agility 9, or any other desired combination that added up to 63 points.

Secondary Characteristics

To find the value of a Secondary Characteristic, the player totals the roll of 3 six-sided dice. For example, a roll of 6, 4, and 4 would give a value of 14. Each Secondary Characteristic is rolled for separately.

An optional rule for generating Secondary Characteristics is to also allow the player to roll a single six-sided die and use the result to increase the value(s) of one or more of the Secondary Characteristics. Consider a Character who rolls, among the other Secondary Characteristics, Motivation 7 and Perception 12. If the player rolled a 4 for the extra die roll, he or she could add all 4 points to Motivation and adjust its value to 11, or could add 3 to Motivation and 1 to Perception to give Motivation 10 and Perception 13, or any other suitable combination. The value of a Characteristic cannot be raised above 18 by adding these points.

"Bad dreams again?
You want something
to help you sleep?"

Med Tech

"No. I've slept
enough."

Ripley

1.4

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Once the Characteristics have been determined, the next step is to find the Character's age, background, and initial skills. Skills determine what a Character can do and are fully discussed in Chapter 2. How capable a Character is with a certain Skill is defined by the **Skill Rating**, which can range from Unskilled to Grand Master. The higher the Skill Rating, the greater the Character's expertise. As a guideline, Skill Ratings above Professional indicate a very high degree of skill.

There are 10 Skills listed in the **General Skills** box, at the right side of the **Character Sheet**. These are the Skills which are typically used by Colonial Marines, and are therefore given the most attention.

A Character may also have ability in any number of other Skills, and there is room to list them at the bottom right side of the Character Sheet in the **Support Skills** box. If necessary, the list of Skills should be continued on the back of the Character Sheet.

FIGURE 1 HUDSON'S SAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Name: Hudson

Education: Fair

Social Status: Middle Class

Merit Points: 9

Rank: Private

Branch: Line Infantry

Specialty: _____

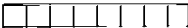
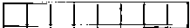
CHARACTERISTICS	
Character Point Total <u>63</u>	
Characteristics	
Primary	
Strength	<u>12</u>
Intelligence	<u>15</u>
Will	<u>12</u>
Health	<u>12</u>
Agility	<u>12</u>
Secondary	
Charisma	<u>14</u>
Leadership	<u>8</u>
Perception	<u>10</u>
Motivation	<u>14</u>
Calculated Values	
Combat Actions	<u>6</u>
Knockout Value	<u>48</u>
Learning Roll	<u>19</u>

EQUIPMENT	
	Weight
Clothing or Armor	
<u>Light Armor</u>	
Combat Load	<u>20</u>
Combat Equipment	
<u>Pulse Rifle</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Pistol</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Spare Magazine</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Flares (6)</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Grenades (4)</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Knife</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Smoke Grenade</u>	<u>1</u>
Combat Weight	<u>19</u>

GENERAL SKILLS						
General Skills	Skill Rating					
	N	C	P	E	M	G
Class 1	-4	0	4	6	8	10
Gun Combat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class 2						
Balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hand to Hand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class 3						
Climbing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scouting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survival	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class 4						
Espionage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infiltration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class 5						
Diplomacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PERSONAL STATUS		KNOCKOUT TABLE	
Age	<u>24</u>	Total PD	Incapacitation Chance
Money	<u>60</u>		
Physical Damage	_____	Under 1/10 KV	-
Disabling Injuries	_____	Over 1/10 KV	10
	_____	Over KV	25
	_____	Over 2 times KV	75
	_____	Over 3 times KV	98

[illegible]

WEAPON DATA			
Weapon	Shot Accuracy	Weapon	Shot Accuracy
Weapon <i>Pulse Rifle</i>	1 <i>15 (-11)</i> 2 <i>5 (-1)</i>	Weapon <i>Pistol</i>	1 <i>8 (-4)</i> 2 <i>1 (3)</i>
Ammo Capacity	3 <i>0 (4)</i> 4 <i>2 (6)</i> 6 <i>5 (9)</i>	Ammo Capacity	3 <i>0 (4)</i> 4 <i>1 (5)</i> 6 <i>2 (6)</i>
			
Rate of Fire <i>LRAF</i>	8 <i>8 (-12)</i>	Rate of Fire <i>SS</i>	8 <i>3 (-7)</i>

"Are there any
species like this
'hostile organism'
on LV-426?"

Insurance Investigator

"No. It's a rock.
No indigenous life."

ECA Representative

Colonial Marine Corps Background

The experience of a member of the Corps is determined using the following guidelines. The Character is tracked from initial education and social standing through one or more Years with the Colonial Marines. Throughout, the Player notes Skills as they are acquired, important events, and the accumulation of **Merit Points**, which represent the opinion of superiors. The information below is repeated on the **Character Background Table (1)** at the back of the book. For ease of reference, the most important tables in the rules are repeated at the back of the book and are numbered; the number appears in parentheses whenever the table is referred to in the rules.

For players who want to get started immediately, a number of pre-generated Colonial Marine Characters are given in Chapter 8.

First, the player rolls on the table below to find out how well educated the Character is, prior to enlistment in the Colonial Marines.

Earth	Formal Education	Merit Points
00 - 40	Poor	0
41 - 80	Fair	1
81 - 97	Good	3
98 - 99	Exceptional	6

Next is the **Social Background** of the Character. Merit Points are awarded for this in part because the sophistication of a higher class Character improves the way he or she is perceived, and in part because of influence wielded by the Character and his or her family and acquaintances.

Earth	Social Background	Merit Points
00 - 61	Underprivileged	0
62 - 94	Middle Class	2
95 - 98	Influential	6
99	Elite	10

The next step is to find the number of Merit Points the Character receives for having high Characteristics; both Primary and Secondary Characteristics can earn Merit Points for a Character. The number earned per Characteristic is shown on the following table.

Characteristics and Merit Points

Each Characteristic of 13 or 14	1 Merit Points
Each Characteristic of 15 or 16	2 Merit Points
Each Characteristic of 17	3 Merit Points
Each Characteristic of 18	5 Merit Points

The Merit Points from the preceding steps should all be added together, and compared to the entries in the following table. This determines what **Branch of Service** will accept the new Colonial Marine.

Merit Points	Branch of Service
4 or less	Colonial Marine Garrison Infantry
5 or more	Colonial Marine Line Infantry
7 or more	Auxiliary
12 or more	Officer
16 or more	Officer, Staff College

The Character can enter the Branch for which he or she has the appropriate number of Merit Points, and can choose to enter any Branch that requires a lower total. For example, a Character with 12 Merit Points could be an Officer, but could also choose Auxiliary, Colonial Marine Line Infantry, or even Garrison Infantry if desired.



"Is this going to be a stand-up fight, Sir, or another Bug Hunt?"

Hudson

Strike Team Being Briefed in Hangar Deck

Learning and Skills

A major factor in a Character's career is the ability to learn. The education of a Colonial Marine comes in many forms, from harsh physical training to intensive classroom study, but in all cases the speed with which the Character absorbs new information is very important. To represent this, every Character has a **Learning Roll (LR)**. The Learning Roll is equal to the Character's Intelligence plus Motivation minus 10. For example, a Character with Intelligence 15 and Motivation 12 would have a Learning Roll of $15 + 12 - 10 = 17$.

Whenever the rules say a Character gets a Learning Chance, he or she rolls a 00 to 99 number; if the result is less than or equal to the LR, the Character has succeeded and the Rating of the Skill in question may be improved.

There are seven possible **Ratings**; Unskilled, Novice, Certified, Professional, Expert, Master, and Grand Master. The effects of these Ratings are described in Chapter 2; for now it is enough to know that everyone starts out as Unskilled in everything, and that each Rating is a major improvement in Skill over the preceding one. Also, it gets harder to improve as the higher Ratings are reached. A single successful Learning Roll is enough to advance from one Rating to another up through Professional, but from that point it gets tougher. When a Character gets a Learning Chance for a Skill in which he or she is a Professional, then two Learning Rolls are made; if both succeed, then the Character advances to Expert Rating. To go from Expert to Master, three consecutive successful Learning Rolls must be made, and it takes four in a row to go from Master to Grand Master. Complete explanations of Skill Ratings and Learning are given in Chapter 2.

Basic Training

Having selected a Branch of Service and determined the Learning Roll, the Character now enters the **Basic Training Table (2A)** to find his or her Initial Skills. To determine what Skills are learned, choose the column for the Character's Branch; for each Skill that has an X marked next to it, the Character receives a Learning Chance. If the roll is failed, the Character gets a Rating of Novice with that Skill; if the roll is successful, the Character has a Rating of Certified. This represents the rapid pace of education in Basic Training.

Auxiliary Characters also choose 3 Skills from the Auxiliary portion of the **Branch Support Skill Table (2B)**, and take Learning Chances for those as well. This is the technical aspect of their Basic Training.

"Did IQ's just drop sharply while I was away?"

Ripley

Basic Training lasts four months, and at the end of that period Colonial Marine Line Infantry and Auxiliary Characters can apply for Specialist Training, as described below. If the Character is not accepted, he or she now proceeds to the Active Duty Table, as described below.

Specialist Training

There are a number of positions within the Colonial Marine Line Infantry and Auxiliary Branches which require highly trained personnel. These positions are listed on the **Specialist Skills Table (2C)** and are fully described in Section 2.9. The rules for becoming a Specialist are as follows.

Each Specialist type has a different set of Characteristic and Merit Point requirements. If a Character meets those requirements (his or her Characteristics and Merit Points are all greater than or equal to those listed), then he or she can apply for the Specialty.

To find out if he or she is accepted, the Character rolls a number from 0 to 9; if the number rolled is less than 1/2 of the Character's Merit Points, then he or she is accepted. If not, the Character has been rejected and may not apply for that Specialty again until his or her next 6-year Tour begins. On the other hand, the Character can apply for every Specialty he or she qualifies for, and if accepted to more than one can select which Specialty to enter.

Specialist Training takes eight months, and at its end the Character begins the first year of Active Duty. During Specialist Training, the Character receives a Learning Chance in each Skill listed for the Specialty on **Table 2C**. These rolls are handled in the same way as normal Basic Training rolls; success means the Character is Certified, failure means he or she is a Novice.

Rank

A Character enters his or her Branch of Service at the lowest Rank for that Branch; Lieutenant for either type of Officer, and Private for all other Branches. The chance for promotion comes whenever Merit Points are earned, and is discussed later in this section.

Active Duty

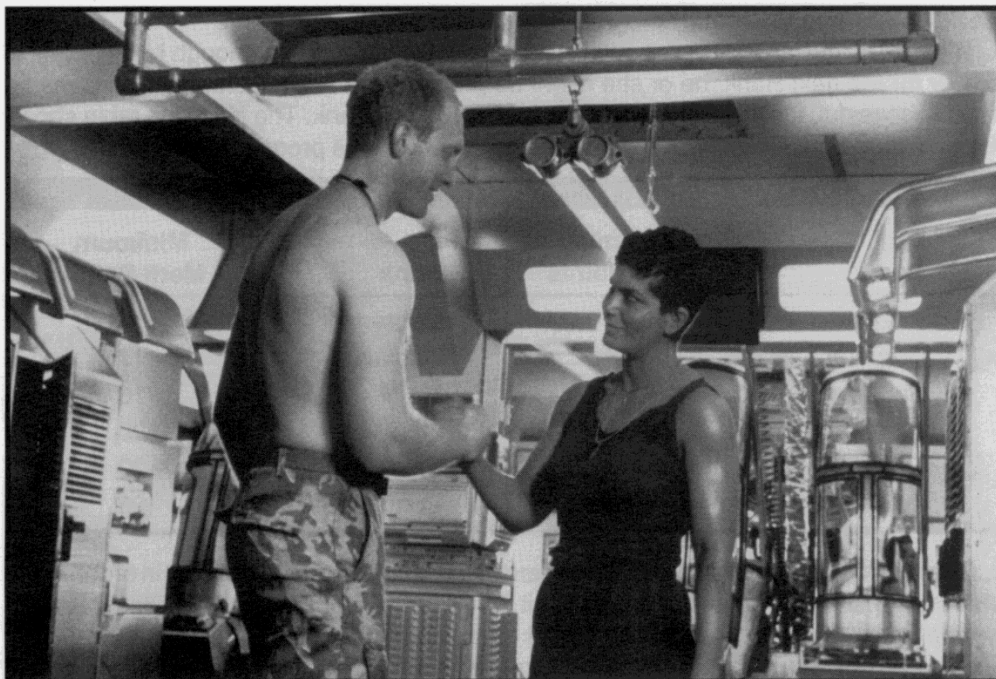
The **Active Duty Table (1E)** is used to generate the past career of each Character, including the major assignments, commendations, and reprimands. Each set of rolls on the Active Duty Table represents a year of service, so it is easy to create Characters of any age, from the greenest recruits to the oldest veterans.

To determine how experienced a Character is, the player should roll a number from 0 to 9; this is the number of years of **Active Duty** for the Character. If the roll is a 0, then the Character is just out of Basic Training and does not roll on the **Active Duty Table (1E)**. On a roll of 9, the Character has at least 9 years of service and should roll again; if the second roll is a 7, 8, or 9, then the player should add another 0 to 9 years to the time the Character has spent on Active Duty. There are special rules for Officers, which are given under **Branches of Service** later in this Section.

For example, Hudson rolls a 5; he has been in the Colonial Marines for five years since leaving Basic Training, and would roll five times on the Active Duty Table as described below. If he had rolled a 9, he would roll again; if the second roll was a 7 or better, then he would roll again and add the second 0 to 9 roll to the 9; if he rolled a 2, he would have a total of 11 years of Active Duty in the Colonial Marines.

For each year of Active Duty, the player will make a set of rolls to determine the duty the Character's unit was assigned to, what Skills were improved, and whether any Merit Points were gained or lost. First, the player goes to the left half of the **Active Duty Table (1E)** and selects the appropriate **Troop Grade** column. For beginning Characters, the Troop Grade is Line, representing assignment to a normal unit. Depending on the Character's career, the Grade may improve. This will happen if and when the Character rolls the **Move Up A Grade** entry on the Table. If this is rolled, the Character moves up one Troop Grade; from Line to Crack, from Crack to Elite, and so forth. All further Active Duty rolls are made in the higher column.

The Garrison column is only used for Characters who failed to attain a higher Branch and were forced to settle for Garrison Infantry. These Characters are automatically transferred to the Colonial Marine Branch and to a Troop Grade of Line as soon as they



Drake and Vasquez in Sulaco's Locker Area

"Hey Vasquez,
have you ever
been mistaken
for a man?"

Hudson

"No. Have you?"

Vasquez

roll the Move Up A Grade result on the Table. For the few unlucky Characters who fail to get into the Colonial Marine Line Infantry Branch, it is suggested that the GM simply change their Branch to Colonial Marine Line Infantry at the end of Character Generation. This at least gives them the opportunity to serve with the other Characters.

A 00 to 99 number is rolled in the appropriate column, and the Player reads across to the **Active Duty** for the year. This is the primary type of assignment that the Character's unit has received, and might be anything from Garrison Duty to fighting against bizarre life forms or in Corporate revolutions; each entry is discussed briefly in Section 1.7.

The Character then reads across to the **General Skill Class** columns, and finds the number of Learning Chances that are received in each Class. The Character chooses which of the Skills within the Class he or she will attempt to improve, and the normal Learning Chance rules are applied. In general, only a single Learning Chance will be offered per Class, but sometimes the Character can select two Skills within a single Class for Learning. It is possible to use both Learning Chances on a single Skill.

Next the **Support Skill Chances** column is checked. This column may hold a dash, meaning no improvement, or a number from 1 to 3, giving the number of Learning Chances earned in the Support Skills. The Support Skills are the assignments that dominated the Character's time during the year, and are selected by the Player from among the Skills shown on **Table 2B**, for the Character's Branch. An exception is made for Characters with Specialist Training; their Support Skill Chances are always used for one of their Specialist Skills, listed on **Table 2C**. Note that only Close Combat and Machine Gun Specialists are constantly preparing for Combat; most Colonial Marines spend the majority of their time in less dramatic duties, including servicing equipment, maintaining facilities, and other "busy work". Again, it is possible to use more than one Learning Chance on a single Skill.

Each Character also gets one Learning Chance per year to apply to any Skill from the **Additional Skills** portion of **Table 2B**; even Colonial Marines have a little free time.

The last column of the **Active Duty Table (1E)** gives the number of chances that the Character has to earn Merit Points, if any. For each **Merit Point Chance**, the player should roll a 00 - 99 number once. If the roll is less than or equal to the Character's Learning Roll, then 1 Merit Point has been earned and should be added to the Character's total. This represents the award of a Service Ribbon or similar commendation, and can result in Promotion. Optional rules for the use of Merit Points are given in Section 1.6.

"If one of those things gets down here, then that will be all. Then all this, this... that you think is so important, you can just kiss all that goodbye."

Ripley

Merit Points and Promotions

Whenever a Character earns one or more Merit Points and has enough Merit Points to qualify for the next Rank, he or she might be promoted. A single Learning Roll is made; if it is successful, then the Character advances a single Rank. The following table shows the minimum number of Merit Points necessary for various promotions.

INFANTRY / AUXILIARY		OFFICERS	
Rank	Minimum Merit Points	Rank	Minimum Merit Points
Private	-	Lieutenant	16
Corporal	11	Captain	17
Sergeant	12	Major	18
Staff Sergeant	13	Lt. Colonel	20
Tech Sergeant	14	Colonel	22
Master Sergeant	15	Commander	26

The Character cannot skip any Ranks; each Promotion must be received in order. Note also that 16 is the minimum number of Merit Points for a Lieutenant, but the Officer Branch can be entered with a Merit Point Total of 12 or more. In theory, the Officer Candidate should earn the Merit Points necessary to make up the difference during the years of field or Staff College experience before receiving his or her command, as discussed below. In practice, and for game purposes, Merit Points are artificially raised to 16 when the young Officer enters play, if necessary.

Age

At the beginning of Basic Training, the Character is 18 years old. Since the Basic and Specialist Training cycle lasts one year, and each set of rolls of Active Duty is another year, it is easy to determine the Age of the Character at the beginning of play. The Age will be 18 plus 1 (for Basic and Specialist Training), plus 1 per year of Active Duty.

Tour of Duty

Each full Tour in the Colonial Marines lasts 6 years. In the first **Tour**, a year is taken up by Basic and Specialist Training and supporting duties, so the **Active Duty Table** is used only five times to complete the Tour.

Many Colonial Marines elect to return to civilian life after their first Tour, taking advantage of the Skills they have acquired and the discipline and respect conferred by a military background. A large percentage of Corporate military personnel have Colonial Marine backgrounds, as do many technicians, heavy equipment operators, communications and computer specialists, and other civilians.

A player can decide to retire a Character after a Tour is completed. Given the many dangers of military service, this is a way to 'win' the game, as it gets the Character back to civilian life and relative safety. The behavior of a Character who is 'short' might change radically, and can be an interesting situation for the player.

Changing Branches

If the Character reenlists, he or she can try to change the **Branch of Service**. To transfer into Garrison, Colonial Marine Line Infantry or Auxiliary, the Character must have the minimum Merit Points for the Branch and must roll less than his or her Merit Point total, using a 0 to 9 die. For example, a Character with 6 Merit Points would have to roll a 5 or less to be accepted into the Colonial Marine Line Infantry. To be accepted into one of the Officer Branches, a 00 to 99 number is rolled, and again the total must be less than the Character's Merit Points; this is obviously much harder.

A Character can only apply for a single Branch Change per Tour. If accepted, the Character receives one Learning Chance for each Skill on the **Basic Training Table (2A)** for the new Branch that he or she has not already learned to at least Novice Rating.



"All right people...
On the ready line!"

Apone

Strike Team preparing to load the Dropship

Branches of Service

The following is a brief description of the duties and abilities of each of the Branches of Service.

Colonial Marine Garrison Infantry: The Garrison units of the Colonial Marine Corps are made up of the lowest quality recruits, and receive the least demanding of duties. Their primary purpose is to maintain security on Garrison Worlds and Military Bases, and sometimes they give support to more talented and better equipped Colonial Marine Line Infantry units.

Colonial Marine Line Infantry: These are the Grunts. They are usually deployed in squad-sized units called Strike Teams, with enough backup from the Auxiliary Branch to make the unit independent. As in all armies, it is the Infantry who do the majority of the fighting and take the biggest chances.

Auxiliary: The high-tech equipment used by the Colonial Marines requires a lot of special attention, a duty that falls to the skilled personnel of this Branch. They operate, repair, maintain, and prepare for use everything from Pulse Rifles to interstellar Frigates, and can even act as Infantry when necessary.

Colonial Marine Officers: These are well-educated, highly-trained personnel with substantial experience. Before being allowed their own commands, Colonial Marine Officers have completed a Tour of Duty and have performed the full range of duties of the Infantry and the Auxiliary. A player with a Colonial Marine Officer for a Character should generate Basic Training and the Tour (5 years), plus an additional 0 to 9 years representing time in the field since receiving a command.

Staff Officers: These Officers come from the recently created Colonial Marines Staff College on Earth, and most have backgrounds of considerable wealth and influence. Because of an increase in Corporate influence on the Colonial Marine Corps in recent years, there are growing numbers of these Officers. Staff Officers do not spend the traditional 6 years in the field before receiving commands; instead, they get 4 years of training at the College and are then sent into the field. This training is the equivalent of

2 years of normal Active Duty experience, in addition to Basic Training. For Characters, roll an additional 0 to 9 years of field experience. Note that it is quite possible for a Staff Officer to hold rank as a Lieutenant straight out of the Academy, and to be in the field leading troops shortly thereafter. Lieutenant Gorman is a good example of this kind of Officer.

"That could have been better."

Burke

Other Backgrounds

For players who want to use Characters who are not in the Colonial Marines, there are a couple of options. The first is to generate a Character who has just left the Colonial Marines after a single Tour. As mentioned earlier, many of the people in Corporate militaries or working as Mercenaries and adventurers have exactly that background.

Alternatively, the Character can be generated according to the specific desires of the player, within the following limits. The player should decide what profession or background he wants for the Character, and then roll 4 six-sided dice to determine the total number of General and Support Skills the Character has. The player then selects which Skills the Character has learned, subject to the approval of the GM. For each Skill, roll a 0 - 9 number to determine the Character's Rating. On a roll of 0 - 5 his Skill Rating is Novice, on a roll of 6 - 8 his rating is Certified, and on a roll of 9 it is Professional.

The player can also trade Skills for Learning Chances. For each Skill that is given up, one Learning Chance can be applied to a Skill in an effort to improve it, using the normal guidelines. Note that the choice of how many Skills to take and how many to convert to Learning Chances is made before the player rolls for the Skill Ratings. The Learning Chances are applied after the Skill Rating rolls, so the player can try to improve Skills that he or she thinks are particularly important; the Skills are distributed in any way desired by the player.

For example, if a player rolled 15 on four dice to determine the number of Skills, he or she could choose to select 12 Skills for the Character, and use the remaining three points for Learning Chances.

Primary and Secondary Characteristics are found using the normal methods.

1.5

EQUIPMENT AND COMBAT ABILITIES

Once the Characteristics and initial Skills have been determined, the other values on the Character Sheet are filled in using the following step-by-step procedure. Basic explanations of these values are given here; the full details are in the Chapters that follow. For ease of reference, all of the tables in this Section are repeated at the back of the book.

Step 1: Combat Load and Armor

The **Combat Load** is the total weight of weapons and equipment carried by the Character during combat, in addition to any Armor worn. Naturally, the stronger a Character is and the less Armor that is worn, the more the Character can comfortably carry. The **Combat Load Table (3A)** is used to determine the maximum weight that can be carried by each Character.

First select the Armor the Character will wear. The various Armor types are somewhat self-explanatory, and are fully defined in Section 5.3. Colonial Marines will wear at least Light Armor; other Characters can choose to wear no Armor at all, or up to Heavy Armor or even a HARDCore Suit, depending on their Skills and responsibilities, and the decision of the GM.

Now determine the Character's actual Combat Load. To do this, cross-index the Character's Strength with the type of Armor chosen. The number shown on the table is the Combat Load. If no value is shown, then under the basic rules the Character cannot wear Armor that is that heavy. Characters who want to carry more or less than the amount shown should refer to Section 1.6, under Optional Load Modifiers.

COMBAT LOAD TABLE / 3A

Strength	Vacuum			Colonial Marine Corps Combat Fatigues				HARDCore
	Clothing	Suit	Spacesuit	Basic	Light	Medium	Heavy	
21	320	315	300	320	310	300	290	290
20	210	205	190	210	200	190	180	180
19	130	125	110	130	120	110	100	100
18	95	90	75	95	85	75	65	65
17	75	70	55	75	65	55	45	45
16	55	50	35	55	45	35	25	25
15	45	40	25	45	35	25	15	15
14	35	30	15	35	25	15	5	5
9 - 13	30	25	10	30	20	10		
6 - 8	25	20	5	25	15	5		
5	20	15		20	10			
4	15	10		15	5			
3	10	5		10				

Example: Hudson decides to wear Combat Fatigues with Light Armor. Cross-indexing his Strength of 12 with the Light Armor column gives a result of 20. This means that Hudson can carry 20 pounds of equipment in addition to his Fatigues and Light Armor.

Choose Armor, and record Combat Load (Table 3A)

Step 2: Equipment

A Character's initial equipment is limited. At the start of play, each Character has only the chosen Armor, one or more weapons, and the standard issue equipment listed below. Specialists also receive any equipment which is appropriate for their specialty, as defined in Section 2.9. Other equipment must be acquired in the course of play. Descriptions of equipment are in Chapter 5, along with full discussions of weapons and Armor.

For weaponry, each Character receives a Pulse Rifle and a Pistol, with two clips of ammunition for each. In addition, the Character receives one of each type of hand-held weapon for which he or she has the appropriate Skill.

The standard equipment issued to every Colonial Marine is as follows:

Armor	Framepack (2 lbs.)
Bed Roll (2 lbs.)	8 Grenades (2 lbs.)
Canteen (2 lbs.)	Knife (1 lb.)
Entrenching / Utility Tool (2 lbs.)	Mess Kit (1 lb.)
First Aid Kit (1 lb.)	Portable Welder (1 lb.)
6 Flares (1 lb.)	Twenty days of Rations (5 lbs.)

Not all of the Character's equipment is carried constantly, of course. Some items, like Framepacks and their contents, are left at the Strike Team's base or can be dropped before entering combat, while others would only rarely be carried at all. These items do not count against a Character's Combat Load.

To represent this, only items that are attached directly to the Character's Armor or which will be carried at all times should be listed in the Equipment section of the Character Sheet; these items are referred to as the Character's **Combat Equipment**. Items that will normally be dropped before entering battle are called **Non-Combat Equipment**, and should be listed on the back of the Character Sheet. Note that framepacks and other items

"Ripley, we have to talk. They've lost contact with the colony on LV-426."

Burke

that are dropped before a combat must be reclaimed afterward. Any articles which are owned by or assigned to the Character, but which are kept in a vehicle or are left at the Strike Team's base, are referred to as **Other Equipment**, and should be listed separately on the back of the Character Sheet.

The player should determine what items of the Character's equipment will go into each of these categories. Total the weights of all equipment in the Combat Equipment section; this is the Character's **Combat Weight**. As noted earlier, this should be less than or equal to the Combat Load determined in the previous step.

Next, total the weights listed in the Non-Combat Equipment section to determine the additional weight carried by the Character in normal situations. This must be less than or equal to 30 pounds.

Record Combat, Non-Combat, and Other Equipment, including weights

Hudson is a good example of this. His Character Sheet (Page 5) shows the Combat Equipment being carried; items of Non-Combat and Other Equipment, which would normally be listed on the back of the sheet, are listed below. Under Combat Equipment he has eight items, with a total weight of 19 pounds. Under Non-Combat Equipment he has listed the rest of his initial kit; 11 items, weighing 28 pounds. He also has an Orbital Communications Unit listed under Other Equipment; this is an item he has been assigned, and which is too heavy and delicate to be carried around.

Non-Combat Equipment

- 1 Bed Roll (2 lbs.)
- 2 Canteen (2 lbs.)
- 3 Electronic Lockpick (1 lb.)
- 4 Entrenching / Utility Tool (2 lbs.)
- 5 First Aid Kit (1 lb.)
- 6 Framepack (2 lbs.)
- 7 Mess Kit (1 lb.)
- 8 Motion Tracker (3 lbs.)
- 9 Radio (8 lbs.)
- 10 Rations, 20 Days (5 lbs.)
- 11 Portable Welder (1 lb.)

Other Equipment

Orbital Communications (25 lbs.)

"I don't believe this. You guys throw me to the wolves, and now you want me to go back out there? Forget it. It's not my problem."

Ripley

If the Character being generated is not a member of any Branch of the Colonial Marine Corps, the GM and the player should decide on the initial equipment being carried. Most military personnel carry a kit very similar to the Colonial Marine gear listed above.

Step 3: Combat Actions

The time required to do something, such as loading a weapon, opening a door, or walking through a room, is measured in **Combat Actions**. Each Action is not a precise amount of time, but a relative representation of how long an act will take. Some people can do things more quickly than others; this is represented by allowing them to use more Combat Actions during each 2-second **Phase**.

To find the number of Combat Actions the Character gets each Phase, check the **Combat Actions Table (3B)**. Find the Character's Gun Combat Rating (from Section 1.4) in the left column, and cross-index it with the Character's Intelligence to find the Combat Actions. Note that the number of Combat Actions can change when the Character advances in Combat Rating, and is also subject to the optional modifiers discussed in Section 1.6.

COMBAT ACTIONS TABLE / 3B

Skill Rating	Intelligence Characteristic																			
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Untrained	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	
Novice	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	
Certified	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	
Professional	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	
Expert	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Master	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Grand Master	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	

Combat Actions = Cross-index Gun Combat Rating with Intelligence on Table 3B

Step 4: Knockout Value

ALIENS does not use "hit points" or any other traditional role-playing method for tracking damage. A simple and highly realistic system of shock and Physical Damage is used instead; it is discussed in full in Chapter 6.

A key factor in this system is each Character's **Knockout Value**. This number is used to determine at what point the Character goes into shock from his or her injuries. The larger the Knockout Value, the greater the ability of the Character to ignore the pain of wounds. The Knockout Value is found by cross-indexing the Character's Gun Combat Rating and Will on the **Knockout Value Table (3C)**. As with the Combat Actions, the Knockout Value changes as a Character advances in Gun Combat Rating.

KNOCKOUT VALUE TABLE / 3C

Skill Rating	Will Characteristic																			
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Untrained	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	
Novice	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	22	
Certified	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	
Professional	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48	52	56	60	64	68	72	76	80	84	
Expert	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	
Master	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90	96	102	108	114	120	126	
Grand Master	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84	91	98	105	112	119	126	133	140	147	

Knockout Value = Cross-index Gun Combat Rating with Will on Table 3C

Step 5: Learning Roll

The **Learning Roll** is used to determine how fast a Character can learn through Training (Section 2.12) or Experience (Section 2.13). It is based on the two attributes which are most important to learning; Intelligence and Motivation. As mentioned in Section 1.4, to find the Learning Roll add Intelligence to Motivation and subtract 10 from the total.

$$\text{Learning Roll} = \text{Intelligence} + \text{Motivation} - 10$$

Step 6: Weapon Data (optional)

This step is optional, and is suggested for quickness of play and to ease the workload on the GM. Every player should at least read through this step, for the information contained in it, but whether it is used or not depends on the players, their degree of experience with the system, and how overworked the GM is.

"Ripley, you wouldn't be going in with the troops. I can guarantee your safety."

Gorman

The weapons used in **ALIENS** are listed in the **Weapon Data Table (4A)** at the back of the book; the terms used in the Table are described below. The data for each Character's weapon should be recorded in the box at the bottom left of the Character Sheet for future reference. For those who are just starting out, this is not necessary during Character Generation. It is, however, a good idea to copy the numbers at some point, as the information will be used in most combats.

Weight: The weight of the loaded weapon, in pounds. This does not include a holster or sling.

Cost: The cost for the weapon through legitimate sources, without ammunition. If a weapon is being bought illegally, the cost will be at least double the normal price, and could easily range up to 5 or 10 times normal.

Ammunition Capacity: The maximum number of times the weapon can be fired before reloading. For fully automatic weapons, this is in bursts of automatic fire, while for single shot and semi-automatic weapons, this is the number of rounds.

Ammunition Weight: The weight in pounds of each magazine or individual round.

Ammunition Cost: The cost for a magazine full of ammunition. As with Weapon Cost above, this is the price for legal purchase; illegal purchases are far more expensive.

Rate of Fire: The Rate of Fire represents how fast a weapon fires. The Rate of Fire value is an abbreviation: Single Shot is abbreviated SS, Low Rate Auto Fire is LRAF, Medium is MRAF, and High is HRAF (only Vehicle weapons have HRAF). These abbreviations are used in the Combat System to determine how many rounds hit a target.

Aim Time and Shot Accuracy: How accurate a shot is obviously has a lot to do with how much time has been spent aiming; the **Shot Accuracy (SA)** measures this. As a Character devotes more Actions to the **Aim Time** on a given shot, the accuracy improves. The greater the SA, the greater the chance of hitting the target.

Each weapon's listing contains the SA's for several Aim Times. These Aim Times typically range from 1 to 8 or 11 Actions. The SA to the right of each Aim Time measures the weapon's inherent accuracy and speed of aim.

The SA affects the Odds of Hitting of every shot fired. The SA's in the tables are for people who are Certified in Gun Combat; in battle, the SA is modified by the Character's actual Combat Skill Rating Modifier and any other applicable modifiers. This is explained in full in Chapter 6.

The Character is now ready for play. Players should refer to Chapter 2 and the rules for using Skills.

1.6

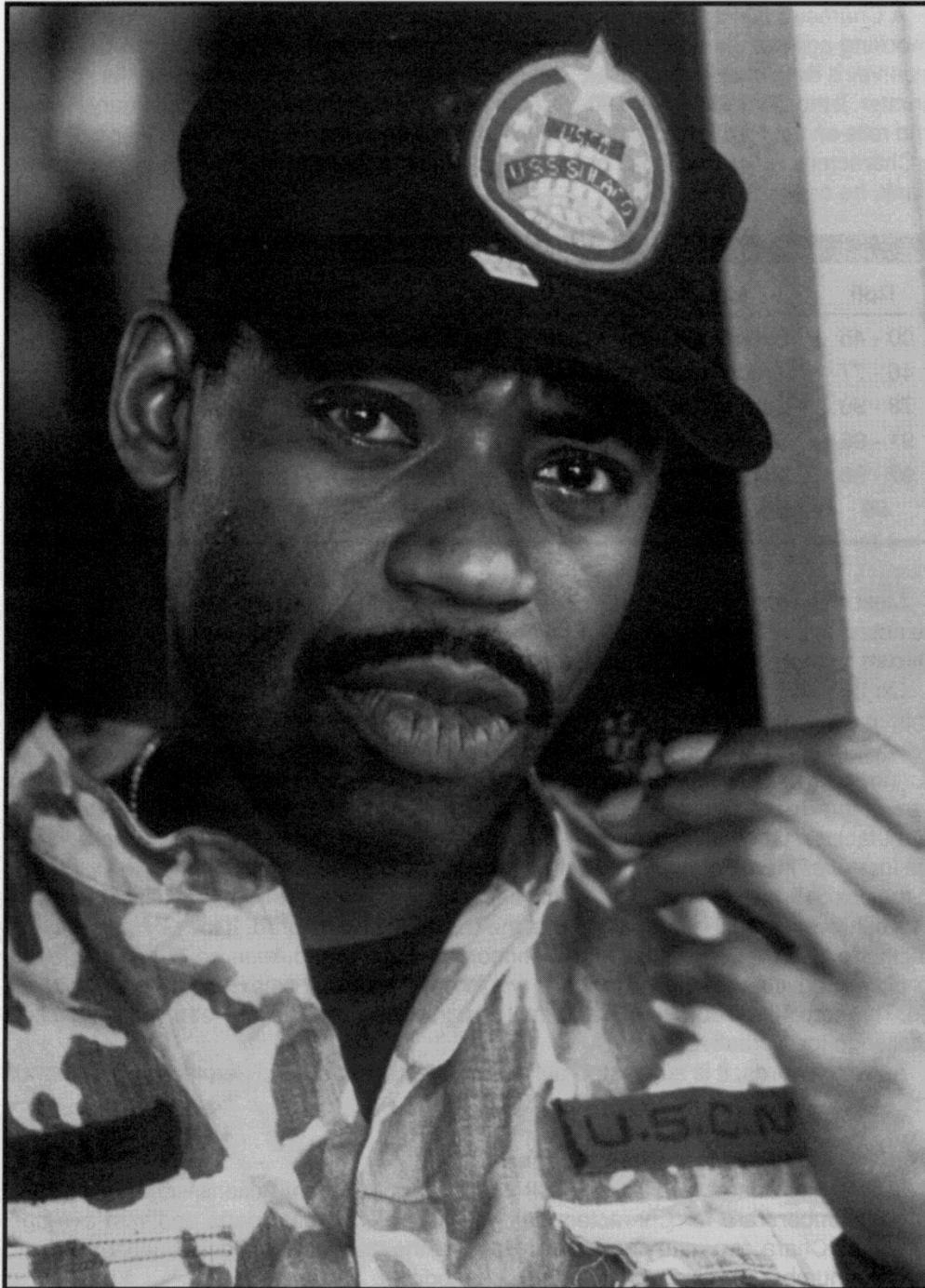
OPTIONAL RULES

The following items were not included in Sections 1.4 and 1.5 for simplicity, and to make it as easy as possible for beginning players to generate their Characters. It is suggested that the Optional Rules be added in as soon as the players are comfortable with the game.

Optional Merit Point Rules

The normal rules for earning Merit Points are designed for ease of play. For those who would like a more detailed way of determining what Merit Points they earn, the following rule can be used.

As with the normal rules, the last column of the **Active Duty Table (1E)** gives the number of chances that the Character has to earn Merit Points, if any. The Character can determine the chance of receiving Merit Points in one of two ways; the Learning Roll can be used as described earlier, indicating that the Character is trying to earn Merit through skill, responsibility, and solid job performance, or the Character can choose to use the Will



"Another glorious day in the Corps. A day in the Marine Corps is like a day on the farm. Every meal is a banquet. Every paycheck a fortune, every formation a parade. I love the Corps!"

Apone

Sergeant Apone

characteristic, which represents trying to display exceptional talent while under stress or in combat. After choosing the method, the Character should roll a 00 to 99 number once per Chance. If the roll is less than or equal to the Learning Roll or Will, depending on the Character's selection, then Merit Points have been earned.

If the Character checked against the Learning Roll, then a normal Service Ribbon has been earned and the Character receives 1 Merit Point, as usual.

If the Character checked against Will, on the other hand, then a Medal or Award has been earned and that column of the **Awards and Reprimands Table (1D)** should be consulted.

"I think personally, for you, it would be the best thing in the world to get out there and face this thing, get back on the horse..."

Burke

A Character can also overstep his or her boundaries in pursuit of Merit Points. When checking against the Learning Roll, if the Character rolls a 97 - 99, then the Character receives a **Reprimand**, and loses 1 Merit Point. When checking against Will, the risks are greater. If the Character rolls a 90-99, then he or she is sent through a Disciplinary Review and rolls on the Reprimand column of the Awards and Reprimands Table. Regardless, if a Character's Merit Points fall below the minimum necessary to hold his or her current Rank, he or she is demoted.

AWARDS AND REPRIMANDS TABLE / 1D		
Roll	Medal / Award	Reprimand
00 - 45	Service Ribbon, +1 MP	Reprimand, -1 Merit Point
46 - 77	Group Award, +2 MP	Reprimand, -2 Merit Points
78 - 90	Commendation, +3 MP	Court Martial: Loss of Rank, -4 Merit Points
91 - 96	Service Cross, +4 MP	Court Martial: Loss of Rank, all Merit Points
97 - 98	Medal of Valor, +6 MP	As above, plus 4 years in Military Prison
99	Medal of Honor, +8 MP	As above, except 8 years in Military Prison

Most of the above results are self-explanatory. When Medals are awarded, they should be noted on the Character Sheet. Players are encouraged to create events to go with their Medals to round out the Character.

On the other hand, if a Character suffers a **Loss of Rank** result then he or she is immediately returned to the Rank at which the service was entered; Lieutenant for Officers, Private for all others. Characters who end up in Military Prison do not roll for Active Duty during their prison term and acquire no useful Skills during their sentence, although the GM can let the Character have Learning Chances in Skills such as Laundry, License Plate Manufacture, Dishwashing, and similar chores. The last three Reprimands, which involve the loss of all Merit Points, would actually result in a **Dishonorable Discharge** in addition to the prison time indicated. This would separate the Character from the rest of the Strike Team, however, so it is suggested that the Discharge be ignored. If the GM and Players decide to allow a Character to be Dishonorably Discharged, then he or she has been forcibly removed from the military and would have a difficult time getting a job in civilian life. This sort of life is outside of the normal design of the game, but makes a very interesting challenge for a creative Player.

As with Awards, it is suggested players create an event which led to the Reprimand.

"Spare me, Burke. I've had my psych evaluation this month."

Ripley

Optional Modifiers to Combat Actions

In Step 3 of Character Generation, the Character's Combat Actions were determined. These numbers are for Characters carrying normal Combat Loads and with average Agility. If a Character is carrying more or less than the standard load, or has unusual Agility, then the number of Combat Actions can be modified.

Consult the **Optional Combat Actions Modifiers Table (3D)** to determine the effects of Agility and weight on Combat Actions. The left half of the table shows the Agility Characteristic Modifiers; adjust the Character's Combat Actions according to this chart. For example, if Hudson had an Agility of 16, +1 would be added to his Combat Actions, while Agility 17 or 18 would give him +2 Combat Actions.

The other part of the table shows the **Encumbrance Modifiers**, for Characters carrying more or less than their Combat Load. If Hudson were carrying up to 30 pounds over his Combat Load, he would subtract 1 from his Combat Actions; with 30 to 70 pounds over the Combat Load, he would subtract 2.

All of the appropriate modifiers should be applied to the Character's Combat Actions.

ACTIVE DUTY DESCRIPTIONS

As mentioned in Section 1.4, the various Active Duty assignments cover everything from standing guard as part of a Garrison to taking part in Military Coups and Corporate warfare. A brief description of each entry is given below.

Move Up A Grade

Transfer to a higher-quality unit, either due to the Character's talent or to fill a sudden vacancy. The Character receives training, and is sent on more important and more dangerous missions.

Garrison

Routine tasks relating to the security and maintenance of long-established bases. Earth Garrison duty is quite tedious and is given to Colonial Marine Garrison troops only; Off-World Garrisons see slightly more action, and include troops of all types.

Base Guard

This is very similar to Garrison duty, but takes place at sensitive facilities and areas which are likely to come under attack.

Civil Disorder

When local authorities are unable to control rioting and demonstrations, the Colonial Marines are sometimes called in. These assignments consist primarily of a show of force, and occasional hand-to-hand skirmishes with angry demonstrators.

Military Police

Enforcing order and discipline within the Colonial Marines. This assignment is complicated by the high level of Corporate influence currently imposed on the Corps.

Honor Guard

A high-profile position providing basic security and ceremonial atmosphere for officers, political figures, and other dignitaries.

Tactical Team

These units handle crisis situations on Earth and Major Worlds, and are just a step or two below Strike Teams in ability and equipment.

Security

This is a mobile form of Garrison duty, such as escorting important equipment or protecting public figures and witnesses in legal actions.

Patrol

Standard duty for a Strike Team, this includes routine checks of Jump Stations, Terraforming and Mining Worlds, and Garrison Worlds. This entry means that the Strike Team has had a fairly quiet time during the year. Most of the entries which follow cover what happens if it is not a quiet tour.

Hot Patrol

Represents a Patrol with more than the usual number of skirmishes.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping consists of preventing hostile factions from annihilating each other, and requires extensive diplomacy.

Contraband

There are many controlled substances, from drugs to weapons to technological breakthroughs to viruses and other lifeforms. The people who smuggle these items are well-trained, efficient, and resourceful. A Strike Team assigned to stopping traffic in Contraband will find all of its abilities tested to their extremes.

"I know. I've read it. You wake up every night, your sheets are soaking with sweat..."

Burke

"I said no and I mean it... I'm not going back, and I would not be any good to you if I did."

Ripley

"Just tell me one thing, Burke. You're going out there to destroy them... right? Not to study, not to bring back, but to wipe them out."

Ripley

"That's the plan. You have my word on it."

Burke

"Alright, I'm in."

Ripley

Colonial Revolt

The residents of some Colonies want independence from their Corporate owners, and there have been many battles on many worlds over this issue. The largest Colonial Revolt is on the world of Alexandria (Section 3.10), but there are minor rebellions on other Colonies as well.

Corporate Raid or Extradition

When a Corporation is found guilty of serious crimes, charges are often filed against key members of the organization. These people must be brought to trial, but extracting them from the Corporation or tracking them down in their hiding places is a very demanding job. When the Corporation at fault is cooperative, the mission is considered an Extradition. When the Corporation is belligerent, bringing the guilty to justice or acquiring vital information or evidence requires a Raid. In either case, the Colonial Marines are in a delicate situation and often find themselves outgunned.

Corporate Investigation

Looking for illegal doings within a powerful Corporation is both very easy and very difficult. It is usually easy to find something illegal; it is dangerous and difficult to investigate and prove the crime.

Harvester / Tartarus

This duty takes place on the planet Tartarus, which is described in Section 3.15. In general, the Colonial Marines are attempting to learn more about very dangerous creatures called Harvesters, which are destroying the Colony.

Hazardous Exploration

Most of the worlds inhabited by Humanity are only partially explored, and the countless worlds which do not have even the simplest settlements are even more mysterious. When the unknown presents a danger to Humanity's expansion and development, Colonial Marines are the first to investigate.

Colonial Rescue

This mission is a cousin to Hazardous Exploration, and is one of the most important duties of the Colonial Marines. When the dangers of a world threaten the Colonists, the Colonial Marines are called in to be their rescuers.

Hostage Rescue

Hostages are taken for a variety of reasons, and by any number of political, economic, or religious groups, as well as simple criminal bands. The safe recovery of hostages is vital in these delicate situations.

Corporate Revolt

The populations controlled by Corporations sometimes revolt against their employers over bad working conditions or other problems; these revolts are frequently created or encouraged by rival Corporations. The Colonial Marine Corps is often called in to quell rioting, with a minimum of bloodshed.

Corporate Military Coup

A Corporation's internal struggle for power sometimes blossoms into an attempt by the Corporation's military arm to take control. Depending on the circumstances, the Colonial Marines can be called in to restore other factions to power.

Renegade Military

When a Corporate, Colonial Marine, or Mercenary force gets too dangerous to the common good, it is declared a Renegade by its superiors. The Colonial Marines are used to capture or destroy these groups.

2

SKILLS

Unlike many role-playing games, **ALIENS** has no rigid Character types. Even the simple Branch of Service classifications have more to do with a Character's background than they do with his or her abilities and potential. Instead of Character types, each Character has or acquires Skills based on the training and experience available, and based on what the Character needs or wants to do. This lack of artificial restrictions allows a broader range of role-playing.

This Chapter contains the rules governing the Skills and Skill Ratings determined in Chapter 1. These rules show how a Character uses his or her Skills to accomplish virtually anything, whether operating a complex piece of equipment, dealing with conditions on the battlefield, or discovering vital information. These rules are generally used by the GM, but should be familiar to the players as well.

A Character's success at a task is a matter of skill and innate ability, aided or hindered by a certain amount of luck. While innate ability and luck are beyond the control of the Character, skill can definitely be improved through Training and Experience, and rules for these have been included in this Chapter.

2.1

Before the use of Skills is discussed, it is necessary to explain how a Character's Skill Rating is measured. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the **Skill Rating** varies from Unskilled to Grand Master, and has a major effect on the Character's chance of success when performing any action. The **Skill Rating Modifiers (SRM's)** listed below represent this, and are applied to all Success Rolls; rules for this procedure are given in the following Section.

SKILL RATINGS

Skill Rating	Skill Rating Modifier
Grand Master	+ 10
Master	+ 8
Expert	+ 6
Professional	+ 4
Certified	0
Novice	- 4
Unskilled	- 8

"Hey, Hicks.
Man, you look
just like I feel."

Drake

A Character's Skill Rating is not permanent. As the Character uses a Skill or is Trained, he or she can attain higher Ratings. Progress from Rating to Rating is governed by the Character's Learning Roll, access to Training (Section 2.12), and field Experience (Section 2.13).

ACTION / REACTION SYSTEM

"Alright, sweethearts,
what are you waiting
for? Breakfast
in bed?"

Apone

The **Action/Reaction System** is a powerful tool for finding a Character's chance of succeeding at any feat. It covers the full range of human activity, from scaling a cliff to repairing a weapon to writing a poem. The system combines the activity's difficulty with the ability of the Character to give the odds of succeeding, called the **Success Roll**.

To find out if the Character successfully performs a task, total the roll of 3 six-sided dice. If this sum is less than or equal to the task's Success Roll, the Character has accomplished the task. If the sum is greater than the Success Roll, he or she fails. The basic chance of succeeding in a given feat is determined by the GM, using the guidelines shown below.

Difficulty Level, Base Odds, and the Success Roll

The GM can quickly determine the **Base Odds** for any feat by deciding what Skill applies to the task, and checking the following list for the **Difficulty Level** which is most applicable.

Difficulty Level	Base Odds
Very Easy	16
Easy	13
Average	10
Very Difficult	7
Extremely Difficult	4

For example, a Character is attempting to walk across a 6-inch wide beam. The GM decides that the Skill required is Balance, and the Difficulty Level is Easy.

The **Success Roll** is equal to the Difficulty Level's Base Odds plus the Character's Skill Rating Modifier (SRM) in the appropriate Skill. Using the 6-inch wide beam as an example, the Success Roll for a Character with a Novice Rating in Balance would be 13 (Easy) - 4 (Novice Skill) = 9; on a roll of 9 or less, he would succeed, and on a roll of 10 or more he would fail. A character with an Expert Rating in Balance would have a Success Roll of 13 + 6 = 19, and would succeed automatically.

Note that failure of one task can lead rapidly to an attempt at another one. For example, if a Character fails in an attempt to Climb a cliff, then he or she will have to attempt a Fall Recovery roll to avoid damage when landing.

There are also times when the Difficulty Level is modified because of unusual circumstances. In most cases, this just results in an obvious change; an Average task which is increased in Difficulty by 1 Level becomes Very Difficult, for example. If the change in Difficulty Level results in the Difficulty going off the table above, the Base Odds are just modified by 3 per Level, in the appropriate direction. If a task which is Extremely Difficult is increased in Difficulty by 2 Levels, for example, the Base Odds of 4 would be reduced to -2.

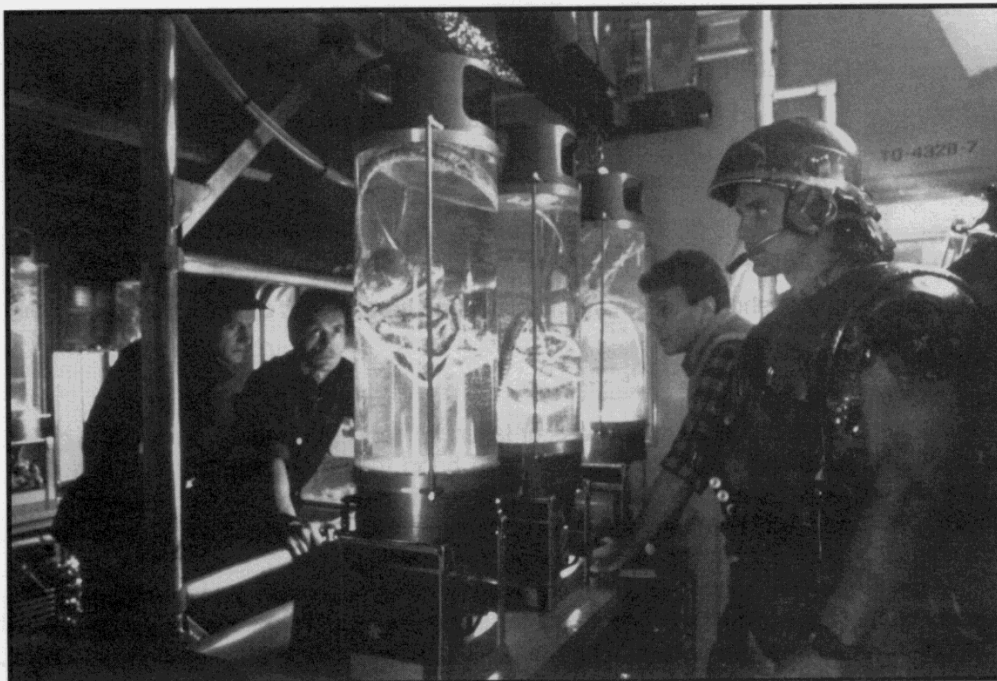
"I hate this job."

Frost

Interactive Tasks

Many events are interactive. That is, they do not consist solely of a Character testing his or her ability against nature, but involve the skills of an opponent as well. In these cases, the Success Roll equals the Base Odds, plus the SRM of the Character, minus the SRM of the opponent.

If the GM does not know the Rating of the opponent, and if he or she does not simply want to assign one, the following table can be used to generate a random Rating. The GM chooses the column for the general level of training or experience for the person being encountered, and rolls a 0 to 9 die to determine the actual Skill Rating. The table represents the range of ability which is likely to be encountered in a unit of a particular quality.



"Look, those two specimens are worth millions to the Bio-Weapons Division."

Burke

Facehuggers in Medlab

OPPONENT SKILL RATING GENERATOR					
Skill Rating	Elite	Crack	Average	Low Quality	Poor Quality
Novice	-	0	0 - 1	0 - 4	0 - 7
Certified	0 - 1	1 - 6	2 - 8	5 - 8	8 - 9
Professional	2 - 7	7 - 8	9	9	
Expert	8 - 9	9			

Example: Gil is a criminal attempting to smuggle contraband through ICC travel security.

He has hidden the contraband in his personal luggage, and is going through the standard customs checks. The GM decides the task of smuggling a small object through low-level security is of Average Difficulty, so the Base Odds are 10. Gil's smuggling ability is measured by his Espionage Skill Rating of Certified; his SRM is 0.

The GM has decided to add another level of interest to the attempt, so he has assigned a Skill Rating to the Customs Inspector as well. Rolling on the Average column of the table above to determine the Customs Inspector's Perception Skill Rating, he gets a 9; the Customs Inspector is a Professional. Perhaps he is a high-level security agent who has been demoted to Customs Inspector after a falling-out with his superiors, or perhaps he is simply a seasoned member of the Customs Service. Regardless, Gil's Success Roll is now 10 (Average Difficulty) + 0 (Gil's Espionage SRM) - 4 (the Inspector's SRM for Perception) = 6. Gil is in serious trouble.

Modifiers

The Base Odds assume that the task is being performed under fairly normal conditions; that there are no significant distractions or unwarranted hazards, and that the proper tools are available. When the conditions are difficult, the odds of success should drop significantly. It is up to the GM to determine the exact handicap for each situation. The following modifiers are suggested as guidelines for when a task is being attempted under less than ideal circumstances.

Base Odds Modifiers

Character is moving faster than a slow walk

- +1 Difficulty Level for fast walk (4 Hexes per Phase)
- +2 Difficulty Level for trot (6 Hexes per Phase)
- and so forth

Character is distracted or injured +1 Difficulty Level

Character is under attack +2 Difficulty Levels

"Hey, who's
Snow White?"

The Gamemaster should assign appropriate modifiers, based on the situation and the task involved.

Vasquez

Success and Failure

In many cases the degree of success or failure is very important. A particularly great success on a public project, for example, can bring the Character to the attention of powerful people, while a spectacular failure can result in dismissal, loss of influence, or a similar social disaster. For many physical feats, failure can also result in injury or death. The following rules govern the degrees of success and failure.

In social situations, or other circumstances where there are greater and lesser degrees of success and failure, the following chart should be used. Just subtract the Success Roll from the number which the player rolled; a positive number indicates failure, and a zero or a negative number indicates success. Enter the number on the chart to determine the reaction of people to the feat. If the task is not publicly known, of course, there is no public response and the rating simply gives the player and the GM an idea of how well or badly the Character performed. For tasks which are very important to the Colonial Marine Corps, or which involve battlefield heroics, the GM may elect to reward the Character with one or more Merit Points, as appropriate.

- +10 **Complete Disaster.** Entire careers are destroyed by failures of this magnitude.
- +7 **Catastrophe.** Accusations of gross negligence are likely, as well as lawsuits.
- +5 **Debacle.** A search for the responsible/guilty parties will follow.
- +3 **Fiasco.** The customer is angry, and the Character's reputation is damaged.
- +2 **Blunder.** There are significant problems. "Don't call us, we'll call you."
- +1 **Failure.** An encouraging try that just barely missed.
- 0 **Marginal Success.** Just meets requirements.
- 1 **Success.** Satisfactory performance, with minor reservations and gripes.
- 2 **Highly Satisfactory.** All parties involved are pleased.
- 3 **Brilliant.** The client is very happy.
- 5 **Major Accomplishment.** Commendations are likely.
- 7 **Masterpiece.** Promotions result; the character is seen as a "rising star" in the field.
- 10 **Work of Genius.** A major critical and popular success. The Character is regarded as a true master.

"She's supposed
to be some kind
of consultant.
Apparently, she
saw an alien once."

Ferro

For tasks which involve a chance of damage to equipment or injury to the crew operating it, the following chart should be used. High Speed Driving is an ideal example of this sort of task.

"Hey, I'm impressed."

Hudson

Damage to Equipment

SR Failed By	Result
1 - 2	No damage to crew or equipment.
3	Superficial damage to equipment. (Bent fenders, etc.)
4 - 5	Crew Injury, plus Minor (MIN) damage to equipment.
6	Crew Injury, plus Major (MAJ) damage to equipment.
7	Crew Injury, plus Replace (REP) damage to equipment.
8 +	Crew Injury, plus equipment Destroyed (DES).



"Alright, I want a nice, clean dispersal this time."

Apone

Strike Team deploying at Hadley Station

The various levels of damage (MIN, MAJ, or REP) are discussed in the **Repair Rules** of Section 5.13.

If **Crew Injury** is indicated, then the damage must be calculated. This should also be done for failures in tasks which do not involve equipment but which are dangerous. This would include a failed Fall Recovery roll (described below) and other risky activities.

To determine the **Physical Damage (PD)** done for most dangerous situations, use the following guidelines. The GM should assign a **Risk Level** to the action, with the base PD equal to the appropriate value from the table below. Physical Damage is discussed in Chapter 6.

Risk Level	Base PD
Minimal Risk	1
Slight Risk	3
Hazardous	10
Very Dangerous	20
Extremely Dangerous	200

To determine the damage done to a crewmember, multiply the Base PD by the number the Success Roll was failed by, times the roll of a six-sided die. The six-sided die is rolled separately for each crewmember. For example, if a Hazardous task with a Success Roll of 10 were attempted, and the number rolled was 13, then the roll was failed by 3 and the damage taken by each crewmember would be equal to 3 times 10 times 1 to 6. If a 1 were rolled, the damage would be 30 PD; if a 6, it would be 180 PD.

Falls

If a Character falls, he or she must make a Fall Recovery Roll based on the distance fallen. The Skill used is Balance, and the Fall Recovery Base Odds are shown on the table below. If the Character makes the roll, then he or she takes no damage. If the roll is failed, multiply the amount the roll was failed by times the Fall Damage Base PD from the following table, times the roll of a six-sided die.

Distance Fallen	Fall Recovery Difficulty	Fall Damage Base PD
4 to 6 feet	Very Easy, -2 Levels	5
7 to 16 feet	Easy	10
17 to 30 feet	Very Difficult	20
31 to 44 feet	Extremely Difficult, +2 Levels	50
45 feet or More	Extremely Difficult, +7 Levels	50

"Looks like the new Lieutenant's too good to eat with the rest of us grunts."

Hicks

If the Character fell 12 feet and failed the roll by 2, for example, then the damage taken would be 2 times 10 times (6), or 20 times the roll of a six-sided die.

Physical Damage (PD) is discussed in Sections 6.6 and 6.7.

Aborting a Feat

In some cases, the Character may begin an action, size up the chances, and then decide whether to continue with or abandon the attempt. This is possible only for definite, short duration actions, like landing a Dropship or hurdling a wall. For such actions, the Character may roll one of the three six-sided dice and then make the decision to complete or abort the attempt before rolling the last two dice. Rolling a 5 or 6 might convince the Character that he or she is likely to fail, for example, where a 1 or 2 might make the Character more confident of success.

If the Character aborts the attempt, there are no ill effects other than a loss of time, a missed opportunity, and possible embarrassment. Note that many feats do not lend themselves to this approach, such as judgements, decisions, and actions like smuggling an item past an inspector. Once the inspection has begun, it would be very suspicious to suddenly bail out. Judgement in these matters is left to the GM.

2.3

SKILLS OVERVIEW

"Ripley's last trip out, the Artificial Person malfunctioned. There were problems, and... a few deaths were involved."

Burke

This section outlines dozens of Skills and how they influence a Character's ability to do things. The Skills have been divided into three categories; General Skills, Support Skills, and Professional Skills. The only restrictions on what Skills a Character can learn are based on what opportunities and Training are available. A Character can learn any number of Skills.

General Skills refer to basic ability in wide-ranging areas such as Gun Combat, Diplomacy, Climbing, and Driving. These are Skills which are used in the course of a Colonial Marine's duty; dealing with hostile and potentially hostile forces, maneuvering in the field, and surviving in dangerous conditions.

Support Skills represent specialized training in the use or repair of sophisticated pieces of equipment, such as being a Dropship Pilot or an APC Drive Repairman. Few of these Skills are glamorous, but they are vital to keeping a high-tech military force in action.

Professional Skills are for abilities and knowledge used when dealing with normal day to day matters. For a Colonial Marine, these represent hobbies and skills acquired outside normal military channels; for other Characters, they also represent the abilities used in the workplace. They form a background which helps to round out a Character's personality, and are often the basis for role-playing in non-physical situations.

Related Skills

Many Skills are closely related to others, and ability in one should often give a degree of ability in another. This is represented by allowing a Character with a Rating in one Skill to use a related Skill as if his or her Rating was one step lower. For example, Hicks has a Certified Rating in APC Drive Operation. The Skill of Ground Exploration Vehicle Drive Operation is closely related, as similar equipment is involved and many of the requirements for the two vehicles are identical. Consequently, Hicks could function with a Novice Rating when trying to Drive a Ground Exploration Vehicle. By comparison, he would have no ability at all in Dropship Operations, because there are major differences between a Ground Vehicle and a Dropship.

The GM should use common sense to determine what Skills are related, and when this rule should be applied.



Searching Hadley Station

"Yo Hicks...I think we got something here. It's coming straight for us...Straight up."

Frost

2.4

As mentioned earlier, General Skills are broad areas of expertise in physical and social skills like Climbing, Diplomacy, and Gun Combat, and are commonly required for survival in a military or adventure setting. A number of General Skills are listed in the upper right section of the Character Sheet, but it is possible for the GM to create others.

The standard General Skills are grouped into 5 Classes, which are used during Character Generation. These Classes include related Skills, ones which would be learned in the same general situations. Class 1 includes only Gun Combat; Class 2 includes Balance and Hand to Hand Combat; Class 3 has Climbing, Scouting, and Survival; Class 4 is Espionage and Infiltration; and Class 5 is Diplomacy and Awareness. Each Skill is described below.

Class 1

Gun Combat: Proficiency with firearms and small arms tactics. It determines the Character's overall weapon, tactical, and movement ability on the battlefield.

Class 2

Balance: The ability to move on uneven surfaces, to maintain balance in unpredictable situations, and to fall properly. This Skill aids the Character when crossing narrow beams, standing on a moving surface, or moving on a cluttered battlefield, and allows him or her to minimize the damage from falls and the time it takes to recover footing.

Hand-to-Hand Combat: Attack and defense skills with hand-to-hand weapons. If the Rating for Hand-to-Hand Combat is higher than that for Gun Combat, the Combat Actions and Knockout Value should be calculated using this Rating, instead of Gun Combat.

GENERAL SKILLS

"The A/2's always were a bit twitchy. That could never happen now with our behavioral inhibitors. It is impossible for me to harm, or by omission of action allow to be harmed, a human being."

Bishop

"All we know is that there's still no contact with the Colony, and that a xenomorph may be involved."

Gorman

Class 3

Climbing: Free climbing and the use of climbing equipment.

Scouting: Exploring unknown territory. This helps in cutting travel times and reconnoitering enemy positions, as well as spotting traps and other dangers. This skill is essential to troops operating in enemy territory, and is often the mark of a good leader.

Survival: Knowledge of dealing with adverse conditions, from Earthlike wilderness to hostile environments and deep space. Emphasis is on wilderness survival, stalking prey on various worlds, surviving hazardous radiation, and dealing with vacuum. This skill also includes operating and maintaining basic space equipment, like Vacuum Suits, Airlocks, and so forth.

Class 4

Espionage: Training in gathering and organizing information by methods ranging from subtle questioning to establishing a network of spies and informants. It includes the skills necessary for long-term undercover operations in hostile areas.

Infiltration: Moving quietly and covertly to penetrate guarded or secured areas. It helps when sneaking up on opponents, picking locks, and avoiding traps.

Class 5

Diplomacy: Negotiation and communication proficiency, which helps when bartering, settling arguments, arranging truces, and avoiding fights.

Awareness: Detecting and remembering the details of a situation, and deducing the emotions of others. This talent is useful for determining if a person is uneasy or lying, and results in increased awareness of surroundings. It also helps the Character to detect and avoid a variety of traps, ranging from trip wires to tactical maneuvers.

2.5

SUPPORT SKILLS

"Excuse me, Sir.
A what?"

Frost

Support Skills represent expertise with particular pieces of equipment. Unlike General Skills, Support Skills are specific in application and determine whether a Character can safely use or repair that equipment. The GM should invent new Skills as necessary.

There are three classes of Support Skills, defined by which Branches of Service can learn them. The classes are basically self-explanatory; for example, Officer Support Skills can be learned by Officers only, although the Colonial Marine Support Skills can be learned by all Garrison and Colonial Marine Line Infantry.

A Character learns Support Skills on a yearly basis when in the Colonial Marines, as described in Section 1.4, and there is room for these Skills to be listed in the box at the lower right of the Character Sheet. The Skills in the following Sections are presented by class, and include a description of the Skills' uses and what equipment they apply to. The Support Skill lists are repeated on **Table 2B**, for ease of reference.

Many of the Skills below are **Operation Skills**, which allow the Character to safely prepare and operate certain types of equipment. The preparation portion of these Skills is very important, because sophisticated military equipment like Dropships and APC's require a lot of maintenance in order to function reliably. This includes refueling the unit, activating and programming sensors, computers, and other onboard electronics, and arming weapon systems. To do so requires the specific Operator Skill for that type of equipment, and the necessary facilities and tools must be available as well.

Once the equipment has been serviced, it is ready for use. Unless otherwise noted, Serviced equipment can be left alone for an indefinite period of time before the Operator uses it. The exception to this is that all equipment must be deactivated before storage and during shipment.



Alien Facehugger in Stasis Tube

If the proper Operation Skill is not available, then high-tech equipment cannot be prepared or used. This limitation applies to any equipment that includes an on-board computer, Life Support, or a weapon system. Normal failsafes and checkout procedures prevent unskilled personnel from attempting to use this kind of equipment. Less complex machines, such as forklifts, trucks, jeeps, and so forth, are not restricted in this way.

"Looks like love at first sight to me. Oh, he likes you, Burke."

Hicks

"It's a Bug Hunt."

Hicks

COLONIAL MARINE SUPPORT SKILLS

These Skills are the technical skills most commonly used in the field, and fall into two general categories; Operations and Repair.

For all **Colonial Marine Support Skills**, a Character who has a Rating of Novice or better in an **Operations Skill** is capable of preparing, maintaining, and operating the equipment in question. For **Repair Skills**, the Character must be of Certified Rating or better to have the normal chances of successful repairs. See Section 5.13 for rules governing Repair.

Operation Skills

The following Skills can be learned by Colonial Marines, and govern the field use of general issue military and civilian equipment. Except where noted, these Skills cover an entire class of equipment, and not any one specific item.

Communications / Computer Operation: This Skill allows the Character to operate and maintain military communications equipment and computers. The use of most sophisticated electrical gear such as Intelligence Units and Orbital Communications equipment is also included in this Skill.

Motion Tracker Operation: Training in the operation of the standard Motion Tracker, and in the interpretation of its data. Detailed rules for this Skill are given in Section 5.1.

Specific Ground Vehicle Drive Operation: This Skill must be learned separately for each vehicle type; the vehicle types are APC's, Hovercraft, and Ground Exploration Vehicles. It includes actual vehicle Driving skills as well as engine service and maintenance knowledge.

Ground Vehicle Life Support Operation: All Colonial Marine Ground Vehicles are equipped for operations in non-terrestrial environments. The systems which allow this, including hull pressurization, air filtration, and thermal control, must be specially prepared for use in each environment encountered.

Ground Vehicle Weapon Systems Operation: Includes Missile Launchers, Mortars, Disruptors, and Lase Cannon.

Portable Welder Operation: This device is described in Section 5.1.

Security System Operation: Operation of standard security devices such as remote cameras, metal detectors, and X-Ray equipment.

Special Weapons Operation: Including Grenade Launchers, Flame Units, and Remote Sentry Guns.

Surveillance Equipment Operation: Operation of surveillance equipment like remote cameras, sound amplifiers, and electronic bugging units.

Repair Skills

Whenever equipment is damaged (Sections 2.2 and 7.8), it must be Repaired before it can be used again. The following Skills are used to Repair most Colonial Marines' equipment, and require the use of special tools and facilities, as discussed in Section 5.13. As with Operation Skills, these cover full classes of equipment except where noted.

Communications / Computer Repair

Specific Ground Vehicle Drive Repair: This Skill must be learned separately for each vehicle type; the vehicle types are APC's, Hovercraft, and Ground Exploration Vehicles.

Ground Vehicle Life Support Repair

Ground Vehicle Weapon System Repair

Infantry Weapons Repair: Includes Pulse Rifles, side arms, and similar weapons. This Skill does not cover any Special Weapons or Vehicle Weapon Systems.

Special Weapons Repair

"How do I get out of
this chicken outfit?"

Hudson



"These Colonial Marines are very tough hombres. They're packing state-of-the-art firepower, there's nothing they can't handle."

Burke

Strike Team entering Atmosphere Processor

2.7

AUXILIARY SUPPORT SKILLS

The following Branch Skills cover the equipment routinely used by Auxiliary Characters. For **Operations Skills**, the Character must have a Rating of Novice or better in order to safely operate the equipment in question. For **Repair Skills**, the Character must be Certified or better to make any necessary Repairs.

Operations Skills

As with Colonial Marines Support Skills, the following Operation Skills cover the entire class of equipment, except where noted.

Aircraft Communications / Computer Operation

Specific Aircraft Drive Operation: This Skill applies to one type of Aircraft only, and must be learned separately for each type. Full information on piloting Aircraft is contained in Section 2.10.

Aircraft Drive Operation, Remote: This ability allows a person to maneuver a particular type of Vehicle from outside the Vehicle, using a Remote Piloting Set. To use this Skill, the person must also be Rated Professional or better with the Aircraft's Drive Operation Skill.

Aircraft Life Support Operation: Since most Aircraft must operate in vacuum as well as in a variety of atmospheres, and must tolerate the stresses of launch and reentry, their Life Support systems are quite complex and are of critical importance.

Aircraft Navigation System Operation: Includes launch, reentry, atmospheric, and combat maneuvers.

Aircraft Power Operation: These Vehicles are powered by fusion generators which obviously require careful maintenance and operation.

Aircraft Weapon Systems Operation: The maintenance, aiming, and firing of Aircraft-mounted Laser Cannon, Disruptors, Missiles, and Chain Guns.

General Equipment Operator: This allows the Character to handle normal utility equipment, such as Forklifts, Tractors, Cranes, and Lifts.

Power Loader Operation: The normal operations of the hydraulically supported, one-person military Power Loader, used for lifting and carrying a variety of crates and equipment weighing up to 2,000 pounds. It is described in Section 5.5.

Spacecraft Communications / Computer Operation

Spacecraft Drive Operation (Pilot): This Skill applies to all of the Spacecraft described in this book.

Spacecraft Life Support Operation: Since most Spacecraft constantly operate in hard vacuum and must handle high-g acceleration and Jump, their Life Support systems are absolutely vital to survival.

Spacecraft Navigation System Operation: For guiding a Spacecraft from planet to planet, from star to star, and through combat maneuvers.

Spacecraft Power Operation: Spacecraft are powered by Fusion Generators which obviously require careful maintenance and operation.

Spacecraft Weapon Systems Operation: This Skill covers the maintenance, aiming, and firing of the large Disruptors used on Spacecraft.

Repair Skills

As described under Colonial Marine Repair Skills.

Aircraft Communications / Computer Repair

Specific Aircraft Drive Repair: This Skill applies to one type of Aircraft only, and must be learned separately for each type.

Aircraft Life Support Repair

Aircraft Navigation System Repair

Aircraft Power Repair

Aircraft Weapon Systems Repair

General Equipment Repair: For routine repairs and maintenance of utility equipment.

Spacecraft Communications / Computer Repair

Specific Spacecraft Drive Repair

Spacecraft Life Support Repair

Spacecraft Navigation System Repair

Spacecraft Power Repair

Spacecraft Weapon Systems Repair

2.8

OFFICER SUPPORT SKILLS

The following Skills may be learned by all Officers. Most are self-explanatory, and cover basic areas of military discipline, command, and administration.

Administration

Communication Skills

Covert Actions

Drill

Forward Observer

Guerilla Warfare

Identification (military)

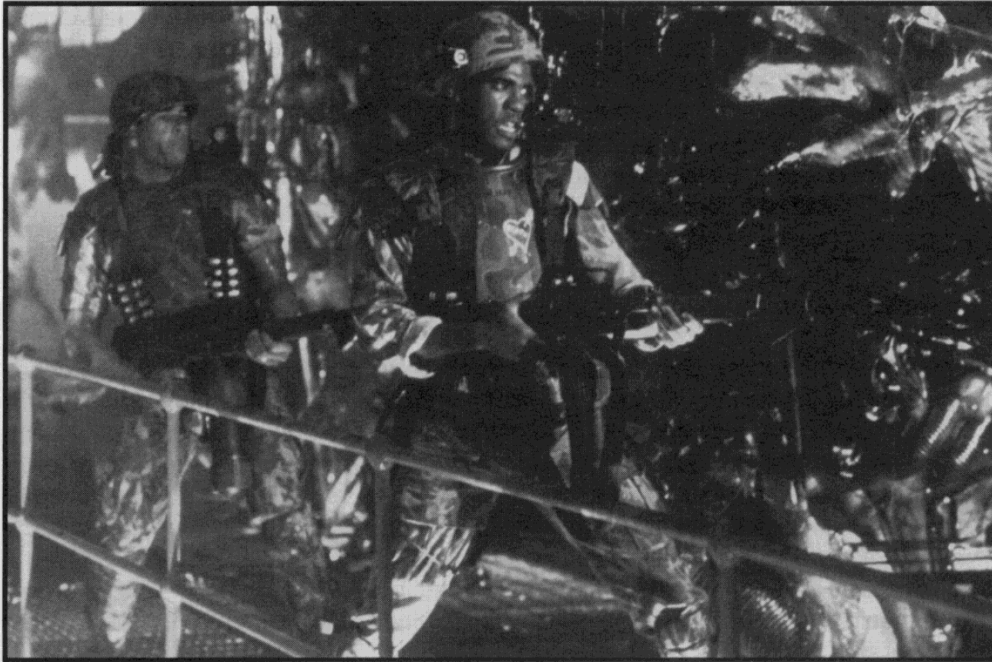
Intelligence

Interrogation

Languages

Law

Leadership



"Steady, people.
Let's finish our
sweep. We're still
Marines, and we've
got a job to do."

Apone

Frost and Wierzbowski in the Reactor Room

Logistics

Military Etiquette

Philosophy / Political Indoctrination

Propaganda

Public Relations

Security

Smuggling

Surveillance

Tactical Command Post: This device is used by officers to monitor the location and status of their Strike Team. It is discussed in Section 5.7.

Tactics

Xenobiology:

2.9

The **Specialist Skills Table (2C)** shows what the minimum qualifications are for various Specialties. The Skills that are learned within each Specialty are also shown on the table and are summarized below, along with a brief description of what the Specialty is for and how it is used. Where a Class of Skills is mentioned, it means the Specialist learns all of the Skills in that General Skills Class. The Airship Pilot Specialty is available only to members of the Auxiliary Branch; all of the other Specialists listed are available to members of the Colonial Marines Line Infantry only. If any unusual items of equipment are issued for a given Specialty, they are also listed below.

Close Combat: Colonial Marines with this Specialty are the most deadly soldiers in the Corps. They generally have few Skills which are not directly related to combat. Specialty Skills are:

Class 2 General
Class 3 General

Forward Observer
Gun Combat

Vehicle Weapons

SPECIALIST SKILLS

"Alright. Now listen up. I want this thing to go smooth and by the numbers... Now move it, people!"

Gorman

Guerilla Warfare: This Specialty is used in areas where the power of the Colonial Marines is weak, and in situations where long-term conflict with a particular enemy is considered likely. The job of this Specialist is to undermine the opponent subtly, to use sabotage where appropriate, and to gather vital information. Guerilla Warfare Specialists frequently work with Intelligence Specialists. A Pulse Communicator, a Medical Kit, and an Intelligence Unit are issued to any Strike Team which includes one or more Guerilla Warfare Specialists. Specialty Skills are:

Class 3 General	Demolitions	Intelligence
Class 4 General	Diplomacy	Propaganda
Class 5 General		

Hazardous Atmosphere and Radiation Detachments (HARD): The Colonial Marines operate on a great many worlds and under a wide range of environmental conditions, including corrosive atmospheres, high and low gravity, extremes of temperature and pressure, and places where radiation is at dangerous levels. Specialists of this type are used to provide vital information for normal Marines regarding specialized circumstances and/or equipment, and are often committed in full Strike Teams for particularly important missions or in dangerous environments. Each HARD Specialist is given a **HARDCore Suit**, and each Strike Team also has an Intelligence Unit, a Pulse Communicator, and a HARD Shelter. Specialty Skills include all Close Combat Specialist Skills and:

Alien Worlds	HARDCore Suit	Zero-G Combat
---------------------	----------------------	----------------------

In addition, each HARD Specialist selects one other Specialist type to be his or her field of study, and may learn the Specialty Skills from it.

Heavy Weapons: These Colonial Marines handle Missile Weapon Systems and Vehicular weapons. Each Heavy Weapons Specialist is issued a Rocket Launcher with 6 rounds of ammunition, and 12 Demolition Charges. Specialty Skills are:

Demolitions	Rocket Launcher	Vehicle Weapons
Gun Combat		

Intelligence: This Specialty takes the soldier far from the battlefields normally associated with the Colonial Marines. The espionage conflicts between Corporations and involving the Corps are the first priority for these Specialists, although the equipment available to the Intelligence wing of the Colonial Marines is not on a par with that used by the Corporations. These Specialists are equipped with a Pulse Communicator, an Intelligence Unit, and a Computer Command Center per Strike Team. Specialty Skills are:

Comm / Computer	Intelligence	Surveillance
Espionage	Military Identification	

Machine Gun: This is a highly mobile and extremely powerful weapon system which is commonly assigned to Colonial Marine Strike Teams. Colonial Marines with this Specialty are envied by many other Colonial Marines, because of the tremendous firepower under their direct control. The Machine Gun Skill is described in Section 2.10, and the Machine Gun is the only piece of Specialty equipment. Specialty Skills are:

Class 2 General	Infantry Weapon Rep	Special Weapons
Class 3 General	Machine Gun Op	Vehicle Weapons
Gun Combat		

Recon: Recon Specialists are often dropped in hostile territory, alone or in small teams, and are used for surveillance, to coordinate air strikes and to call in fire from space and from distant ground units. Each Strike Team with a Recon Specialist is equipped with a Pulse Communicator and an Intelligence Unit. Specialty Skills are:

Class 3 General	Forward Observer	Intelligence
Class 4 General		

"Alright, sweethearts, you heard the man and you know the drill... Hudson, come here. Come here."

Apone



"Watch your fire and check your targets. Remember, we're looking for civvies in here."

Apone

Vasquez and Hudson in Reactor Room

Aircraft Pilot: These Specialists are drawn from the best members of the Auxiliary Branch. The reasoning is obvious; it is the Pilot who must deliver a Strike Team safely to the field and recover them when the mission is over, and who must make the most of the powerful weaponry aboard Dropships and Gunships. It is common for these Specialists to sub-specialize, as either Pilots or Weapons Officers. Specialty Skills are:

Aircraft Pilot Aircraft Weapons Remote Piloting
Aircraft Operation Skills Aircraft Repair Skills

2.10

The majority of Support Skills are self-explanatory, but there are exceptions. This Section defines a few unusual Skills, including how they are applied and what minimum Skill Ratings are necessary for the safe, normal use of the Skill. The GM can use these rules as guidelines for defining other unusual Skills.

Appropriate Difficulty Levels are also presented, and are used whenever the Skill is applied to a task. The Difficulty Levels given are used if the Skill is being applied under normal conditions. There is a modifier of +1 Level to the Difficulty if the Skill is being used in a rush or under crisis conditions; the GM should feel free to modify the Difficulty Levels for any other special circumstances which may apply.

Aircraft Pilot Minimum Skill Rating: Professional

Piloting a Dropship or any other Aircraft is a demanding task. The subtleties of reentering an atmosphere, the forces exerted by various types of atmospheres on the craft, and the ability to hover under adverse or dangerous conditions are all major factors for the Dropship Pilot, and ensure that only very talented personnel ever receive this assignment. The normal Base Odds for various tasks are shown below.

Normal Flight	Very Easy
Docking	Very Easy
Descent	Easy
Tactical Maneuvering	Average
Ascent	Very Easy

UNUSUAL SKILLS

"I don't care if you are short, Hudson, get it done."

Apone

The Difficulties shown apply under normal atmospheric conditions. If there are adverse conditions, modifiers of +1 or +2 Difficulty Levels should be applied by the GM. Additionally, if the Dropship's Computer is not functioning, there is a modifier of +3 Difficulty Levels.

The Pilot must make a **Success Roll** each time one of the maneuvers above is attempted, and any other time the GM feels is appropriate. If the roll is failed by 1 or 2, the Pilot does not complete the maneuver, and must make a second attempt after an appropriate loss of time. If the roll is failed by more than 2, however, the Dropship goes out of control; at low altitude, this results in a Crash. Rules for Crashes are contained in Section 7.10. If the Dropship is at a very high altitude, such as during Reentry or when cruising several thousand feet above ground, the Pilot has a chance to Recover from the error; this is a Very Difficult action, and the Success Roll is made normally. If successful, the Pilot has Recovered from the error and the flight continues, although at a much lower altitude; if the roll is failed, then the vehicle Crashes in spite of the Pilot's best efforts.

Comm / Computer Operations Minimum Skill Rating: Novice

This Skill allows the Character to operate standard military issue communications equipment and computers. This includes a wide variety of functions, including ground to space communications and all standard software packages. The GM should determine any penalties if the Character is dealing with unusual equipment or software.

Normal machine functions are an Easy task, and a Character has two chances to get a piece of equipment to work. If both attempts fail, then the Character cannot succeed without spending time studying the problem. If the player wants to do the studying, the Character must roll less than or equal to his or her Motivation on 3 six-sided dice. If this roll succeeds, the Character spends 10 hours studying the problem, and then may attempt two more Success Rolls. This process can continue until the Character gives up (rolls greater than Motivation) or succeeds.

If the Character is attempting to break through a computer system's security, the following modifiers to the Base Odds are used.

Cracking a simple system's security	Extremely Difficult
Corporate system	Extremely Difficult, +2 Levels
High Security	Extremely Difficult, +3 Levels*

The * on the High Security line indicates that systems of this type will lock the Character out after the second failure. At this point the modifier goes to Extremely Difficult, +7 Levels.

Demolitions

This Skill is obviously used for one primary purpose; blowing things up. The Difficulties for various functions of this Skill are as follows.

Set up a prepackaged demolition charge	Very Easy
Set up a simple demo charge	Very Easy
Set a trap	Difficulty of Trap
Disarm an explosive trap	1 Level over Trap's Difficulty
Disable a vehicle or ship with a demo charge	Average

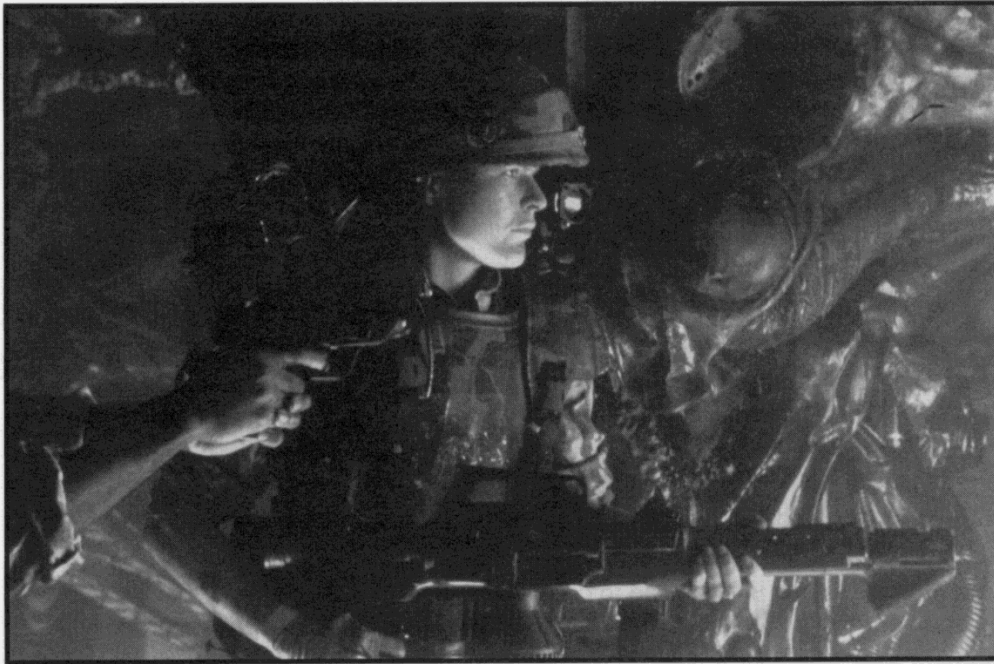
"Hey, Sarge, you get lip cancer smoking those."

Hudson

Machine Gun Minimum Skill Rating: Novice

The mount on the standard Colonial Marine Machine Gun consists of a harness, a gyroscopic stabilizing device, and a headset that includes a single eyepiece. It allows a trooper equipped with the Machine Gun to conveniently carry, aim, and fire the weapon without other assistance. The mount supports the weapon, and gives it stability independent of the wearer's movement. This feature combines with a **Heads-Up Display (HUD)** projected within the eyepiece to create a highly accurate mobile firing platform. Qualified users equipped with the mount may also ignore the Moving Shooter penalties listed in **Table 6C**, as long as their speed is no more than a slow walk (2 Hexes per Phase).

Note that the mount is very bulky, and prevents the user from going Prone and from using the normal Firing Over Cover modifiers.



"Maybe they
don't show up on
infrared at all..."

Dietrich

Dietrich with Flame Unit

Spacecraft Navigation Computer

Minimum Skill Rating: Certified

This Skill allows the Character to operate a Spacecraft Navigation Computer. If the vessel is travelling to a system which is commonly known, the Navigation Computer does most of the work; the Navigator needs to do little more than select the destination and make sure that the Computer is running properly. The Computer itself will automatically set the ship's course, line up for Jump, and execute all necessary functions once the crew is in hypersleep.

When travelling to unfamiliar systems (those which have not been programmed into the Computer), the Navigator's work is far more difficult, and a higher Rating than Certified is advisable. Rules for this are contained in Section 5.9.

2.11

The Skills in this Section are the ones that are not unique to the Colonial Marine Corps and other militaries. These are Skills which are used by all types of people throughout the ICC, and include many day-to-day activities. The Skills listed here and on the **Additional Skills** portion of **Table 2B** are only a partial list; the players and GM should add other Skills as desired.

These Skills are used in common sense ways, using the standard rules. The GM should assign Difficulty Levels and other details as he or she sees fit.

Computer Systems: The use of the wide variety of commercial computers available on the market. Characters with the military Comm/Computers Skill are considered to have this Skill at their full Rating; civilians with this Skill can operate military computers at one Rating lower than normal.

Con / Acting: The art of acting, impersonation, and disguise. It also includes skills used in smuggling and forgery.

Driving: Ground vehicle driving skills; street legal driving requires only Novice ability. Higher skill indicates experience and training in high speed maneuvers.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

"We're a team
and there's nothin'
to worry about.
We come here,
and we gonna
conquer, and we
gonna kick some.
Is that understood?"

Apone

Engineering: There are three different types of Engineering Skill; Civil, Electrical, and Mechanical, which are used to design and build the tools of society. Civil Engineering involves buildings, public works, and related fields; Electrical Engineering covers general science applications, including microelectronics; Mechanical Engineering is used in designing and manufacturing tools, heavy equipment, and the like. People with these Skills are in great demand by the many technology-intensive industries of the ICC, and the ones with Ratings of Expert and higher are the people who lead research teams and scientific projects.

Finance and Business: Investing money and controlling commerce. While the Engineers design things, it is the Financiers and Businessmen who get them built, sell them, and run the Corporations of the ICC.

Law: These are the people who keep the Financiers out of jail. In theory, it is the administration of Law which keeps a society functioning, and prevents people from using violence to solve their problems. This is the Skill of lawyers, judges, political leaders, and those who attempt to administer the public welfare.

Manufacturing: This covers all types of practical manufacturing skills, including carpentry, machining, plumbing, and so forth.

Management: This Skill is used to coordinate the activities of people who are working together. It is a somewhat nebulous quantity, but is vital to smooth operations.

Medical Aid: This Skill greatly improves the chance of surviving an injury. A Character must have a Medical Aid Skill Rating of Novice or higher to administer proper First Aid, as given in the Medical Aid rules (Section 6.13), a Rating of Professional or better to operate in an Aid Station, and Expert or better to operate in a Field Hospital or Trauma Center.

Networking: A refined form of the Diplomacy Skill. Networking applies specifically to controlling communication and activity in business environments, and is often used to have important contracts and business deals awarded to allies of the Networker. Diplomacy and Networking are related Skills; a Character with a Diplomacy Rating automatically has a Networking Rating no more than one step lower, and vice versa.

Science: The Science Skill is subdivided into countless fields, including all the aspects of biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, and so forth. Each person with the Science Skill will specialize to some degree, and the focus of this specialization will narrow as the Skill Rating increases.

Sleight of Hand: Manual dexterity training which aids in picking locks and pockets, and in performing sleight of hand tricks.

2.12

LEARNING SKILLS

One way a Character develops Skills is by **Training**. (The other method, **Experience**, is discussed in Section 2.13.) As always, a Character Trains in each Skill separately.

At the end of each year of Active Duty, every Character selects one of his or her Specialist or Primary Skills, as defined in Section 1.4, and attempts to improve it. A single Learning Chance is given, and if successful, the Character advances in Rating as explained later. This Learning Chance represents assorted courses, seminars, and instruction received by the Character during the course of the year.

Additionally, the GM can put one or more Characters in Training for particular Skills as part of the preparation for a Mission. This is entirely up to the GM's discretion; there are times when this will be vital to the Strike Team's survival, but overuse of this option will result in Characters who are more powerful than they should be. A better approach to this problem is to have the GM assign a Specialist to the Strike Team, someone who has been specifically trained to handle the activity.



"Okay, Ferro, take us in low over the main colony complex... Storm shutters are sealed... there's no visible activity."

Gorman

Landing Grid at Hadley Station

Training

If a Character entered Training as an Unskilled person, then a single Learning Roll is made. If the number rolled is less than or equal to the Character's Learning Roll, the Character attains the Certified Rating. If the number is greater than the Learning Roll, then the Character earns the Novice Rating.

To advance from Novice to Certified, or from Certified to Professional, the Character must take the Training and roll for success at its end; if the number rolled is less than or equal to the Learning Roll, the Character advances by one Rating.

At higher Ratings, it is more difficult to succeed. When going from Professional to Expert, the Character rolls twice at the end of Training, and must succeed on both rolls. To go from Expert to Master the Character must succeed at three rolls in a row, and to attain Grand Master Rating from Master, four rolls in a row must be made.

Note that it is not possible to advance more than one Rating per Training period, except when the Character is Unskilled.

On the Job Training

A Character can improve Skills through practice, even without formal Training. This is especially important if the Strike Team is in the field for a lengthy period and lacks the usual Training opportunities, and is called On the Job Training. Opportunities for advancement are determined by the GM.

In general, a GM should allow a Character a chance to advance in Rating up to once per year, if the Character is regularly and consistently using a particular Skill in the normal course of his or her life. For example, if a Character who is a Novice in Comm/Computer spends a year handling the normal Comm/Computer chores for a Strike Team, then the GM might determine that he or she should receive On the Job Training in the Comm/Computer Skill.

If the Character does receive On the Job Training, the GM should treat it as if the Character has completed a Training program; a Learning Chance is given, and if it is successful the Character advances in Rating. In the above example, the Character would advance to Certified if the roll was made.

Note that it is never possible to advance to a higher Rating than the job requires when doing On the Job Training. If the task would normally require a person of Certified Rating, for example, a Character performing that task will never receive any chances to advance to Professional. This is common sense; if the job is not an extremely difficult one, the skills developed will never be very advanced.

EXPERIENCE**"One Express Elevator
to Hell. Going Down!"**

Hudson

A Character can also advance in Rating through actual **Experience** in risky or unusual situations. Advancement through Experience can be more rapid than through Training, but it is certainly more dangerous. In fact, danger is an important requirement for gaining Experience; to receive Experience, a Character in a crisis situation must extend his or her abilities beyond their normal limits. A crisis situation is an event involving danger, where someone or something is depending on the Character for help. Examples of crisis are combat, natural disasters such as floods, fires, and earthquakes, and any threat to the life of the Character or a comrade.

Experience is given in Learning Chances, which are used in exactly the same way as indicated for Training. For example, if the Character is of Novice Skill and qualifies, a single Learning Chance would be awarded and a Learning Roll would be made; if successful, the Character would immediately advance to Certified in that Skill. If the Character is Professional and is attempting to reach Expert, two rolls would be attempted, and if both were made the Character would advance. How Experience is awarded is covered for each type of Skill below.

General Skill Experience

A Character receives a Learning Chance in a specific General Skill each time he or she successfully performs a feat which uses that Skill, and when the Success Roll is less than or equal to 8. For example, if a Character had a Success Roll of 8 to land a disabled Dropship, a Learning Chance would be received if the Character were successful. If the Success Roll were 9 or higher, however, no Learning Roll would be received regardless of the number actually rolled.

Remember, this feat must be performed in a crisis situation, where the actions put the Character at risk and are necessary for his or her own welfare, or that of others.

Combat Experience

A Character is awarded Combat Experience each time he or she exhibits exceptional combat skill in a crisis situation. Determination of this is left to the GM, but as noted above, the award of a Learning Chance should be an uncommon thing.

Additionally, Learning Chances should be awarded for consistent performance in combat. As a guideline, if a Character defeats 10 armed opponents of roughly equal quality over a period of time, or 100 dangerous animals, he or she should receive a Learning Chance. The GM determines when a Learning Chance is received, as always.

3

SETTING

The time of **ALIENS** is a chaotic one. Humanity is expanding into the stars and establishing new outposts and new colonies, but society is in danger of unravelling. The Nations of Earth have lost most of their power, and in their place the Corporations which led the way into space stand as the new rulers of Humanity. The transition of power from the Nations to the Corporations is an uneasy one, and confrontations are common.

Because of this, there is far more violence now than there was a generation ago. The Corporations used to be sensible enough to settle matters in court and take their legal losses with restraint. Now, issues which would normally go through the legal system cannot be allowed to drag on that long, especially if the case might end unfavorably. Everyone is more desperate than before, and Corporate and Mercenary forces are much more eager to cut out a piece of the future than ever before. Companies are changing hands so rapidly, with debts left unpaid and countless promises broken, that dozens of financial entities might hold title to a single piece of valuable property.

In the midst of the chaos, the **Colonial Marine Corps** stands as Humanity's peacekeeping force. It is the Corps which is charged with seeing that disputes are settled through law rather than violence, and which protects Colonists from unknown dangers and from sabotage by rival Corporations. Unfortunately, the Colonial Marine Corps depends on the Nations of Earth for financing and technology, and the Nations are no longer strong enough to support them. Because of this, the Colonial Marines are few in number and many places are beyond their reach. At the same time, Corporate military forces are more numerous and better equipped, and an increasing number of Colonial Marine commanders owe their real loyalty to Corporations rather than to the Corps. Faced with dangerous life forms, Human criminals, Corporate militaries, and internal corruption, the Colonial Marine Corps attempts to safeguard the future and well-being of Humanity.

One good thing is that battles are now fought on a smaller scale than the wars of earlier centuries. The transportation of troops and equipment from world to world is expensive and time-consuming, and the sophisticated military equipment being used means that the military profession belongs to an elite group of capable, highly-trained people. Combined with the desire of the Corporations to avoid the destruction of factories and other economic resources, these facts have created military forces that use small numbers of well-equipped troops for clearly defined missions. For the Colonial Marine Corps, these Missions range from conflicts with Corporate forces to assaults on renegades and confrontations with new and dangerous life forms.

The most important of these dangerous life forms is the Alien itself, which is fully described in Chapter 4. The presence of the Aliens, and the risk that they will get loose on one or more worlds, is the greatest danger Humanity has ever faced. The Characters' battles with people in control of the Aliens, and with the Aliens themselves, will probably form the core of the game for most people.

The other types of battles are also discussed in this Chapter, along with information about the state of Human society, the Colonies and Outposts which have been established, and guidelines for determining the fates and fortunes of Mercenary and Colonial Marine forces.

"How many drops is this for you, Lieutenant?"

Ripley

"38. Simulated."

Gorman

3.1

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

"How many combat drops?"

Vasquez

"Uh, two. Including this one."

Gorman

The closing years of the 20th Century saw a fading of the great Nations and a rapid increase in the power and influence of multi-national **Corporations**. These Corporations were not restricted to a single field; their interests were vast, covering all aspects of industry and economics, as they diversified into every field that held profit. They were also not defined by country, society, or ideology. In industry, in business, and in the media, the multi-nationals became more powerful and more visible.

As the Corporations grew, they wove together the economic interests of the Nations of the world, and the spectre of large-scale warfare was reduced. With head-to-head warfare economically unacceptable, the advanced states settled for venting their hostilities and waging their wars in Third World nations.

This trend continued through the following decades, as the Corporations prospered and the interdependence of the major Nations of Earth grew. Tensions did not end, but were kept under control and released in ways that did not damage anyone's ability to make money. Thus Humanity entered the Age of Space in an atmosphere of controlled tension, but not outright war.

Space Travel

The Age of Space came in the wake of two tremendous technological breakthroughs. The first was the reactionless **Displacement Drive**, which allowed Humanity to travel quickly and cheaply within the Solar System. The **Jump Drive** soon followed, expanding on the principles behind the Displacement Drive and taking Humanity out into the stars. As the technologies were perfected, exploration craft went out from Earth.

The search for minerals and other raw materials was only a secondary goal of the explorers; those things were available within the Solar System itself, in amounts that would keep Humanity supplied for many years. The most important things the stars held were knowledge, the potential of new habitable planets to ease the population pressures of Earth, and the opportunity to study new life forms.

The greatest value for the Corporations lay in the life forms. Each world is like a gigantic laboratory, where the forces of nature have experimented for billions of years. The creatures produced in those laboratories, and the complex chemicals contained within them, possess abilities far beyond those available to Humanity. Many of these abilities are nearly miraculous, and several unusual life forms are described in Section 3.16.

The expansion into Space has been a slow process, since useful systems are rare and the effort involved in establishing Colonies is great. Still, five Earth-like worlds have been found, and dozens more that are at least habitable. On other worlds, the process of terraforming is underway, as hostile environments are slowly changed into places where Humans can live.

On every habitable world, Colonies have been established. They have expanded at varying rates, depending on the Corporate support they have received and the qualities of the worlds. Shiploads of people and equipment are sent to each Colony, and eventually the Colonies begin to send items of value back to the rest of Humanity; unusual life forms and mineral combinations, the products of local industries, and after a generation, skilled workers.

These skilled workers are part of the rapidly-growing populations of the Colonies, and the Corporations have developed many techniques for managing them successfully. Colonists are taught to live active, disciplined lives, to maximize their economic value and reduce the risks of living on the Colonies. Good educations are available for those considered capable of higher learning, and thorough technical training is given to those who are not. By contrast, the disorganized state of the populations of Earth means that there are relatively less people who are well-disciplined and well-educated. As the quality of life diminishes on Earth, the value of trained, energetic, and obedient workers from the Colonies increases.



"Something never recorded once in over three hundred surveyed worlds... a creature that 'gestates inside a living human host', these are your words, and has 'concentrated acid for blood.'"

ECA Representative

Emerging Chestbuster

In addition to the above aspects of Corporate life, a major part of each Corporation's management approach has been the establishment of a Corporate military force. These forces are not large, but they are well-trained, have the best equipment their Corporation can afford, and include many former Colonial Marines.

Corporate Strife

With Colonies on many worlds, the power and influence of the Corporations rose rapidly. As they became more powerful, they became more of a threat to the Nations of Earth. The situation was a very delicate one; the Nations had far larger armies, but the Corporations controlled space and vital high-technology. The same economic interdependence which prevented war among the Nations now prevented the Nations from harming the Corporations.

"I'm telling you, I've got a bad feeling about this drop."

Frost

Across Earth and in the Colonies, tensions grew. Every political weapon was used, including diplomacy, bribery, blackmail, and economic pressure. Separatist movements were created to destabilize Nations, which responded by seizing Corporate property. Finally, one small crisis got out of control and erupted into warfare. Dozens of other small wars began within weeks, and the Earth spun into chaos. Fortunately, the wars remained limited; few nuclear or biological weapons were used.

The wars lasted for five years, and out of the violence came the **Interstellar Commerce Commission (ICC)**, a coalition of Corporations and Nations which united Humanity. This organization was in charge of regulating activities among its members, and the **Colonial Marine Corps** was created as its military arm. The wars had taught everyone that it would be valuable to have a sort of "police force" to discourage them from using violence to solve their problems.

War in the Colonies

Throughout the wars, the Colonies strongly supported the Corporations. They wanted to remain free from the Nations, and many believed they would receive status as independent entities with increased control over their own affairs. When the ICC was formed, it became clear this would not be the case; the Colonies were treated as Corporate property. Another cycle of hostility, tension, and intense diplomacy began, and eventually several Colonies rebelled. The Colonial Marine Corps, supported by Corporate forces, was given the job of bringing the rebels back under control.

The cause of the Colonies was in danger from the beginning. The tremendous financial and military resources available to the ICC meant that their losses could be quickly replaced, while the Colonies were very weak in technology, industry, and population. One by one, the Colonies were defeated militarily or economically. There are still underground rebel movements on most Colonies, but they pose little threat to the ICC at present.

The only Colony that is still actively resisting the ICC is Alexandria, which has control of several systems that insulate it from the ICC. By holding these vital locations, Alexandria is able to keep ICC forces at bay. Battles for these systems are described in the entry for the Colonial Wars in Section 3.4. While the people of Alexandria have little chance of actually winning in their struggle against the ICC, they may be able to set the cost of defeating them so high that the Corporations will give in to some of their demands.

3.2

COLONIAL MARINES

"You always say that, Frost. You always say 'I got a bad feeling about this drop.'"

Crowe

The **Colonial Marine Corps** was created at the same time as the ICC. The intent was that the Colonial Marines, funded by a coalition of all the space-going Nations, would be an independent force that would resolve disputes among the Nations and Corporations, and keep the peace in the Colonies as well. Each Nation had its own portion of the force made up of its own citizens, but they shared equipment, training, and doctrine. They were led by the **Colonial Marine Corps High Command**, which included representatives from several Nations.

Most of the power belongs to the Corporations, however, and the Nations have little influence among the stars. Their only tool is the Colonial Marine Corps, and its power is dwindling. Every year, the Colonial Marines fall a little further behind in technology; their weapons are not upgraded, their supplies and other equipment fail to incorporate the latest improvements, and their ships are faced with the improved designs available to the Corporations.

The shortage of personnel is also a growing problem for the Colonial Marines. They have not replaced the losses suffered during the wars against the rebel Colonies, and the additional drain imposed by the current turmoil has made the problem even worse. For the Colonial Marines, the loss of a single Strike Team can mean that large areas will remain unpatrolled and unmonitored for months or even years.

CREATING A STRIKE TEAM

Characters in **ALIENS** have nearly unlimited options, depending on the type of campaign the GM wants to run, and what the players are interested in. The basic choice is to have the players run a **Strike Team** of Colonial Marines. This arrangement may not last longer than the first adventure, or it may prove to be a satisfying setting for long-term play. The direction taken is obviously up to the GM and the players.

What follows is a set of guidelines for creating a Colonial Marine Strike Team, as well as notes for transforming the Strike Team into a Mercenary force.

Strike Team Composition

The standard **Colonial Marine Strike Team** includes a junior Officer, 2 Auxiliary personnel, a squad of 8 to 10 Colonial Marine Line Infantry, and a Synthetic (Section 5.6). If the Colonial Marines are protecting the interests of a Corporation, a representative of that Corporation usually accompanies the Strike Team.

While the Infantry are treated as a single unit and transfers are rare, it is very common for the Infantry component of a Strike Team to serve with a different Officer on every Mission, and changes in the Auxiliary personnel are also common. This was not the practice of the Colonial Marines in their early days, but with the increasing Corporate influence on the Corps there have been many changes.

This situation is especially common among Mercenaries, where the actual fighting troops do not have any association with the spacecraft they use, and are in fact little more than passengers. Full guidelines for Mercenaries are in Section 3.7.

If there are positions in the Characters' Strike Team that have not been filled, the GM should create **Non-Player Characters (NPC's)** to round out the Team and make sure that all important Skills are represented. Chapter 8 contains a number of Pregenerated Characters to use; others can be created quickly using the Other Backgrounds rules in Section 1.4 and the Skill Rating Generator in Section 2.2. While Officer and Auxiliary NPC's may change from Mission to Mission, at the discretion of the GM, actual members of the Strike Team should be assigned on a long-term basis. As time goes by, the players will adopt the NPC's and it is possible to convert an NPC into a regular Character if the GM feels it is appropriate.

The classic Strike Team is of course the one presented in the film. Full data on all the Colonial Marines in the movie is in Chapter 8.

"Okay, okay. When we get back without you, I'll call your folks."

Frost

MILITARY ACTIONS

The duties of the Colonial Marines are different in many ways from those of previous militaries. Each type of Mission is discussed below, with the reasons for the conflicts, how they are handled, and what types of forces engage in them.

Peace Keeping

This is the traditional purpose for the Colonial Marines. They have been caught in the middle of Colonial rebellions and a lot of inter-Corporate and inter-National strife, and their duty is to settle conflicts as quickly and quietly as possible. This is a complex job, as they have to protect the interests of the Nations, the Corporations, and even the remaining rebel Colonies as much as possible, even when these factions are attacking each other. A further complication is the growing degree of factionalism and corruption within the Colonial Marines; old National loyalties and new Corporate money make it difficult for the Colonial Marines to just deal with problems as they see fit, and politics plays a vital role in all decisions made by the Colonial Marines.

The types of Peace Keeping tasks undertaken by Colonial Marines are innumerable, and include stopping drug traffic, preventing illegal production or distribution of nuclear and chemical weapons, combatting the smuggling of restricted lifeforms and technologies, and opposing riots and other civil disorders throughout the ICC.

**"Alright, gear up.
Two minutes, people.
Get hot!... Somebody
wake up Hicks."**

Apone

Espionage

The Corporations are concerned with the control and development of technology. They compete with each other in many ways, attempting to acquire an advantage in research or production, expanding into the various Colonies and Outposts, and vying for the contracts available from the Nations and each other.

One of the major ways the Corporations compete is Espionage. If one Corporation can steal a technological advantage from another, it greatly improves its own standing with little work or cost. Espionage comes in many different forms, of course, including networks that gather information through stealth, blackmail, or bribery; the infiltration of agents into the rival Corporation's operations; and small-scale paramilitary operations designed to "acquire" a person or device through the careful application of force. Consequently, vital equipment and personnel must be carefully guarded against the espionage efforts of opposing Corporations. The potentials and dangers of these missions have created a thriving Espionage, Counter-Espionage, and Security industry.

Corporate Warfare

Every Corporation maintains its own military forces, and the size of these forces is growing steadily. Most conflicts involving these forces are internal, however; controlling civic disorder, taking sides in various power struggles within the Corporation, and combatting the actions of pirates, thugs, and other criminals.

Actual war between two Corporations is very rare, as no one can afford to suffer the economic losses of a war; Spacecraft are expensive, and production facilities even more so. The heads of the Corporations are smart enough to know that the costs of war are out of all proportion to the benefits.

Because of this, battles are fought to control the Board of Directors of each Corporation, and these conflicts are intense. As mentioned above, many of them are internal, with different factions of a Corporation waging a bloody 'proxy fight' over shares of stock, management positions, and Corporate policy. In other cases, one or more outside Corporations take an interest in the decisions and policies of a firm, and try to influence those decisions. Their efforts include a wide variety of financial manipulations as well as less legitimate efforts, including coercing Corporate officials (through blackmail, kidnapping, or intimidation), and hiring Mercenaries to disrupt the Corporation. A large percentage of the pirates and thugs mentioned earlier are certainly Mercenaries working for rival Corporations, or for dissident factions within a Corporation.

It should be noted that when Corporations take action against each other, the types of attacks they make and the damage they do to each other's facilities is generally limited.

Colonial Wars

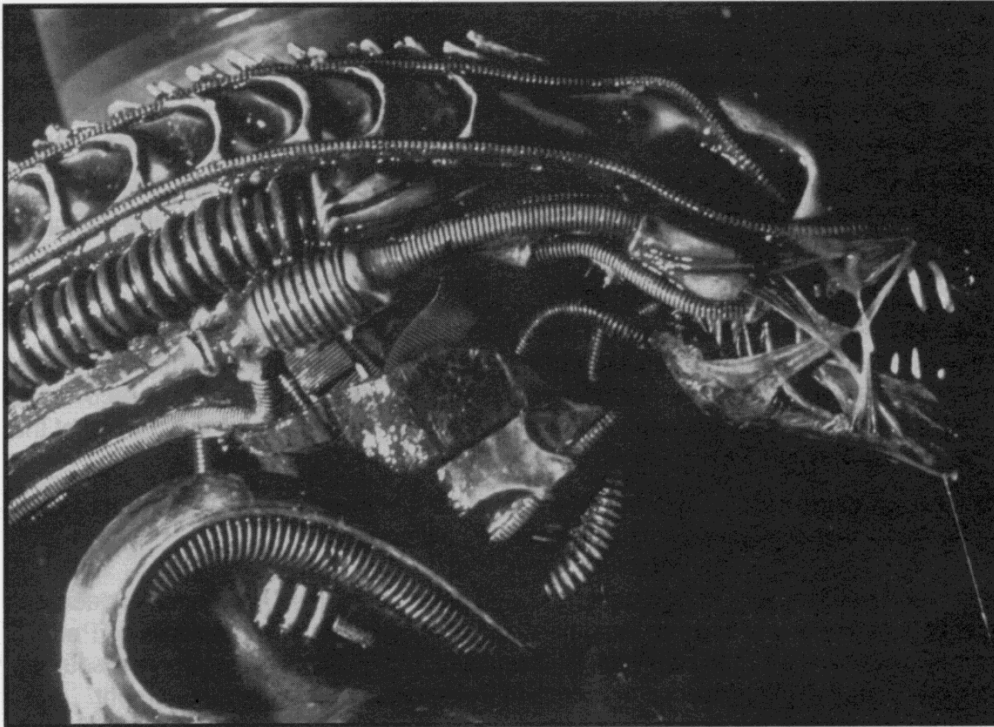
The Colonial rebellions were unlike engagements involving the Corporations, in that there was widespread popular support for the rebellion within the Colonies. This meant that large forces like old-style armies were raised in the Colonies, and the Colonial Marines were used in large numbers. Although pitched battles were rare, since control of space was sufficient to force surrender, the number of troops used in most actions was large.

The rebellions are ending now, and the level of violence has dropped. At present, the only Colonial Marine tasks include disabling and boarding enemy spacecraft, and precision raids on critical military facilities.

3.5

MISSION GENERATION

This Section can be used by the GM to generate situations facing the Strike Team. Of course the GM can design an entirely customized Mission, but the **Mission Generator** provides a fast, simple way of creating a challenge for the players. The Missions listed are designed for use with a Strike Team of Colonial Marines, but they can be adjusted for Mercenaries without too much trouble. Notes on how to translate these Mission rules for other groups are given at the end of the Section.



"Just one of those things managed to wipe out my entire crew within 24 hours."

Ripley

Alien Warrior's Head

Active Duty Assignment

At the beginning of each year of play, the GM should determine what the Strike Team's Assignment will be. The **Active Duty Assignment** tells the GM what type of world the Strike Team will be based on, and the opponents who will be encountered during the year. The Assignment can be determined by the GM, can be a task requested by the players, or the following table can be used. The meanings of the entries are given below.

Roll	Active Duty Assignment
00 - 43	Patrol
44 - 50	Peacekeeping
51 - 58	Contraband
59 - 75	Colonial Patrol
76 - 91	Corporate Patrol
92 - 96	Tartarus
97 - 99	Hazardous Exploration

"Vasquez, take point. Let's move! Move up...Hudson, run a bypass."

Apone

Patrol: The Strike Team does not have a set base of operations, and moves from system to system as needed. Strike Teams on Patrol run into the widest variety of situations, but are handicapped by their lack of a stable base. This means that they have few opportunities to establish strong contacts with the local inhabitants and rarely encounter other Colonial Marines. A Patrol Assignment is best for players who are more interested in combat than the subtleties of role-playing, and for groups that get together irregularly.

Peacekeeping: This Assignment puts the Strike Team in the middle of a conflict between two or more forces, usually Corporations. They will probably spend their time on a single Major Colony, although travel to other systems may occur.

Contraband: Stopping the flow of controlled items is a demanding task, and is an ideal Assignment for players interested in espionage. Depending on the type of Contraband being combatted, the Strike Team may have to do a great deal of travelling as they track down users, suppliers, smugglers, and producers of controlled substances.

Colonial Patrol: The Strike Team is sent to a particular Colonial world, and will encounter the dangers common to that place. Colonial Patrol allows the Characters to get acquainted with local leaders, citizens, and troublemakers. This Assignment puts an emphasis on general role-playing ability, including diplomacy and the creation of good relationships with NPC's, and is an opportunity for the GM to develop a world in detail.

Corporate Patrol: This Assignment puts the Strike Team in constant contact with a particular Corporation. This Corporation might be under investigation by the ICC or the Colonial Marine Corps, or it may be a routine assignment. Regardless, the problems of the Corporation will become the problems of the Strike Team.

Tartarus: The once-prosperous Colony of Tartarus is the site for this Assignment. A horde of huge, powerful creatures called Harvesters is sweeping through inhabited lands, and the Colonial Marines are being called upon to protect Colonists, recover lost equipment, and discover ways of defeating the Harvesters. A full description of this world is in Section 3.15.

Hazardous Exploration: An ideal Assignment for GM's and players who want to travel the edge of known space, and to encounter new dangers.

Once the Active Duty Assignment has been determined, the GM can make decisions about the availability of special equipment and other support; a Strike Team on Patrol is entirely on its own, while one assigned to Peacekeeping would have significant resources, possibly including the presence of other Strike Teams on the same Assignment.

If the GM desires, the Active Duty Assignment can serve as the starting point for his or her own ideas. Otherwise, the **Mission Generation Table** can be used to find out exactly what task the Strike Team faces, and what the opposition will be. Just roll a 00 to 99 number, and check the appropriate column to find the Mission.

MISSION GENERATION TABLE

Mission	Patrol	Peace Keeping	Contraband	Colonial Patrol	Corporate Patrol	Tartarus	Hazardous Exploration
Tactical Assault	00-02	00-02	00-06	00-03	00-02	00-13	00-02
Rear Guard	03-06	03-08	07-10	04-07	03-04	14-31	03-06
Corporate Transition	07-09	09-13	11-14	08-10	05-07	32-33	07-09
Security	10-15	14-31	15-18	11-14	08-18	34-42	10-13
Recon	16-33	32-49	19-30	15-28	19-36	43-51	14-45
Civil Order	34-41	50-55	31-33	29-36	37-46	52-57	46-47
Anti-Guerilla	42-43	56-58	34-35	37-38	47-50	58-58	48-49
Peacekeeping	44-67	59-68	36-37	39-58	51-66	59-60	50-51
Investigations	68-73	69-74	38-63	59-70	67-74	61-62	52-55
Bug Hunt	74-79	75-76	64-65	71-78	75-78	63-89	56-63
Colonial Revolt	80-81	77-80	66-67	79-82	79-87	90-90	64-65
Corp. Investigation	82-84	81-82	68-75	83-84	88-89	91-91	66-67
Corporate Extradition	85-87	83-84	76-83	85-88	90-90	92-92	68-69
Colonial Rescue	88-90	85-87	84-86	89-91	91-91	93-95	70-91
Hostage Rescue	91-93	88-90	87-91	92-93	92-93	96-96	92-93
Corporate Raid	94-95	91-93	92-93	94-95	94-95	97-97	94-95
Corp. Military Coup	96-97	94-96	94-95	96-97	96-97	98-98	96-97
Renegade Military	98-99	97-99	96-99	98-99	98-99	99-99	98-99

How often the Strike Team gets a Mission depends on what the GM and the Players want. It would be realistic for the Strike Team to be idle about 2/3 of the time; the GM would roll a six-sided die, and on a 5 or 6, the Characters would receive a Mission. Otherwise, the Month would pass in routine tasks and tedious drills. This is accurate for Players who want to track their Characters through one or more Tours, but does not necessarily make for a very exciting game. If desired, the GM can elect to assign Missions for the Characters whenever he or she wishes, even to the point of keeping them in constant action.

Mission Type Descriptions

The following are some of the Mission types on the Mission Generation Table. Many of the entries on the Table were already described in Section 1.7, as part of the Active Duty Assignments.

Tactical Assault: This Mission consists of a direct assault on a particular site. These attacks are uncommon, but in some situations diplomacy breaks down and there is not enough time (or talent) available for more subtle courses. In these actions, the best efforts of local and Corporate authorities, as well as whatever influence and intimidation the Colonial Marines could bring to bear, have all failed, and force is necessary to resolve the problem.

The real reasons behind a Tactical Assault are often invisible to the Marines doing the fighting, and sometimes that is just as well. Although some Assaults are used to stop the actions of someone who is jeopardizing others, others occur when a Corporation has enough influence within the Colonial Marines to send a Strike Team against a primary opponent, whether Corporate or otherwise. In these actions, the Marines will frequently be fighting a battle in which there is no right side, or where they may be on the wrong side.

Rear Guard: There are times when combat is inevitable and key installations or personnel cannot be abandoned. At these times a Strike Team can be called in to deter an attack, and if necessary hold off the attack to give noncombatants and vital equipment time to be evacuated. Sometimes evacuation is not possible, and the Team is a final line of defense.

Corporate Transition: Strike Teams of Colonial Marines are used to provide security for installations which are being transferred (for whatever reason) from one Corporation to another. Under the present conditions, this is a hazardous duty. A common situation is as follows; a Corporation is forced by legal action to turn over control of an installation to a rival, and Colonial Marines are assigned to guard the facility during the transition. The first Corporation vacates the premises quietly, but before the second Corporation can move in, the original owners hire a Strike Team of Mercenaries to sabotage the facility. This often forces the Marines to deal with a large, well-equipped force that has full information on their dispositions and complete familiarity with the installation itself, courtesy of the former owners. Fortunately, these actions are usually simply a defense against sabotage; it is very rare for a direct assault on the Marines to take place.

Security: Colonial Marines provide Security for diplomatic personnel, the transfer of important documents or equipment, and other matters which are important in ICC and inter-Corporate relations. This is always dangerous, but it is never more so than when they are assigned to protect someone who has information that is damaging to a Corporation in a legal action.

Some of these people are ICC Intelligence agents, others are Corporate personnel who have been involved in illegal activities and are delivering information to the ICC to avoid prosecution and to get protection, while others are official ICC auditors. These auditors are sent into Corporations to gather information on Corporate misdeeds, and if they are particularly good at their work they are rewarded with repeated attempts on their lives. The Corporation in question can obviously save itself a great deal of trouble if an accident befalls the auditor.

"Sir, you copying this? Looks like hits from small arms fire... with some explosives damage, it's probably seismic survey charges... are you reading this?"

Apone

"You seeing this alright? Looks melted. Somebody must have bagged one of Ripley's bad guys here."

Hicks

Recon: A Recon Mission is used to gather information on an opponent's strength and dispositions, or to explore an unknown area. These are common Missions when fighting rebel Colonies, and they are also used on frontier worlds where there are high numbers of civilian casualties or disappearances. When that happens, Colonial Marines are used to investigate the area, and to flush out any dangerous xenomorphs, criminal humans, or other dangers.

Civil Order: The wealth of the Corporations is staggering, and the poverty of the lower classes is just as staggering. In any society with such a wide gap between the rich and the poor, it is inevitable that there will be a high level of civil disorder. When local police forces are unable to handle the problem, or when a Corporation has been able to wield enough influence to receive extra support, Colonial Marines are called in.

Anti-Guerilla Warfare: A comparatively rare assignment. When a Corporation cannot deal with a rebel group or its own rogue military elements, a Strike Team is assigned to track down and defeat the opposition. Units which receive this assignment have to be talented and dedicated, as their enemy is usually well-entrenched or is supported by the local population.

Peacekeeping: This is like the Security Mission listed earlier, but is used when there has already been violence. The Colonial Marines may be sent to protect valuable installations from Mercenaries, rioters, or other destructive forces, or they may be assigned to the protection of Corporate personnel and military forces. While in theory the Colonial Marines would be assigned to protect a disputed facility or a Corporation that is being illegally endangered, in practice the growing corruption within the High Command means that they are frequently furthering the interests of one Corporation at the expense of another.

Investigations: The Strike Team is assigned to audit or investigate the behavior of part of a Corporation, or of members of the Colonial Marine Corps. This is police work, where the subjects of the inquiry are suspected of negligence, criminal behavior, or other questionable activity. A pair of junior Officers is usually assigned to the Strike Team for the duration of this Mission; they conduct the investigation itself, while the members of the Strike Team provide backup and handle legwork. The GM may decide whether to run the Investigations Officers himself, or allow the players to handle that.

Bug Hunt: This is a generalized term for a variety of actions against life forms which are dangerous to Humanity. These Missions are rarely a serious challenge for the Marines, as there are few xenomorphs which can stand up to the firepower of a Strike Team. Nevertheless, there are some species which are very dangerous, and careless Marines can easily become casualties. Sample xenomorphs are found in Section 3.16.

3.6

MAKING AND SPENDING MONEY

The **Pay Scale** for a Colonial Marine is based on his or her Skill Ratings. Each Colonial Marine receives 1 **Credit (C)** per Month for each Skill with a Rating of Novice, 10 Credits per Month for each Certified Rating, 100 Credits for each Professional Rating, and 1000 Credits for each Rating of Expert or higher. To calculate this, count the Skills in each Rating column on the Character Sheet, and arrange the digits in order from the highest Skill Rating to the lowest; Expert and higher first, then Professional, then Certified, and then Novice. The number of Expert Skills is the thousands digit, Professional is the hundreds, Certified the tens, and Novice is the ones. For example, Hudson has one Professional Skill Rating, 8 Certified, and 8 Novice, so he is paid 188 Credits per Month; 100 for the Professional Skill, 80 for the Certified Skills, and 8 for the Novice.

For Colonial Marines, this pay is above and beyond room and board, as well as incidental expenses such as ammunition, repairs, and so forth. If a Colonial Marine uses or destroys large amounts of equipment, there will be an official inquiry; if the Character's



**"I got signals...
I got readings in
front and behind."**

Hudson

**"Where, man? I
don't see anything."**

Frost

**"He's right, there's
nothing back here."**

Hicks

Dietrich stalked by an Alien

actions are considered reasonable (by the GM), then there is no problem. If it is found that the Character was irresponsible, he or she will lose one or more Merit Points at the GM's discretion, and can even be forced to pay back some or all of the damages. This is usually done by docking the Character's wages.

Mercenaries are paid according to the conditions of their Contracts, which are discussed in Section 3.7.

Pay scales can be assigned for civilians as necessary. As a guideline, a low-paying service industry job would pay about 1,000C per month, a decent clerical job would be about 1,500C, and trained professionals would probably make over 2,500C. This is much more than Colonial Marines make, but civilians have to pay for housing, food, transportation, the Corporate services that have taken the place of taxes, and so forth.

Costs

The Earth prices for many common items are given in **Table (4)**. The GM should use this Table to determine prices for other items as needed, and can also use the ICC standard of about 500C for one ounce of gold as a guideline.

Prices are much higher on frontier worlds. While the normal price list is correct for Earth and the major Colonies such as Micor and New Eden, most prices are tripled on normal Colonies and quadrupled on Terraforming and Mining Worlds. This is discussed in more detail in Section 5.12.

Colonial Marines do not have to pay for travel in the course of their duty, of course. For people who do, the price is 700C per Jump Unit for passenger travel. (Space travel is fully described in Section 5.9.) If the distance between two systems is 10 Jump Units, for example, it would cost 7,000C for each person to make the trip. 700C is the base price for a ticket on a typical passenger liner, which has Jump 2. For those in a hurry, passage on a Jump 3 craft can be purchased for 1,300C and on a Jump 4 craft for 2,000C, while less wealthy Characters can book passage on a Jump 1 ship for 250C. Standard passenger transportation includes the passenger and up to 80 pounds of baggage. Additional baggage on passenger liners can be shipped at a rate of 10C per pound per Jump Unit. For large freight shipments of one ton or more, the charge is 250C per Ton per Jump Unit; this is on cargo craft without life support in the cargo hold.

3.7

MERCENARIES

If the players want to run military Characters who are not Colonial Marines, there are two basic ways to approach it. For those who want to decide their own futures, the path of the **Free Striker** is available; it is a dangerous, treacherous life, but the challenges are fascinating and the rewards are impressive for the skilled and the lucky. If the Characters want more security than that, they can hire out as **Retainers** for a Corporation. This path gives them a balance of freedom and support, and may be preferable to either service in the Colonial Marines or life as a Free Striker.

Both of these approaches are described below, as are some of the overall mechanics of running Characters who are not Colonial Marines. The GM and the players should not feel limited by these two paths; they are presented as suggestions for independent groups, and can be used or discarded as desired.

Overview

All mercenaries work under **Contracts** with Corporations or Nations. For game purposes, a Contract defines the term of service or the mission of the Mercenaries, how much they will be paid, and any special conditions or clauses that are needed. The fine print of these Contracts is not important, unless the GM decides to add that level of role-playing to the game.

In general, a Corporation which hires Mercenaries will pay enough money to cover their normal equipment costs, salaries, and any Medical Aid necessary, and will provide transportation to and from the site of the job. Money is deducted from the Contract for any Corporate property damaged or destroyed, and for special expenses.

When calculating how much each Strike Team member is paid, the method is similar to the one for Colonial Marines. Add up the number of Skills of each Rating, but multiply their regular value by 10, and add 1,000C to the total, as the base pay of a Mercenary. For example, Hudson makes 81C per Month in the Colonial Marines. As a Mercenary, he would make 810C plus 1,000C, for a total of 1,810C per Month. Of course, as a Mercenary he must pay for his own lodging and other services. This base pay is adjusted depending on what kind of Mercenary is being paid and what kind of Mission is involved; this is explained later.

The Corporation usually supplies an Officer to lead the Mission, although this NPC will stay away from the battlefield if at all possible. His or her duty is to direct the Mercenaries and keep track of what they do, not to take any risks. The same can be said of any

"Sir, this place is dead. Whatever happened here, I think we missed it."

Apone

Auxiliaries supplied by the Corporation; these NPC's are available if the Mercenaries do not have their own.

Mercenaries rarely have their own Dropships, so these are also supplied. They do not enter combat situations and will usually abandon the Mercenaries on the ground rather than try to pick them up while they are under fire; if the Dropship is damaged, the Mercenaries must pay for repairs. For Mercenaries who do not have their own APC, this can also be supplied. Since the Characters will be driving it, they may do with it as they wish, but again any damage to it will be subtracted from their Contract's value. It is quite possible for a Mercenary Strike Team to end up owing money to its employer, a debt that is usually worked off by taking an additional Mission at a reduced Contract value.

If unusual expenses can be reasonably expected, these are added to the Contract. For example, if a Strike Team will clearly need to use a Dropship's Missiles or other explosives, an allocation for these expendables will be included. The amount of this allocation might be the focus of intense negotiations; if the Mercenaries go over the allocation, they will have to make up the difference, while if they are under it, they might be able to take the extra equipment with them at the end of the Mission for later use.

Players will notice that the **Standard Services Table (4E)** includes entries for **Medical** and **Military Equipment Insurance**. These can be valuable commodities for Mercenaries, especially those with unreliable employers (for Medical Insurance), or who are somewhat careless (for Military Equipment Insurance). The GM should increase the costs listed for Characters who make too much use of insurance services; doubling the price after each use is appropriate.

Corporate Retainers

Retainers are outside the standard military of the Corporation, and are usually organized as Strike Teams which handle specific Corporate needs in exchange for financial contracts of varying durations.

People in these units are similar to the normal military personnel that a Corporation might hire on salary, but they differ in that they are usually of outside origin and have a certain identity of their own. The origin of a unit of Retainers might be the military of a destroyed Corporation or faction within a Corporation, or it might be one of the Colony worlds. Former Colonials make up the bulk of Retainers, as there are many worlds which have more people than wealth, and "export" soldiers. They are trained and given basic equipment before they are sent to a Corporation, which then supports them, supplies them with additional equipment, and gives them any special training or indoctrination needed. The Retainers fight for the Corporation in the usual range of situations, while the Corporation pays them and supports their families. The main reason Retainers work in Strike Teams is a simple one; Corporations do not trust them to be organized in any larger numbers.

For Characters, life as a Corporate Retainer has several advantages. The Corporation is available as a source of financial and military support, and usually pays well. The Characters still have a degree of freedom, however, and can approach problems in their own way without too much interference from the Corporation. Additionally, if they get a better offer or see a special opportunity arise, they can probably get out of their Contract and move on in their careers. On the other hand, Retainers can find themselves working for a Corporation which is less than honorable, or which is not too concerned with their welfare.

Contracts for Corporate Retainers

The standard Contract lasts for one Year, although longer terms are very common. When they have no pressing duties, they live and are paid like idle Colonial Marines; the pay scale is exactly the same. If they receive a mission or go into combat for any reason, they receive Combat Pay for that Month.

The value of **Combat Pay** is usually two times the normal Mercenary salary of the Strike Team, as calculated above, although the Contract value for especially dangerous Missions would be increased and might well be two or three times this amount. A large portion of the money is used for group overhead and military costs, including ammunition

**"Hicks, meet me
at the south lock.
We're coming in."**

Gorman

**"He's comin' in. I
feel safer already."**

Hudson

and so forth, and any remaining funds are split among the members of the unit for their personal use. How the profits are shared is up to the members of the Strike Team, and does not have to follow standard salary guidelines; for example, the unit's leader usually receives a larger share than the others, regardless of Skill Ratings.

Free Strikers

While **Free Strikers** (usually called Strikers) are not common, they hold one of the most interesting positions in the ICC. Where Retainers have Contracts which run for a number of Years, Contracts for Strikers might last only Weeks or even Days. It is a hard, uncertain way of life, and it is forced upon most Strikers.

Many Corporations are defeated with little or no bloodshed, and most of the Corporate military is absorbed into whatever Corporation or coalition of Corporations was victorious. Some personnel will not willingly change their loyalties, however, and the military's best leaders are frequently among this group. These people have no firm place to stand, yet at the same time the victorious Corporation has no interest in destroying them. Consequently, they can take a certain amount of equipment and vanish quietly from the scene.

The victorious Corporation is content, because a bloodless triumph has been won at the price of a few soldiers taking their equipment with them. For the new Striker group, it is also a victory of sorts. They have survived the destruction of their Corporation, and have managed to avoid bowing to a new leader; on the other hand, their future is very uncertain.

To survive, a unit of Strikers requires a talented military leader and a high degree of organization. These units often go to Earth, where it is almost possible to disappear; legal jurisdiction is unclear in many areas and the local authorities can often be bribed or intimidated into ignoring the weapons of the Strikers. Another likely destination is at the edge of Human space, on Outpost and Colony worlds that are sparsely settled and where there is little regulation of the group's activities.

Strikers do not own Spacecraft, so their employment is limited to the world they settle on unless the employer is willing to pick them up, deliver them to the job, and bring them back. This is a great expense, and as a result the only Strikers who get jobs like this are of extremely high quality.

For Strikers of lower quality, life is precarious. Many of these units survive through force alone, terrorizing local populations and setting themselves up as petty warlords, while others manage to get enough "legitimate" business from Corporations to lead a decent life. Some are treated almost as well as the very best Strikers; it is not unknown for a Corporation to hire and transport a good but not exceptional band of Strikers, and then neglect to pick them up when their job is done. This only works for certain kinds of missions, but saves the Corporation the expense of transporting the unfortunate Strikers home, and of paying them their completion fees.

As that example indicates, life as a Striker is always uncertain. No matter what the circumstances and no matter how prestigious or powerful the Strikers, the complete destruction of the unit could always be just around the corner. A Striker unit lives in a universe where there are no friends, no allies, and no certainties; only clients, targets, and the struggle to survive.

Contracts for Free Strikers

The standard Contract value is three times the total salaries of the Mercenary Strike Team. This allows the Strikers to replace spent ammunition, weapons that have been damaged or lost, and other miscellaneous costs, as well as surviving the lean times between jobs. Remember that the Employer wants to get its money's worth, and that the Mission is often one that was avoided by Corporate military forces and rejected by any Corporate Retainers.

Employers and Safe Houses

The Employer is obviously a vital person to the Mercenaries. If the Employer is honest or generous, they will probably prosper; a cheap, deceptive, or manipulative Employer can easily destroy even a well-run Strike Team. The nature and goal of the Employer should be determined by the GM.

"Sir. They sealed off this wing at both ends. Welded the doors, blocked off the stairs with heavy equipment... but it looks like the barricade didn't hold."

Drake

"Any bodies?"

Gorman

"No sir."

Drake



"Apone, what
is going on?"

Gorman

"Wierzbowski and
Crowe are down...
Dietrich and Frost
off the board."

Hicks

Hicks and Wierzbowski in Reactor Room

Sometimes the Mercenaries will not know who their Employer is. This is especially true if the Mission is clearly illegal, or if someone is being betrayed. Jobs like these are found through **Safe Houses**, which exist on nearly every world. They are run by discreet, faceless organizations that guarantee that the identity of the Employer remains secret and that the Mercenaries receive prompt payment. This arrangement is ideal for Mercenaries who are content to follow orders and who do not want to ask too many questions.

Setting Up a Contract

Corporations and Nations routinely advertise for the services of Retainers and Strikers. Mercenaries who want a job need only answer one of these ads, and if their leader represents them well and their price is reasonable, they have a good chance of receiving the right to risk their lives for pay. The mechanics of this process are as follows.

Each Month, the unit can attempt to find a Mission. This is a task of Average Difficulty, adjusted by the Diplomacy SRM of the group's leader. The Difficulty Level should be adjusted down by one Level if the unit is very qualified or well-known in the area, or if they reduce their normal Contract value by 25%. The Level goes up by one if the unit is unknown or is underqualified. The GM should make other adjustments for the situation as appropriate; it is easier to find work in areas that are in chaos or if the Mercenaries have contacts within a local Corporation, and it is more difficult on peaceful worlds.

If the first attempt to find a Mission fails, the Mercenaries can make another attempt, with a Difficulty that is one Level higher.

Type of Contract

The Missions for Mercenaries are very similar to those of Colonial Marines, although sometimes they will be on the other side of the action, and will be trying to prevent a group of Colonial Marines from completing their task. The GM can invent his or her own Missions, or use the Mission Generation system of Section 3.5. If the Mission Generation system is used, the Missions should be converted to fit Mercenary units as opposed to Colonial Marines. A few notes on how to do this follow.

Corporate Retainers receive long-term assignments, exactly like the Active Duty Assignments of Colonial Marines. They hardly ever travel from world to world, however, and the Patrol assignment should be treated as a Colonial Patrol. Retainers are often supporting their employer's interest against that of another Corporation, and perhaps against the will of the Colonial Marines. Depending on the employer, the GM's decision, and the tone of the game, they might be on either side of the law.

Strikers are hired for specific missions and their Contracts are rarely long term in nature. The type of Mission can be determined by the GM or taken from the **Mission Generation Table** of Section 3.5, just as with Colonial Marines. In general, these Missions are like those assigned to Colonial Marines. The differences are detailed below.

Tactical Assault: These Missions are almost always placed through Safe Houses.

Strikers making Tactical Assaults are almost always on the wrong side of the law, and will find themselves abandoned if things go poorly. Refuge might be found in the Safe House which hired them.

Rear Guard: Strikers are often hired to guard Corporate property which is considered a high risk target. This type of Mission is particularly unpleasant in that the attacker will almost certainly have the advantage while the Strikers are expected to prove their merit. More than one group of Strikers has made its reputation in this type of action.

Corporate Transition: The unit is either being sent in to sabotage a facility, where they are the adversaries being faced by a normal Colonial Marine Strike Team with this Mission, or they have been assigned to guard a facility which is considered too dangerous for regular troops.

Security: A Mission of this sort might involve the protection of a person defecting from one Corporation to another, or of an intelligence agent who has acquired vital information through infiltration or some other means. It might also involve halting the defection, or stopping the intelligence agent.

Colonial Revolt: Mercenary units sent into this type of situation often find themselves there to handle the dirty work for local authorities, who are more than willing to overlook violent incidents. This is how some Corporations bring brute force to bear on a problem without having to take the blame.

Colonial or Hostage Rescue: When a Corporation wants its people back but cannot afford to have their own units involved, they often hire Strikers to perform the operation.

Corporate Revolt or Military Coup: Strikers fighting for a Corporation under these circumstances usually find themselves on the losing side in a desperate bid for power.

Renegade Military: Corporations often hire Strikers to harass or attempt to destroy Renegade Military units. Such units are losers in a Corporate war who have refused to turn in their arms and have not become Mercenaries themselves. In essence, the Strikers become Bounty Hunters.

Anti-Guerilla, Peacekeeping, Investigations, Bug Hunt, Corporate Investigation and Extradition: These Missions are not generally appropriate for Mercenary groups, unless there is a special situation. A Mercenary unit which gets one of these Missions should beware of hidden dangers. The GM can reroll these Missions if desired.

"Last stand."

Frost

"Must've been a hell of a fight."

Wierzbowski

"Yeah. Looks that way."

Hicks

MISSION AFTERMATH

When a Mission is concluded, there are several things to settle. Each is discussed below.

Survival and Medical Aid

The first issue for everyone will be the survival of the Characters. Each injured Character should pass through the Medical Aid rules of Section 6.13, using the available medical care, to see if he or she has survived. Colonial Marines always receive the best care available at any world they reach, and this care is provided free of charge. Obviously, the Characters must decide how far they can travel before the Critical Time Periods (see Section 6.13) of the injured Characters expire.

Mercenaries usually have Medical Aid as part of their Contract, and will receive the best level of care available on the world they are assigned to. It is possible for the Employer to betray the Mercenaries, of course, in which case they are left to their own resources.

Aftermath of a Successful Mission: Colonial Marines

At the end of a Mission, the Strike Team will return to its base (if possible) and receive its pay. Any Learning Rolls that have been earned (see Section 2.12) are taken at this time, and this is also the opportunity for the Characters to spend their money.

Aftermath of a Successful Mission: Mercenaries

For Mercenaries, the terms of the Contract are fulfilled. The Characters receive the money they contracted for, modified by any incentive bonuses or penalties, and less the cost of the Mission as discussed in the previous Section. If the Characters end up in debt to their Employer, they must either pay the amount owed or fulfill another Contract. This Contract will be less favorable than the first one, but if the Characters do not accept it they will be faced with either prison time or life as fugitives from Corporate justice.

Aftermath of an Unsuccessful Mission

When a Mission goes badly, there are any number of possible outcomes. The Strike Team will usually end up captured or on the run.

If the Characters are captured, they will be treated well unless they have committed a crime or atrocity, in which case they will be put on trial. Colonial Marines who are captured by a Corporation during a legitimate action (where the Corporate forces are operating openly) will be repatriated after the immediate crisis is past; it is vital for Corporations to stay on good terms with the Corps. If the Corporate forces are renegades or are operating illegally, the Characters will be repatriated only after the general conflict has been resolved. Usually the Corporation will pay a ransom, or will quietly transfer custody of the captives from the illegal operation to the Corporation itself. Regardless, the Strike Team will be well cared for and will be returned to the Corps within a few weeks.

Mercenaries who are captured are less well treated, as they do not have the influence of the Corps to back them up. Their Employer might pay a ransom, which would be a debt the Characters would have to work off, or their capturers might simply let them go at the end of the crisis, if they are not a long-term threat. At the other end of the spectrum, it might be in the interests of the capturers to imprison or even execute the Characters. If so, the GM should determine the conditions of their captivity, so they can plan an escape.

If the Strike Team evades capture but cannot get back to its base, the GM can create an entire campaign around their efforts to get home. The possibilities here are nearly endless, depending on the world, the opposing force, and whatever contacts the Characters have established. For Colonial Marines, a rescue effort will be mounted from the nearest base, and they will have to avoid enemy forces until help arrives.

For Mercenaries, there will not be any help on the way; this can be a grim and very challenging situation. Their best chance is to find a Safe House where they can take refuge. If they were hired through the Safe House, they will be helped back to their base for a reasonable fee. If not, their services will be sold to a new Employer for one Mission; the Strike Team will not be paid for this Mission, but at least they will be out of trouble for a little while.

**"Two are alive,
the rest are dead.
Surgically removed
before embryo
implantation. Subject:
Marachuk, John J.
Died during the
procedure.
They killed him
taking it off."**

Bishop

WORLDS

Humanity has reached hundreds of worlds, and has established dozens of Colonies and Outposts. These worlds are scattered across dozens of light-years and cover a wide range of environments, and the Human and non-Human inhabitants are just as diverse. Some of the most notable worlds are discussed below. The GM should feel free to add to, amend, or alter the following as desired, and to create new worlds that suit his or her game.

The **Star Map** (Figure 2 on the following page) shows the locations of the major systems inhabited by Humanity, and indicates the Jump Distances among them. (Jump Distances are described in Section 5.9.)

Earth

Home to nearly 10 billion people, Earth is a world in chaos. The Nations have waned in power, but most of their citizens do not really understand the change. The Corporations are the new rulers, but they are concerned with themselves and their Colonies; the administration of Earth's billions means little to them. In the gap between the power of the Nations and the will of the Corporations, society is falling apart. Large areas of Earth have become lawless, as some Nations have lost the ability to control their own citizens. Ethnic, religious, and social minorities have seceded from many of the weaker Nations, and have established their own small states.

Wealth and social status on Earth range from the most desperate poverty and oppression in history to unprecedented levels of riches and power. Those who rule the Corporations have every possible trapping of wealth, including mansions, resorts, travel, obedient servants, private armies and more. They even have vast numbers of people to feel superior to; the masses of Earth. Beyond the Corporate preserves and the houses of the rich, there are many millions of people who live uneasy middle-class lives in a world with few certainties. And next to their simple communities, surrounding the places where they work, are the dispossessed; billions of people who work at menial jobs or survive on government subsidies, or who prey on others.

The range of social environments on Earth makes it an ideal place for role-playing adventures. Players can move quickly from contacts with rich Corporate personnel into the harsh streets, where poverty, squalor, roving gangs, and sudden violence are common.

The possible duties for Colonial Marines (or jobs for Mercenaries and other Character groups) are endless. There are areas in civil chaos, where it might be vital to restore order or to evacuate special personnel or equipment, while other areas operate under complete fascism and the Characters would face entirely different challenges. Many ethnic groups and fringe religions have established their own small nations, sometimes with Corporate backing, and the safety of people and facilities in those areas could easily be imperiled. There are even areas where there is no law; where local wars have erased all government and the Nation or Nations who own the land have given up on the attempt to administrate.

Major Worlds

The Major Worlds hold the future of Humanity. These are planets that are very much like Earth, with breathable atmospheres, decent climate, and great potential for life. There are five Major Worlds at present (Alexandria, Hilo, Micor, New Eden, and Tartarus), and all are being rapidly developed by the Corporations which own them. Populations range from 2 million to 50 million, but all five worlds have high-tech manufacturing, heavy industry, and are nearly self-sufficient.

Colonies

Colonies are established on worlds which are fairly liveable, or which have been adapted to human use. A Colony has two important attributes; a Spacecraft Service Base and manufacturing capability. The exact level of technology available varies with each Colony, but all have at least some ability to manufacture their own goods. Populations range from 30,000 on Starview to 25 million on Aerodyne, and the worlds are self-sufficient in the most vital commodities; food, water, and atmosphere. The most advanced Colonies, like Aerodyne, even have full high-tech manufacturing and heavy industry.

"What's her name again?"

Gorman

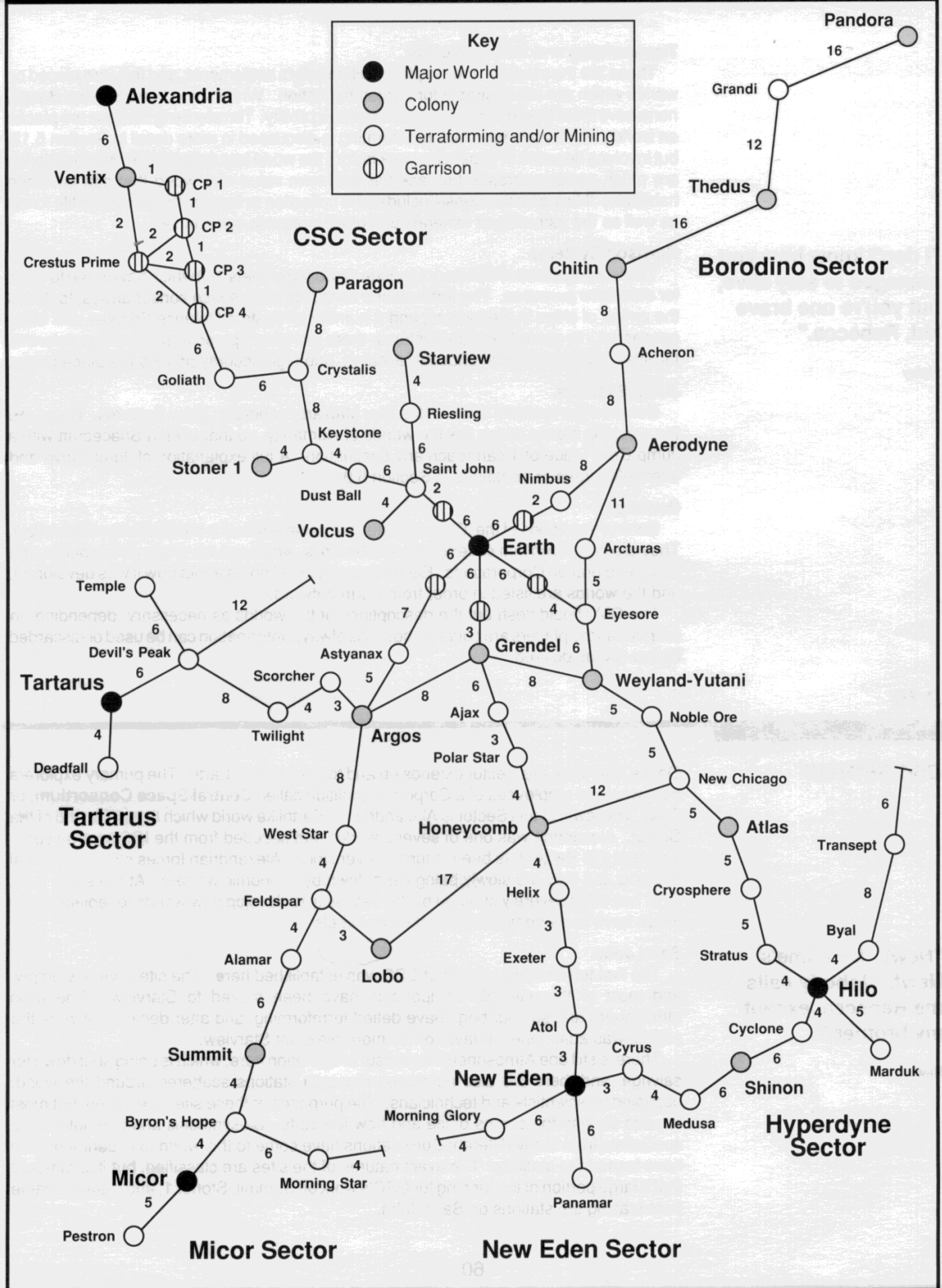
"Rebecca."

Dietrich

"Now think, Rebecca. Concentrate. Just start at the beginning. Where are your parents? Now look, Rebecca, you have to try and help... Total brainlock... Come on, we're wasting our time."

Gorman

FIGURE 2 STAR MAP



"I don't know how you managed to stay alive, but you're one brave kid, Rebecca."

Ripley

Terraforming and Mining Worlds

These are the smallest and simplest of Humanity's settlements, and they are placed on worlds which are not desirable for human habitation. While some have Service Bases, none have more than rudimentary manufacturing ability. Terraforming Stations are placed on worlds which have potential; terraforming is discussed in more detail in Section 5.12, but involves decades of expensive work before the world is truly habitable. Mining Worlds are much easier to create, but lack the long-term value of a world that can be made habitable. "Mining" in this sense includes the collection or harvesting of unusual life forms as well as the gathering of minerals and other inorganic substances.

Garrison Systems

These are systems which do not include inhabited planets, but which have been fortified for defensive purposes. The fortifications consist of deep space sensor arrays, to detect the arrival of ships in the system, and a number of System Defense Frigates and other spacecraft. In some Garrison Systems, there are also top-secret military and scientific facilities. Weapons tests, unusual research, and high-security prisons are placed here.

Jump Systems

Between the systems listed on the Star Map are numerous Jump Systems. These are the stepping stones which link the worlds of Humanity, so that even a Spacecraft with a Jump Drive value of 1 can reach any destination. A full explanation of Jump Drive and interstellar travel is contained in Section 5.9.

Sectors

Each of the worlds of the ICC is described in general terms in the Sections which follow. They are organized into several different **Sectors**, which are the areas developed by the major exploration Corporations. Each Sector includes notes about how it was developed, and the worlds are listed in order from Earth outward.

The GM should flesh out the descriptions of the worlds as necessary, depending on what areas the players are curious about. As always, information can be used or discarded by the GM as desired.

3.10

CSC SECTOR

On the Star Map, this Sector extends up and to the left from Earth. The primary explorers here were the employees of a Corporate coalition called **Central Space Consortium**, or **CSC**. The jewel of this Sector is Alexandria, an Earthlike world which lies at the end of the Sector. Alexandria was one of several worlds that seceded from the ICC several years ago, and this Sector has been in turmoil ever since. Alexandrian forces still hold several systems, but they are slowly being worn down by economic warfare. At the same time, CSC has been severely strained by the necessity to develop new worlds to replace those which have been (temporarily) lost to the rebels.

Saint John

The first terraforming project of CSC was established here. The site is largely empty, and most of the valuable components have been moved to Starview. The toxic atmosphere and sulphur bogs have defied terraforming, and after decades of work the project was abandoned in favor of the more pleasant Starview.

There is still one Atmosphere Processor in operation here, which is being shut down for salvage, and there are also numerous research stations scattered around the world, occupied by scientists and technicians. The purposes of these sites are varied, but most have to do with the origins of life and how it adapts. Biosynthesis and bioengineering specialists from many different Corporations have come to this world to experiment, and have leased the stations. The exact natures of the sites are classified, but it is rumored that a large portion of the funding for CSC's work on Summit, Stoner 1, and Paragon came from leasing the stations on Saint John.

"Newt. My name's Newt. Nobody calls me Rebecca, except my brother."

Newt



"Drake! Come on!"

Vasquez

"He's gone! Forget him, he's gone!"

Hicks

Hicks and Vasquez in the APC

Volcus

One of a group of Colonies developed by CSC after the secession of Alexandria. The Colony is in a domed community on the major moon in orbit around the planet of Volcus itself, and neither the moon nor the planet is terraformed. Volcus is a world ruled by volcanic forces, with vast magma flows covering much of its surface. It is the tremendous geothermal energy available on the planet which has led to the development of the system. CSC has developed (and is still improving) a system which uses the almost unlimited thermal energy of Volcus for power.

Automated power stations float on the magma and draw energy from the heat surrounding them. This energy is then broadcast to a spacestation in orbit around the planet, and from there to the Colony on the moon. There are currently 200,000 people on the moon, but the Colony can expand rapidly because of the availability of power. A self-contained ecosystem has been created, with air, water and heat being recycled. CSC hopes to turn this moon into a thriving Colony, as an example of how a hostile system can be overcome.

Riesling

This is the site of exploratory mining and drilling operations. The world's composition indicates that it has potential as a source of several rare elements, and science crews are still evaluating it. At present, only remote exploration sites are set up, with teams from CSC and a number of freelance groups licensed to conduct the research.

Starview

This is the latest find of CSC, and it already has a sizable population. This world is better in many ways than Alexandria, and once terraforming is complete it will become the primary world for CSC. This terraforming effort will take another half century to complete, however, despite the best efforts of CSC's scientists, because the Corporation is overextended. Various factions within CSC have taken hold on each of the other three most important colonies (Stoner 1, Paragon, and Volcus), and CSC does not have the funds to fully develop Starview.

"Is Timmy around here too, maybe, hiding like you were?... Mom and Dad?... Newt, look at me. Where are they?"

Ripley

"They're dead, alright? Can I go now?"

Newt

Starview is a large world, with gravity very close to Earth's. Its surface is desolate and cold, as the atmosphere is nearly opaque due to a vast cloud of small particles. This cloud is suspended in the upper atmosphere, and leaves the world in eternal twilight. Once the cloud has been removed, the world will warm up and should be very comfortable for normal habitation.

Today, a Colony of 30,000 exists on the world. The atmosphere is breathable with the use of a filter mask, and work is proceeding to create Atmosphere Processors.

Dust Ball

This is a small moon which possesses a few mining communities. These operations are centered on the crater left by the impact of an ancient meteor. Unique and valuable minerals were created by the combination of the meteor's and the moon's materials, subjected to the tremendous heat and pressures generated by the impact. Dome operations are scattered around Dust Ball. Some are involved in traditional mining, while others simply sift through tons of sand and pulverized quartz on the surface, in search of the trace minerals. These minerals are used in the creation and quality control of microcircuitry.

Keystone

Keystone was a major basecamp for exploration in the early days of CSC. In spite of this the planet was not terraformed, as there are many unstable asteroids in the system and it is just a matter of time before one of them hits Keystone; there are signs of many devastating strikes in past ages. As exploration proceeded, the population and importance of Keystone dwindled. It is now mostly abandoned, with a current population of 20,000, down from a peak of 500,000. There were a few mining operations at one point, but there was nothing so valuable here that it was worth shipping to other systems.

Antioch, a mid-size Corporation with ambition, is studying the possibility of buying the rights to the system and making Keystone safe for habitation. This would involve a major operation to clear the most dangerous debris from the system, and to track the movements of the many asteroids. If successful, however, Antioch would be able to quickly rebuild the existing facilities and could transform Keystone into a wealthy Colony.

Stoner 1

This planet has recently been terraformed by CSC as a means of recovering from the secession of Alexandria. While most of the planet's atmosphere is still toxic, there is a vast natural cavern within Stoner Mountain which now has its own atmosphere and biosphere. This cavern is over 10,000 square miles in size, and is protected by the immense rock dome of the mountain and a network of airlocks. Excavation is now going on within the Mountain, to expand the available living space while terraforming continues above ground. At present, much of CSC's light manufacturing and engineering is done at Stoner 1.

There are ample resources on this world, and once it is fully terraformed the above ground mines and other operations will make it a major industrial base.

Crysalis

This Colony, based on a large moon, is the site of a standard mining operation. It is a domed complex, without a major Service Base, and the mines recover heavy metals and a rare mineral used in power conversion units. The operation is protected by Security forces from CSC.

Paragon

This is a fairly recent Colony, and was established by CSC in an attempt to rebuild after Alexandria's rebellion. Paragon has recently completed its program of terraforming, and the atmosphere is fully breathable. The climate remains harsh and cold, with high winds and unpredictable weather. The communities of this world have been built underground for protection from these conditions.

Another major consideration in the construction of Paragon's cities was security. CSC is not willing to accept another rebellion, and every effort has been made to ensure that management remains firmly in control. The communities are being expanded only slowly, and are kept as self-sufficient as possible. The middle and lower classes here live in a



"Ferro, do you copy?
Prep for dust-off, we're
gonna need immediate
evac. I say we take
off, nuke the site from
orbit. It's the only
way to be sure."

Hicks

Survivors retreating from the Atmosphere Processor

tightly controlled environment, with the most sophisticated police state in the ICC watching their every move. CSC is satisfied with the way the system is working on Paragon, and they are transporting much of their high-tech and high security operations here. This will become the new Corporate Headquarters for CSC, and will also be the site of manufacturing for all critical components.

Goliath

This world is the site of a sizable terraforming operation, and is also being mined for Iridium and Helium 3. Before the secession of Alexandria, it was being developed normally by CSC; since the secession, CSC has used Goliath as a staging point for its attempts to recapture and blockade the rogue colony.

Goliath now has a major ICC Military Service Base, as well as a ground base which supports a large contingent of Colonial Marines. From these bases, the Colonial Marines and CSC forces patrol three Jumps in each direction, watching for Alexandrian craft and for smugglers and other blockade runners. These patrols fight with Alexandrian forces, which try to drive ICC vessels away whenever a major smuggling run is being made. These actions are usually short, with the inferior side making a brief show of resistance before withdrawing.

The atmosphere on Goliath is still too thin to breathe without assistance, but there is enough oxygen for simple rebreathers to operate. The population has grown to nearly 1 million people in the years since the Alexandria's rebellion. About 10,000 of these are Colonial Marines, and there are also a large number of CSC troops. The majority of the population is made up of people working at industries to support the military units.

The Crestus Garrison Systems

These systems are named Crestus Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Delta, in order of their distance from Ventix and Alexandria. The only settlements here are military Service Bases orbiting the major planet of each system. There are no ground colonies or installations, other than tracking and communication facilities.

Crestus Prime

Crestus Prime is a Garrison World with a Service Base and a fleet of large cargo transports, used for transporting disabled Frigates from the four Crestus Garrison Worlds nearby. The location of Crestus Prime is known only to top level military personnel of Alexandria, and is only placed in the Navigation Computers of ships assigned specifically to the system. The world itself holds only the Service Base and its supporting community, with a total population of 30,000, all of them members of the military.

"Don't you think you'd be safer here with us?... These people are here to protect you. They're soldiers."

Ripley

Crestus Prime has become the hub of the Alexandria space defense system. From here, the space fleet can reach any of the four Garrison Worlds which protect the approach to Ventix. This constantly threatens any ICC forces trying to clear the Crestus Garrison Worlds, and provides support for Ventix if the ICC ever gets that far. It is unlikely that it will ever come to that, since the ICC has decided to use a blockade to defeat Alexandria. The presence of Crestus Prime was a major factor in that decision.

Ventix

Ventix is a Colony near Alexandria and is controlled by the people of that world. It is a dense and prosperous community, built underground in vast, airtight chambers. Terraforming of Ventix was put on hold by the eruption of the rebellion on Alexandria, and the years of conflict have transformed the city into a military hardsite.

Considerable heavy equipment was here to support terraforming, most of it having been moved from Alexandria when the major work on that world was completed. This equipment was used to expand the basecamp into a full Colony designed specifically for use by the Alexandria military forces. It now protects the only route to Alexandria, and is the final line of Alexandria's defenses.

There are five major Military Bases on Ventix. Each of them has full space repair facilities, and receives parts and other support from Alexandria. They are connected by a network of tunnels, with high-speed monorails carrying people and cargo. Each Base has a population of about 50,000 people, and they are all self-sufficient.

The atmosphere of Ventix is too thin to breathe without a Life Support system, but there is enough oxygen to keep a Life Support system operating indefinitely; Life Support systems have pumps which can be used to compress the atmosphere in an enclosed space, and make it breathable. The climate is cold and dry, with no vegetation.

Only personnel with military clearance have access to Ventix.

Alexandria

This is the only holdout from the Colonial rebellions. It is isolated from the rest of ICC space by the military colony it controls on Ventix, and by the five Crestus Garrison Worlds. To date, the ICC has not committed enough forces to conquer Alexandria and its Garrison Worlds. The area is quarantined by Colonial Marine forces on and around the Goliath system, and a policy of sanctions and blockade is being used to bring Alexandria back under ICC control.

Smuggling to and from Alexandria is a thriving industry on the Garrison Worlds of Crestus Prime and Goliath. Stopping the flows of goods, people, and military equipment occupies a sizable contingent of Colonial Marine and Corporate forces.

Alexandria itself is a highly developed world which is nearly self-sufficient. Originally owned by CSC, it now has a population of 30 million people, which is rapidly growing, and its industries are on a par with the industrialized nations of the 20th century. There are also a number of high-tech facilities producing items for the fledgling space industry on the planet. The space industry is owned by the planet's central government, a democratic republic, and is nearing self-sufficiency. Only certain critical components for Displacement and Jump Drives must be smuggled in from the ICC.

Environmentally, Alexandria is nearly an ideal world. It has been terraformed, and the atmosphere is breathable and even pleasant. The climate is generally hot and dry, and there are few large bodies of water, so the major settlements are closer to the poles than to the equator. Water for drinking and agriculture is transported from the polar regions; it is comparatively expensive, but there are no shortages and the population is well supplied.

The communities on Alexandria are scattered across the northern temperate region. Industries are built at the edges of or outside of the residential areas, and are hardened against possible warfare. Civil defense has been a major concern in the cities as well, and bomb shelters and long-term food stores are common. There is a mandatory four year military/public service term for all citizens from the ages of 18 to 22. Most fulfill this requirement by working in technical and trade institutions, on community support programs, and in the large terraforming and community expansion projects. A select few

serve in the military itself, and there is great pride in being chosen to protect Alexandria's independence. Most of the people in the military have made it their career, and there is a high level of respect for them.

3.11

Unlike the other Sectors, this chain of worlds has not been developed by any single Corporate entity. It was begun by a Corporation called Borodino, which went bankrupt generations ago. Since that time, dozens of Corporations have tried their luck in this area, and many fortunes have been made exploring the Borodino Sector. Many more have been lost, however, because while it is the only unclaimed frontier in the ICC where mid-sized Corporations can try to expand, it is also a treacherous and difficult place.

The two strangest worlds in the ICC lie in the Borodino Sector; Pandora, with its illegal technologies and bizarre life forms, and LV-426, also called Acheron, where Humanity first encountered the Aliens.

Nimbus

This is a very large world, a gas giant, which has a research space station in orbit around it. It is being used for studies of high pressure and high energy conditions by Hyperdyne. Probes enter Nimbus' atmosphere and are subjected to incredible heat and pressure as they decelerate. They then emerge from the atmosphere and are recovered by craft from the research station. The exact nature of the work being done here, and the results found to date, are highly confidential and are well-guarded by Hyperdyne.

Aerodyne

This world was originally called Chalmer 3, but was renamed when Aerodyne Corporation established its headquarters here. It has been terraformed, and is now a cold planet with a thin, breathable atmosphere and vast open steppes, swept by constant winds. There is little open water, but the population of 25 million is self-sufficient and the people lead a fairly comfortable life. The communities are built behind large windbreaks. A wide range of light and heavy industries are present, and Aerodyne produces its own spacecraft in cooperation with Weyland-Yutani.

Recently, Aerodyne and Weyland-Yutani opened the Arcturus Loop, a direct trade link which does not run through Earth. This has enraged Earth-bound Corporations and Nations, which have lost significant influence over trade and commerce as a result of the new trade route. Although the ICC has set up Customs stations, Aerodyne, Weyland-Yutani, and Hyperdyne hold direct control of the Loop, and have not allowed Colonial Marine forces to patrol the area. Customs procedures are being subverted along this route, and it is believed that corruption at high levels in the ICC and in the three major Corporations has encouraged smuggling activities. Drugs and controlled technologies from Pandora are introduced into the ICC through this route as well.

Acheron

A harsh, bitter world in the midst of terraforming. There are many deposits of heavy metals here, which offer the hope of future prosperity, and when terraforming is complete it could be a fairly pleasant world. The most interesting aspect of this world is obviously the strange ship which contains the Alien Eggs. The current status of Acheron is described in Chapter 8.

Chitin

The surface of this planet is covered with heavy flows of basalt, so it appears to have an armored shell. Beneath this shell, which earned the planet its name, there are a number of soft areas which were excavated to form human communities. There are three of these subterranean vaults, with a total population of 600,000, and they are largely self-sufficient.

BORODINO SECTOR

**"It won't make
any difference."**

Newt

**"That's a nice
pet you've got
there, Bishop."**

Spunkmeyer

Chitin has the only significant light manufacturing capability on the long run from Aerodyne to Pandora, and the economy here is expanding rapidly. The Service Base in orbit around the planet is large, efficient, and well-stocked with spare parts, and support industries beneath the world's surface are beginning to produce Spacecraft components as well.

This world is dominated by Aerodyne, which is moving much of its older light industry here as it upgrades its home world. Personnel who are unhappy with conditions on Aerodyne are commonly transferred here, where they find a more relaxed atmosphere, greater freedom, and a relative absence of bureaucracy.

Thedus

This is a small, struggling Colony which survives off the traffic from the core of the ICC out to the frontier world of Pandora. It is a domed Colony, as the atmosphere of Thedus is thin and has little oxygen. The world is not self-sufficient; it has a full space Service Base, but all other items are in short supply.

There are three communities on Thedus, each of which is built around a reactor that also provides power for an Atmosphere Processor. The expansion of the Colony is limited by the shortage of power, and the population subsists on ship service and maintenance, and providing for the crews of vessels that are being worked on. The crime rate on Thedus is very high, and many unwary travellers never leave the planet.

Grandhi

This is a Service Base, with a small station set up to service ships making the long haul to and from Pandora. It is a full service port, with the repair abilities of a Colony for anything relating to Spacecraft. Other than that, there is only a small community of 15,000 which tends to the needs of crews passing through the system.

Grandhi is a moon in orbit around a dry and completely barren planet called Sahara, which is more than four times the size of Earth. Grandhi itself has no atmosphere, but supplies of water and oxygen are available through mining and mineral processing. Water, food, and air are all extremely precious on Grandhi, and little is wasted in this domed community.

Pandora

This Colony is at the edge of ICC space, and as such operates with little regard for law or accepted behavior. The world has an unpleasant but breathable atmosphere, and gravity near Earth's. Most of the surface is covered with water, and the small land areas are overcrowded with a population of 4 million. Work is in progress to artificially increase the land area by building out into the oceans.

The biosphere of Pandora is a diverse one, and there are still countless life forms that have never been studied. If this planet were closer to the rest of civilization, it would be covered with research teams from all of the major Corporations. As it is, only unusual people come this far out; the ones who are obsessed with their work, others who are avoiding legal and personal problems, and people who are very adventurous, curious, or unstable.

The location and the people combine to create a dangerous and exotic world. Several Corporations are conducting exploration into the stars beyond Pandora, but where they are going and what they have found remain mysterious. Experiments which would be halted on a more civilized world are conducted in shadowy laboratories here, including forbidden studies of genetics, biomechanics, and cybernetics. There are rumors of startling breakthroughs in all of these fields.

Strange drugs are also synthesized from the native lifeforms by researchers, some of whom are true geniuses and others who are simply renegades or madmen. The most popular and useful drugs are exported or smuggled back to the rest of the ICC, but the local inhabitants have access to countless other substances. All manner of claims are made about these drugs; some are powerful stimulants or depressants, others have reputed medical value, still others might be pain killers or hallucinogens. Many of the drugs are

"Magnificent, Isn't it?"

Bishop



Hicks, Hudson, and Vasquez after the Dropship crash

addictive; most are dangerous; all are unregulated, and therefore unpredictable. The alleys of Pandora are filled with people who have had their health or their minds broken by these experimental drugs.

Arcturus Loop

This is a new interstellar link between Aerodyne and Weyland-Yutani, and is being used to bypass Earth and ICC Customs. There is a great deal of illegal traffic in this area, but the efforts of honest ICC Customs officials to clean it up have been unsuccessful. Part of the trouble lies in the relative weakness of the Colonial Marine Corps in the Loop, but much of the blame lies with corruption at high levels of the ICC and the major Corporations involved.

Arcturus

This is the only well-developed system on the Loop. It is habitable, although cold and harsh, and has a functioning biosphere of its own. The native lifeforms include a generally humanoid creature which lives in large, complex warrens underground. These creatures usually live in communities of a few dozen, although large warrens of hundreds and even thousands are sometimes found. They are not intelligent, although they use very primitive tools, such as sticks, and work together to gather food and to defend their warrens. They are fully described in Section 3.16.

The population on Arcturus is approximately 25,000, but it is expanding quickly as traffic increases on the Loop and the world is adapted for human use. The leadership on the world is turning a blind eye to smuggling and other questionable activities, and has restricted Colonial Marine presence to battles with native warrens which are considered dangerous to the Colony, or which are obstacles to further expansion.

Eyesore

An old mining site which has been abandoned. The world is habitable by about 400 people, but is ugly, infertile, and generally unpleasant. Only a small community remains on Eyesore, which handles rudimentary repairs and limited services for crews which pass through. There is every chance that Eyesore will grow rapidly in the coming years, due to the traffic on the Loop.

"Well that's great, that's just great, man. Now what are we supposed to do."

Hudson

"Are you finished?"

Hicks

HYPERDYNE SECTOR

This Sector was originally developed by two major Corporations working together; Hyperdyne and Weyland-Yutani. At about the time the ICC was formed, Hyperdyne sabotaged certain critical operations at Weyland-Yutani, and attempted to take full control of the Sector for itself. This was a lucrative path for many years; Hyperdyne even discovered the Earthlike world of Hilo, and now commands tremendous wealth. Weyland-Yutani recovered from Hyperdyne's treachery, however, and now holds a critical position in the Sector. There has been no open warfare between the two Corporations in many years, but there is a certain tension in their dealings with each other.

This Sector extends down and to the right from Earth on the Star Map.

Weyland-Yutani

Weyland-Yutani was one of the preeminent Corporations of the early days of space exploration, and still produces some of the finest high-technology equipment in the ICC. It was once a partner of Hyperdyne, but Hyperdyne betrayed Weyland-Yutani's interests and sabotaged several of its exploration craft. Weyland-Yutani was badly disrupted by this, and lost its opportunity to lead the discovery of new worlds.

After losing several decades, Weyland-Yutani gathered its resources to take control of the world of Relitor, which it renamed after itself. This put Weyland-Yutani directly on Hyperdyne's route to Earth and the rest of the ICC, and allowed it to take some measure of revenge in the form of legal harassment and increased tariffs and taxes. To combat these obstacles, Hyperdyne was forced to develop new routes for its commerce. The routes include the Hilo - New Eden link, and the long, desolate trip from New Chicago to Honeycomb. Today, Weyland-Yutani and Hyperdyne are still somewhat hostile to each other, but there has been no traceable violence for many years. They even cooperate on control of the Arcturus Loop.

At present, the world of Weyland-Yutani has a full range of industry and space manufacturing facilities, and the cooperative ventures between Aerodyne and Weyland-Yutani are the largest manufacturers of commercial spacecraft in the ICC. They also produce the ships for the Colonial Marine Corps, and use this as leverage in their control of the Arcturus Loop.

Noble Ore

A titanium mining site with five domed communities. There is only a small Service Base here, and no industry at all.

New Chicago

This old mining and survey planet was abandoned after research showed it would not be profitable for long-term mining or terraforming. It has become a major Service Base for Hyperdyne forces, and many spacecraft in that Corporation's fleet call New Chicago their home port. These forces protect the New Chicago - Honeycomb route, and attempt to control traffic from Weyland-Yutani to Hilo.

The civilian population here is 30,000, and the economy is heavily dependent on the Hyperdyne fleet. Laws governing the sale and possession of weapons are largely ignored, and just about any kind of military hardware is available here, for the right price.

Atlas

Atlas is a large asteroid with no atmosphere. Temperatures are very low, and the radiation level is dangerously high for unprotected people. The Colony is a small one, composed of three domed and shielded communities with a total population of 12,000. The communities are all on a single plateau, and are connected by a monorail system.

Dozens of small survey and mining craft operate out of Atlas, working in the system's asteroid fields. These ships are specially shielded against radiation, and the crews work among the asteroids for 90 days before returning to Atlas for detoxification. The reason for all this dangerous and difficult work is the presence of complex radiation-stable hydrocarbons, which are used for medical research and genetic engineering.

**"Yo! Stop your
grinnin' and drop
your linen.
Found 'em."**

Hudson

"They alive?"

Gorman

**"Unknown. But it
looks like all of them.
Over at the Processing
Station, Sublevel 3,
under the main
cooling towers."**

Hudson

Cryosphere

A research station has been established on this planet, which is in a very distant orbit around the system's sun. It is a small station, with only eight people, and most craft simply pass through the system without going anywhere near Cryosphere. While valuable work is being done regarding the formation of solar systems and planets, the eight scientists at the station are extremely eager to talk with anyone who comes to the planet.

Stratus

Stratus was used as a Garrison System by Hyperdyne before the ICC was created, and there are the remains of a large ground military base and a deep space tracking station here. Today there is only a way station and a small, poor salvage operation recovering equipment left over from earlier conflicts.

Hilo

This was the second ideal world found, and it is under the control of Hyperdyne. Hilo had an ideal climate and ample water when found, but lacked indigenous life. This made it very easy to tailor the world, introducing the proper mix of lifeforms from Earth and other worlds to create the perfect environment. Hilo is a thriving world, with a full space industry, complete self-sufficiency, and a population of 6 million. There is a great deal of wealth here, and it is protected by the most powerful single Corporate military force in the ICC.

There was a rebellion here at the beginning of the Colonial Wars, but it was quickly crushed by Hyperdyne's military. The population was quietly purged in the years after the rebellion, and new personnel were brought in. Radical elements which were not found guilty of capital crimes were sent to Shinon, where they are monitored by Hyperdyne forces in what is essentially a penal colony.

On Hilo, there is no trace of dissent. The people are brought up to believe that the ends justify the means, and the rewards for those who succeed at Hyperdyne are immense; wealth, power, and even access to illegal technologies.

Hyperdyne is the leading producer of Synthetics (see Section 5.6), and the design studios and most of the factories for this industry are on Hilo. Much of Hyperdyne's wealth comes from its development of biotechnology and Synthetics; other industries have been established primarily to guarantee Hyperdyne's independence.

The economic and political power of Hyperdyne is immense, and its influence in the Colonial Marine Corps is growing rapidly.

Marduk

Little is known of this system, except that there is a large space station in orbit around the primary planet and that there are no ground installations. Rumor indicates that Hyperdyne does experimental work on Synthetics here, and that illegal programming packages are sometimes sent from Marduk into the ICC. There is an extremely high level of security here, and even the location of the system is known to few.

Byal

This is another of Hyperdyne's special labs. It is a space station, where work is done on biotechnology integration and modification. Its location is known at the top levels of the ICC, but it is not common knowledge and there is no commercial traffic to Byal.

Transept

This barren world is the base camp for Hyperdyne's space exploration fleet. Hyperdyne is trying to open a direct route to Pandora, as that is the location of the only other major research being done in the field of biotechnology. If Hyperdyne is successful and can keep its route a secret, it will be able to subtly control the work done on Pandora and capitalize on any breakthroughs which are made, without ICC opposition.

Cyclone

A research and manufacturing lab set up by Hyperdyne in an underground installation. It develops weapon technology and security systems, and contains only a few hundred personnel. The location of this think tank is not common knowledge, and the best military and scientific minds of Hyperdyne do their work here.

"Looks like a damn town meeting."

Hicks

"Let's saddle up, Apone."

Gorman

"Aye, Sir. Alright, let's go people, they ain't payin' us by the hour."

Apone

Shinon

This Colony is the dumping site for people removed from Hilo during the Colonial rebellions. These are people who were considered to be security risks, but who could not be convicted of serious crimes. All sorts have been sent here; petty criminals, relatives of rebels, free-thinkers and rabble rousers, intellectuals, and those who were simply not patriotic enough. The population is 480,000.

Shinon is almost self-sufficient, with critical supplies being provided by Hyperdyne in exchange for good production from the light industry of the Colony. The citizens are theoretically free, although there is no way for them to leave the system and they are under tight supervision by Hyperdyne law enforcement personnel. Regardless of Hyperdyne's claims, Shinon is essentially a modern penal colony.

3.13

NEW EDEN SECTOR

This Sector was the first to yield an Earthlike world, the planet of New Eden itself. Exploration was handled by a coalition which renamed itself New Eden/JV after the world which made it rich. This Sector is comparatively stable, compared to the strife of the CSC Sector and the danger and uncertainty of the Borodino Sector.

The New Eden Sector lies straight down from Earth on the Star Map.

Grendel

Grendel is large Colony of over 200,000 people, who live in hundreds of small domed cities. There is substantial light industry, and the world was a major stopping point for travel among Micor, New Eden, Weyland-Yutani, and Hilo. Much of the traffic was lost to the New Chicago - Lobo route, but Grendel still survives.

This world was the first to allow Corporations to circumvent Earth's control of shipping routes, and in retaliation the powers of Earth held back support, minimized Colonial Marine presence, and even helped destabilize the government and economy of the world. Over the years, the destabilization and the absence of Colonial Marine patrols led to the development of a powerful organized crime network. This network wields full power on Grendel, and operates outside the ICC's controls and without the consent of the population of Grendel. The center of the trade in illegal drugs and other contraband is found on this world, and bribery, extortion, and payoffs are major parts of getting business done here. The criminal network is currently building up a large drug trade from Pandora to Micor.

Micor and the other major Corporations created the New Chicago - Lobo bypass to free themselves from the bribery and corruption of Grendel, and are currently trying to decide how to destroy the organized crime elements. It will probably fall to the Colonial Marines to clean up the place.

Ajax

This is a marginally habitable world that could yield great wealth after successful terraforming. Several years ago, there was an accident at an Atmosphere Processor here; an immense explosion caused a major radiation release, and the mid-sized Colony was almost entirely destroyed. There was tremendous loss of life and wealth, and literally thousands of lawsuits were filed in the weeks after the disaster. Since the end of the relief efforts which evacuated the survivors, the world has been largely uninhabited as efforts are made to resolve this unprecedented legal morass. There is a small permanent station some distance from the site of the old Colony, and the staff's primary duty is to take inspectors, analysts, experts, and lawyers on tours of the devastation, and to track and report data about the world's current condition.

Polar Star

This outpost consists of a Research Station on a moon which orbits a gas giant at the edge of the system. There are only 30 permanent residents at the facility. A Service Base with a crew of 1,000 also orbits the planet, and attends to the traffic through the system, but there is little contact between the Service Base and the Research Station. This system has no manufacturing ability.

**"I'm not making that
out too well. What
is it, Hudson?"**

Gorman

**"You tell me, man.
I only work here."**

Hudson



**"Nailed the other one.
It's history, man."**

Hudson

Hudson Shooting Facehugger in Medlab

The permanent residents are scientists at work on a research project, studying high-pressure molecular synthesis. They are under contract to Micor, but so far they have not attained their goals. Until they succeed, none have anything to look forward to but continued isolation on Polar Star or a one-way trip back to poverty on Earth. Most of the staff have been here for more than ten years; the stress level is high, and the mental health level is low.

Honeycomb

The atmosphere of this world is toxic and bitterly cold, so this Colony of 250,000 was built underground. Vast caverns lie just under the surface, and several large communities have been set up in them. They are fairly close together, and are linked by an efficient monorail system.

Honeycomb is rapidly growing, as a result of the traffic link between New Chicago and Lobo. It has become a major Service Base and shipping warehouse, and now features both light and heavy industry. Secure areas of the caverns are leased out to Corporations interested in long-term storage and production, making the planet something like a high-tech space bank. The Colonial Marine Corps does not have the rights to investigate these individual Corporate areas, and since they are all sealed off, it is difficult to gather information about what is going on inside. This much is clear; the rulers of Honeycomb care little for what goes on in each area, and this has led to the growth of some illicit industries. More than one illegal shipment has been traced to Honeycomb, but the trail ends in what has become known as the Labyrinth.

The caverns of Honeycomb riddle the entire world, and are much larger than the Colony and all the storage areas. Very little of the Labyrinth has been explored.

Helix

Helix has a Service Base and is the focus of a fleet of small exploration craft which are investigating the vast asteroid belts of the Helix system. These craft are owned by several different Corporations and independents, have crews of 3 to 8 people, and go on extended missions of up to 2 years deep into the belts. Thousands of asteroids have been explored and plotted, and many bear rich mining deposits.

At present, the mining claims on these asteroids are being bid on at Helix, and there will soon be full-scale mining operations throughout the system. Dozens of Corporations are

"Looks like some sort of secreted resin."

Dietrich

interested in the mining rights in the system, and the Colonial Marines will certainly be called in to monitor disputes. Most of the contracts call for minimum production levels and schedules, or the forfeiture of all rights; ICC officials expect that some smaller firms will be sabotaged, and will be swallowed up by larger competitors.

Exeter

This small outpost has two enclosed communities of about 20,000 people each. It is primarily a service port for shipping to and from New Eden. Most of its business has been taken from it by the facilities on Honeycomb, and Exeter is rapidly declining in wealth and importance. Within a few years, only a few small mining operations which were the original purpose of the Colony will remain.

Atol

Atol is a water world with a heavy atmosphere and continuous rain. The water is acidic and contains no life, and the planet has no stable land mass above sea level. There is a large moon, however, which combines with the system's sun to create huge tides that sweep the planet. It is impossible to build communities on the land areas that are exposed, because they are above water for only a few hours at a time. The seas are so violent that no attempt has been made to build floating structures. The atmosphere is breathable with a filter mask, however, and research continues into how to tame this world. A spacestation orbits Atol, carrying a few dozen permanent staff, and two or three survey teams go down into the atmosphere every month.

New Eden

This was the first ideal world discovered by Humanity, and it made the coalition of Corporations which found it extremely rich. This coalition solidified into a mega-Corporation in the years which followed, and now calls itself New Eden/JV. New Eden/JV has a strange Corporate structure that is like a smaller version of the ICC, with the New Eden/JV entity itself functioning as a sort of umbrella and the various components retaining their own identities and goals. Control of New Eden/JV is determined along democratic lines, with each member Corporation receiving votes based on its wealth and rate of growth.

When New Eden was discovered, it had an almost ideal climate and environment. Only rudimentary lifeforms existed on the world, but it proved to be an easy terraforming job. The world is now completely terraformed, and has a population of 200 million.

The world was colonized very rapidly, and was a spur to the growth of all the involved Corporations and the rest of Humanity as well. The most talented people in the member Corporations were transferred to New Eden, where they were able to work in an unusual environment that rival Corporations consider a drawback; personnel on New Eden can easily change their employment from one member of New Eden/JV to another. This guarantees that everyone is well treated and that real talent is rewarded. Elsewhere in the ICC, it is very difficult to change Corporations, and this has resulted in stagnation as internal politics became more important than good work.

The good treatment afforded the employees of New Eden/JV has prevented the member Corporations from truly maximizing their short-term profits, but because of their unique business environment and since the wealth produced by New Eden has been so great, they have been somewhat magnanimous. Other Corporations generally elect to increase their profits by giving the employees as little as possible, and point to New Eden/JV as an example of inefficiency and bad management.

Regardless, New Eden is a prosperous and self-sufficient world, its population has a great deal of freedom, and the member Corporations are all growing quickly and smoothly.

Cyrus

Cyrus will eventually be a comfortable world for humans, and it will have a large and productive Colony. At present, the atmosphere is toxic and contains insufficient oxygen, and the world's greatest value is that it is one step on the recently completed New Eden - Hilo route. Cyrus is being terraformed by New Eden/JV, and colonial development will probably begin within the next twenty years.

"Yeah, but secreted from what?"

Hicks

Medusa

A cold world with an unbreathable atmosphere, but good potential for future development. It lies on the route that links New Eden with Hilo, and is early in a terraforming program being managed by New Eden/JV.

Panamar

This is another terraforming project for New Eden/JV. A small research and mining station is studying and harvesting a type of thermogenic plankton; this simple lifeform uses thermal energy instead of sunlight to create hydrocarbons. It is already used in Life Support systems, and will probably have many other functions as well.

Morning Glory

This is the base camp for New Eden/JV's attempt to link up with Micor through Morning Star. It is a Service Base which is currently the port for deep exploration craft.

3.14

MICOR SECTOR

This route runs from Earth to the rich world of Micor, and is below and to the left of Earth on the Star Map. This sector has had a relatively peaceful past. Its Colonies were not self sufficient enough to rebel during the Colonial Wars and the Corporations owning the rich world of Micor have been complacent and peaceful. The Corporate conflicts which characterize the Hyperdyne and CSC Sectors seem out of place and the Sector is very prosperous. All this is changing, however, for Micor is supported by a society pushed to the edge of revolt and greedy Corporations from other Sectors have consolidated their positions enough to begin to look for new avenues of expansion. The Micor Sector will certainly appeal to many.

Astyanax

This is a small Research Station with only rudimentary spacecraft repair abilities. It is located on a moon in three domed communities, where a decades-long biological experiment is being run. A team of 20 operates and maintains the station.

The research involves the study of an indigenous life form called **Brachous Slugs**, and is nearing its completion (Section 3.16). Until recently, there was little interest in this outpost, but last year there was a slight security leak. The stock of the owning Corporation, Falcon Industries, suddenly soared in value before being pulled off the market. Falcon Industries then bought up all available stock, and began hiring a military force for the protection of Astyanax.

Whatever the nature of the breakthrough, something has happened on Astyanax and many Corporations are hoping to muscle in on Falcon's operation, using intimidation, financial trickery or leverage, or brute force. Falcon is obviously unwilling to share this new development; only time will tell who will profit from the situation, and how valuable this breakthrough really is.

**"Nobody touch
nothin'."**

Apone

Argos

Argos is a dry, sand-swept world much like Mars. It has little water and a thin atmosphere, and these commodities are carefully maintained and conserved. Even with these restrictions, Argos is a thriving Colony with a population of 100,000. It is the base for a number of small manufacturing Corporations, and this industry is supplemented by large cargo facilities which handle commodities from Tartarus. The location of Argos is its greatest asset; it receives all the traffic to and from the Tartarus Sector, as well as vessels from Earth, Micor, and Grendel. In all, it is a prosperous, well-run commercial Colony. Beneath the surface, there is also another healthy economy; that of a well-established network of smugglers, dealing in all types of contraband.

West Star

This is a small Mining operation on the moons of the gas giant which rules this system. The operation uses remote mining robots for the work, and there is a crew of only 60 people here who oversee and maintain the robots. The substance being mined is Helium 3, which is the standard element used in creating the fusion reactions which generate most of the power in the ICC.

Feldspar

Feldspar is a Mining World that has been played out. Recent years have seen it transformed into a cargo storage and inspection point on the Honeycomb - Micor and Micor - Argos routes. Micor is concerned with illegal traffic into its territory (most of it through Grendel), and is using Feldspar as its control point for all commercial traffic. A customs and security compound has been added onto the old Mining station, and space defenses are also being set up. These are being run by Hyperdyne, although some people question whether Hyperdyne really wants to halt the illegal activities.

"Hot as hell in here."

Frost

Lobo

A large Colony which has expanded recently due to the increasing trade to and from Honeycomb. Terraforming was completed here only 8 years ago, and the population has grown rapidly to its current level of 70,000. Many of the new residents are involved with the advanced planning and transfer of the owning Corporations' assets from other worlds to this budding trade center. The Corporations that own Lobo are organized into a loose consortium called Tradex, which is based on Micor and is superficially similar to New Eden/JV. Unfortunately, Tradex exerts little real control here.

The local police and military forces of Tradex are currently under the control of Colonel Castel, and he possesses much more power than is usually given to a Colonial military commander. He is an ambitious man who has built up the power of his forces, and has transferred their loyalty away from Tradex and to himself. This force, which is beginning to resemble a personal army, has been implicated in high levels of bribery, corruption, and extortion. Castel has certainly encouraged these crimes, and is believed to be associated with criminal elements and Corporate forces which threaten the interests of Tradex.

Tradex is investigating the situation, and charges of embezzlement and treason will probably be filed in the near future. Due to Castel's influence, however, and his links with powerful Corporations, the ICC has declined to assist the Tradex investigation, and may not support any legal action they take. In the meantime, the Corporations licensed to operate on Lobo can do almost anything, as long as Castel gets a cut, and crime and smuggling have become the Colony's two major industries.

"Yeah, man, but it's a dry heat."

Hudson

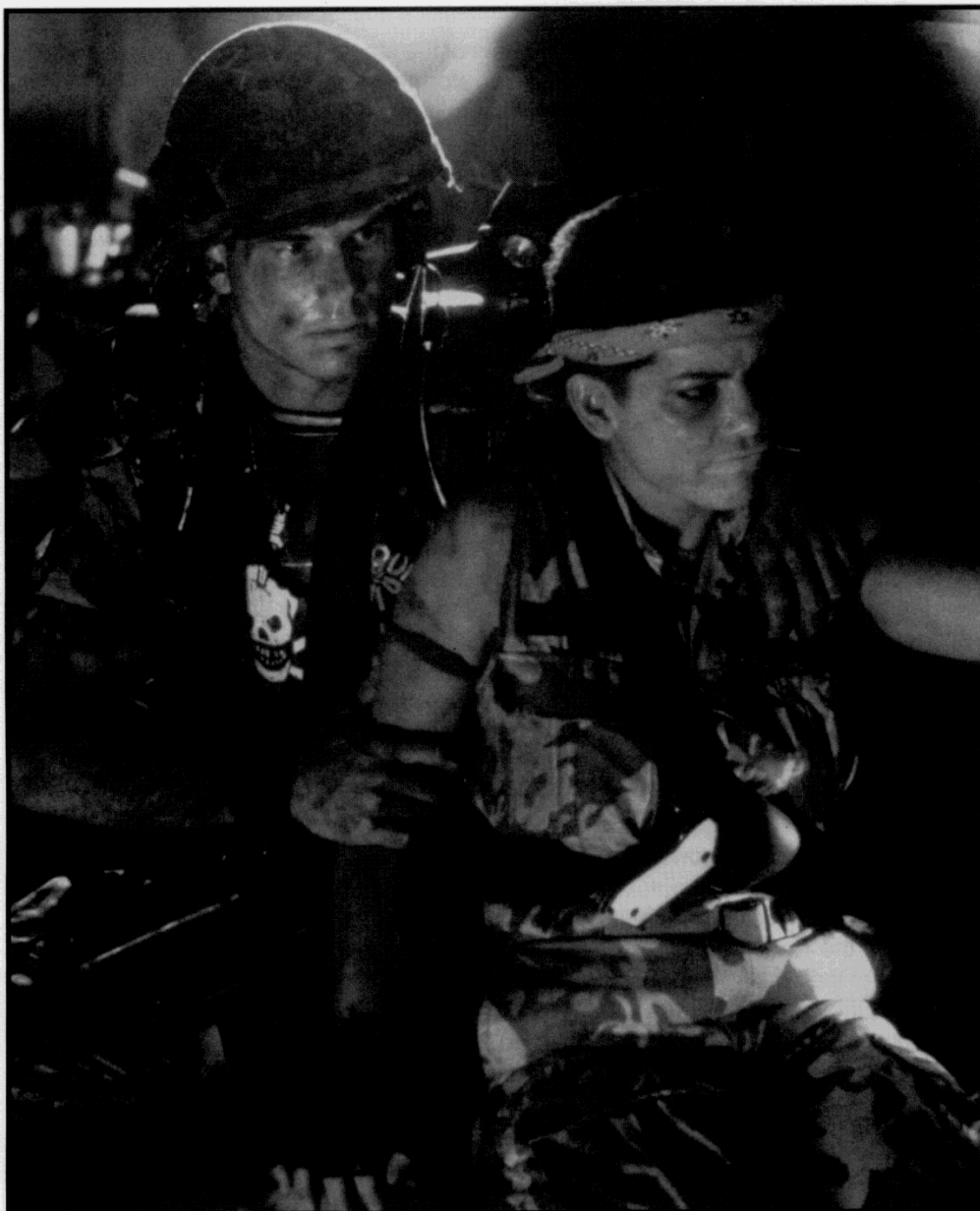
Alamar

The star in this system is a Red Giant, and Alamar is a Research Spacestation in orbit around it. There are 80 scientists and technicians here, conducting general research on stellar exploration probes and supporting equipment.

Summit

Summit is a Colony in the last stages of terraforming and is prepared for major expansion. The air is now breathable and the climate mild, so many Corporations are planning to move to this nearly ideal environment. This is the boom world for the next generation, and along with this economic and population boom will come the problems associated with rapid growth.

The world was developed by the hard work of the original colonists. This was a group of 2,000 people who were members of wealthy families, and who decided to expand their fortunes in the finest traditions of industry; through intelligent planning, sensible risk-taking, and honest labor. They formed their own Corporation and set about developing the world of Summit, which had great potential but had been ignored by its former owners. After decades of terraforming and preparation, the colonists and their now-grown children are poised to reap the benefits of their labor.



**"Afraid I have
some bad news."**

Bishop

"Well, that's a switch."

Hudson

Hudson and Vasquez

The only obstacle to the happy fulfillment of this dream is the potential for deceit, treachery, and financial manipulation by the Corporations who are flocking to Summit. How the colonists will face this final crisis, and whether their great accomplishment will be passed on to another generation, is yet to be decided.

Byron's Hope

This is the scene of a cancelled terraforming project by Pindel Corporation. A disaster destroyed the initial terraforming site and killed the head of Pindel and some of his top advisers, and ended the Corporation's efforts here. Lacking effective leadership, Pindel decided to cut its losses and the new Corporate heads have settled for spending their wealth on Micor. Their quick abandonment of development and business in exchange for a life of ease is seen by many as a sign of decay within the upper classes of the ICC.

The world holds promise, if it is properly developed. The atmosphere is too thin to breathe and there is no surface water, but these are fairly simple terraforming problems.

"Lieutenant, what do those Pulse Rifles fire?"

Ripley

"Ten millimeter explosive tipped caseless. Standard light armor piercing round. Why?"

Gorman

"If they fire their weapons in there, won't they rupture the cooling system?"

Ripley

Micor

This is the richest planet in the ICC, in terms of the standard of living of the inhabitants. It is a nearly ideal world that has been fully terraformed, and is possessed of an Earthlike ecosystem. Micor has become a home for the rich of the ICC; wealthy stockholders from dozens of Corporations have settled here with their families, and have lives of great ease. Many people who were once powerful in the Nations of Earth are also here, having accepted Corporate bribes in exchange for their country's economic cooperation. It is noteworthy that the people who live on Micor are not those who currently have power. They are people who have traded their power for simple wealth, and who are now reaping the benefits of that decision.

There is little industry on Micor itself. The industry necessary for the world, as well as the 800,000 people necessary to operate that industry, have been consigned to a large domed colony on Micor's moon. The workers all dream of the ultimate promotion, which is transfer to Micor itself, and work very hard in pursuit of that dream. Micor also has a vast corps of scientists and researchers on this moon and scattered in labs across the ICC. These people are graduates of one of Micor's greatest assets, its chain of universities on Earth.

These schools represent the highest education possible for Earth's billions, and allow Micor to select and train the most talented people available. On graduation, these students are offered positions with Micor, with the inducement that if they are successful, they will be given wealth and homes on Micor itself, the closest thing to paradise in the ICC. Driven by youthful optimism and courage, many of the best choose to go with Micor. They are then leased out to small Corporations in need of assistance, where they work in the most advanced scientific projects in the ICC. Micor receives a share of the proceeds from these projects, and passes on some of its profits to the scientists responsible. For those who make breakthroughs, the rewards are everything they have been promised. Only a few are successful, however, and the others continue to work desperately, driven by the desire to reach Micor and the knowledge that their only real option is a trip back to the poverty and chaos of Earth.

Some of the larger Corporations, ones that do not contract with Micor for scientists, are resentful of the wealth Micor is accumulating, and they are tired of competing with the graduates of their think-tanks. These Corporations are working to undermine Micor from within, and they are supporting the development of the drug trade to Micor and its moon. They hope that they can disrupt Micor's society, and bring an end to its monopoly on scientific genius. The leaders of Micor are aware of these efforts, and are trying to defend their social structure.

Pestron

A world in the early stages of colonization. Basic exploration and terraforming plans have been made, and the first Atmosphere Processors are in place. Construction of the rest of the terraforming equipment and of the future Colony are in full swing.

Morningstar

Advanced space exploration base for the establishment of a route from Micor to New Eden. Good progress was being made, but in the last few years funding has been cut and new exploration is on hold. The rulers of Micor have apparently decided that a direct route to New Eden is not in their best interests, and they are dragging their feet. The exploration and maintenance crews of Morningstar have been waiting here for some time, and there is general dissatisfaction.

3.15

TARTARUS SECTOR

This small Sector branches off from the Micor Sector at Argos, and is named for the fertile world of Tartarus. That planet is the scene of the greatest emergency in the ICC in recent years, as the indigenous Harvesters have surfaced and are destroying the Colony.

Scorcher

A small manufacturing facility on a hot, barren world with no atmosphere. This world is very close to its sun, and the intense heat makes it uniquely uninhabitable. The Colony survives by being buried under the surface, and is protected by domes with multiple barriers that are highly reflective. This keeps the heat to a bearable level. The very harshness of the environment is what lends the world its value; the hard vacuum, the high temperature, and the extremely pure base minerals found readily available here make it easy to produce critical parts for the drive and power systems used in Spacecraft.

This fragile Colony of 5,000 is just a moment away from a disaster, because of the brutal conditions. Even if all systems are properly maintained and the residents are very careful, an unusually large solar flare could still be devastating; this possibility hangs over the Colony like the threat of an earthquake, or some other natural disaster.

Spacecraft coming into the system stay outside Scorcher's orbit, and transportation to and from the planet is handled by special shuttles which can handle the extreme heat. Because of the special expense of this fleet, few non-essential items are found at this facility. Prices for all items are four times normal, while luxury items and non-essentials cost 20 times the regular price.

Twilight

This Colony harnesses the planet's volcanic energy and magma for ore processing and other mining. Volcanic eruptions have polluted the atmosphere beyond the ability of any Atmosphere Processor to cleanse it, and the dim light which reaches the surface gave the Colony its name. The atmosphere is toxic, and the Colony of 15,000 is domed.

Robotic rigs float on the seas of magma and handle the mining chores, and manned vehicles are used to collect the ores.

Devil's Peak

Most of this world is covered by ocean, with only a single landmass rising above its surface. This area is at a very high elevation (15,000 feet above sea level), and contains the Colony. Since the atmosphere is moderately toxic, the Colony exists in four domes, and Atmosphere Processors are slowly adjusting the air.

Until recently, Devil's Peak was a small but prosperous place, with a population of about 10,000 people. Events on the planet Tartarus have changed all this, as refugees from that dangerous world have fled to Devil's Peak by the thousands. At the moment, the population has reached 40,000, and Biozone Alpha (BZA), which owns Tartarus, has nearly exhausted its resources. There is not enough transportation to take the refugees on to other systems, and to continue evacuating people from Tartarus; to date, BZA has continued evacuating Tartarus, but the situation on Devil's Peak is now unstable.

The refugees have overcrowded the small Colony, and have stretched its food, water, air, and living space to the limit. Refugees are being housed in every available area, and production in the Colony has almost stopped. BZA is trying to pay for the services for the refugees, but it is simply not possible to provide for their needs. Malnutrition and disease are becoming problems, and crime and violence are at very high levels. As the situation deteriorates, BZA is appealing to the ICC for assistance, and relief supplies and transportation might be sent in the near future. Even if there is no aid, Colonial Marines will certainly be sent in to handle the civil unrest which is building.

Temple

This is a science outpost on a planet with a toxic atmosphere and low gravity (1/12 Earth) where two dozen researchers are working on metallurgy. They are being assisted by nearly 50 Synthetics of the latest design, and new techniques are being developed for the use of Synthetics in research. The manufacturer of the Synthetics, Hyperdyne, is a major supporter of the work on Temple, and hopes to demonstrate the effectiveness of advanced Synthetics in the sciences and in the operation of facilities on dangerous worlds. One technology being tested allows a direct transfer of memory from a Synthetic to a Human, and of instructions and guidance from the Human back to the Synthetic. This would allow Human reasoning and instinct to be more closely coupled with the sheer power of a Synthetic's brain.

"So? So what?"

Gorman

"Look, this whole station is basically a big fusion reactor. Right? So we're talking about a thermonuclear explosion, and adios, muchachos."

Burke

**"We can't have
any firing in there.
I want you to collect
magazines from
everybody."**

Gorman

**"What the hell
are we supposed to
use, man? Harsh
language."**

Frost

**"Flame units only.
I want rifles slung...
And no grenades."**

Gorman

Tartarus

This is an extremely fertile world, with thousands of species of plant/animal hybrids that use the sun's energy and the rich carbon dioxide/oxygen atmosphere for growth. Although it holds great promise, it is now the site of a major crisis for the ICC.

Tartarus was discovered only a generation ago, but it was already habitable and was quickly developed. An unusual feature of Tartarus is its rotation, which is perpendicular to its orbit. It takes 40 years to complete its orbit around the sun, so it has a 20 year day and a 20 year night. The constant sunlight of this extended day produces a vibrant and diverse ecosystem. On the night side there is little life, and the world waits for day to return. There are three major continents on Tartarus, only one of which is currently in daylight and which is colonized. The environment has been ideal; there is an abundance of life with no particularly dangerous creatures, and excellent atmosphere and climate.

Knowing about Tartarus' peculiar orbit, the settlements were designed with a slow migration in mind. Each continent would be colonized in turn, and as night settled over a part of the colony, it would be shut down and the inhabitants would move ahead to a new site, one which was entering the daylight.

This process was just beginning a few years ago, as sites which were within a year of twilight prepared for shutdown and the colonists got ready to transfer to new locations on a continent that was nearing its dawn. Darkness would settle over the rest of the first continent over the course of eight years. The transfer was eagerly anticipated by all the Corporations present, as a test of their abilities and an opportunity to develop new areas. It was at this point that the most dangerous native lifeform made its appearance. Scientists had been looking forward to finding out how the environment handled the transition from day to night, but these ravenous monsters are not what they had in mind.

The creatures are called **Harvesters**, and that is exactly what they do. As a continent enters its night, these immense, armored creatures burrow up from tunnels far below the surface to devour all organic materials. This material is shredded and carried back underground, to cysts where the Harvesters live. The Harvesters live off the organics for years, and slowly generate the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which in turn regenerates the surface life when daylight returns. It is a strange ecological cycle, but one which remains in balance. Unfortunately, the Harvesters do not differentiate between their natural food and the Colonists who now live on Tartarus.

The Harvesters look something like huge amadillo. They are capable of digging and boring through rock and concrete, and their jaws can shred almost anything. They move in packs of several dozen, and these packs often fight each other for control of fertile areas. A pack will coordinate its activities, and organizes for war in the same way that ants do.

Colonial Marines and other forces have been sent to Tartarus to protect the many settlements scattered across the daylight continent. Missions include evacuating colonists, delaying Harvester attacks, retrieving abandoned equipment from devastated communities, and Harvester hunting and research. The Harvesters are sweeping across the continent, and will be done with their work within three years if Humans do not stop them. Parts of the continent will still be in full daylight at that time, however, and Corporations which own communities in these areas do not want to abandon them until night falls. In these places, plans have been made to defend the communities against Harvester attacks; how well this will work is unknown.

To assist in these defenses, missions are being sent down into the Harvester tunnels to see if the creatures have a weak point. To date, no one has reached any of the cysts where the Harvesters live and store their food. When they do, another surprise is waiting for them. The Harvesters have a smaller form which never leaves the cyst, called a Drone, which is used to defend the cyst from underground pests, ranging in size from small insects up to nearly Human size. The Drone is little more than a large pair of powerful jaws, and it is not even a self-supporting life form. Instead, the Drones grow on Harvester variants called Carriers. When they leave their Carrier to fight, they have only a few hours of life left. They attack the invading creatures by biting with their immense jaws, which lock in place. Like a bee, they give their lives defending their lair.

Full rules for Harvesters, Carriers, and Drones in combat are given in Section 6.12.



"Die! Come on, come on, come get it baby! Come on, I don't got all day. Come on! Come on, come on you bastards! Come on, you too! Oh, you want some of this? Hicks!...Hicks!"

Hudson

Hicks and Vasquez trying to save Hudson

Deadfall

Deadfall is a research station studying the mechanics and processes involved in Terraforming. The world is an Earth-sized planet with a good temperature, but little atmosphere or surface water, and minimal volcanic activity. This static situation has made it an ideal laboratory for studies of atmospheric development and volcanic activity.

To promote volcanic activity, asteroids are being thrown into Deadfall; the impacts of these asteroids trigger shatter parts of the planet's crust, and the resulting movements and volcanoes are studied by a facility with 30 scientists and about 100 people responsible for moving the asteroids. The asteroid movers were formerly asteroid miners, but their contracts were bought up for this unusual activity. Specially designed Tug Spacecraft are being used, as well as nuclear detonations; the work is naturally under tight security, and a detachment of Colonial Marines and 20 special ICC Agents protect these technologies.

3.16

LIFE FORMS

The strange environments found on the worlds of the ICC are home to thousands of unusual Life Forms. A few of the most distinctive are described below. The GM may use these as desired.

Arcturians

These are the natives of Arcturus, and they are mammal-like creatures that are about the same size as Humans. Their society is like that of ants; they live in underground hives, have a single large Queen which lays eggs, and raise their young in communal nursing chambers. They are semi-intelligent, with mental abilities similar to those of the lower apes.

This combination of animal and insect traits makes the Arcturians a strange race. They are warm-blooded omnivores, breathe an oxygen atmosphere, and are roughly humanoid, but they are also eyeless and they communicate and find their way using sonar. Their

**"Steady, people.
Let's finish our sweep.
We're still Marines and
we've got a job to do.
Keep it movin'."**

Apone

**"Get over here!
We've got a live one.
You're gonna be
alright, you're gonna
be alright."**

Dietrich

"Please... Kill me."

Colonist

young are amphibious and are raised in warm pools in nursing chambers near the bottom of the hive. The limited intelligence of the Arcturians allows them to work together on important tasks, learn from experience, and teach each other. They have a rudimentary language and use simple tools, including sharpened pieces of stone for weapons. In combat, use the Arcturian weapons listed in the **Hand-to-Hand Tables(8C)**. When an Arcturian takes damage, the Human **Hit Location and Damage Table (6A)** is used.

Arcturians pose little threat to armed Colonial Marines, but an unwary group entering Arcturian tunnels could be in trouble. They have been known to lay traps for Humans, and have even collapsed shafts to isolate intruders. The Arcturians have also learned to wait until a group's lights have failed before attacking, to maximize their advantages.

Arcturians are kept away from Human settlements by sonic barriers. To drive them out of their warrens is more difficult, as the Queen is immobile and the Arcturians will defend their nursing chambers to the death.

Blackbody Coral

Discovered on Saint John, Blackbody Coral is a hive-type micro-organism that is similar to the coral of Earth. It grows on surfaces that are exposed to light, and its cells are essentially light traps; virtually all of the solar energy which hits the Coral is absorbed into the cells, which are also well-insulated. The energy is used to feed the growth of the Blackbody hive.

Blackbody Coral is widely used in construction on Colony worlds with harsh environments, because of its excellent insulation and energy absorption properties.

Harvesters

Harvesters are large creatures which live below the ground, and they are destroying the Colony on Tartarus (Section 3.15). Their attack is almost impossible to stop because they bore through the earth and attack from directly beneath the facilities. No underground protection has been found that will stop the Harvesters, although many attempts have been made. Decoying the Harvesters to the surface outside the Colony where they can be attacked by Aircraft has been used with success, but the Harvesters are cunning and these tricks are no longer effective. The primary focus at the remaining facilities is to destroy the Harvesters in their underground chambers. For this work, the Colonial Marines have been called in.

A Harvester is heavier than any land animal on Earth; it is over nine feet high and nearly twenty feet long. Shaped something like an armadillo, the Harvester lives beneath the ground and has massive front claws and a powerful snout for digging. It uses sonar as its main sense and has acute hearing and smell, but limited vision. The Harvester is very maneuverable for a creature of its size and can move up to 24 feet per second (8 hexes per Phase). Its main purpose is burrowing and harvesting. Harvesting consists of burrowing to the surface and shredding organic plant and animal life which it processes and stores in its gut. Harvesters operate in groups and their communication and intelligence can be compared to that of a wolf pack. They are highly territorial and attack any Harvester from a foreign pack or any other threat within their area of operation. A Harvester's attack consists of the creature charging and overrunning or ramming its target. When Harvesters fight each other, it is a push and shove match until one is turned over, exposing its softer underbelly. This leaves it vulnerable to the shredding jaws of the victor.

The Carrier is another form of the creature, and it is very similar to the normal Harvester. It is different in that it is not equipped to harvest and store large quantities of organic material. Instead, it has up to 12 Drones growing on itself. These Drones can be regrown in about three weeks.

The Drone is a smaller, boar size creature whose purpose is defense against small animals and creatures which threaten the Lair and underground chambers. The Drone has only one purpose, and that is to bite. It lives attached to what is called a Carrier and has few internal organs of its own. When released from the Carrier to attack a foe, it does so with the ferocity of a creature whose only purpose is attack, for the Drone can only live a few hours once released. The Drone can climb and jump, as well as move at up to 42 feet per second (14 hexes per Phase). Once it reaches its target, it attacks with its jaws.



"I guess we're not
going to be leaving
now, right?"

Newt

Newt being grabbed by an Alien

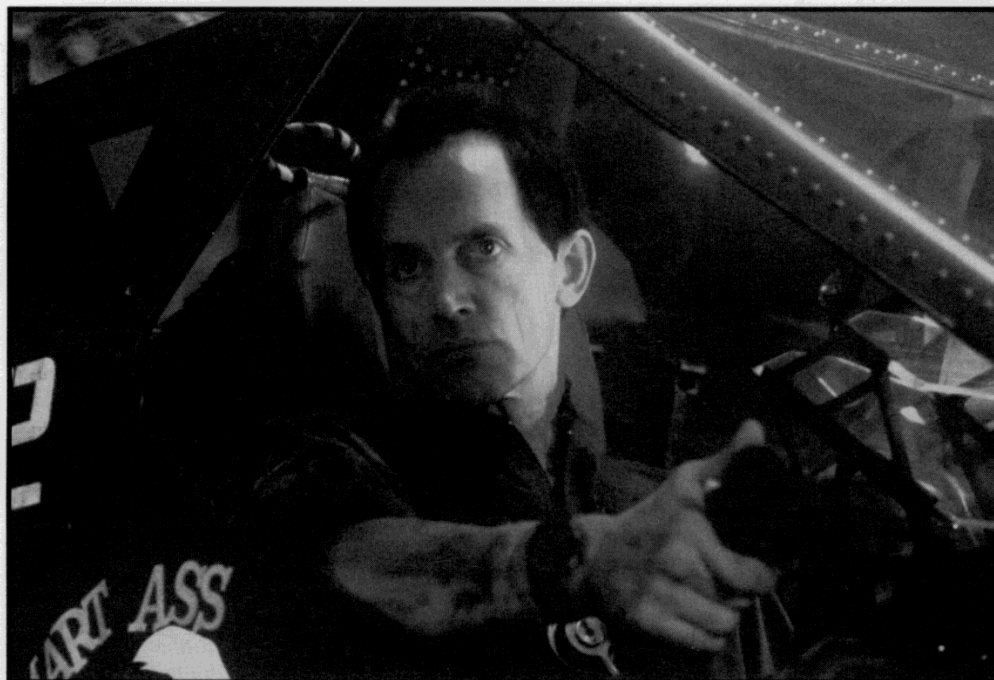
The creature is nothing more than a portable set of mandibles, and once it locks its jaws onto its victim it will not release its grip. The jaws actually ratchet down and cannot be opened short of breaking the thick skull and mandibles. The Harvester, Carrier, and Drone's abilities in combat are detailed in Section 6.12.

Hyper-Algae

This very small type of plantlife was found in the limited shallow seas of Alexandria. When it is cultivated in an environment of water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide, it reproduces at an incredibly high rate. Oxygen is the main byproduct of Hyper-Algae, so it is used in the large Life Support systems of many Colonies, and is the primary reason the systems are inexpensive and reliable.

"I prefer the term
Artificial Person,
myself."

Bishop



Bishop Piloting a Dropship

Morphers

These creatures were discovered on Saint John. They weigh five to ten pounds and have a unique shape-changing ability. They are able to adopt any one of several forms, including a water-breather like a fish, an amphibian form, and a land-dwelling air-breather. Morphers do not simply change shape at will; they enter a state of dormancy in response to seasonal and climatic change, and emerge from that state days or weeks later in a form which is more appropriate to the current environment. This change occurs through the action of a special part of the Morpher's DNA code, and is like the way a tadpole becomes a frog, except that a Morpher changes among several different forms on a cyclic basis.

The study of Morphers has been vital to the science of genetic engineering, and Morpher DNA is still being heavily researched for future uses.

Panamar Plankton

A recent discovery on Panamar is a type of thermogenic plankton; this simple lifeform uses thermal energy instead of sunlight to create hydrocarbons. It is already in experimental use in Life Support systems, and will probably have many other functions as well.

Brachous Slugs

This is a simple and decidedly unglamorous organism which lives on Astyanax. Concealed in its DNA, however, could be one of the greatest prizes discovered by Humanity. Because the Brachous Slug evolved in a high radiation environment, it has developed the ability to repair radiation damage and other harm to its own DNA. The ability to repair itself has given this simple creature effective immortality. Falcon Industries is currently leading an intensive research project into the Brachous Slug, in the hope of greatly extending Human life.

4

THE ALIENS

At the heart of this game is the most dangerous and bizarre species ever encountered by Humanity: the Aliens. In addition to the fascinating nature of these terrifying creatures, they are important because the most interesting game situations for the GM and the players will be those that involve the Aliens. There are a number of ways in which the players can be brought into contact with the true stars of the game, as described below and in Chapter 8. The history of the Aliens is also discussed in the following pages, and may be used as desired by the GM.

Please note that the information presented here is specifically designed for use with this game, and that there is no particular relationship between what follows and what other ALIENS-related products might have stated or implied about the Aliens and their abilities, or what might be revealed about them in future films. GM's who wish to blend this game with information from other sources will have to modify what is presented here to suit their purposes.

4.1

BACKGROUND

Long before Humans reached Acheron, also called LV-426, that harsh, barren world was visited by another race. Little is known of them, except that they were giant, humanoid creatures that travelled among the stars. Their bizarre craft was apparently forced to land on Acheron, where the crewmembers were killed by the same creatures which destroyed Hadley Station: the Aliens.

The Spacecraft remained there for untold years, holding its deadly, dormant cargo. An exploration craft heard its automatic warning signal and reported it to its superiors. Shortly thereafter, a cargo ship called the Nostromo was sent to investigate the signal, as shown in the movie ALIEN. As far as its owners could tell it was lost with all hands. Interest in the warning signal from the inhuman Spacecraft was eclipsed by more pressing matters, and the signal was forgotten by Humanity.

Decades passed, and at last the desolate world of LV-426 was bought by the Weyland-Yutani Corporation and slated for terraforming. Ignorant of the Giants' ship, the Corporation had Atmosphere Processors set up and a small Colony established. The settlement was named Hadley Station, and it was home to over 150 scientists and workers, and their families. The little Colony expanded slowly, and the atmosphere was slowly made breathable, but not pleasant. The world remained harsh, forbidding, and virtually unexplored.

More than 50 years after the Nostromo's visit to the system and more than 20 years after the establishment of Hadley Station, the Nostromo's Escape Pod was recovered, and its lone inhabitant revived. Her name was Second Officer Ellen Ripley, and her wild story of an unkillable creature with acid for blood was believed by almost no one. One man at Weyland-Yutani, Carter J. Burke, believed just enough of her story to send the Colonists on LV-426 to look for the inhuman ship.

**"Movement...
Can't lock in... uh,
multiple signals,
they're closing...
I got readings in
front and behind...
Look, I'm telling you
there's something
moving and it ain't us."**

Hudson

"The tracker's off scale, man. They're all around us, man."

Hudson

Russ Jorden was the Colonist chosen; he took his wife and two children, Timothy and Rebecca, in a Ground Exploration Vehicle across the hundreds of miles to the site. The adults went into the immense craft, and Russ was attacked and immobilized by a Facehugger. His wife dragged him to safety, and radioed back to Hadley for help. They were flown back to the Colony for medical aid, and the Vehicle was abandoned.

What happened to Jorden and the rest of the Colony was discovered by the Strike Team of Colonial Marines sent out to investigate the sudden silence of Hadley, as related in the movie itself. The only survivors were Ripley, Corporal Hicks, Rebecca Jorden, and the Synthetic Bishop.

In the aftermath of this failed mission, Weyland-Yutani is trying to figure out what to do while suppressing all information. The survivors are being debriefed at great length, and Weyland-Yutani is attempting to erase all traces that the mission ever occurred. Other Corporations have picked up rumors, however, and interest in Acheron is increasing. The situation is fully described in Section 8.4, and is ideal for the starting point of an **ALIENS** campaign.

4.2

LIFE CYCLE OF THE ALIENS

The way Aliens reproduce and multiply is one of the most bizarre traits of a highly unusual species. Each Alien goes through several stages of growth, and each adult Alien possesses the ability to reproduce without assistance. The details are as follows.

The Egg

The Egg contains the first form of an Alien. Eggs may be laid by any of the adult Alien forms, but the Queen is by far the most prolific and efficient Egg-layer, as described later. The Egg itself is made of polarized silicate, like the exoskeletons of all Alien forms. The silicate is extremely tough and durable, and is an ideal protection for the newly-created Facehugger within it. An Egg laid by a Queen weighs 60 pounds, while one laid by a normal adult Alien is less than a quarter of that weight. The difference lies in their long-term durability; Queen-laid Eggs will protect and support the Facehugger for centuries, while Eggs from other Aliens last only a few months.

The Facehugger

The Facehugger looks like two long, spindly hands which have been joined together, and to which a long tail has been attached. The outside of the Facehugger is made of an extremely tough polarized silicate, but the inner surface, the "palm" of the hands, is less well protected.

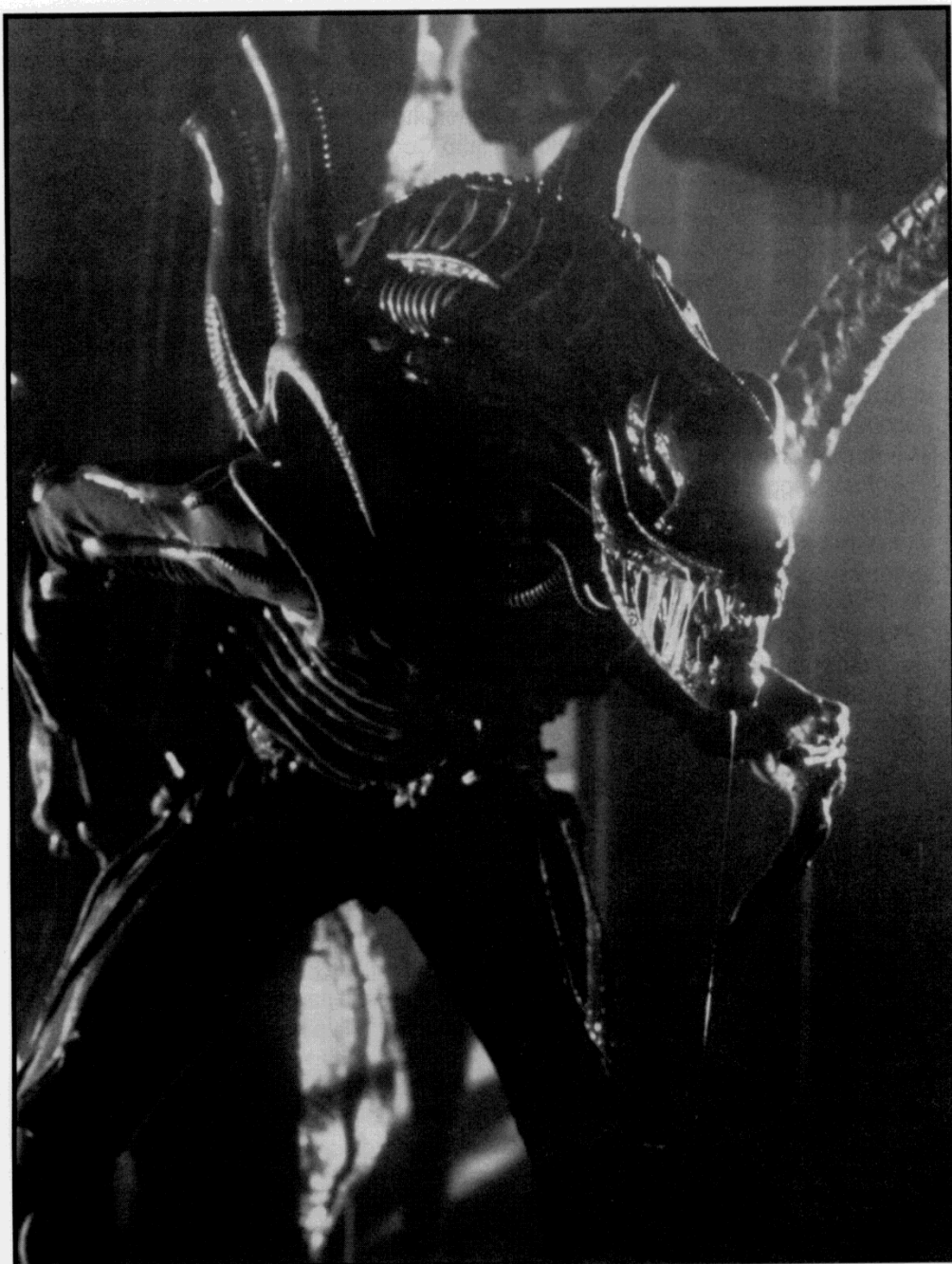
The Facehugger is dormant within the Egg, and can wait there for an unlimited time. It will awaken in response to movement outside the Egg by sensing vibrations; rather like a spider, the Facehugger is keyed to respond to the repeated motion patterns of living creatures, and it is even capable of determining the approximate mass of the life form. If the life form weighs at least 30 pounds, the Facehugger will awaken and will attack. It possesses good instincts regarding attack techniques, and will wait until the target is as close as possible to the Egg before springing. When the Egg opens, a small amount of a special gas is released, which prevents nearby Eggs from opening for a short time; a minute or so, in a ventilated area. After this period has elapsed, another Egg can open in response to other life forms, or the continuing struggles of the original target.

When in action, the Facehugger is capable of crawling on its "fingers" at 25 feet per second (16 miles per hour, or 8 Hexes per Phase for miniatures play), and of leaping up to 12 feet. The tail provides the remarkable power behind the Facehugger's leap, and is used to carry the creature from the Egg to the head of a nearby target. Rules for the Facehugger's Leap and its behavior in combat are given below.

Facehugger Leap: When a Facehugger Leaps at its target, it has a Success Roll of 10 (Average Difficulty) minus the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM to attach itself to the target's head. If it makes the roll, the Facehugger grasps the target very tightly with its

"Let's Rock!"

Vasquez



Alien Warrior

fingers while tightening its tail around the target's throat. It then inserts a flexible tube from the center of its inner surface into the target's mouth, and emits a broad-spectrum paralyzing agent from the end of the tube. This immediately enters the target's lungs and causes unconsciousness. If there is something between the tube and the target's mouth, like the faceplate of a helmet or similar protective device, the Facehugger will secrete a sufficient quantity of Acid Blood (Section 6.11) to allow the tube to penetrate. This takes one Phase.

If the Facehugger fails its roll by 3 or less, it has grabbed the target's head or upper torso but has not been able to place itself properly or paralyze the target. It will attempt to paralyze the target again during the next Phase, as described below. For example, if it needed a 7 on an attack but rolled an 8, 9, or 10, then it failed to attach itself but would have a firm hold on the target.

"Maybe we got
them demoralized."

Hudson

"Apone, are you copying me?... I want you to lay down a suppressing fire with the incinerators and fall back by squads to the APC."

Gorman

"Apone? Talk to me... Apone? Talk to me, Apone!"

Gorman

"He's gone! Get them out of there! Do it now! Hicks, whoever's left, get the hell out!"

Ripley

If it failed its roll by 4 or more, then the Leap missed the target entirely. The Facehugger will land within 6 feet of the target, and during the next Phase it will race after the closest appropriate target using normal movement until it catches up, at which time it will Leap at the target and make another attempt to attach itself. The Success Roll is again 10 minus the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM.

Facehugger Combat: When a Facehugger has partially grabbed a target but is not properly placed, it continues trying to immobilize the victim. It gets one try each Phase, needing a Success Roll of 14 minus the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM. For each person assisting the target, reduce the Facehugger's Success Roll by 2 or by the person's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM, whichever is greater. (A Character with a Rating of Certified, Novice, or Untrained would subtract 2; a Professional would subtract 4, and so forth.) If the Facehugger makes its roll, it can only be removed surgically (see Section 4.5); if it fails its roll by 4 or more, it has been thrown off and must spend one full Phase recovering. The Facehugger will continue trying to attach itself until it is successful or it is thrown off the target.

A Facehugger that has grabbed a target cannot be safely shot off. If the situation is desperate Characters can try to shoot the Facehugger, but they have the same chance of hitting the Facehugger's victim as they do of hitting the Facehugger. Find the Odds of Hitting the Facehugger normally, and then roll twice; the first roll determines whether the Facehugger has been hit, and the second roll determines if the victim has been hit. If the victim is hit, the Firing Around Cover column of the **Hit Location Table (6A)** should be used when determining damage. In addition, if the Facehugger is hit the victim and all nearby Characters are subject to Acid Spray (Section 6.11).

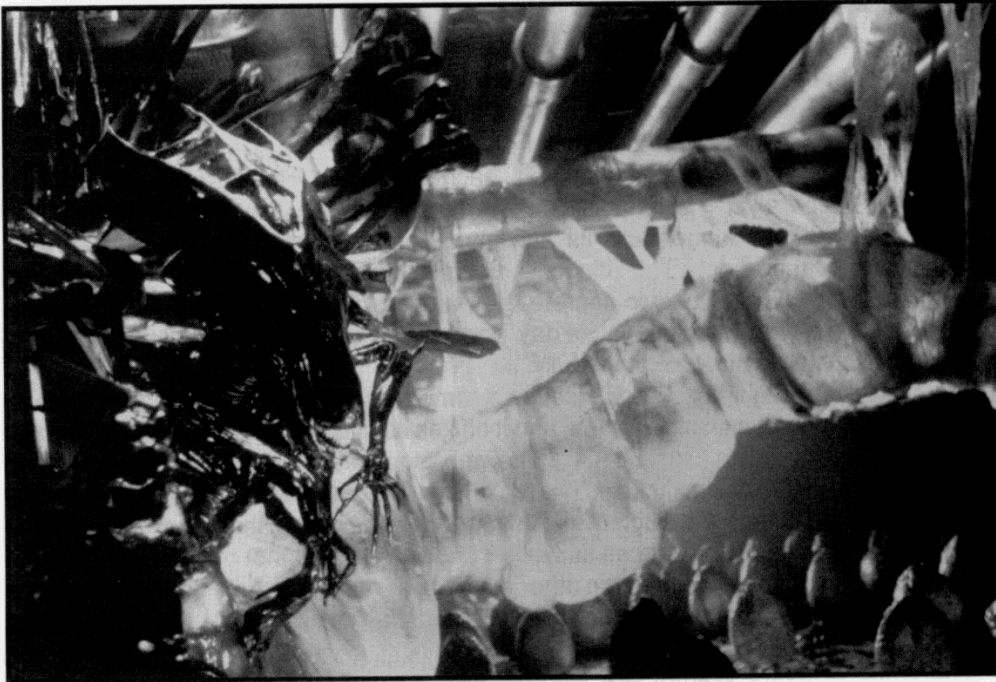
The GM should note that the Facehugger is extremely well designed to deal with humanoids, but it is an adaptable lifeform and can use its abilities against a wide variety of creatures. It can also use dead lifeforms as hosts when they are available, as discussed below.

Once it is firmly attached to its target, the Facehugger will implant one or more Chestburster Embryos inside the chest cavity of the target. Each Embryo is placed by the tube, which can be extended up to two feet initially, and can grow at a rate of 2 feet per day if necessary. As the implantation procedure goes on, the Facehugger will keep its host dormant by limiting its oxygen supply and reintroducing the paralyzing agent if necessary. The creature possesses a marvelous ability to monitor a live host, and to guarantee that it does not die.

The full implantation procedure takes 20 plus 1 to 6 hours. It then takes two more days for the Embryo(s) to mature into the Chestburster form. Throughout this 3 day period the Facehugger is slowly wasting away, and it will generally die and fall off the host a few hours before the Chestburster hatches. If by some chance the Facehugger's implantation process and the growth of the Chestburster are interrupted by being placed in a Hypersleep chamber, Embryo implantation and incubation take 20 times as long as normal.

The number and type of Embryos planted by the Facehugger are determined by the state of the host and its mass. If the host is dead during implantation, only a Warrior Alien can be produced. One Warrior Embryo can be implanted for every 30 pounds of mass of the host. If the host is alive during incubation, then any type of Alien can be produced, including a Queen or a Sentry. One Sentry Embryo can be implanted for every 50 pounds of mass of the host, while only a single Queen Embryo can be implanted, regardless of the host's size. The minimum mass for a Queen Embryo is 100 pounds. Decisions about what type of Embryo to implant are made by the Queen, if necessary.

Note that the Embryo type is determined when it is implanted. The only variation here is that if the host dies after implantation but before the Chestburster hatches, the Alien automatically grows into a Warrior. Also, the masses given above are the minimums for each type, and no Embryo can be implanted in a host of less than 30 pounds. For example, a 140 pound host can only be used for 4 Warriors, or 2 Sentries, or 1 Queen.



Queen's Chamber

The Chestbuster

The Chestbuster is the immature form of the normal adult Alien. It has a number of characteristics which are different from the adult forms, in particular its ability to regularly shed its skin as it grows and the phenomenal rate at which it can eat and process food.

As mentioned before, the Chestbuster is laid in embryo form in the chest cavity of the Host, and incubates over the course of two days. At the end of incubation, the Chestbuster weighs a little over a pound, and appears to be a cross between an adult Alien and a Facehugger; it has acquired the head and upper arms of an adult, but retains the long, powerful tail of the Facehugger.

When incubation ends, the Chestbuster breaks out of its host, using its tail, teeth, and even acid secretions to create an opening. In ideal circumstances, the Chestbuster will then consume the Host to fuel its growth, but this is not vital. The creature requires a great supply of food, inorganic matter, and water. It will consume a total of two times its eventual adult weight of this, of which roughly 1/4 must be hydrocarbon based matter (including animals, plants, nylon, petrochemicals, plastics, and so forth), 1/2 should be inorganics (including dirt, glass, sand, and other substances high in silicon), and 1/4 water. The adult weights of the various Alien types are given in their descriptions on the following pages.

The growth rate of the Chestbuster is phenomenal, and is only limited by the food supply. With sufficient food, the Chestbuster will attain its full size within a day of "hatching". If it does not find enough food to reach maturity within three days, it will die; the creature's metabolism is far too fast to allow it to live for very long. Throughout the growth period, the Chestbuster will maintain as low a profile as possible, as it is not fully capable of combat.

A Chestbuster can chew its way through obstacles quickly; it can get through a standard interior wall in a ship or building in about 20 seconds. There is no known limit to the materials which one can chew through, including steel and other metals, because it can secrete acid while chewing if necessary.

Once the Chestbuster reaches full size, its metabolism changes drastically. The skin thickens and hardens, the need for food comes to an end, and it acquires the full use of its movement and combat abilities. The exact size and abilities of the adult Alien depend on the type; Warrior, Sentry, or Queen. Each Alien type is described on the following pages. Combat values for all three types are given in Section 6.11.

"But each one of these things comes from an Egg, right? So who's laying these Eggs?"

Ripley

"I'm not sure. It must be something we haven't seen yet."

Bishop

**"Hudson? Vasquez?
Hicks? I told them to
fall back. I told them
to fall back..."**

Gorman

**"They're cut off!
Do something!"**

Ripley

**"Ripley, what the
hell are you doing?
Turn around!
That's an order!"**

Gorman

Warrior

This is the most common Alien form. A Warrior stands about seven feet tall and weighs nearly 300 pounds. It has all of the dangerous attributes of the species; an incredibly tough exoskeleton of polarized silicate, concentrated acid for blood, powerful claws and teeth, and a long tail used in battle and for balance.

There are 18 Stingers on a Warrior's tail, each of which is 2 inches long and contains a small sac of a paralyzing substance like that used by the Facehuggers. In combat, the Warrior can inject a Stinger and its sac into its target, which results in the rapid incapacitation of the target. The Stinger remains in place for a number of hours, during which time the sac continues to secrete the paralysis substance into the victim. The Stingers can be regenerated in a single day, and are only used against prey which is likely to be dangerous or to struggle powerfully.

The tubes on the Warrior's back produce a slimy web which gives the Warrior greater mobility. This works like a spider's web, and it affixes itself tightly to any areas which have been Encrusted by Resin (Section 4.4.). The web produced will easily hold the weight of a Warrior and a victim of similar size. The maximum distance that the web can be shot by the web tubes is 18 feet. Although the web naturally adheres to Resin, it can be used to attach the Warrior to other surfaces as well; in such cases it cannot be shot and must be wrapped around a projection or some other attachment point. The tubes are also capable of coiling the web around themselves, which allows a Warrior to ascend through a webbed area at 8 yards per Phase.

The limbs of every Warrior are studded with special glands which secrete small amounts of a web-like substance, which acts as a light glue in contact with the Aliens' Resin. This allows the Warrior to maneuver easily through Encrusted areas. There are also assorted hooks and spikes on the limbs which permit the Warrior to attach itself to the Resin, for ambushes and for use during periods of dormancy.

An additional use for the tubes on the Warrior's back is as a harness for prey. Victims of up to Human size can be placed between the tubes, and then webbed into location. This leaves the Warrior's limbs free for additional maneuvering and combat.

Warrior Aliens produce and shape the Resin that forms the Alien lair; Lairs are described in Section 4.4. The Resin is secreted from the mouth of the Warrior, and is formed with the hands. Warriors perform the labor for the hive, including building the tunnels and chambers, maintaining them, and gathering available food and hosts for Eggs.

Lastly, a Warrior Alien can lay one Egg each Day, if it eats 15 pounds of organic and inorganic material.

Sentry

The Sentry is the Alien type that links the Queen to the rest of the lair, and which is the leader of all nearby Aliens of other types. It is exactly like a Warrior, except that it has sensors built into its hands which are capable of creating and sensing extremely small vibrations within the Resin and web of an Alien lair.

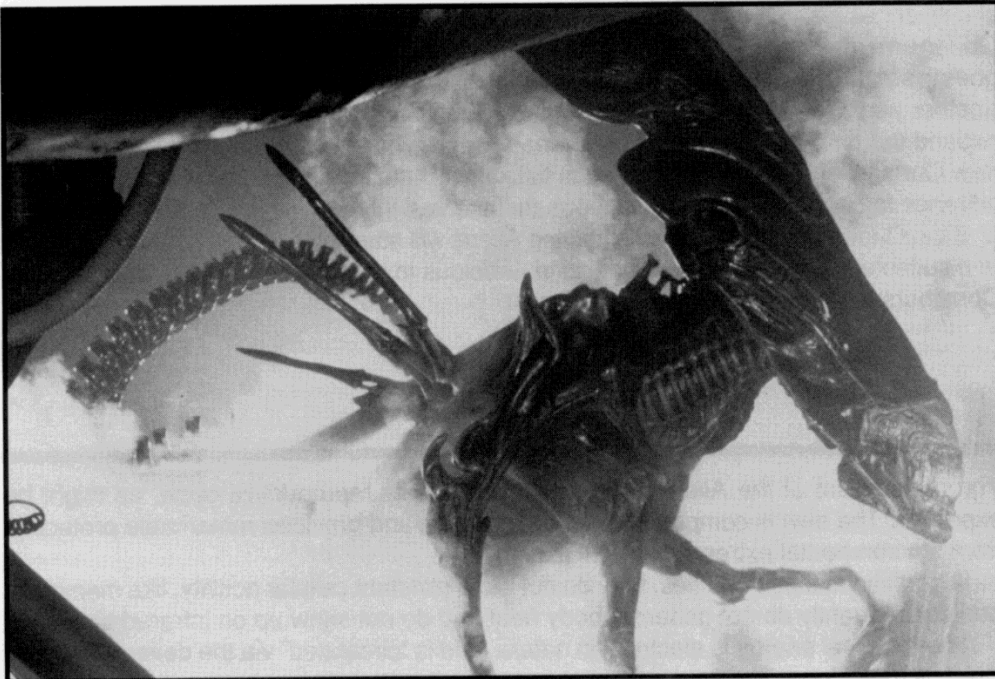
These vibrations are a sophisticated form of communication and allow the Sentry to inform the Queen of what is going on in the Sentry's area in great detail. The Queen responds to this information by giving appropriate instructions to the Sentry. The Sentry passes these orders to nearby Aliens vocally, or by using the infrared patterning on its head, as described later under Metabolism.

There is no chance of the Sentry having its own opinion, or of changing the Queen's orders. A Sentry is essentially a well-programmed communications machine, which accurately and quickly passes information to and from the Queen.

When operating outside the lair, Sentries will attempt to leave a web trail behind them. Even a single strand of web is capable of passing the vibrations to and from the Queen, and in this way the Queen can remain in control of Aliens working at a considerable distance from the lair.

The Queen

The Queen is, of course, the most devastating of all Aliens. Unlike other Aliens, she continues to grow and develop after reaching maturity, depending on her food supply. A



"We've been trained to deal with situations like this."

Gorman

Alien Queen

Queen goes through ten **Stages** of development; at each she becomes larger, more powerful, and more productive. The development of a Queen and her abilities at each Stage are as follows.

When a Chestburster Queen matures, it is considered a Stage One Queen. It fights and lays Eggs exactly like a Warrior Alien, although it is better protected and uses the **Queen** section of the **Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D)**. It can only progress to Stage Two by eating 600 pounds of organic material, or about 4 human-sized victims. As each victim is consumed, the Queen sheds her outer layer of skin and grows a new, larger protective layer. The shedding and growth cycle takes a period of one day. After the fourth victim is devoured, the Queen has completed her growth into a Stage Two Queen.

At Stage Two the Queen is capable of laying 10 Eggs a day, although this requires a supply of 15 pounds of organic and 45 pounds of inorganic material per Egg. Additionally, it has increased fighting abilities, as described in Section 6.11. The last new ability of a Stage Two Queen is its increased protection and ability to survive damage; whenever a Stage Two Queen takes a Dead result on the **Queen** section of the **Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D)**, there is only a 30% chance that it will actually die. If it does not die, it simply sprays Acid (Section 6.11) and continues to fight.

To progress to Stage Three, the Queen must eat 900 pounds of food, the equivalent of 6 more people, for a total of 10. She can lay 20 Eggs per day, if raw materials are available, and has only a 20% chance of dying when a Dead result is shown on the **Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D)**.

Stage Four is reached after a total of 20 people have been eaten, and gives the Queen the ability to lay 30 Eggs per day. There is only a 10% chance she will die from a Dead result.

Stage Five requires 10 more people as food, for a total of 30, and 40 Eggs per day can be laid. In addition, the Queen can completely ignore the first Dead result on the Table, and has only a 10% chance of dying from further Dead results.

The remaining Stages continue in the same pattern. Each requires an additional 10 human victims as food and increases the number of Eggs the Queen can lay each day by 10. Additionally, one more Dead result can be ignored for each Stage advanced.

The highest possible Stage for a Queen is Stage Ten. When she reaches this Stage,

"You had your chance, Gorman."

Burke

she arranges for a Queen Embryo to hatch. As soon as the Chestbuster form of the new Queen emerges, the old Queen leaves the Lair with a handful of Sentries and Warriors and goes in search of a new Lair. The Queen will build this Lair up until it is capable of protecting another new Queen, and will then move on; in this way, a Stage Ten Queen is able to expand the area controlled by Aliens steadily and almost unstoppably. Meanwhile, the new Queens left behind have full Lairs to protect them, and if food is available they can advance to become Stage Ten Queens themselves.

If the Queen of a Lair is killed, surviving Aliens will attempt to implant a Queen Embryo in a suitable live host. They will be quite ferocious in their defense of this host, and the Chestbuster Queen which emerges from it.

4.3

ALIEN METABOLISM

The metabolism of the Alien is just as unusual as its reproductive cycle, as might be expected. The skin is composed of polarized silica and provides remarkable protection from environmental extremes as well as impact.

In addition to these oddities, they do not have constant cellular activity, like mammals, and consequently do not generate body heat and do not show up on infrared sensors.

Their internal energy is electrical in nature, and is "circulated" via the devastating Acid which is their blood. The Acid is highly conductive, and the molecules are ideal for energy storage and transportation. This process is similar to that used in automobile batteries and other small electrical storage devices.

Because of this, Aliens do not require organic food to survive. They need it to create Resin and web, to grow, and to heal from injuries, but to continue existing they need only to have access to electrical current. They can derive this energy from a number of sources, including solar energy, static electricity, and direct current.

Aliens are even capable of surviving by simply being close to high levels of electrical power. For example, current moving in a power line induces a current in the Alien in much the same way that a radio signal induces a current in an antenna. This kind of current supplies enough power for an Alien to survive in dormancy, and to recharge slowly while inactive. Because of this affect, Aliens are attracted to the machinery of Humanity; in a way, it "smells" good to them.

These sources of "food" make the Alien a creature of incredible endurance. It eats dirt and water to reach the adult stage, and once mature can survive on the energy generated by a light breeze. The process of absorbing energy is a quick one, and they can go from having virtually no energy to being fully "charged" in an hour, if the energy is available. Their natural physical abilities are enhanced by this arrangement, as an Alien which is active while exposed to a strong "food" source can work and fight indefinitely without tiring.

In addition to the above, Aliens are also very efficient on a purely physical level. They regenerate non-fatal damage within half a day, and can always recover from any injury which is not immediately fatal. Fatal injuries are noted on the **Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D)**.

Other Characteristics

The senses of the Aliens are good. Their vision is especially sharp, and they can see further into the infrared than Humans can. They also have excellent hearing.

Aliens generally communicate by sound, although they do not have a language that is recognizable to Humans. Their communications skills are like those of bees or ants, which carry vital messages about food or danger but which are clearly beyond the realm of Human-style communication. In vacuum and other situations where sound is useless, Aliens communicate by adjusting the heat production of the surfaces of the head. Although this is invisible to the Human eye, the infrared abilities of Aliens make it easy for them to determine what patterns are being displayed.

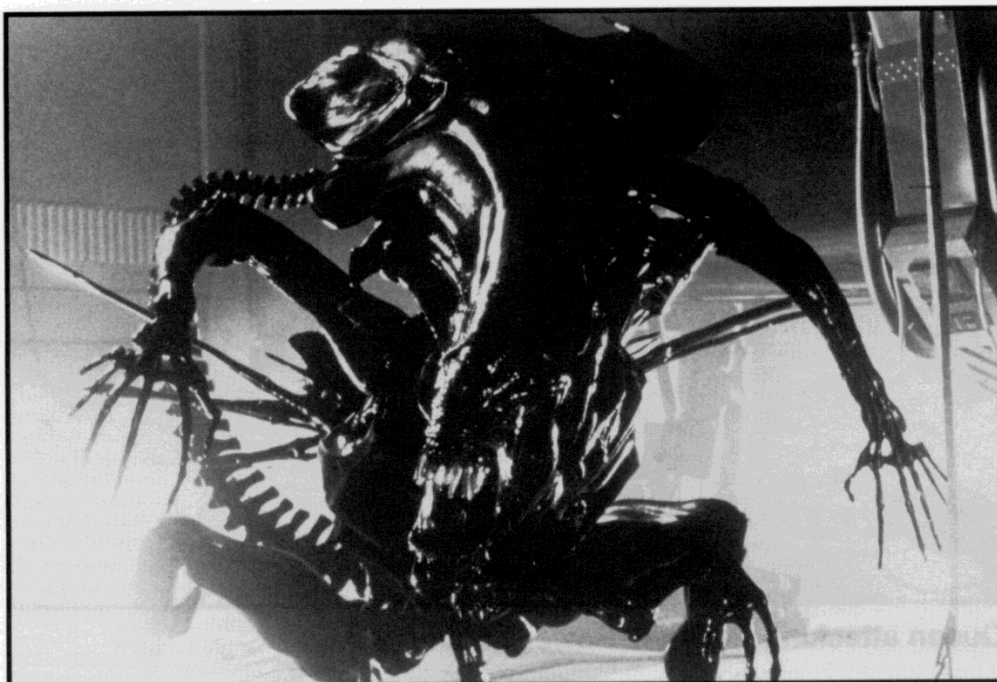
This infrared sense is one of the primary ways the Aliens track their prey. Their sense

"Drake! We are leaving!"

Hicks

"He's gone! Forget him, he's gone!"

Hicks



"This ain't happenin', man. This can't be happenin', man. This isn't happenin'."

Hudson

Alien Queen in the Sulaco's Hangar Bay

of smell is also used prominently, as it informs the Alien of the rough organic composition of the victim and is frequently what alerts them to the presence of the victim in the first place.

Much like the Facehugger within its Egg, a dormant adult Alien can remain in that state for decades or centuries with no loss of ability, and it will wake up only in the presence of food or danger.

4.4

ALIEN LAIRS

The Aliens' Lairs are constructed from Resin which is secreted from the mouths of Warriors. This Resin is composed primarily of polarized silicon and is extremely tough and durable. It also has remarkable insulating properties and is semi-opaque. Another important feature of the Resin is that it interferes with radio communications, and any Strike Team penetrating deep into a Lair will find they lose contact with the outside world.

Aliens normally build their Lairs around a pre-existing structure such as a natural ground depression, a man-made structure, or a stand of trees. The Resin is used to insulate and protect the Lair, to provide a structural framework for the Aliens to move on, and to create niches for concealment and rest in dormancy.

Aliens build the Lair so that they can use the walls, floor, and ceiling for movement. Their gripping power combined with the special glands which secrete a contact cement allow them to support themselves from the ceiling and walls much like giant insects. This greatly increases their mobility and their Stalking ability within their Lairs.

Because the Resin is composed of the same type of material as an Alien's exoskeleton, the Lair provides ideal camouflage. If an Alien remains motionless it is almost undetectable, blending perfectly into the wall or ceiling. This plays a key role in how deadly the Aliens are within their Lairs.

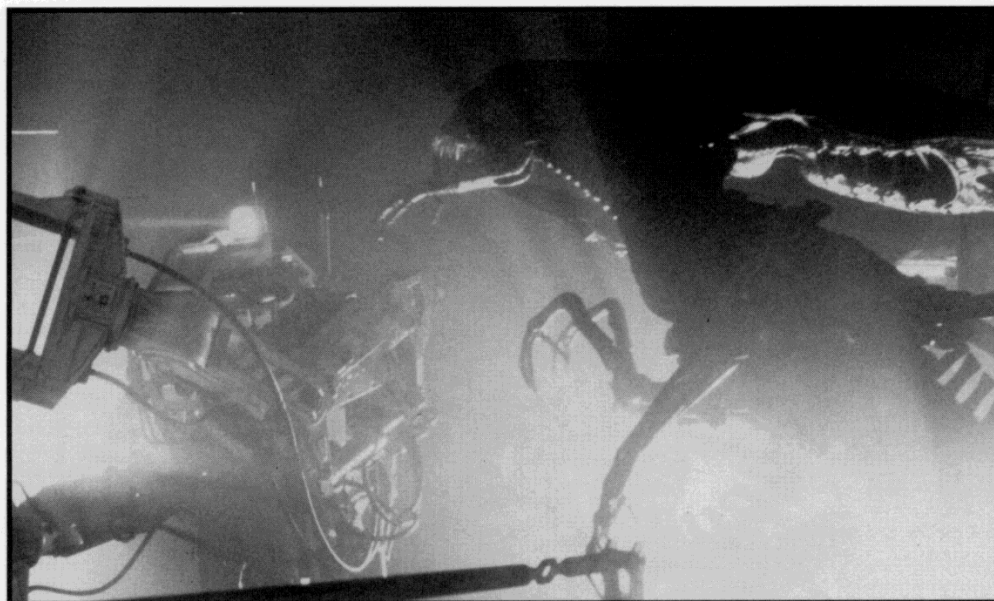
Sentry Aliens have the ability to pick up and monitor vibrations through the Resin. This sense is used to communicate with the Queen and also provides them with exceptionally accurate remote sensors for tracking the movement of life within the Lair. In essence, this gives the Sentry an accurate picture of the numbers, movement, and position of all life in

"He's dead! Wake up, pendejo, man, I'm gonna kill you!"

Vasquez

"Get away from
her, you bitch!"

Ripley



Queen attacking Ripley in Power Loader

the Lair. The Sentry thus has a much clearer picture of the situation within the Lair than any Colonial Marine Officer could ever obtain. To account for this, the GM should feel free to limit the players information on Alien movement to the data their Motion Trackers give them, but move the Aliens into ambush and attack positions with full knowledge of the players' movement and positions.

4.5

REMOVING FACEHUGGERS

This is obviously of critical importance to anyone who is facing the possibility of Chest-bursters in their future. The removal of a Facehugger is actually a fairly simple procedure, unless the survival of the host is also important; if so, it is extremely difficult.

Any attempt to remove the Facehugger is met by one of the defense mechanisms of the creature. If it is cut or injured, its Acid Blood endangers the host and anyone else nearby. If someone attempts to simply pull it off, it will anchor itself to the host by tightening the grip of the tail around the host's throat, which will result in the strangulation of the host, or in the crushing of the host's throat. As a final defense, if the Facehugger is killed in any other way, it will inject its entire reserve of the paralyzing agent. Such a dose is lethal to any Human or similar creature.

The task of safely removing a Facehugger is Extremely Difficult plus 1 Level of Difficulty; this makes the Base Odds 1, and this number is modified by the SRM of the Surgeon in charge. This Success Roll applies to a team of trained Medical personnel, including a Surgeon, who have not researched the problem and who have no special equipment. For a Medical team which is experienced in dealing with this problem and which has special equipment, it is a Very Difficult task.

If the attempt to remove a Facehugger fails, the creature is still removed alive from the patient and may be kept for study. The patient, however, is killed.

5

EQUIPMENT

The technology of the 22nd Century is diverse; from hand-held welding/cutting torches to gyro-stabilized weapon mountings, from hydraulic loading machinery to gigantic craft capable of travelling between suns. This Chapter contains information on the equipment available to Characters, including how it is used, how much it costs, and how it can be repaired.

5.1

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

The items below are those which are routinely carried by Colonial Marines, as well as other military and non-military personnel.

Equipment Harness

This Harness has attachments for holding the miscellaneous items which might be carried by military personnel, including grenades, flares, and a medical kit. There are also several utility pouches, which can be used for anything from ammunition clips to personal items. The Equipment Harness is a standard part of all Colonial Marine Combat Fatigues, and its weight is already included in that of the Fatigues.

Field Radio

A normal military radio for communication across distances up to 100 miles. It is used for routine communications between troops and their Armored Personnel Carrier. The Field Radio automatically encodes and decodes transmissions to and from other Radios used by the same unit or as part of the same operation. These codes change constantly according to programming within each unit, and therefore cannot be decoded.

The use of a Field Radio can be **Traced**, with the aid of basic espionage and communication equipment. It is a Very Difficult task, modified by the tracing operator's Comm/Computer SRM. The task gets easier by one Difficulty Level for each full 30 seconds that the target Radio transmits.

It is also possible to **Jam** an opponent's radio communications, with the same equipment that is used for Tracing. This is a Very Difficult task, and the Comm/Computer Skill Rating Modifiers of both operators are used to determine the Success Roll. If a Jamming attempt is successful, the targeted radio cannot be used effectively for communication for as long as the jamming equipment is operational.

Intelligence Unit

This is a multi-purpose computer that fits easily into a briefcase. An Intelligence Unit generally stores a wide variety of information pertaining to a given mission, including all available data on important locations, personnel related to the mission or present at the locations, and other vital items. It includes a scanning device; a picture is fed into the scanner, which then searches the Intelligence Unit's files and produces any relevant information, including the identity of any people, where the picture was taken, and so forth. The scanner is capable of processing pictures of fingerprints, as well as supplying limited forensic information from closeup pictures of pieces of evidence. It can also enhance the image, so the user can study it as closely as desired.

"Hey. Hey, look. The Sarge and Dietrich aren't dead, man. Their signs are real low, but they ain't dead."

Hudson

"Then we go back in there and get them. We don't leave our people behind."

Vasquez

"I say we take off and nuke the entire site from orbit. It's the only way to be sure."

Ripley

An Intelligence Unit is also capable of storing and processing information fed into it by the user, to develop case files and the like, and of tapping into other computer systems for additional research. For example, if the user of an Intelligence Unit has authorization, the Unit can draw data from law enforcement computers and perform fingerprint matching, vehicle registration searches, and similar tasks.

Light and Comm Gear

Another standard part of all Colonial Marine Combat Fatigues, and available for use by those without Combat Fatigues. Light and Comm Gear provides a single bright light which is mounted over the wearer's shoulder and can be aimed in any direction, a headset communications device allowing voice contact with the rest of the wearer's unit and with the commanding officer, a simple video camera which is mounted to the wearer's helmet, passive infrared sighting gear, and a transmitter which automatically sends medical and visual data back to the Command Post overseeing the wearer. The power cell for this unit lasts for 12 hours of operation. Replacement cells weigh .2 pounds.

Medical Kit

Generally carried by two or three members of each Strike Team, a Medical Kit allows any Character with a Medical Aid Rating of Novice or better to apply **First Aid**. Rules for Medical Aid are given in Section 6.13.

Motion Tracker

A Sonar unit combined with passive air density sensors, the Motion Tracker is used to provide Colonial Marines with information about unseen opponents. Given the range of environments they fight in, and the frequency with which they encounter unusual life forms, this general purpose detection device sees a great deal of use.

A Motion Tracker will indicate the position, size, and speed of any object within 180 feet. The size of object the Motion Tracker is scanning for is determined by the user, down to a minimum diameter of about 6 inches. The frequency and settings must be adjusted repeatedly to filter interference, and operating the Motion Tracker in cluttered terrain is difficult without a good deal of skill and experience. The Difficulty Level for normal operation is Average. The Motion Tracker will not work in vacuum.

The Motion Tracker can register movement on the far side of a solid obstacle, but the air flow between the two locations must be unblocked, and the operator's task is made more difficult; for each corner or intervening obstacle, increase the Difficulty Level by one step; one corner is Very Difficult, two is Extremely Difficult, and so on.

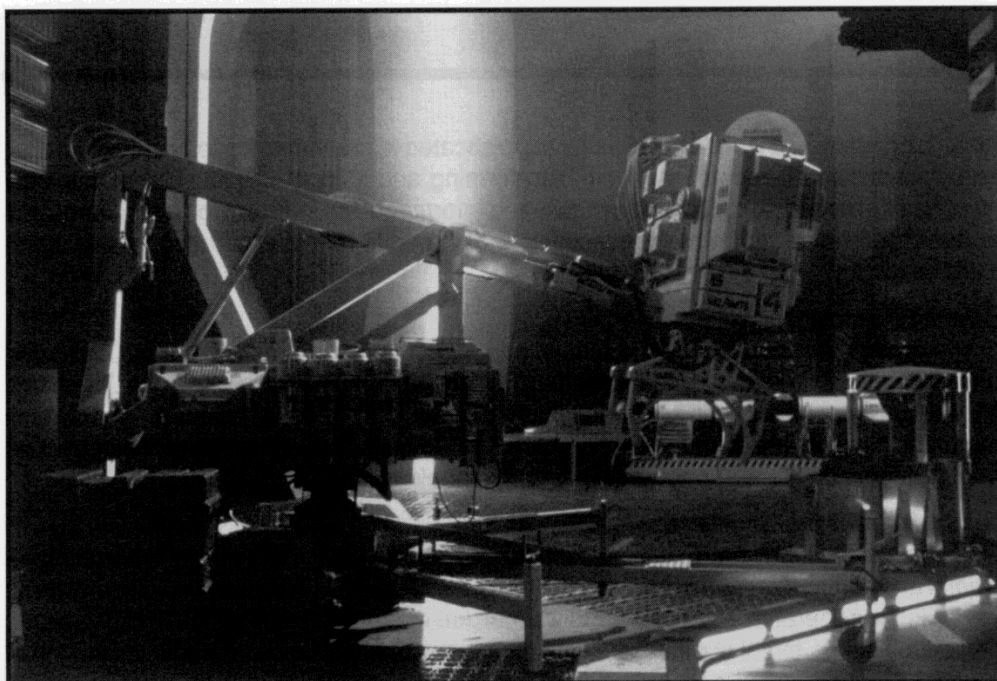
If the operator uses the Motion Tracker successfully, then he or she receives accurate information regarding the number, position, speed, and size of all moving objects within the Tracker's range; if the roll is failed, then the information will be inaccurate to some degree. If the roll is failed by 1 or 2, the Tracker will show the range and speed to all nearby targets, but the number and size of the targets will be unknown; if the roll is failed by 3 or 4, only the range will be known, while a failure by 5 or 6 results in the operator receiving no significant information. If the operator fails by 7 or more, then the GM should give the operator information which is significantly incorrect.

Orbital Communicator

This unit is very similar to the Field Radio, but it has a tracking dish for talking to Spacecraft and Dropships in orbit. It uses the same encryption methods as normal Field Radios, but has more power so it can reach Spacecraft. On a planetary surface, it has a range of 100 miles. An Orbital Communicator can also be Traced like a Field Radio, but it is an Extremely Difficult task that gets easier by one Difficulty Level per full minute of transmission. Jamming is also Extremely Difficult.

Personal Data Transmitters

Commonly issued to all Corporate and military personnel who are exposed to danger, the **Personal Data Transmitter (PDT)** broadcasts the individual's location. In general, this broadcast is tracked by the computer at the facility to which the wearer is assigned, but the broadcasts use standard wavelengths and can be picked up by any person with suitable communications equipment.



Dropship Ground Service Equipment

For people in non-security environments, PDT's are surgically implanted to eliminate the chance that they will come off by accident. Military and security personnel cannot afford to have their locations broadcast to opponents, of course, so their PDT's are either incorporated into their Equipment Harnesses or are in the form of wristbands. These PDT's are used only when radio security is not important, and are turned off or removed by most troops if there is any indication that they present a security risk. In cases where the battle is more or less "civilized", where the two sides are providing good medical care to captives and where there will be a prisoner exchange after the battle, troops leave the PDT's turned off until they are seriously injured, and then turn them on to broadcast their location so medical personnel from either side can find them.

Portable Welder

This utility tool is carried by most Marines, and is used for either welding or cutting metal. It can cut or weld a manhole-sized opening in standard ship or construction plate in 90 seconds, and can make two such cuts before requiring recharging.

Position Trackers

These are small, simple devices used by Colonial Marines and other security and rescue personnel when they are searching for people wearing PDT's. Position Trackers can be specifically tuned to a given broadcast code, and display the distance to the nearest PDT using that code. They are especially valuable for recovering wounded personnel.

Pulse Communicator

This device serves the same purpose as an Orbital Communicator, but is used by Recon Specialists and others who need secure communications. A complete message is fed into the Pulse Communicator by the operator, and it is then transmitted to its target in a single pulse. At the same time, a return pulse can be triggered, which the Communicator deciphers.

This type of communication is almost impossible to trace, jam, or intercept. It only has enough power for a brief broadcast, but it is very small and can be easily concealed; when disassembled, it is smaller than a briefcase. Normal two-way communication is not possible with this unit, but it does allow an agent in the field to transmit vital data to his or her superiors, and to receive periodic orders.

"Hold on one second. This installation has a substantial dollar value attached to it."

Burke

"They can bill me."

Ripley

COMMUNICATIONS, COMPUTERS, AND FINANCE

"Okay, look. This is an emotional moment for all of us, okay? I know that. But let's not make snap judgements, please. This is clearly an important species we're dealing with, and I don't think that you or I or anybody has the right to arbitrarily exterminate them."

Burke

"Wrong."

Ripley

All civilized areas of a world are linked by sophisticated telecommunications and electronic data transmission systems, even on Terraforming and Mining Worlds. These systems include telephones with full visuals, networked information processing for computers, and an assortment of other conveniences. The most notable features of these systems are listed below.

Business Cards

In a logical extension of telecommunications technology, most Business Cards are printed on plastic cards which have digital information encoded into the plastic. The Card is inserted into an optical scanner which is built into every telephone, and which automatically dials the number on the Card. The standardization of this technology has made address books and hand-dialing nearly obsolete.

Computer Information Retrieval (CIR) Booths

These are the equivalent of public telephone booths, which incorporate telecommunications and computer technology and allow the user to tap into the local computer network. The fees for general use are low and are charged directly to the user's Credit Account. There are listings for all businesses, with their locations, services, and prices, and most individuals, residences, and public facilities. All of this information is cross-indexed, making it possible to track down the residence of a particular citizen, or to obtain a list of all the businesses which sell a particular product.

Inquiries about residences and citizens are logged with local law enforcement, and it is possible to pay to have your name and residence removed from the standard public listings.

Credit Cards

Every citizen carries a small plastic card which is used for identification and as currency. The card includes the citizen's unique identification number, as well as appropriate account numbers.

There is a black market for secret or illegal purchases. This market functions on a barter system, although gold and rare metals like iridium are sometimes used as currency. In all cases, the GM can convert the barter values of items into their Credit equivalents. For reference, the standard value of one ounce of gold is 500 Credits; GM's may use this as the basis for assigning prices where necessary.

Jammer

This unit is a box about eight inches across, and is used to protect a limited area against audio surveillance. This area can be up to 15 feet across, and must be surrounded by walls. Any microphone or "bug" attempting to follow a conversation within the secured area will pick up only an undecipherable buzz.

If it is also necessary to defeat video surveillance, the users must wear Jammer Headsets. These include full faceplates which prevent wearer identification, lipreading, and other analysis, and the wearers communicate over a closed circuit that networks the Headsets.

Jammers are often built into limousines and other vehicles used by wealthy business people. In these cases, the Headsets are unnecessary within the enclosed area.

Locator

This device is available on every world which is listed on the Star Map as a Colony or Major Colony, as well as on Earth. It is held in the palm of the user's hand, and contains a keypad and a small display. The Locator uses radiotelecommunications to link with its own satellite system, and will pull up a local street map and indicate the user's current position on the grid. In some areas of Earth, this information is no longer correct, and may even be dangerously outdated.

If the Locator is tapped into a CIR Booth, it is possible to show the locations of any desired businesses, public sites, and so forth. An itinerary can be loaded into the Locator at that time, to indicate a path for the user once he or she has left the CIR Booth. The Locator can also serve as a Personal Data Transmitter, and has an emergency beacon.

Radiophone

This is another handheld device which operates through the Computer Information Retrieval system. It provides the user with the audio portion of normal telephone service, and uses radio to stay in contact with the nearest CIR Booth.

Security Device

A flat plastic box, about three inches square. It functions as a broad-spectrum detector and can be passed over a person's body to determine if he or she is carrying concealed weapons or any other metal, or any electrical unit. It is capable of presenting the general shape of the detected item on a small screen. Larger versions of this exist as walk-through booths, and are widely used.

Shopping Booth

An expanded version of the CIR Booth which is installed in the homes of the wealthy and in Corporate offices. The user simply steps in and calls any desired stores, and a sales person appears full length on the screen. The sales person can call up images of products which interest the user, or can get them and present them for viewing. Sales can be completed quickly and easily, with items delivered by a freight service and appropriate charges automatically appearing on the customer's Card. The Shopping Booth is an efficient shopping tool, which saves both time and money, and is especially popular on Earth, where travel is dangerous.

Video Camera

A lightweight camera which is just a few inches across, and which uses the CIR system to transmit images back to a home Video Recording Unit, where the data is stored on a laser drive. Images can also be replayed from the home unit to the Camera, where they are played into the eyepiece for editing or viewing. The Video Camera can be used for normal video recording, or in a single-frame mode which essentially takes photographs.

"Yeah. Watch us."

Vasquez

5.3

Normal clothing comes in a wide variety of styles, but requires no special rules. Unusual items of protective gear which are likely to be used in the course of play are described below.

Combat Fatigues

The standard military combat suit worn by Colonial Marines and most Corporate military forces is an improved form of the Combat Fatigues used by 20th century troops, and includes complete coverage for the body and limbs, as well as a light helmet and face shield to protect the head. Combat Fatigues are made of a durable, lightweight, bullet-resistant cloth, which is also water resistant and provides good insulation against extreme temperatures. The Fatigues come in a variety of camouflage patterns, depending on the environment where they are used. There are also a number of supporting items which are normally attached to the suit itself. These include an Equipment Harness, Light and Comm Gear (both described in Section 5.1), and some degree of Body Armor, described below.

Body Armor

There are three standard grades of Body Armor which can be worn over Combat Fatigues; Light, Medium, and Heavy. Light Body Armor is the most common, and provides additional protection for the torso and lower legs of the wearer, as well as a heavier helmet and faceplate. Medium Body Armor uses the same lower leg protection as Light, but features an improved helmet and breastplate, while Heavy Body Armor has torso protection that is still tougher.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND ARMOR

**"Hey, maybe you
haven't been keeping
up on current events,
but we just got our
asses kicked, pal!"**

Hudson

"I believe Corporal Hicks has authority here."

Ripley

HARDCore Armor

This is a hydraulically-assisted steel exoskeleton which combines all the features of a Spacesuit (see below) with armored protection; it takes its name from the **Hazardous Atmosphere and Radiation Detachment (HARD) Specialists** who usually wear it. HARDCore Armor is covered with titanium plate, and has a Glancing Factor of -10 on all Hit Locations. It functions well in vacuum and in hazardous atmospheres, and can withstand the temperatures of deep space and of lethally hot planetary surfaces with equal ease.

HARDCore Armor is slightly larger than the wearer within, and the total weight is about 600 pounds. Operation and motion are very similar to those of the Power Loader (Section 5.5), except that the limbs have been designed to accommodate the full range of movement of Human arms, legs, and hands. There is an internal power supply, which will operate the Armor for up to 12 hours; after that, the rechargeable power packs must be replaced. The Life Support system is designed to protect the wearer for 24 hours, but in emergencies it can be used for up to 72 hours.

Since the power supply only lasts for 12 hours, HARDCore Armor is used close to a base of some sort; usually an APC or a Dropship, where the Armor can be recharged.

Spacesuit

When operating in vacuum or in a hazardous atmosphere, Colonial Marines wear Spacesuits. These fit comfortably over the standard Combat Suit, and have attachments for systems which are too bulky to fit inside the Spacesuit, including Light and Comm Gear and the Equipment Harness. Spacesuits are designed for operations on planets with hostile atmospheres and extreme temperatures, as well as in places with dangerous levels of radiation and in deep space. They have durable thermal control systems, which allow them to be used in the utter cold of space and on the surface of planets with temperatures up to 500 degrees Fahrenheit (260 Centigrade). A Spacesuit is designed to support its wearer for 8 hours, but will last for up to 24 hours in emergencies.

If a Spacesuit is punctured in a vacuum, the wearer can survive 00 to 99 minutes as the remaining Life Support leaks into space. If the atmosphere is toxic the wearer will survive only 00 to 99 Turns (of 8 seconds each), due to poisons seeping into the suit.

Vacuum Suit

This is a lighter, less durable version of the Spacesuit. It does not have radiation protection and is not designed for use in deep space, as it has only a basic thermal control system. It can be used as a Spacesuit if absolutely necessary, but exposes the wearer to a higher level of danger.

Like a Spacesuit, a Vacuum Suit will support the wearer for up to 24 hours in an emergency, but is designed for only 8 hours of comfortable wear. Puncture rules are the same as for Spacesuits.

5.4

WEAPONS

The personal weapons of the Colonial Marines and other forces are described below. The availability of weapons to non-military personnel varies from world to world, with heavily settled areas having strict gun control laws, and Outposts and other worlds far less controlled.

Standard Weapons

The following weapons are the ones which are the most common, and which are issued to all major military forces in the ICC.

Pistol: A compact, high capacity semi-automatic pistol, this is the standard sidearm for all military, paramilitary, and police forces. It fires the same ammunition as the Submachine Gun listed below.



Searching for the Colonists

Submachine Gun: This is a light, clip-fed automatic weapon used by military and security forces that operate in civilian areas. The weapon is very effective against the unarmored opponents found in cities, such as rioters, members of gangs, and other criminals, but will not penetrate armor, walls, and other obstacles encountered in civilized areas. This minimizes the risk to innocent bystanders.

Pulse Rifle: This is the definitive weapon of the Colonial Marines and most other military forces. It fires a 10mm Light Armor Piercing round with an explosive tip, and also includes a 30mm Grenade Launcher, which is slung under the barrel. The Pulse Rifle is used in military environments only, and is usually replaced by the Submachine Gun when Colonial Marines and other forces are performing police work and other duties which bring them in contact with civilians. As mentioned above, the Submachine Gun does not have a great deal of penetrating power; the Pulse Rifle will penetrate personal armor, as well as normal building walls and other city obstacles.

Special Weapons

These weapons have unusual attributes or uses, and are less common than those listed above. They are generally used by persons specifically trained in their operation.

Sniper Rifle: A semi-automatic, clip-fed Rifle with a powerful Scope and excellent long-range accuracy. This weapon is used by Espionage and Guerilla forces, and possesses impressive penetrating ability. Use of a Sniper Rifle does not require any special Skill.

Machine Gun: This is the primary fire support weapon issued to Strike Teams in the Colonial Marines and in Corporate militaries. It features a gyro-stabilized mount, a Heads-Up Display, and other sophisticated subsystems, and is operated by specially trained personnel. A full description of how this system is used is found in Section 2.9.

Flame Unit: Also called an Incinerator, this is a light Flame-Thrower carried by Colonial Marines and Corporate militaries. It is ideal for close combat, but its use against Humans is frowned upon by the ICC and it can only be used by Characters with the Special Weapons Skill. It is restricted to Very Close range, and rules governing damage are contained in Section 6.12.

Shotgun: Changing technology has not made this simple weapon obsolete. The design has improved significantly since the 19th Century, but the basics remain the same; numerous small metal shot are fired when the trigger is pulled, and anyone standing in their path is in grave danger. The Shotgun does not penetrate armor very well, however, and is limited to Short range. Rules governing damage are contained in Section 6.12.

"Look, Ripley, this is a multimillion dollar installation, okay? He can't make that kind of decision, he's just a grunt. No offense."

Burke

"None taken. Ferro, do you copy? Prep for dust-off, we're gonna need immediate evac. I say we take off, nuke the site from orbit. It's the only way to be sure."

Hicks

**"Move it, Spunkmeyer.
We're rolling."**

Ferro

Sentry Guns: These are like the Machine Guns carried by Colonial Marines, except they are automated. The weapon is mounted to a tripod, which includes a Motion Detection Sensor and servos for aiming and firing the weapon. A separate Control Module weighing 1.5 pounds is used to program, activate, and deactivate the weapon, and can be used from up to a quarter of a mile away. The weapon is programmed to cover a given area, ranging from a 30 degree cone to all-around fire and out to 180 feet. Once activated, it automatically tracks and fires at any target which enters this area. It can fire up to 4 times per Phase at MRAF, and has a Shot Accuracy of 0.

The weapon has a Capacity of 60 bursts, and is primarily used to secure perimeters against non-intelligent lifeforms. Sentry Guns are not employed in civilized areas, due to the danger to non-combatants, and it is illegal to use them against human opponents. Only Characters with the Special Weapons Skill can use Sentry Guns.

Explosive Weapons

Explosive Weapons possess devastating power, and are only used against the most dangerous human opponents and non-sentients. Anyone using these weapons without prior approval will be subject to an inquiry by his or her superior officers, to guarantee that the weapon was not used improperly. Rules for these weapons are in Section 6.8.

Hand Grenade: A small metal cylinder, which weighs .25 pounds and contains a high-powered explosive. It has a 4 second fuse, and can be thrown up to 84 feet. The Special Weapons Skill is used for throwing Grenades; rules for accuracy are in Section 6.12.

Grenade Launcher: The standard Pulse Rifle has a Grenade Launcher mounted under its barrel. This fires a small projectile with the same explosive power as a standard Hand Grenade. Accuracy for the Grenade Launcher uses the Special Weapons Skill.

Rocket Launcher: A rare weapon system, designed to destroy vehicles and fortifications. It is extremely powerful, and can only be used by a Character with the Rocket Launcher Skill. Accuracy and damage follow the rules for Light Missile Launchers (Section 7.7).

Demolition Charge: This is a hand-carried package of high-explosives, used for destroying obstacles and fortifications. It also contains a thermite charge that essentially burns its way through everything it touches.

5.5

LARGER EQUIPMENT

**"Hold on a second,
there's something..."**

Spunkmeyer

The following items are major pieces of equipment which are likely to be encountered or dealt with by the Characters.

HARD Shelter

This is a semi-portable living environment which is used in hazardous environments. It will support four personnel in HARDCore Armor for up to one week, and provides full protection from vacuum, extreme temperatures, and radiation. A HARD Shelter takes up the same amount of room in a Dropship's Cargo Bay as an APC, and HARD Specialists on extended missions are sometimes given the Shelter instead of an APC. HARD Shelters can be equipped with additional supplies.

Specialized HARD Shelters are also available in one and two person sizes. These are used when concealment is important.

Hypersleep Pods

These are used on Spacecraft during Jump Drive, and all personnel must be in Hypersleep for Jump. The Pods monitor and control life support during Jump, and revive the crew once the target destination is reached or in the event of an emergency. If Life Support aboard the spacecraft is damaged, only the commanding officer will be awakened, and he or she must then make the necessary decisions regarding the future of the crew.

In cases where the Life Support is in danger of running out (Section 5.10), the commander must decide how much time will be allotted to each Pod, and may elect to shut down some of them. In general, all Pods will be allotted an equal share of the Life Support, and all will run out at the same time. More cold-blooded decisions may be made, of course, and an unscrupulous commander may even elect to devote all remaining Life Support time to his or her own Pod, thereby killing the rest of the crew.

Power Loader

The Power Loader is a hydraulically supported, one-person equipment mover. It is used for lifting and carrying a variety of crates and equipment weighing up to 2,000 pounds, and is common in both civilian and military use. Power Loaders have a number of utility tools built into them, including a cutting torch, a spot welder, wire strippers, and other small devices. They are capable of performing all standard operations on normal fittings and fixtures, and are especially useful when installing large pieces of equipment. They can also be programmed to assume control over other equipment in their area, including warehouse doors, loading bay ports, and so forth. Note that this programming must be done from the control center of the loading area or dock; a Power Loader cannot simply take control of local equipment.

Vacuum Shelter

A lighter, less durable version of the HARD Shelter. It does not block high levels of radiation or the greatest temperature extremes, but it is sufficient on most worlds. A Vacuum Shelter will support 6 people for a month, and can also be found in one and two person sizes.

"Just get up here."

Ferro

5.6

SYNTHETICS

Synthetics, also called Artificial Persons, are used to assist Strike Teams on board all Colonial Marine ships. Although they perform a wide variety of services for their Strike Teams, their most important role is that of backup Pilot and Navigator in the event that Auxiliary personnel are injured or killed. Synthetics possess limited artificial intelligence, and units which have been in service for long periods develop individual personality traits and emotions. This personality is sharply limited by the **Behavioral Inhibitors** built into every Synthetic, which prevent them from taking any aggressive actions, endangering human life or allowing it to be endangered, or disobeying orders.

These inhibitors are vital to safety, as Synthetics possess remarkable abilities. The Strength, Intelligence, and Agility of Synthetics are all 21, making them clearly superior to humans, and they receive 16 Combat Actions per Phase. In addition, Synthetics can be programmed with a wide variety of Skills and are extremely durable.

Skills

Every Synthetic can be programmed with 8 Skills at Expert Rating, and another 16 at a Rating of Certified. In general, the Skills given to Synthetics are those which are vital to the survival of the Strike Team, including Navigation, Dropship Piloting, and so forth. As a guideline, any Skill which could be vital to the survival of the entire Strike Team, and which is possessed by only one or two Team members, will be programmed into the Synthetic. A Synthetic's programming can only be changed at a Service Base, in a process which takes 3 days and costs 50,000C.

Because of the limited nature of Synthetics' creative abilities, they are not well suited to tasks which require original thought. Their logical abilities and speed of thought are ideal for scientific work, but only in structured environments where their duties are clearly defined. No human scientist can work as quickly and efficiently in a laboratory, but Synthetics are very poor at deciding how to approach a problem, and are almost incapable of assigning values to the results of their work.

**"Spunkmeyer?...
Well, where the..."**

Ferro

"Well that's great.
That's just great, man.
Now what are we
supposed to do?"

Hudson

Note that Synthetics can never be programmed with any Skill which has an offensive or aggressive nature, under any circumstances. They also cannot be used for Piloting in conflict situations, except when trying to avoid combat.

Damage to a Synthetic

When a Synthetic is damaged outside of combat, there is a 1% chance that it is **Disabled** for every 100 points of Physical Damage (PD) it takes. For example, if a Synthetic takes 500 PD, there is a 5% chance that it will be Disabled.

If a Synthetic is hit in combat, the Hit Location is determined normally. When making the Glancing Roll, the Synthetic has a Glancing Modifier of 0 on all Hit Locations. If the hit is on a limb, there is a 1% chance that the limb is Disabled for every 10 PD. The effect of a Disabled limb is the same as for humans (Section 6.7). If the hit is to the Body, there is a 1% chance per 100 PD that the Synthetic is completely Disabled. If the hit is to the Head, there is a 1% chance per 100 PD that the Synthetic is Crippled.

When a Synthetic is Disabled, it can no longer move and cannot perform any of its normal functions. It is still capable of controlling any limbs which are not Disabled, but can use them for simple activities only.

When a Synthetic is Crippled, it can no longer think. The body and non-Disabled limbs will continue attempting to perform the last task to which they were assigned, but only in a spasmodic manner. Once Crippled, a Synthetic is reduced to random twitchings and convulsions.

If a Synthetic is both Disabled and Crippled, it is completely dysfunctional and shuts down.

"Are you finished?"

Hicks

Illegal Uses

The Synthetic industry is one of the most closely monitored in the ICC, owing to the potentials of Synthetics and the threat they might pose to Humanity. The inhibitors on their behavior are carefully modified to suit each new type of Synthetic and each new set of programming, to guarantee that there are no unpredictable situations and no loopholes. As a final check, every Synthetic is programmed to stop all activity if it cannot determine what its proper action should be.

Despite these controls, there are rumors that one or more Corporations have created Synthetics without the standard inhibitors, and that they are even using them as assassins. No evidence exists to support these rumors.

5.7

GROUND VEHICLES

There are many different types of **Ground Vehicles**, from those used for personal transportation to Armored Personnel Carriers and Assault Tanks. The details pertaining to the ones that Characters are most likely to encounter are given below, along with data about equipment they contain.

Rules for how these Vehicles are used in Combat are in Chapter 7.

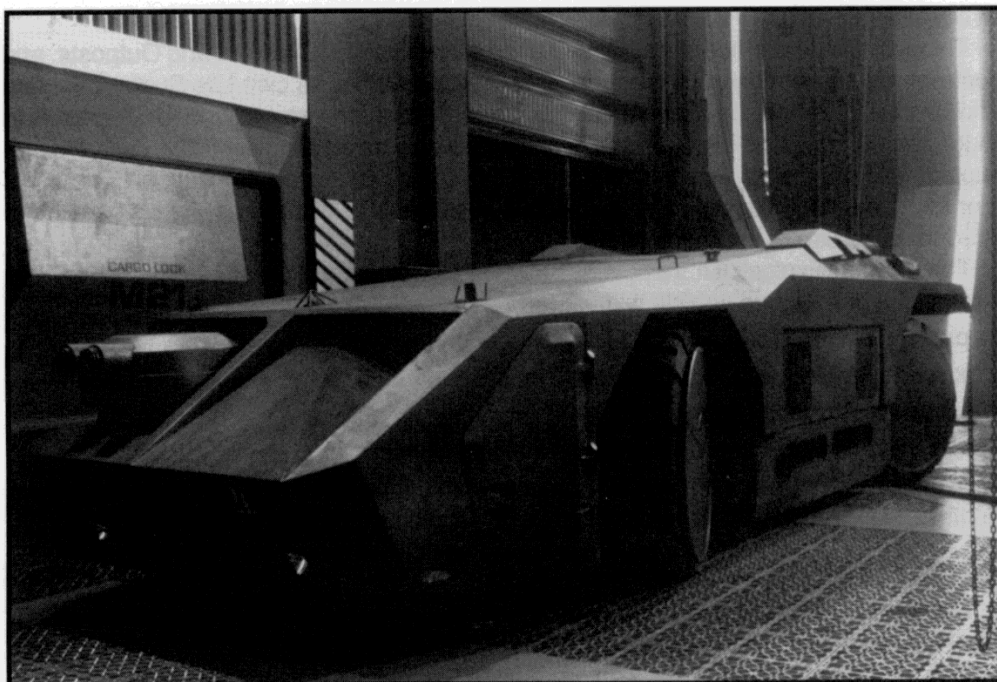
Armored Personnel Carrier

Like most ground vehicles, the **Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)** uses a fuel-burning, turbine-driven engine. Although most engines of this type use oxygen from the atmosphere, military vehicles must be capable of operating in a wide variety of environments and are therefore equipped with oxygen tanks. The range of an APC is 300 miles, after which it must have both its fuel and oxygen tanks refilled.

The interior of the APC is a sealed environment, and its Life Support system is capable of maintaining reasonable temperatures and atmospheric conditions for seven days under adverse conditions.

Capacity: 1 Driver and 14 Passengers.

Maximum Speed: 25 Miles per Hour Cross Country. 80 Miles per Hour On Road.



Armored Personnel Carrier (APC)

Weapons Systems: The main armament of the APC is a Light Disruptor, which is a dual-barreled weapon mounted in a mobile Turret at the back of the APC. It is designed for use against ground targets.

Also included in this turret are two Light Missile Launchers. The Missiles which can be fired by the Light Missile Launchers are the Sprint and the Dogleg, which are described in Section 7.6. The Missiles for these weapons are carried in the top of the APC; a total of 16 are carried, usually 8 of each type.

A Lase Cannon is mounted in the front of the APC. It has a higher rate of fire than the Disruptor, and is both the primary anti-missile system and a devastating anti-personnel weapon.

The final weapon system of the APC is an Automatic Light Mortar, which is mounted in the roof of the vehicle and is generally used against opponents in good defensive positions. There are 32 rounds for the weapon stored in the APC, each of which is the equivalent of a Light Missile Blast Warhead.

All of the weapons and missiles mentioned above are detailed in full in Chapter 7.

Defensive Systems: The APC is maneuverable and fairly well armored; the effects of various weapons against its armor are shown on the **APC Hit Location and Damage Table**. No small arms fire can damage an APC.

Command Post: APC's which are being used by front-line military units also feature a **Command Post (CP)**. The CP has monitors which display the feedback provided by the Light and Comm Gear and the Personal Data Transmitters of the members of the unit. This equipment allows the Officer in charge of a Strike Team to talk to each soldier and to keep track of what each one sees and hears, as well as his or her physical status and relative location. This information greatly reduces command difficulties, and when used by a capable Officer greatly increases the effectiveness of a Strike Team. In game terms, the GM can represent the value of a Command Post by allowing the Players to discuss their Characters' actions during combat, and to fully coordinate with each other. In contrast, Characters without the support of a Command Post would not be able to confer with each other, and their coordination would be limited to prearranged battle plans and whatever orders the Characters could give to each other in the noise and confusion of combat.

"We better get back,
'cause it'll be dark
soon, and they mostly
come at night.
Mostly."

"What are we gonna
do now? What are
we gonna do?"

Hudson

"Maybe we could build
a fire, sing a couple
of songs. Why don't
we try that?"

Burke

"We better get back,
'cause it'll be dark
soon, and they mostly
come at night.
Mostly."

Newt

Ground Exploration Vehicle

This is a standard piece of equipment used extensively by Colonies and Outposts, and common on any world where there is difficult terrain. It has its own Life Support System and has been designed for use as a long-term exploration vehicle, and for operation in rough terrain. In a non-ideal climate, it has a one-way travel range of 300 miles, and can support four people for 4 weeks. It has a range of 800 miles and can support its crew of four for 12 weeks on a world where the air is breathable, if all of its fuel tanks have been fitted to make use of the atmosphere.

The Ground Exploration Vehicle has its own sleeping, food preparation, and hygiene facilities. It is a rugged vehicle with all-terrain mobility.

Capacity: Driver, Co-Driver, and Passenger Bay.

Maximum Speed: 30 Miles per Hour Cross Country. 60 Miles per Hour On Road.

Weapon Systems: None.

Cargo Bay: This is large enough to hold a light construction vehicle, such as a forklift.

Passenger Bay: Designed as the living quarters for 4 people, with a kitchen, bunks, and other basic amenities. It will hold up to 12 people for short excursions.

Other Ground Vehicles

The **Automobiles** in use are powered electrically, from high-performance batteries. They are not designed for long-distance travel, but for transportation within a given city or Colony. A standard Automobile can carry up to 6 people in reasonable comfort and has a cruising speed of 40 miles per hour. These vehicles can only be used on smooth, well-maintained surfaces, and have a range of 200 miles between chargings.

Another common vehicle is the **Cycle**, which uses the same technologies. A Cycle can carry one or two people, will reach speeds of about 60 miles per hour, and has a range of 150 miles.

Long distance travel is left to vehicles specifically designed for that purpose, including Trucks, public transportation devices such as Monorails, Aircraft, and Hovercraft.

5.8

AIRCRAFT

The general category of Aircraft includes several different types of craft used both commercially and militarily. Most of these vehicles are capable of travelling from the surface to spacecraft in low orbits. The most common varieties are discussed below, with special emphasis on the Dropship used by Colonial Marines and other military forces.

Aircraft are powered by internal **Fusion Power Generators**, which use fuel that is only available at Service Bases. The Fusion Generator powers the **Gravity Drive** which allows the vehicle to fly and maneuver, and to attain the high velocities necessary for orbit. For complete reliability, the Generator must undergo routine maintenance after every 25 days of use, a process which costs 10,000 Credits and takes a week. The Table below gives the possible side effects of continued use after 25 days. A 00 to 99 roll should be made for each day of use, and the appropriate result applied. Where appropriate, the GM should roll randomly to determine how far through the day the malfunction occurs.

AIRCRAFT MALFUNCTION TABLE			
Days of Use	Catastrophe	Emergency Shutdown	Controlled Shutdown
26 to 50	-	-	00 - 00
51 to 75	-	00 - 00	01 - 01
76 to 100	00 - 00	01 - 01	02 - 02
101 to 125	00 - 01	02 - 03	04 - 05
126 or more	00 - 03	04 - 08	09 - 15

"How long after we're
declared overdue can
we expect a rescue?"

Ripley

"17 days."

Hicks

In the table, **Controlled Shutdown** means that the Aircraft is no longer stable in flight and must immediately land; its Drive has taken REP damage. This landing is executed normally, unless there is no suitable landing site. This might be the case if the Aircraft was over water, or travelling through a mountainous area. If there is no landing site, then the **Aircraft Crashes** (Section 7.10), with a modifier of +1 to the Crew Damage rolls.

An **Emergency Shutdown** means that the Aircraft is dysfunctioning too badly to execute any sort of normal landing. It Crashes with no modifiers.

If the Aircraft suffers a **Catastrophe**, there is a 30 percent chance that it detonates in air, killing all on board. Otherwise, it Crashes with no modifiers.

Rules for using Aircraft in Combat are in Chapter 7.

Dropships

The Dropship is the workhorse of the Colonial Marine Corps and of many other military forces. It provides transportation from space to the surface and back, and while within an atmosphere it serves as a combat aircraft and mobile artillery platform.

Capacity: 1 Pilot, 1 Co-Pilot, Payload (see below).

Maximum Speed: Nearly unlimited in vacuum.

Cruising Speed: 500 miles per hour in normal Atmosphere.

Weapon Systems: Mounted in deployable bays on the Dropship are two banks of Heavy Missile Launchers, capable of firing Hammer Missiles. There is one bank of 6 Launchers on each side of the Dropship.

Two banks of Light Missile Launchers are contained in the deployable Weapon Bays of the Dropship. Each Weapon Bay has 16 Launchers, which contain either Sprint or Dogleg Missiles.

In the center of the Dropship's nose is a single Chain Gun, which is used primarily for low-level anti-personnel and anti-vehicular missions. There is also a Lase Cannon, which is designed as an Anti-Missile system but is also effective for Air-to-Ground attacks.

Speed and Maneuverability: The Dropship has good maneuverability for a craft of its size, although it is no match for the Gunship. Its **Combat Speed** is 5, and its **Maneuver Number** is 4.

Payload: The Dropship is designed to carry and offload APC's and Cargo Pallets. These have their own drive systems, with which they are driven in or out of the Dropship on the **Cargo Ramp** which descends below the vehicle. The drive system on a Cargo Pallet is a very simple one, capable of speeds up to 4 Miles Per Hour.

For items which do not have functioning drive systems, there is a **Winch** within the Dropship's Cargo Bay. Hooking the cargo to the Winch and bringing it into the Cargo Bay is a time-consuming task which must be carefully executed.

Rapid ejection of cargo can be done with or without a drive system on the cargo. The Dropship must land, or hover just above the target location, and lower the Cargo Ramp. At this point, explosive bolts fire which drop both the cargo and the inner ramp bed to the ground. This can only be done after manual override of several safety systems, of course.

Note also that for Atmospheric Reentry or escape to Orbit, the Dropship must have its Weapon Bays and Cargo Ramp closed. If they cannot be closed, the vehicle will be destroyed on reentry, or while attempting to reach orbital velocity.

Carryall

These are the basic commercial Aircraft now in use. They do the hauling and transportation from ground bases into space and back again, as well as performing countless functions within the atmosphere. There are several different sizes of these Carryall, but they have been standardized and each type can be found on virtually any world. The same parts and systems have been used for years, and most are interchangeable from one model Carryall into another. This means that all Service Bases can work on all Carriers with the same equipment and tools.

"17 days? Hey man, I don't want to rain on your parade, but we're not gonna last 17 hours."

Hudson

"Hudson! This little girl survived longer than that with no weapons, and no training, right?... You'd better just start dealing with it, Hudson... Just deal with it, because we need you and I'm sick of your nonsense."

Ripley

"Bishop, I want these specimens destroyed as soon as you finish with them, is that clear?"

Ripley

"Mr. Burke gave instructions that they were to be kept alive in stasis, for return to the company labs... He was very specific about it."

Bishop

The most common Carryall is very similar to a Dropship in size and function. It has a large Cargo Bay like that on a Dropship, which can load and carry two Cargo Pallets, or one APC. The electronics and basic equipment are even the same, except that instead of Weapon Bays, a Carrier has four additional **Cargo Pods**, capable of carrying 2,000 pounds each. If weapons are installed in a Carryall, the configuration is like a Dropship. The Cargo Pods are replaced by Missile Bays and the Chain Gun and Lase Cannon are mounted externally.

The Drive and Power in a Carrier, and most of the subsystems, are identical to those used in a Dropship. The real differences are that Carriers have several different frame sizes, all larger than that of the Dropship so that bulkier cargoes can be handled, and Carriers lack armor and weapons and have poor maneuverability.

Capacity: Pilot, Co-Pilot, Cargo Bay, 4 Cargo Pods.

Maximum Speed: Nearly unlimited in vacuum.

Cruising Speed: 400 Miles per Hour in normal atmosphere.

Weapon Systems: None. Optionally, two Heavy Missile Bays, two Light Missile Bays, one Chain Gun, and one Lase Cannon.

Speed and Maneuverability: The Carryall is not designed for combat. Its **Combat Speed** is 4, and its **Maneuver Number** is 2.

Payload: If the Carryall is not equipped with weapons, it can carry two Cargo Pallets or one APC in its Cargo Bay and 2,000 pounds in each of its four Cargo Pods. When equipped with weapons, only the Cargo Bay can be used for normal Cargo.

Gunship

The Gunship uses the same Power and Drive systems as the Dropship and Carryall, and shares the same subsystem designs and general parts. The primary difference is that it is more heavily armored, and the Cargo Bay has been replaced with additional weaponry. The Gunship is nothing more than an armored gun platform, which carries a Heavy Disruptor, four Light Missile Bays, and two Heavy Missile Bays, as well as a Chain Gun and a Lase Cannon. It is designed specifically for intense offensive combat, and is a devastating force within an atmosphere; it is a match for 3 Dropships in battle.

Capacity: Pilot, Co-Pilot.

Maximum Speed: Nearly unlimited in vacuum.

Cruising Speed: 600 Miles per Hour in normal atmosphere.

Weapon Systems: Two Heavy Missile Bays, four Light Missile Bays, a Chain Gun, a Lase Cannon, and a Heavy Disruptor.

Rules governing the weapon systems are the same as those given for Dropships above.

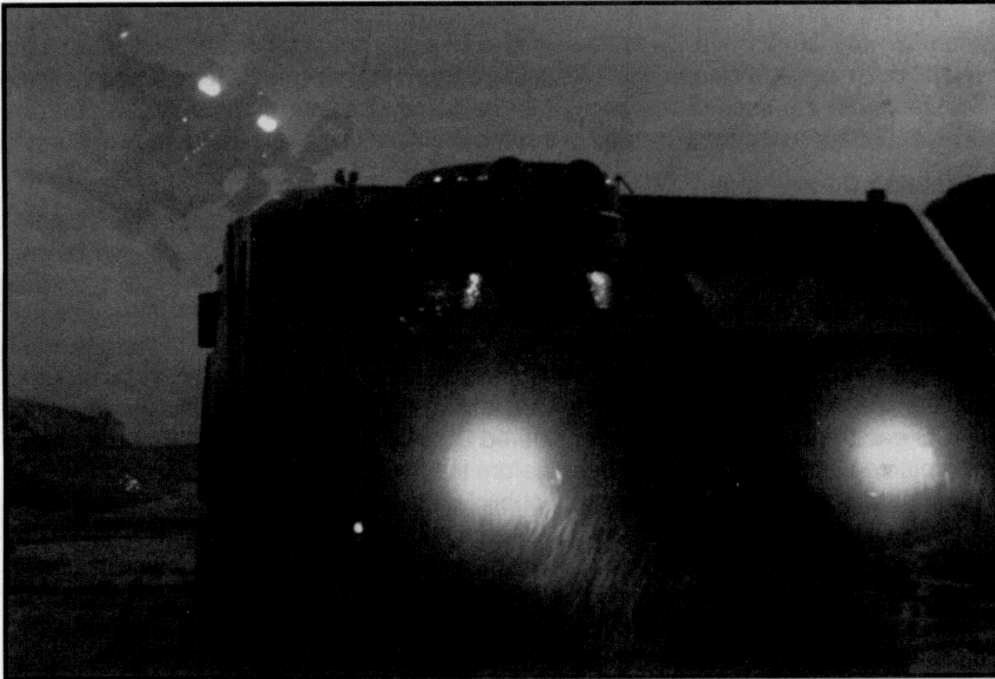
Speed and Maneuverability: Since the Gunship is designed specifically for combat, it is vastly superior to the other Aircraft. It has a **Combat Speed** of 6, and a **Maneuver Number** of 6.

5.9

SPACE TECHNOLOGY

Humanity is a newcomer to the stars. It has been a comparatively short time since the development of interstellar travel, and in that time Humanity has discovered the true vastness and cold of deep space. The distances are almost beyond the reach of the Human imagination, and can only be crossed with the aid of complex and powerful technologies. Even when Humanity reaches a new star system, the worlds that are found are usually disappointing; this universe was not designed for the convenience of Humanity, and most planets are not capable of supporting Human life for long periods.

Humanity fights back, as always. More and better Spacecraft are built, and the ranks of the explorers grow with each generation. Colonies have been established on dozens



Dropship and APC

of worlds, and others are being slowly terraformed so that they can support Humanity. New life forms are found constantly; many are dangerous, but so far none have been a match for the intelligence, strength, and technology of Humanity. Indeed, until recently the most dangerous foe Humanity had found among the stars was itself; the Aliens have changed that, of course. The following Sections describe the technologies and vessels which are used to travel among the stars.

Drive Systems

There are two components to the Drive of an interstellar craft. The first is the **Displacement Drive**, which displaces the volume of space directly in front of the spacecraft, and draws the ship forward into it. Displacement Drive is reactionless, and is capable of hundreds of G's of acceleration. Although the theoretical maximum speed of the Displacement Drive is the speed of light, the time and energy consumed in reaching that speed are prohibitive; in practice, ships equipped with these Drives rarely move faster than 1/3 the speed of light. The most important limitation on the speed of the Displacement Drive is power; the speed at which the Drive Field can move the ship is limited by the power which can be supplied to it. Since power generating equipment takes up a lot of room, this means that the faster a ship is designed to be, the less it can carry on board.

Coupled with the Displacement Drive, and drawing its power from it, is the **Jump Drive**. It can be activated whenever the craft is travelling faster than 1/5 the speed of light, and the energies it produces vastly enhance the effect created by the Displacement Drive. Instead of simply distorting space, the Jump Drive actually breaks through it, and allows the craft to travel through a separate dimension and emerge into normal space several light years away. The Jump itself takes about one day. Upon arrival, the Drive has to remain idle for six days to recharge, so a Spacecraft can Jump once per Week. During the six day recharging period, both the Jump Drive and the Displacement Drive are completely inoperable. This means that Spacecraft are very vulnerable after Jump, and must be careful when they are entering a system that might be hostile.

In order to emerge safely, the **Navigation Coordinates** of the destination must be precisely known and the Jump Drive must have enough power to cover the entire distance; these things are described on the next page.

"Okay Ferro. Set down on the landing grid. Immediate dustoff on my clear, then stay on station."

Gorman

"Look, those two specimens are worth millions to the Bioweapons Division, right? Now, if you're smart we can both come out of this heroes, and we will be set up for life."

Burke

"You're crazy, Burke, do you know that?"

Ripley

"You were responsible for the deaths of 157 Colonists... I just checked the Colony Log... You sent them out there, and you didn't even warn them. Why didn't you warn them, Burke?"

Ripley

"Okay, look... So if I went and made a major security situation out of it, everybody steps in, administration steps in, and there's no exclusive rights for anybody. Nobody wins. So I made a decision, and it was wrong. It was a bad call, Ripley, it was a bad call."

Burke

Note that there are many ships which only have a Displacement Drive, without an accompanying Jump Drive. Such vessels are obviously restricted to operating in a single system, but have a greater payload. A standard **System Defense Frigate** is shown in the Ship Tables at the back of the book; it is the same size as a normal Frigate, but the additional weapons it carries instead of a Jump Drive make it a very dangerous opponent.

Navigation Coordinates

For a Spacecraft to Jump from one system to another, the exact Navigation Coordinates must be known. These Coordinates are a mathematical representation of the gravitational location of the system, and cannot be determined from a distance. Before the creation of the ICC, the Coordinates for most systems were closely guarded secrets. When the ICC was established, however, the Coordinates for all systems discovered up to that time were made public knowledge. This gave the Colonial Marine Corps the mobility it needed to keep the peace, and went a long way toward uniting Humanity. Systems discovered since the ICC was created, however, are considered Corporate property, and their Coordinates are protected as they would have been before the ICC. The systems shown on the **Star Map** (Figure 2 on page 59) are those with publicly known Navigation Coordinates. The GM should feel free to introduce hidden Corporate systems as desired.

Although Navigation Coordinates cannot be exactly determined from another system, they can be estimated. This means that in order to explore a new system, a number of automated probes are sent toward a star in hopes that one will land within its Gravity Well. This will allow it to regenerate its Drives and execute its automatic return program. As soon as a probe returns, the coordinates of the system are known.

Once the location has been determined, follow-up craft move into the system. One of the first tasks of these craft is the recovery of the expensive automated probes that missed the system. Since the estimated Navigation Coordinates are reasonably accurate, the probes are generally close by; "close by" in this case can be many billions of miles. To simplify this process, all automated probes which fail to land in a Gravity Well activate a beacon which broadcasts on a particular frequency. The motivation behind this process is obvious; automated exploration probes cost 1 million C.

If the players are interested, it is possible for Characters outside the Colonial Marine Corps to join an Exploration Team. The Characters would begin as junior crew members, or as security for the exploration craft, and would spend their time at the edge of ICC space. A full development of space exploration is beyond the scope of this product, but may be interesting to a creative GM. As a starting point, finding the Navigation Coordinates of a system is Extremely Difficult, plus 2 Levels of Difficulty; the Base Odds are -2.

Using Jump Drive and the Star Map

All Jump Drives have a **Jump Value**, which ranges from 1 to 5. A Jump Value of 1 means that the ship can Jump a distance of up to 5 light years, while Jump 2 is up to 10 light years, and so forth. In the **Star Map**, all distances are given in the number of 5 light year Jumps necessary to cover the distance. For example, there is a 16 on the line connecting the Colonies of Chitin and Aerodyne. This means that a Jump 4 ship would need 4 Jumps to cover the distance, while a ship with Jump 1 would need 16 Jumps. All of the Systems along this route have been mapped out, but they do not contain habitable worlds or any Human settlement. The only sign of Humanity in each of these Systems is a Station (Section 5.11), in the vicinity of the entry point.

5.10

FRIGATES AND WARSHIPS

Because of the costs and technologies involved, the sizes of Spacecraft which can be built are somewhat limited. There are a number of standard frames, a few of which are described on the following pages. The most common in the military is the **Frigate**, and this is likely to be the kind of vessel that the Characters will encounter most often. Players should remember that Spacecraft are designed for use in vacuum. While they can land on a planet, they are not effective for combat within an atmosphere.

Vessel Size

Among Spacecraft fitted with Jump Drive, the smallest is the Recon Ship, which is designed for long Jumps. Frigates like the **Sulaco**, which appears in the movie, are twice as large as Recon Ships, while large cargo and military vessels at least 10 times that size.

Spacecraft Maintenance

Frigates and other Spacecraft use a great deal of complex machinery, and the results of a flaw in this machinery are obviously a good deal more serious than a malfunction in a ground vehicle. The rules governing Spacecraft Maintenance, and the risks and consequences of insufficient Maintenance, are as follows.

Routine Maintenance of a Spacecraft costs 100,000C, takes one Month, and can only be performed at **Service Bases**. For complete reliability, a Spacecraft should be Maintained after every 25 Weeks of active use. Since a normal Jump takes 1 Week, counting Jumps is a quick way to keep track of the wear and tear on most Spacecraft; craft which do not or cannot Jump must be kept track of more carefully. A Spacecraft is capable of up to 25 completely safe Weeks of use after it is serviced. Thereafter, there is an increasing chance that there will be some sort of malfunction within the ship during Jump or Displacement Drive operation. The chances and results of malfunction are shown on the following Table.

SPACECRAFT MALFUNCTION CHANCE PER WEEK			
Week of Use	Catastrophe	Stranded No Power	Stranded
26 to 50	-	-	00 - 00
51 to 75	-	00 - 00	01 - 01
76 to 100	00 - 00	01 - 01	02 - 02
101 to 125	00 - 01	02 - 03	04 - 05
126 or more	00 - 03	04 - 08	09 - 15

In the Table, **Stranded** indicates that the Jump Drive of the vessel has failed, and cannot be repaired by normal means. If it did not Jump, then the Displacement Drive has failed. If the vessel is returned to civilization, the affected Drive has taken REP damage (Section 5.13). In the Stranded column, only the Drive has malfunctioned; the power systems and life support are fine, and the crew of the vessel must simply wait for some sort of rescue. **Stranded No Power** means that the Drive and primary Power systems have failed; the vessel cannot use either Drive and can only support Emergency Life Support, so the crew must be placed in Hypersleep. The **Catastrophe** column indicates that the ship has been destroyed by a devastating malfunction on board, which has either resulted in the explosion of the ship or in its failure to emerge from Jump space.

Beginning with the 26th Week of Use since Maintenance has been performed, this Table should be consulted each Week. The GM should roll percentile dice and consult the appropriate line on the Table.

For Malfunction purposes, if a vessel spends one Year without being used, the GM should add one to its total Weeks of Use anyway. This reflects the slow deterioration caused by time, and may be of importance in the cases of Colonies and Outposts which see little traffic and for abandoned or derelict vessels.

Ship Stats

The basic information for the most common spacecraft is given below. Rules governing the use of Spacecraft in Combat are in Chapter 7.

Colonial Marine and Corporate Frigates

These two classes of Spacecraft make up the bulk of the combat vessels built by Humanity. The two classes are very similar, with the only differentiation being the modernized and somewhat improved construction of the Corporate Frigates, as opposed

"Bad call? These people are dead, Burke! Don't you have any idea what you've done here? Well, I'm going to make sure that they nail you right to the wall for this. You're not gonna sleaze your way out of this one."

Ripley

"Ripley, I... you know, I expected more from you. I thought you'd be smarter than this."

Burke

"I'm happy to disappoint you."

Ripley

"How long 'til
it blows?"

Hicks

"Four hours... with a
blast radius of 30
kilometers, equal to
about 40 megatons."

Bishop

"Oh, that's beautiful,
man. That just beats it
all. I don't believe this,
I don't believe this!"

Hudson

to the older and less efficient Colonial Marine Frigates. All of the information below applies to both classes, except where noted.

Frigates are versatile Spacecraft, and are designed to deliver significant space firepower and one or two Strike Teams of ground troops with the minimum of cost. Each Frigate carries two Dropships, two APC's, and either one or two Strike Teams, depending on the situation. A Synthetic is also assigned to it, as well as two Auxiliary personnel and an onboard Navigation Computer.

There are enough supplies and Life Support to serve an active Strike Team for 20 weeks. If the crew is in Hypersleep, it will last for 40 years. Resupply is handled at the same time as the Frigate's Drives are maintained.

Frigates have one Class 7 Disruptor and two Class 5 Disruptors, as well as two Cargo Bays, each with a Dropship and an APC inside. They have a Maneuver Number of 8, Combat Speed of 4, and a Jump Value of 4.

System Defense Frigate

These vessels use the same frame as normal Frigates, but do not have Jump Drive. This means they cannot leave the system they were built in without a large cargo vessel for transportation; it also means they can carry more weapons than normal Frigates. This can give them a decisive edge in combat, and they are extremely valuable for defensive actions. They are cheaper to build than Frigates, and are superior in combat.

System Defense Frigates have a Class 9 Disruptor and a Class 7 Disruptor, and carry two Gunships in their Cargo Bay. The Maneuver Number is 8, and Combat Speed is 5.

Cruiser

The Cruiser is an upgunned Frigate. It carries the same cargo as a Frigate, but has better space weaponry. These vessels are designed to enter hostile systems and defeat System Defense Frigates. They are not common in the Colonial Marine Corps, but many are being built by wealthy Corporations.

Each carries a Class 9 Disruptor and two Class 5 Disruptors, as well as two Dropships with APC's and Strike Teams. The Maneuver Number of a Cruiser is 8, its Combat Speed is 4, and the Jump Value is 4.

Recon

These are the smallest manned interstellar craft built. The limitation here is on the smallest Displacement and Jump Drives which can be created. Recon ships are used widely in business and the military, to transport important people quickly and discretely.

Recon ships have only a single Disruptor, of Class 7, and have only a single Dropship and APC in their small Cargo Bay. They are quick vessels, having a Maneuver Number of 8, a Combat Speed of 5, and a Jump Value of 5.

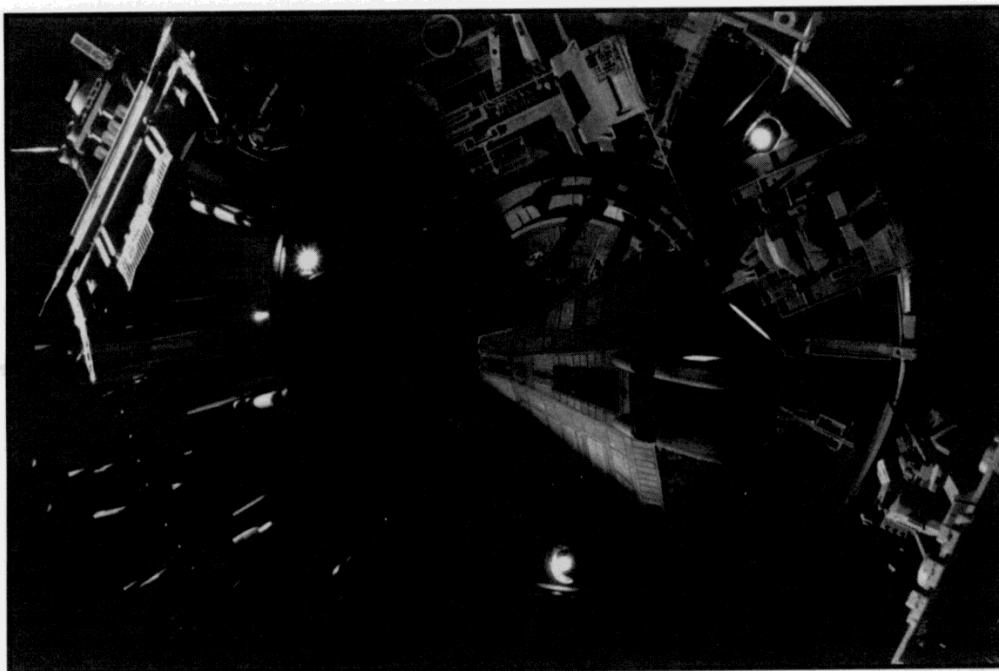
Larger Vessels

Commercial tugs and cargo liners are huge vessels. They are used purely for commercial work, and are vital commodities to all of Humanity. These vessels are protected by all parties because of their expense and their importance, and no force has ever destroyed such a craft. The large Spacecraft are not designed in the same modular, efficient ways as the more numerous smaller craft. Once a system is disabled, it has to be repaired in place and only a handful of special salvage craft exist which have the tools necessary for these repairs.

5.11

SPACE FACILITIES

Space Facilities come in all sizes and designs, and two Facilities which are theoretically of the same caliber are likely to be wildly different, although they will provide similar services. The most typical Facilities are described below, with a brief outline of their population, services, and other attributes. The GM should feel free to doctor these outlines as desired when designing a particular Facility.



Ripley's Shuttle being rescued by a Deep Space Salvage Team

Station

Virtually every System which has been explored has a Station in it, which is set up in the area where Spacecraft arrive out of Jump. Stations are the smallest and simplest of Space Facilities, and are designed to provide only the most limited assistance for crippled spacecraft. Stations are not manned, and the spacecraft must be able to reach the Station on its own.

The value of a Station is that it contains a functioning **Life Support** system, which keeps the crew of a damaged Spacecraft alive until help arrives. There are usually food stores present, and occasionally there are tools and other valuable items. What is present at a Station depends in large part on the gratitude felt by the people who have sheltered there. Consequently, most Stations have little beyond a docking port, the habitat, and a few weeks of food, while there are two or three which have lavish accommodations, tools and spare parts for making simple repairs, and functioning communications gear. Stations in especially remote systems usually have larger food stores, and some even have **Hyper-sleep Pods**.

Unless a crew is lucky enough to find one of these rarities, they have nothing to look forward to but drab accommodations, short rations, and a long wait. This wait is greatly reduced if the Station is in an inhabited or well-traveled system. Signaling craft which pass through the system is easy if the Communications gear of the ship is still functioning; if not, the Station has an **Emergency Beacon** which can be activated and which will notify passing vessels that there are travellers in need on the Station.

How long the crew must wait for rescue is up to the GM, but when assistance comes, the stranded party will have standard transportation fees charged to the ship's owner. If the owner does not salvage the vessel within 7 years, it is fair game for salvage by the first group to claim it.

Stations are used rarely in the game, but are an excellent setting for horror-related encounters. A dangerous life form on the loose in a Station filled with marooned Characters will keep them on their toes, especially if the lifeform is an Alien.

Service Base

Service Bases are owned by either the Colonial Marines or a Corporation, or may have joint ownership. They are near the primary inhabited planet of their system, and have the ability to repair damaged spacecraft. The tools present are capable of fixing REP damage

"Bio readouts are all in the green; looks like she's alive."

Deep Space Salvage Team Leader

"We've gotta get the other Dropship from the Sulaco... we'd better think of a way."

Ripley

(Section 5.13), but the parts are rarely available and the vessel must dock awaiting their arrival. This can take months, and transportation costs are added to the price of the parts, making them very expensive. Any devices which are unusual in design can only have MAJ repair work done. The parts for work of this sort are often available for all types of craft.

Service Bases are usually placed where there are Colonies, and the types of goods and parts readily available at the Service Base are determined by the level of sophistication of the Colony. What the Service Base cannot get from the Colony must be ordered from outside the system, and will be significantly more expensive.

5.12

MAJOR INSTALLATIONS

**"Somebody's gonna
have to go out there...
take a portable
terminal, go out
there and patch
in manually."**

Ripley

**"Oh yeah, sure. With
those things running
around? You can
count me out."**

Hudson

**"Yeah, I guess we can
just count you out of
everything."**

Hicks

**"That's right, man.
Hey, why don't you
go, man?"**

Hudson

The new communities created by Humanity on distant worlds fall into four general categories; Major Worlds, Colonies, Terraforming / Mining Worlds, and Garrison Systems. The traits of each are described below.

Major Worlds

There are only a handful of Major Worlds, and each features a number of large, well-developed settlements. They are the most Earth-like planets found to date, and each has been the focus of intense development by the Corporation or coalition of Corporations which discovered it. In order to develop the Worlds, the owning Corporations have brought in other Corporations to handle expansion, manufacturing, services, and many other tasks. As a result, every Major World features representatives of all the primary Corporations in the ICC, and a great many of the smaller entities.

At present, each of the Major Worlds has a large, well-developed economy and is self-sufficient. They still have weaknesses in their industries, however, and import many rarities and critical components from Earth or from other Major Worlds and Colonies. Facilities on a Major World are capable of fully refitting, repairing, and building Spacecraft and all normal military hardware. Food, other necessities, and most military equipment is the same price it would be on Earth, but general consumer goods are double normal price.

The Major Worlds are Alexandria, Tartarus, Micor, New Eden, and Hilo, and each is described in Chapter 3.

Colonies

Colonies are the places which hold Humanity's future, and are discussed individually in Chapter 3. A Colonial Service Base is capable of fixing damage to spacecraft up to REP level, and can even provide the necessary parts to preferred clients. For clients from outside the owning Corporation, and which do not have the necessary political leverage, the parts still have to be ordered from outside the system at the usual increased cost.

The high level of self-sufficiency of a Colony results in a lot of trade, and almost all goods are available at a Colony. Exactly what items can be manufactured in-system, as opposed to those which must be imported, depends on the level of technology present at the Colony, as described in Chapter 3. Except for basic necessities and items which are produced in-system, all goods cost consumers about three times the normal price. Some of the most noteworthy Colonies are Grendel, Aerodyne, Summit, and Weyland-Yutani.

Terraforming and Mining Worlds

These are far less developed than Colonies, and range from squalid mining camps on marginally habitable worlds to sophisticated dome communities on worlds which are not habitable at all. Most of these Worlds are without space facilities, and have only a landing pad for Aircraft at the edge of the settlement.

Little manufacturing is done at these places, which instead include research facilities, mining or harvesting operations, and terraforming equipment. Only a limited range of goods is available at a Terraforming / Mining World, and it may not even be possible to import something which is desired. If Repairs are necessary, up to MAJ damage can be fixed, providing parts are available. Goods and services are available at four times the normal cost.

Atmosphere Processors: A common feature of the Terraforming Worlds is the Atmosphere Processor. This is a group of huge reactors which slowly alter the nature of the planet's atmosphere. On a typical world which is marginally habitable, an aggressive program of Atmosphere Processing will result in a breathable atmosphere in 20 years.

Garrison Systems

These systems are controlled by military forces and have very limited civilian facilities. Costs and service are similar to those on Terraforming and Mining Worlds, except that the large military base present in each of these systems will repair friendly military vessels, and has extensive deep space radar equipment.

5.13

REPAIR

Given the amount of bullets, missiles, and Acid Blood which get sprayed around in **ALIENS**, it is inevitable that important equipment will be damaged. **Repairs** might be made in the field or in drydock, and they may be handled by Characters or may be paid for with hard-earned Credits, but the Repair of damaged equipment is likely to be a fact of life for the Characters. The following rules are used in all situations.

Levels of Damage

There are five Levels of damage which may be sustained by equipment; Superficial, Minor, Major, Replace, and Destroyed. The Combat System, especially the Vehicle Damage System of Section 7.8, explains when damage occurs and how to determine what Level of damage has been sustained. Each Damage Level is described below.

Superficial: The damage has no significant effect on the equipment's functioning. It usually consists of bent panelling and scratched surfaces, and while Superficial damage is often unpleasant to look at, it is essentially harmless. It is not necessary to repair Superficial damage; if it is repaired, the price is 5% of the unit's original cost.

Minor (MIN): This Level of damage is sufficient to stop the subsystem involved from functioning, but can usually be fixed quickly. Simple field repairs are sufficient to mend MIN damage, and special parts and equipment are not necessary.

Major (MAJ): Significant circuits, mechanisms, and/or structures have been damaged within the device, and extensive work by capable personnel will be required. Spare parts must be used, and frequently special repair facilities are needed.

Replace (REP): This Level indicates that the damage is extensive, and that there are subsystems which must be Repaired throughout the equipment, rather than in just one or two areas. Numerous spare parts are required, along with special repair facilities, and it is often more reasonable to simply scrap the equipment and buy a replacement.

Destroyed (DES): The equipment is beyond repair, and is in fact mostly beyond having any salvage value. It can be scrapped for what little remains, but is otherwise without use.

Conducting Repairs

The Repair system uses the normal Action / Reaction rules of Section 2.2. A Success Roll is calculated in the normal way, and the Character receives two chances to make the roll. The guidelines for determining Base Odds and Success Rolls, and the special situations and costs associated with Repair work, are given below. In all cases, the Rating of only one Character is considered. Other Characters may assist to some degree, especially with large equipment, but the Success Roll is determined by the Rating of the Character who is in charge of the Repairs.

If the Character attempting the Repair has a Rating which is considered high enough for the equipment (see Section 2.6), then the Success Roll is calculated normally. If the Character's Rating is not high enough, then a special modifier of +1 Difficulty Level per level of deficiency is applied.

"I'll go. I'll go. I mean, I'm the only one qualified to remote pilot the ship anyway."

Bishop

"Yeah, right, man. Bishop should go. Good idea!"

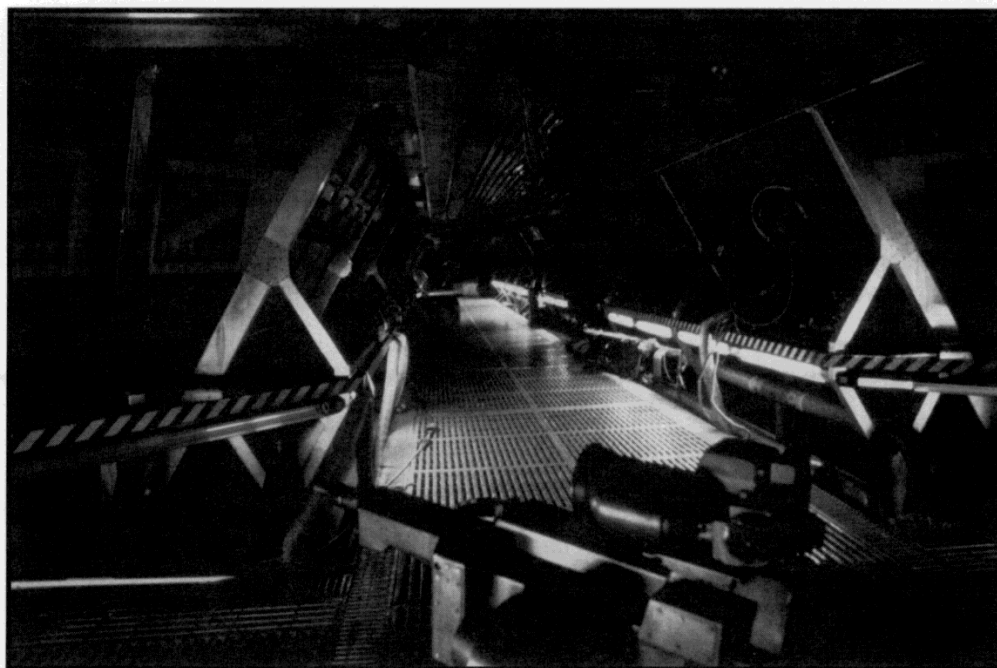
Hudson

"Believe me, I'd prefer not to. I may be synthetic, but I'm not stupid."

Bishop

"Hicks, I'm not going to end up like those others. You'll take care of it, won't you?"

Ripley



Fully Automated Sentry Gun on Station

Repairing a piece of equipment which has suffered **MIN damage** has a Difficulty Level of Easy; the Base Odds are 13. The price of MIN repairs is 5% of the unit's normal cost if performed by Characters with suitable equipment, and 10% of the cost if the Characters pay for someone else to do it. Note that the pay of Colonial Marine Characters will be docked by the Corps if the damage occurred through negligence, while Characters who are not part of the Corps will always have their pay docked, unless they are in particular favor with their employers.

For **MAJ damage**, the Difficulty Level is Average (Base Odds 10), and the price is equal to 20% of the unit's cost for Characters with suitable equipment, and 30% of the cost if the Characters pay for someone else to do it.

For **REP damage**, the Difficulty Level is Very Difficult (Base Odds 7). The price is equal to 30% of the cost for Characters with suitable equipment, and 70% of the cost if they pay someone else. If the Characters elect to scrap the equipment instead, they receive 5% of the unit's cost.

If the Characters have the Skills necessary for a Repair job but lack the facilities, then they will have to borrow the facilities from friends, or simply rent them. The GM can determine if the Characters have any friends in the right places; if not, the rent is equal to 50% of the Character repair cost.

Example: The APC takes MAJ damage to its Engine but is picked up by the Dropship and returned to the Sulaco for repair. Crowe is Certified in APC Drive System Repair and directs the effort. The Sulaco's hangar deck has enough tools and spare parts for this type of repair, so Crowe's Success Roll is 10 (Average Difficulty) + 0 (Certified Repair SRM) = 10. Crowe rolls a 12 and is unsuccessful. Trying again, Crowe rolls a 10 and is successful; the Engine has been repaired. The cost of this repair is 20% the Engine's cost of 16,000C (Table 4C) or 3,200C in parts.

Salvaging Equipment

There are times when repairing a piece of equipment is not feasible and the Characters might want to sell it for salvage. Guidelines for the price they get are; 50% of the original cost for Used Equipment, 40% for equipment with Superficial Damage, 30% for equipment with MIN damage, 10% for MAJ, 5% for REP, and 2% for Destroyed equipment.

"If it comes to that, I'll do us both. Listen, let's just make sure it doesn't come to that."

Hicks

6

COMBAT SYSTEM

The future is a violent place. Encounters with dangerous new life forms, Corporate warfare, and every other variety of Human strife combine to keep Colonial Marines and other professional soldiers involved in countless battles and skirmishes every day. Because of its importance to game play, combat in **ALIENS** is as intense and deadly as it was in the movie itself. The system is derived from our **Living Steel** and **Phoenix Command** games; players not familiar with those games, or other **Leading Edge Games** products, will find that the Combat System contains a number of unfamiliar concepts.

Each of these concepts is fully explained below but, in brief, the Combat System does not use "hit points" or any similar method of tracking damage, as is common among other Role-Playing Games. Instead, it simulates combat in a very realistic manner, and a single mistake can be fatal for even the most experienced soldier. This is very much the tone of the movie, and players will soon learn that combat is not a thing to be entered lightly.

6.1

As mentioned during Character Generation, the **ALIENS** Combat System uses **Phases** which are 2 seconds long. Within each Phase, all movement and fire are executed simultaneously. The system has been designed for use in either an informal setting, where the GM has a minimum of preparation and set up is simple, or for full miniatures-type play. Miniatures play requires a noticeable amount of work for the GM and the players, but can reward all concerned with a higher degree of satisfaction. Beginning players will almost certainly wish to begin by using the informal method, but are encouraged to experiment with miniatures play.

Informal Play

All the parameters in the Combat System are flexible enough that battles can be run with a minimum of work. When a combat occurs, the GM will determine what the general terrain of the area is and roughly how far apart the combatants are from each other, using the **Range Categories** described below. From that point, it is a simple matter of noting major changes in position among the combatants and of using the appropriate modifiers in the Combat System. The GM will find that this method is ideal for unexpected encounters, brief skirmishes, and other situations where preparation is either not possible or of minor importance.

Miniatures Play

For a playing surface, either a table top or a map with a hexagonal grid may be used, with each Inch or **Hex** representing 6 feet. Each combatant should be represented on the playing surface by a **Miniature**, counter, or other agreed-upon marker.

Characters are set up on the playing surface whenever combat is imminent, or in situations which require detailed role-playing. The GM simply draws the outlines of buildings and other terrain features, such as trees and ridgelines, directly on the surface. A variety of blank, erasable hex maps are currently available in hobby and gaming stores

GAME SCALE AND PLAYING SURFACE

"Hey, I want to introduce you to a personal friend of mine. This is an M-41A Pulse Rifle, ten millimeter, with an over and under 30 millimeter pump action Grenade Launcher. Feel the weight."

Hicks

"Okay. What do I do?"

Ripley

and are ideal for this purpose. If the players are using a table top, then butcher paper or something similar can be easily substituted. As much detail as desired can be included, and the GM should be careful to draw all features to scale. When the map is ready, then the Characters are placed in their locations, along with whatever opponents or other people and creatures they can see. When Characters move, their exact locations are tracked on the map.

This method is most appropriate for battles which the GM considers vital and for which he or she has had time to prepare. Final confrontations and battles where fairly subtle changes and strategies can have a major effect on the outcome are also suitable for this treatment, if the GM and the players find miniatures play entertaining.

6.2

PHASES AND COMBAT ACTIONS

As stated above, the game is run in **Phases** which are 2 seconds long. During each Phase, every combatant is able to perform a number of **Combat Actions**, as defined during Character Generation (Section 1.5). A Character does not have to use all of his or her Actions during a Phase, but those which are not used are simply lost; they may not be saved from Phase to Phase.

The **Action Time Table (4F)** gives the Action costs for many typical Actions. As an example, Normal Movement costs 1 Action per 6 feet.

The GM can determine the cost of any unlisted Action using his or her own judgement. The Action cost is equal to twice the time in seconds that it would take an average person to perform the act. For example, something that takes an average person 3 seconds to perform would cost $2 \times 3 = 6$ Actions.

Anything listed on the **Action Time Table (4F)** can be done by any combatant; it just takes some people longer than others. If a Character is trying to do something that takes more than a single Phase, then the Actions that are available are applied to it in the current Phase, and additional Actions are also used in the following Phase or Phases. When the Character has "spent" enough Actions, then he or she can perform the act.

For example, Frost has 5 Combat Actions. It is the beginning of a Phase, and he wants to climb through a window; as noted on the **Action Time Table (4F)**, this takes 6 Actions. Frost uses all 5 of his Combat Actions during the Phase attempting to climb through the window, but he needs 1 more Action to finish. At the start of the next Phase he spends the Action; he is now through the window, and has 4 Actions left to use in the second Phase.

Actions can be mixed, as long as they are not exclusive. This means that a Character can aim while moving, but cannot aim at two different targets at once, or any other obvious contradiction. It is also difficult to Aim While Moving; a Character can only use a maximum of 2 Actions worth of Aim while moving.

It should be noted that Characters can change their minds. A Character who initially intends to Aim for 6 Actions can decide instead to shoot after only 5 (or 4, or 7, or any other number). The target may also move out of sight (Section 6.4) before the Character wishes to fire. In this case the Character must shoot as the target goes out of sight, using whatever Actions of aim he or she has at that point, or the time spent aiming is simply wasted and the Character receives nothing for the Actions that have been used.

6.3

FACING AND MOVEMENT

In informal play, the **Facing** of a Character and the way he or she moves through combat are of secondary importance. The GM should note significant changes of location, so the Ranges can be adjusted, but this is only a small issue. More importantly, the GM should



"Terraformers... planet engineers. They go in, set up these big Atmosphere Processors to make the air breathable. Takes decades. It's what we call a 'shake 'n bake' colony."

Van Leuwen

Hadley Station

give Characters information based on the general directions they are looking in, and not tell them about things they cannot see. This makes it possible for people to sneak up on each other and to maneuver on the battlefield; the GM should apply this guideline using common sense and the Action/Reaction Tables.

In miniatures play, the figure or marker representing each Character is always oriented in a specific direction; this determines where he or she can move and fire, and is called the Character's **Facing**. Facing may be in any direction and is not limited by the hex grid. Hexes are used only to regulate movement distance.

The Character's Facing determines the **Field of Fire**. The Field of Fire is the area into which the Character can see and can fire a weapon; this is the front 180 degrees, centered on the Character's Facing. If the game is being played on a table top or other unmarked surface, the Field of Fire is estimated by the GM.

The **Action Time Table (4F)** mentions the Action costs for Changing Facing; it should be noted that small turns made while moving are free. For each hex entered, a Character can change Facing up to 60 degrees (one hexside) without any Action cost. There is only an Action cost for turning if the Character is not moving, or if more than 1 hexside is being turned per hex moved.

Example:

Hudson is on guard at one end of a 4 hex corridor, facing a closed door. He hears an alarm sound behind him, and rushes to investigate. It takes him 2 Actions to turn 180 degrees, and 4 Actions to moves the 4 hexes to the other end of the corridor. It has taken a total of 6 Actions for Hudson to respond to the alarm.

6.4

There are several factors which affect the accuracy of a shot. The skill of the shooter, the basic accuracy of the gun itself, the amount of effort spent aiming, and the range are obviously all very important. Each is considered when determining the chance of hitting a target, using the following simple system.

FIRE

"Okay. Pull it in tight here... Lean into it... Alright, now it will kick some... You're ready to Rock and Roll."

Hicks

"What's this?"

Ripley

"That's the Grenade Launcher. I don't think you want to mess with that."

Hicks

The shooter's skill is represented by the **Gun Combat SRM**, which was determined during Character Generation and is shown at the top of the General Skills box on the Character Sheet. The **Range** is the distance between the shooter and the target, and will fall into one of the categories listed at the top of the **Odds of Hitting Table (5A)**, either Point Blank, Very Close, Close, Short, Medium, Long, or Very Long. (The equivalent distances in feet, for miniatures play, are shown at the top of Table 5A.) The weapon's inherent accuracy and the amount of time spent aiming are represented by the **Shot Accuracy** values from the **Weapon Data Table (4A)**. A shot using 1 Action is the quickest, and is usually called a Snap Shot. A shot using the maximum number of Actions shown in the Aim Time column is the most accurate possible for that weapon. Note that the act of firing is included in the Aim Time; a Snap Shot uses one Action for aiming and firing, and does not require 1 Action for aim and another to pull the trigger.

These factors are all included in the Odds of Hitting Table. The left column is labelled **Shot Accuracy (SA)**; this is equal to the Shot Accuracy of the weapon used at the number of Actions of aim which the shooter has applied, plus the shooter's Gun Combat SRM. (Adding the Modifier to each of the Shot Accuracies on the Character Sheet simplifies this step during combat. On Hudson's Character Sheet, both values have been noted.) With 4 Actions of Aim, his Pulse Rifle's modifier is 2; that, plus Hudson's SRM of 4 (Professional Skill) equals 6. This will always be Hudson's basic Shot Accuracy when he uses 4 Actions of Aim.

The SA is then cross-indexed with the appropriate Range category to determine the Odds of Hitting. The shooter rolls a number from 00 to 99; if the number rolled is less than or equal to the Odds of Hitting, the shooter has hit his or her target.

If, as mentioned above, Hudson has a Shot Accuracy of 6, then he would have to roll a 67 or less to hit a target at Short Range (43 to 84 feet).

There are other factors which can be included in figuring the Odds of Hitting. If the GM and players would like a greater degree of realism, the **Optional Accuracy Modifiers** of Section 6.5 should be used.

Flow of Combat

At the beginning of each Phase, the combatants determine what they will do for the Phase. The GM decides what the Characters' opponents are doing, and the players tell the GM what they are going to do. If a combatant wants to react to what someone else is doing, then he or she loses 3 Actions for the Phase, but may decide what to do with the remaining Actions after finding out what everyone else is doing.

Sometimes it will be important to determine what order everything happens in. For ease of play, the GM can break each Phase into three components; **Movement, Melee, and Fire**. The appropriate Actions would occur in each section, with all Movement going first, then Hand-to-Hand Combat and similar activities, and finally all Fire.

There is a more accurate method that requires more thought. The GM should prorate each Action as the Phase goes by. For example, if one combatant had 8 Actions and another had 4, the faster combatant would receive 2 Actions during the time the other received 1. Each would perform the Actions in sequence; the faster Character would take 1 Action, and then his second Action would occur at the same time the slower combatant took his first Action, and so forth. The method is slower than the others, but it only requires common sense and a little thinking. Players and the GM should decide if it is worth the extra effort or not.

Visibility, Concealment and Exposure

One of the most important things in combat is whether the combatant is under cover or is visible to the enemy. On most battlefields, there is a variety of possible cover; trees, rocks, vehicles, doorways, and so forth. Sensible combatants will hide behind these obstacles. Each combatant must be in one of three possible situations: Concealed, which means he or she is completely behind cover and cannot be seen by the enemy; Firing Around Cover, meaning that the combatant is looking or firing over cover, or that some but not all of the target area can be seen by the enemy; and In The Open, meaning that the combatant is largely or completely visible to the enemy. A combatant can only be in one

of these states per Phase, and the most visible state of the Phase should be used. For example, if Hudson moves across an open area in clear view of the enemy and enters a building where he is out of sight, he would be considered In The Open for the entire Phase. Combatants must obviously be next to or behind the cover they want to use; common sense should be applied here, and the GM's decision is final if there is any question as to whether cover can be used.

Naturally, a Character has to be able to see a target to shoot at it. The GM should establish if there is a clear line of sight between a combatant and a prospective target. All Exposed or Partially Exposed targets which are within a Character's Field of Fire and which are not blocked by an obstacle are visible for the entire Phase, and may be fired upon. Again, this is a common sense issue. It is quite possible for an Exposed combatant to be visible to one Character and not to another.

6.5

OPTIONAL ACCURACY MODIFIERS

There is far more to the chance of hitting a target than the factors mentioned above; these factors are covered on the **Optional Accuracy Modifiers Table (5C)**. If desired, any or all modifiers which apply are added to or subtracted from the Shot Accuracy before determining the Odds of Hitting.

As an example, return to Hudson's Short Range shot that required a 67 to hit. If his target were moving, he would subtract 5 from his SA. This would give him an SA of 6 minus 5, or 1. Cross-indexing this SA with Short Range, he would now need to roll a 33 or less to hit the target. If the target was also Standing in the open, however, Hudson would add 8 to his SA, bringing it up to 9, and an 86 to hit.

Positions

There are three possible positions; Standing, Kneeling, and Prone. Each of these has a different Shot Accuracy Modifier, shown on **Table 5C**. From a Standing position it costs 1 Action to Kneel and 2 to go Prone. From Kneeling, it costs 1 to either Stand or go Prone. When Prone, it costs 2 to Kneel and 3 to Stand up.

Ducking

Ducking is a defensive option available to anyone who is being fired at. Ducking costs no Actions, and a Duck may be performed during the same Phase as any other activity, including firing. All shots fired at someone who Ducks are at -5 to Shot Accuracy, and if the person Ducking fires during the Phase, the shots are executed with a -15 to Shot Accuracy. Note that Ducking interrupts any Action which was being performed, and if the combatant does not fire, then any Actions of Aim which have been accumulated through that Phase are lost.

Automatic Fire

Most of the weapons used in this game are capable of Automatic Fire. When a weapon is set on Automatic, it fires a one-half second **Burst** each time the trigger is squeezed, instead of just a single round. Weapons which can do this are those which have Low, Medium, or High Rate Auto Fire next to their Penetration values in the **Weapon Data Table (4A)**.

When using Automatic Fire, only 4 Bursts may be fired per Phase. This is in contrast to Single Shot firing, where the maximum number of shots which can be fired in a Phase is limited only by the number of Combat Actions of the shooter. On the other hand, all Automatic Fire receives a +1 Action Aim Time bonus, as shown on **Table 5C**. It also uses the **Automatic Fire Table (5B)** to determine how many rounds hit the target. This table works in the following way.

To use Automatic Fire, determine the Odds of Hitting normally, making sure to include the +1 Aim Time modifier for Automatic Fire. Roll to see if the shooter hits; if so, then it means the rounds are in the correct area and at the right height. Now go to **Table 5B**. Find

"You started this.
Show me everything.
I can handle myself."

Ripley

"Yeah, I noticed."

Hicks

"Newt, wake up.
Be quiet... we're
in trouble."

Ripley

the appropriate Range, and cross-index it with the Rate of Fire of the weapon. This gives the number of rounds which have hit the target.

It is possible to hit more than one target with a Burst of Automatic Fire. At Point Blank, Very Close, Close, and Short Ranges, the shooter can sweep the fire across 12 feet. If this happens and a hit is scored, every person within 6 feet of the target may be hit. The Short Range column on **Table 5B** is used to determine the number of hits scored on each target.

Target Size

Combatants who are in doorways, behind walls, and in similar situations are harder to hit than those who are standing in the open. The **Target Size Modifiers** deal with these situations.

There are five entries in this portion of the table. The Firing Around Cover modifier is obviously applied to combatants who have chosen to be Partially Exposed, and the other modifiers depend on the Position of the target and are equally clear. In addition to the Odds of Hitting modifiers, targets which are Firing Around Cover can only be hit in certain body locations. This is handled by using the Firing Around Cover column of the **Hit Location Table (6A)**, and is discussed in Section 6.6.

Desperation Fire

In the normal Game Flow described above, Movement and Melee come before Fire. It is possible for a combatant who is going to be attacked in Melee to take a Snap Fire which is performed immediately before Melee, and after all Movement is completed. This is called Desperation Fire, and it is executed with 1 Action of Aim and an additional Modifier of -10 to the Odds of Hitting. It represents a quick, desperate effort to fend off an opponent who is too close to actually aim at.

Note that if a Character uses Snap Fire against an Alien, he or she will be subject to Acid Spray, as described in Section 6.11.

6.6

HIT LOCATION AND DAMAGE

Whenever a target is hit, the **Hit Location and Damage Table (6)** is used. This table divides the body into its significant areas, or Hit Locations, depending on how vital they are to survival. It also shows the appropriate injury caused by the shot, based on how well it penetrates the target's armor. The various factors on the Table are discussed below.

Target Position

There are two columns in the Hit Location Roll portion of the table, labelled **Firing Around Cover**, for combatants who are partially exposed, and **In The Open**, for targets who are completely visible. The possible Hit Locations in the Partially Exposed column are limited to those areas which are visible when a combatant is looking or shooting over or around cover (the Head, Shoulders, and Arms,) while the In The Open column includes all Hit Locations.

The proper column should be selected for each shot, depending on the situation.

Hit Location

This section of the Table is simply a list of the various body areas which can be hit. Glance hits are assumed to cut across the target at a shallow angle, and usually ricochet off bone.

The shooter now rolls a 00 to 99 number, and cross-indexes from the appropriate Hit Location column to determine the actual Hit Location.

Example: Hudson has hit an opponent who is firing over a wall. Hudson therefore uses the Firing Around Cover column. He rolls a 62, which is the Shoulder location. If his opponent had been fully exposed, he would have used the In The Open column, and this same roll would have resulted in a hit to the Thigh-Flesh area.

Penetration Line

Once the Hit Location has been determined, the question is whether the shot has penetrated the target's armor. The **Weapon Penetration Lines** at the top of the **Hit Location and Damage Table (6)** are used for this. Each Weapon has its own line, with Machine Guns on top, then Sniper Rifles, and so on down to Pistols. Whenever a weapon is being used, the appropriate Weapon Penetration Line will be combined with a Glancing Roll (see below) to determine damage.

Glancing Roll

Some shots will strike cleanly, while others may partially or completely Glance off. This depends on the penetrating ability of the weapon involved, and the thickness, slope, and other protective abilities of the armor being hit.

This is reflected by the use of the **Glancing Roll**, shown at the top of the **Hit Location and Damage Table (6)**. For each shot that hits a target, a 0 to 9 number is rolled and is adjusted by the **Armor Glancing Modifier** (from Table 6B) for that Hit Location. The total is entered on the appropriate Weapon Penetration Line to find the effect of the shot. If the number rolled is less than the lowest number in the first column, then the shot glanced off the armor and no damage is done. Otherwise, the number rolled determines which of the other sections of the Hit Location and Damage Table should be used.

Example: Hudson's shot is from a Pulse Rifle, so that line on the table is used. His target is only wearing Combat Fatigues on the Body, so +6 is added to Hudson's Glancing Roll. The number rolled is a 3, so the total is $3 + 6 = 9$. Read across on the Pulse Rifle line to the third column, labelled "9+". This column will be used to determine damage. On the other hand, if the target were wearing Medium Armor on his Body, the Glancing Modifier would be -6. The new total would be $3 - 6 = -3$. Since any total of 2 or less with a Pulse Rifle bounces off, the target would be unharmed.

Resolving Damage

Now that the Hit Location and the proper column of the Damage Table are known, the exact damage is determined by cross-indexing them. The severity of the wound is given in terms of points of **Physical Damage (PD)**. The greater the PD, the more serious the wound and the greater the chance that the combatant has been Incapacitated.

The PD value covers a very wide range, from 1 point to many thousands of points. (The first thing that experienced role-players should do, when confronted by these numbers, is forget everything they know about hit points.) These represent degrees of damage; rough descriptions are included in the first column. A scan down this column and the PD's associated with various Hit Locations will give the players some idea of what they are dealing with.

For example, a first column hit to the Thigh - Flesh area does 3 PD. This is in the general category of Superficial Wounds, and while somewhat painful, it is not an Incapacitating wound to any but the frailest of people and is little threat to one's health. A first column wound to the Thigh - Bone, however, is a 16 PD Disabling Injury, while one to the Heart is a 4000 PD Critical Wound. The significance of Physical Damage is discussed in the next section.

The first column represents damage caused by shots which have been significantly slowed down by the target's armor, or which lacked a great deal of power to begin with. As you move across the columns, greater and greater velocities and stopping power are represented.

Because the armor worn by a target is rarely the same for all Hit Locations, it is often necessary to roll the Hit Location before determining the Armor Glancing Modifier and damage column.

Example: Hudson's shot was on the third column, and hit the Shoulder. Cross-indexing these two, the target has taken 1,000 PD. (The asterisk indicates a Disabling Injury, which is discussed below.) If the Glancing Roll had put the shot in the second column, the wound would have done 500 PD, while a first column shot would have done only 21 PD.

**"Hudson! Vasquez!
Meet me in Medlab,
we got a fire!"**

Hicks

**"They're coming,
Newt."**

Ripley

The first use of PD is to determine if the combatant is **Disabled** or **Incapacitated**; this is covered in the next Section. Even more important than that, however, the PD also determines the chance of a combatant surviving his wounds. This is discussed in depth in Section 6.13.

The standard **Hit Location and Damage Table (6A)** is used for all Humans and humanoid targets. There is a separate **Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D)** for that species, and **Table 6E** has the same information for the race known as Harvesters (Section 3.16). The Tables for Aliens and Harvesters have the natural armor of the creature built into the results; no Glancing Roll Modifiers are necessary.

6.7

DISABLING INJURIES AND KNOCKOUT

There are two immediate side effects possible from a wound received in combat. It is possible that the victim will fall unconscious, slip into shock, or otherwise be unable to continue fighting. The combatant might also be able to continue, but find that his or her abilities have been limited due to injuries.

Being **Incapacitated** is the first issue. Each Phase a combatant takes one or more wounds, there is a chance that he or she will be unable to continue the battle. The following **Knockout Table** is used to determine the odds of this happening.

Compare the total amount of Physical Damage (PD) that the combatant has taken to his or her **Knockout Value (KV)**, discussed in Section 1.5. Select the appropriate line from the table, and read across to find the **Incapacitation Chance (IC)**.

A 00 to 99 number is then rolled, and if the number is less than the IC, the combatant is out of the fight. If the number rolled is greater than or equal to the IC, then the combatant may continue, subject only to the Disabling Injuries rules discussed below.

Knockout Table

Total PD	Incapacitation Chance
less than 1/10 of KV	-
over 1/10 of KV	10
over KV	25
over 2 times KV	75
over 3 times KV	98

"All clear. I nailed
the other one. It's
history man."

Hudson

For example, Hudson's KV is 48. If he took a wound of 4 PD or less, he would not have to make a KV roll. For PD's of 5 to 48, he would have to roll a 10 or better, for 49 to 96 he would need a 25 or better, for 97 to 144 PD his KV roll would be 75, and for wounds of 145 or more PD, he would need a 98 or a 99 to remain conscious.

Incapacitation must be checked each Phase that a combatant takes damage, regardless of how much is taken. Also, the check is made against the **Total Damage** the combatant has received, not just the value of the latest wound. Thus, if Hudson had taken 35 PD from a previous wound and was hit again for 21 PD more, his total PD would be 56. This is more than his KV, and he would have to roll a 25 or higher to remain active.

Note that a combatant who is Incapacitated is not necessarily unconscious. Some Incapacitated combatants are simply scared and unable to continue, especially those with low KV's, while others are in extreme pain or have slipped into shock. Regardless, they are no longer effective in combat, and it is up to the GM to determine if they are conscious, coherent, or able to move away from the action. For GM's who want further guidelines, rules governing states of Incapacitation are included in the **Phoenix Command Small Arms Combat System**.



Operations Room at Hadley Station

Regaining Consciousness

The severity of a wound determines how soon the victim can recover from shock, regain consciousness, or otherwise deal with the short-term Incapacitation represented by a failed Knockout Roll. This is handled through the use of the **Incapacitation Time Table (8B)**.

First choose the appropriate PD Total line, rounding down the combatant's PD Total if it is not shown; a PD Total of 49 uses the 0 line. Then roll a 0 to 9 number, and cross-index. This gives the time required to return to normal (or at least semi-normal) functioning. See Section 6.13 for combat capabilities following recovery.

Disabling Injuries

Disabling Injuries are shown on the **Hit Location and Damage Table (6)** with an asterisk (*). They are hits which have significantly damaged or broken the limb in question. These hits prevent the combatant from using the injured limb until it is fully healed.

A Disabled Leg means that the combatant cannot move, and a Disabled Arm or Shoulder means that he or she cannot fire a weapon with that Arm, and that fire using weapons in the other Arm suffers a 1 Action penalty to Aim.

"Alright, the area's secured. Let's go in and see what their computer can tell us."

Gorman

"Burke. It was Burke."

Ripley

6.8

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

Explosives are a very potent force in combat. For area effect and for clearing buildings, there is no weapon more valuable. This section of the rules deals with the unusual aspects of explosive weapons. There are many types of explosive weapons, but only four are used by individuals in the field; Hand Grenades, Grenade Launchers, Rocket Launchers, and Demolition Charges.

Explosive Weapon Accuracy

The Shot Accuracy of Explosive Weapons is found the same way as conventional weapons.

"I say we grease him right now."

Hudson

Explosive Weapons are often aimed at a vehicle, building, or other large object, instead of at a person. When this is the case, use the optional **Target Size Modifiers** shown on **Table 5C**. Just add in the appropriate modifier when necessary.

In casual play, an explosive round which misses its target is assumed to land several feet to one side. All possible targets take damage as if they were one Range category further from the explosion than they would have been if it had hit. Damage from explosions is discussed below.

Those using miniatures-style play can find out exactly where the round lands, to see how it affects other combatants. Because of the way weapons are fired, the round will probably be either long or short of the target, but not too far to the left or right. To find out exactly where it lands, roll a ten-sided die; on a 0 to 4, the shot is short, and a 5 through 9 means it is long. The number of feet it misses by is equal to the difference between the Odds of Hitting and the number that was actually rolled.

For example, if Hudson needed a 60 to hit his target but rolled a 90, then he rolled 30 above the necessary number; the round lands 30 feet (5 hexes) away. Hudson then rolls to see if it was in front of or behind the target; he rolls a 6, and the round detonates 5 hexes beyond the target.

Explosive Concussion Damage

The damage done by an Explosive Weapon is caused by concussion, the shock wave generated by the blast. The explosive rounds and Grenades shown on the Weapon Data Tables have an effective Blast Radius of up to Short Range, or 84 feet (14 hexes) for miniatures players. This means that every person within this range of the blast location must check the **Explosive Damage Table (6C)** to find the damage taken.

Choose the section of the Table that contains the weapon which is detonating, and then cross-index the target's Range from the Burst with the target's armor type. The number given is the PD taken by the target. It does not hit any particular location and does not cause Disabling Injuries, although it can certainly Incapacitate or kill the target.

Note also that the round fired from a Grenade Launcher is essentially the same as a Hand Grenade, and that both use the first section of the table.

Hand Grenade Accuracy

The accuracy of a thrown Hand Grenade is determined in the same manner as conventional weapons, using a Shot Accuracy of 4 plus the thrower's Special Weapons SRM. The range is limited to Short, and the throw takes 4 Actions.

6.9

TACTICAL NOTES

The **ALIENS** Combat System is somewhat different from most role-playing games, and naturally the tactics used are also different. A few very simple pieces of tactical advice for combat against opponents who have guns are included below. Players can make of these what they will; based on playtesting, these points are sensible advice. They are not rules of any sort, however, and talent, unusual situations, or luck can render any of them invalid sometimes.

The most important advice sounds obvious, but it is very wise; try not to get shot. The longer you aim, the better your chance of hitting, but the longer you are exposed to enemy fire. Because of this, taking a Snap Shot and Ducking is often advisable.

Make use of cover, and try to get the drop on your opponent. Cover the corner or doorway you expect him to come around, and when he appears take a shot and duck. It is likely that during the Phase he comes around the corner he will not have many more Combat Actions. Take your free shot and do not give the enemy time for a good return shot.

Also, movement in a small arms battle is usually made up of quick darts from cover to cover. Unlike some movies, combatants who stay out in the open take terrible, and often fatal, risks. Stay low, and do not step into open areas that your opponent can see.

One last point; teamwork is a key factor. Do not attack a prepared enemy from the front if it can be avoided. Frontal assaults are bloody and unpleasant, and your Characters

"It just doesn't make any sense."

Hicks

deserve better treatment than that. Let part of the Strike Team work around the flank and surprise the enemy. This will make your life far easier and much longer.

6.10

Not all combat involves gunfire, of course. The **Melee Combat** rules are for battles fought with fist, bayonet, and claw. Melee Combat is divided into two categories; Armed and Unarmed. Note that ability in these two fields is covered by the Hand-to-Hand Skill; it is a Class 2 General Skill for Characters.

The rules assume that the opponents are aware of each other's actions and are taking appropriate defensive moves. The GM should modify a Character's SRM to account for situations such as surprise and injury.

In miniatures play, the combatants must be in the same hex to engage in Melee Combat.

Unarmed Hand-to-Hand Combat

Table 7A is a list of Unarmed Hand-to-Hand combat actions, including hand strikes, kicks, and blocks. The meaning of each column on the table is as follows.

Base Odds: This is used the same way Base Odds are used in the Skill System (Section 2.2). This number, plus the Character's Hand-to-Hand SRM, minus the opponent's Hand-to-Hand SRM, equals the Success Roll. The Character must roll less than or equal to this number on 3 six-sided dice to hit the opponent.

Action: A general description of the action. A Jab is a quick blow which does less damage than a normal blow, while a Set blow means that the Character has taken the time to set his or her feet, and to deliver the blow with extra force.

Action Cost (AC): The number of Combat Actions necessary to perform the Action.

Impact Damage (ID): This is the range of Impact Damage possible. The ID, combined with the target's armor, determines the Physical Damage (PD) done by a Strike.

Each Phase, the Characters involved in Hand-to-Hand combat decide what they are going to do with their Combat Actions, using the Action Costs from the table. Each Character then rolls for the Strikes and Blocks, as described above, to see if he or she hits. If a **Block** is successful, then any 1 Strike at the Blocking Character has been parried. The Character must decide which Strike to Block before the opponent checks to see if he or she hits. When resolving combat, the highest Skill opponent takes the first blow and the defender can decide whether he will Block or not before the Success Roll is made. Once the results of this blow are resolved, the opponent takes a blow. This exchange of blows continues until all blows have been resolved.

When a Strike hits, roll randomly to find the ID done; a Set Punch does from 2 to 4 ID, for example, while a Kick does from 1 to 4 ID. Next, check the **Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)** and go to the portion of the table labelled **Blunt Attacks**. Roll a 00 to 99 number to find the Hit Location, and choose the appropriate Armor Line at the top, based on the Glancing Roll Modifier for the target's armor in the Location that has been hit. Read across the Armor Line to the highest value that is lower than or equal to the ID done, and then cross-index this with the Hit Location to determine the Physical Damage (PD).

For example, if Hudson hit an opponent with a normal Punch, the ID would be 1 to 2. He rolls a 2, and then checks for the Hit Location; a 44 is rolled, meaning the blow has hit the Lower Chest. His opponent is not wearing Armor, so the Glancing Roll Modifier is +12, and the bottom Armor Line is used. Reading across to the column for 2 ID, Hudson cross-indexes and discovers he has done 2 PD. If his opponent were wearing a Vacuum Suit (Glancing Roll Modifier of +6 on the Body), then Hudson would use the middle Armor Line, and the blow would do no damage; it takes at least 3 ID to get on the table on that Line. Obviously, normal punches do not carry through the padded and reinforced material of a Vacuum Suit.

MELEE COMBAT

"He figured that he could get an Alien back through quarantine, if one of us was... impregnated, whatever you call it... and then frozen for the trip home. Nobody would know about the embryos we were carrying, me and Newt... The only way he could do it is if he sabotaged certain freezers on the way home, namely yours. Then he could jettison the bodies and make up any story he wanted."

Ripley

"He's dead. You're
dog meat, pal."

Hudson

"This is so... nuts.
I mean listen, listen
to what you're saying.
It's paranoid delusion.
It's really sad.
It's pathetic."

Burke

Armed Combat

Armed Combat uses the same general guidelines as Unarmed, with the following changes. The **Armed Hand-to-Hand Combat Actions Table (7B)** lists the basic actions open to armed combatants and their Base Odds. These Odds are used the same way as those on **Table 7A**. The **Hand-to-Hand Weapon Data Table (7C)** lists several common melee weapons and their attributes. Definitions of the attributes are as follows.

Action Cost (AC): The number of Combat Actions necessary to throw a normal blow with the weapon. As mentioned in **Table 7B**, a Jab takes one less Action, while a Set blow takes one extra Action.

Weapon Class: The accuracy modifier of the weapon. Add or subtract this number from the attacker's Success Roll.

Impact Damage (ID): There are two types of Impact Damage caused by Hand-to-Hand weapons; Stabbing, listed in the column labelled IDs, and Cutting, labelled IDc. The attacker must state which type of blow is being taken before the Strike, and rolls the appropriate damage if it hits. Cutting blows with sharp weapons use the Cutting Attacks portion of the Hand-to-Hand Damage Table, while Stabbing blows with pointed weapons use the Stabbing Attacks portion of the Table. All blows with Blunt weapons, whether Cutting or Stabbing, use the Blunt Damage portion of the table.

As noted on **Table 7B**, a Jab does one-half the ID of a normal blow, while a Set blow does double the normal damage.

Example:

Drake (Certified with Hand-to-Hand) has a Billyclub and is facing a criminal (Professional Hand-to-Hand) armed with a Crowbar. Both the criminal and Drake have 6 Combat Actions. In the first Phase of combat the criminal decides to take a Set Cutting Strike (3 + 1 = 4 Actions) and save 2 Actions for Blocks. Drake decides to take a normal Cutting Strike (3 Actions) and save 3 Actions for Blocks. The criminal has a Success Roll of 8 (Set Cutting Strike Base Odds) - 0 (Drake's Certified Hand-to-Hand SRM) + 4 (criminal's Professional Hand-to-Hand SRM) + 0 (Crowbar WC) = 12. The criminal rolls an 8 and will hit if Drake does not successfully Block the Strike. Drake's Success Roll for a Block is 11 (Base Odds with Parry Device) - 4 (Criminal's Professional Hand-to-Hand SRM) + 0 (Drake's Certified Hand-to-Hand SRM) = 7. Drake rolls an 11 and is hit by the Strike. Note that even though Drake has enough Combat Actions for 3 Blocks, only one can be used against the Strike.

The criminal rolls a 4 for the six-sided die and does $4 + 2 = 6$ times 2 = 12 ID points with his blow. He rolls a 32 and strikes Drake on the Upper Chest using the Blunt Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D). Drake has Light Armor over his Combat Fatigues and has a Glancing Modifier of 0 for this Hit Location. The blow uses the top line of the Hand-to-Hand damage table and does 1 PD. Had Drake been unarmored the blow would have used the bottom line of the table and inflicted 100 PD.

6.11

ALIENS IN COMBAT

The Aliens are the most dangerous species ever encountered by Humanity, and there are a number of special rules governing their actions in combat.

Stalking

Stalking is a vital part of a predator's attack, especially for creatures like Aliens which are hunting armed Colonial Marines. The reason is simple; if a Human with a Pulse Rifle has some warning, it is easy to defeat an Alien at a distance. If the Alien can get close, however, it might be able to attack the Human before he or she has a chance to open fire. The rules for Stalking by an Alien are as follows, and can be modified as desired by the GM to suit other hostile lifeforms.



Medlab at Hadley Station

The Difficulty Levels below are for an Alien or a group of Aliens attempting to Stalk or Ambush Humans. The Levels given assume confined terrain such as jungle, a building, or an Alien Lair with many places to hide. For more open terrain such as an urban street or countryside the Difficulty Level is increased by 1.

ALIEN STALKING TABLE

Marines are:	Difficulty Level
At Leisure	Very Easy
Cautious	Easy
On Alert	Average
Moving and Very Alert	Very Difficult
Stationary and Very Alert	Extremely Difficult

When Stalking, Aliens can close to Short Range without difficulty. From that point, they must make a Success Roll for each Range Category; from Short to Close, Close to Very Close, and Very Close to Point Blank. The Success Roll is equal to the Difficulty Level above, adjusted by the highest Perception SRM of the target Characters. If the Aliens fail the Success Roll at any point, they have been spotted; the Characters can respond any way they want and the Aliens must decide whether to charge or run away. If they successfully close to Point Blank, then they are able to pounce on the Characters using the guidelines given for Alien Attacks below.

Aliens decrease the Difficulty Level by 1 whenever the Characters are actually going directly through an area inhabited by Aliens, as when the Colonial Marines entered the Reactor Room in the movie.

If it is the first contact between a Strike Team and a particular lifeform, the Difficulty Levels are decreased by 1 Level. This represents the Characters' unfamiliarity with the creatures behavior and tactics.

"They cut the power."

Ripley

"You know, Burke, I don't know which species is worse. You don't see them screwing each other over for a percentage."

Ripley

"Alright, we waste him. No offense."

Hicks

"They cut the power."

Ripley

Alien Attacks

To attack, an Alien must be within 6 feet of its target. A Warrior or Sentry attacks by **Grabbing** and immobilizing its prey, by **Biting** with its powerful telescoping jaws, or by using the **Stingers** in its tail. To determine the type of attack used, roll a 0 to 9 number each Phase; on a 0 it Bites, on a 1 through 8 it Grabs, and on a 9 it Stings. All Alien attacks are considered Melee, and they take place after Movement but before normal Fire. As mentioned earlier, only Desperation Fire (Section 6.5) comes before the Aliens' Melee attacks.

When an Alien attempts to **Grab** a target, the GM makes a Success Roll for the creature. The Difficulty Level is Very Easy, and the Base Odds are modified by the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM. If the Alien succeeds, the target is Grabbed. A Grabbed target has been pinned by the Alien, and cannot resist effectively. This means the target has its effective Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM reduced to -8, as if its Skill Rating was Unskilled. It cannot move, fire a weapon effectively, attempt melee attacks, or take any other physical action. In addition, the target takes damage from being **Crushed** by the Alien's grip. Go to the Blunt Attack section of the **Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)**. The Alien does 3 to 30 points of Blunt Impact Damage, and the normal Hand-to-Hand rules are used to determine the Hit Location. The Alien's attack is entered on the appropriate Armor Line on the table, and this is cross-indexed with a Hit Location found by a 00 to 99 roll. The target makes a KV roll, if necessary. If the target is still conscious and struggling, the Alien will continue to attack each Phase until resistance ceases. Once the target is quiet, the Alien will try to take it to a safe place within the Lair, where it will be webbed in place and prepared for a Facehugger. Rules for this are in Chapter 4.

For **Bite** attacks, the Difficulty Level is Easy, and the Base Odds are modified by the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM. If the Alien hits, it does 1 to 10 points of Impact Damage. This is entered on the Stabbing Attack Section of the **Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)**, and is cross-indexed with a random Hit Location. Note that the extra armor protection given by Helmet of Light Armor or higher is of no use here, since the jaws are penetrating through the front, where there is either no protection or simply a faceshield.

Sting attacks have a Difficulty Level of Very Easy, modified by the target's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM. On a hit, 1 to 10 points of Impact Damage are done on the Stabbing Attack Section of **Table (7D)**, as described above. If the target takes any PD at all, it is also automatically Incapacitated by the paralyzing drug implanted by the Stinger.

The Queen

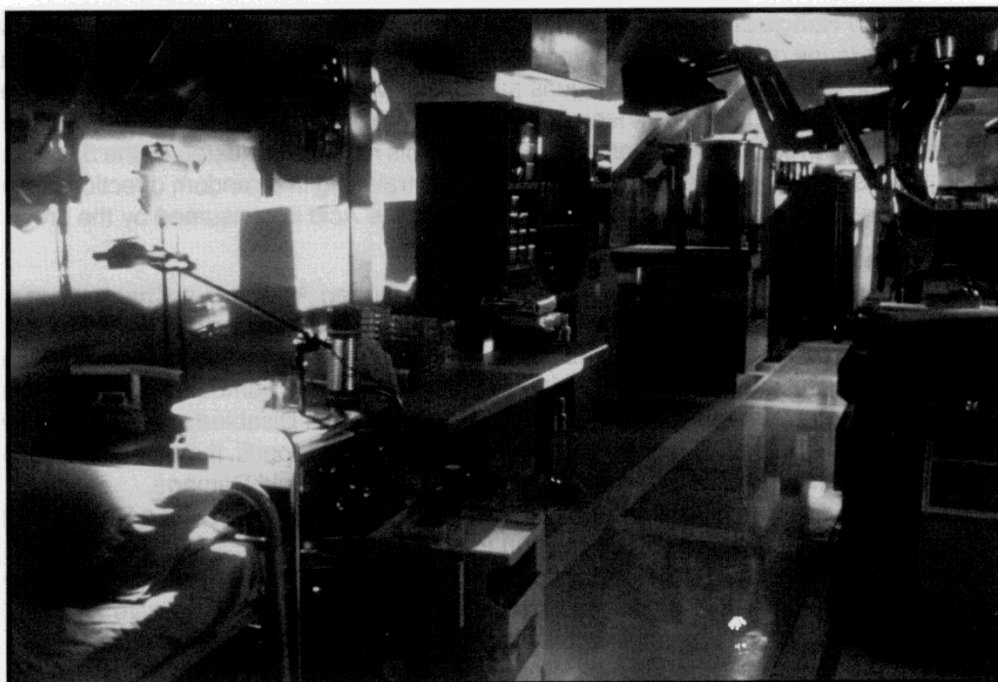
As devastating as Warriors are, they seem almost harmless when compared to the destructive power of a high Stage Alien Queen. Beginning at Stage One, the great size of a Queen even gives her a special attack, called **Trampling**.

Because of her mass, the Queen can overrun Human-sized opponents. Each Phase, the Queen can move up to 48 feet, and anyone in her path is rammed and knocked aside. Each time that the Queen comes into contact with a possible target, the Queen makes a Success Roll. The Difficulty Level is Average, and the Odds are modified by the target's Balance SRM. In addition, the Queen's Stage is added to the Success Roll. For example, if a Stage Two Queen attempts to Trample a Colonial Marine with a Certified Rating in Balance, the Success Roll would be 10 (Average Difficulty) - 0 (Certified SRM) + 2 (Queen's Stage) = 12. If a Trample attack succeeds, the GM rolls one Hit Location on the Blunt Section of the **Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)**, and the target takes the maximum damage possible to that Hit Location. This represents the Queen stepping on or crushing that part of the target as she passes. If the Queen does not move during a Phase, then she can try to make Trampling attacks against every possible target within 6 feet. Note that Trampling attacks are executed during Movement.

In addition to Trampling, the Queen has the normal attacks of a Warrior Alien, except that it makes two attacks per Phase (one Grab, and a 50 / 50 chance of either a Bite or a Sting). The Base Odds for these attacks are like a Warrior Alien's, but the Queen adds her Stage to the Success Roll as described above for Trampling.

"What do you mean, they cut the power? How could they cut the power, man, they're animals!"

Hudson



Medlab

A Queen's **Grab** attack does 1 to 10 points of Impact Damage times the Queen's Stage, with a minimum multiplier of 3. That is, for Stages One, Two, and Three, the Queen's Grab does 3 to 30 ID; at Stage Four it does 4 to 40, and so forth. The GM rolls two Hit Locations for this attack, and damage is generated separately for each. This represents the Queen's powerful forelimbs clutching the target. During the following Phase, the Queen can either release the target and make another Grab at a new victim, or **Rend** the target; the GM makes this choice. If the Queen Rends the target, the GM rolls once on the Cutting Section of the **Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)** to find the Hit Location. The target takes the maximum amount of damage listed for this Hit Location, regardless of armor. This represents the fact that the Hit Location has been separated from the rest of the body. If additional attacks are necessary, the Queen can Rend a target once per Phase in place of its normal Grab attack.

For a Queen's **Bite** or **Sting**, the damage done is 1 to 10 ID times the Queen's Stage, on the Stabbing Section of **Table 7D**.

If the target of the Queen's attack is in a Power Loader or **HARDCore** armor, the Queen may not make Trampling or Rend attacks but may Grab, Bite, and Sting. Against a Power Loader, the Queen's attacks are at two levels increased difficulty, but if successful, strike an unarmored target. This represents the increased difficulty of striking around or through the Power Loader's cage. Against **HARDCore** armor, Grabs, Bites, and Stings use the normal rules for hitting and damage.

Acid Blood

The blood of an Alien is a highly concentrated molecular acid, and it is extremely dangerous. An Alien's Acid Blood is capable of eating through any man-made material, and can devastate facilities, equipment, and nearby Characters whenever an Alien is wounded or killed.

Any time an Alien takes damage, some of its Blood will spray into the surrounding area. Every person and piece of equipment within the Spray Range is must check for Acid Damage, using the following guidelines.

"Something. It's
inside the complex...
They're inside,
inside the perimeter.
They're in here."

Hudson

"Hudson may
be right."

Vasquez

"The signal's weird
There must be some
interference or
something... There's
movement all over
the place."

Hudson

The **Spray Range** depends on the weapon which damaged the Alien. Pistols have an Acid Spray Range of 3 feet, Pulse Rifles, other standard weapons, and Shotguns have a Spray Range of 6 feet, and Machineguns and Explosive Weapons have a Spray Range of 12 feet. Every target inside these ranges must make a Success Roll of 14. Failure indicates they have taken Acid Damage. Note that this roll is not adjusted by the Skill; the spray travels at too high a speed to react to, and is traveling in a random directions. An Alien hit by a Flame Unit does not Spray Acid at all; the Acid is consumed by the fire.

Acid Damage

When an Acid Spray from a **Warrior**, **Sentry**, or **Queen** Alien hits a Character or a significant piece of equipment, the following rules are used to determine the damage done.

If the Spray comes from a Disabled result caused by a normal weapon (Pistol, Pulse Rifle, and so forth), the victim takes 5 to 50 PD. Just roll a 0 to 9 number and multiply the result by 5; treat a 0 on this roll as a 10. If the Spray is from a Disabled result caused by a larger weapon, including Machineguns and all Explosive Weapons, the damage is 30 to 300 PD. Targets in **HARDCore** Armor take only half normal Acid Damage.

A Dead result from a normal weapon causes a 30 to 300 PD Spray, and a Dead result from a larger weapon causes a 100 to 1000 PD Spray.

The Acid Spray from a **Facehugger** does 1/4 the normal PD, and the maximum Spray Range is 6 feet, even if the Spray was caused by a Machinegun or an Explosive Weapon.

When equipment is hit by an Acid Spray, the chance that it will take MIN Damage is equal to 1% times the PD done by the Spray. For each point of PD over 100, there is a 1% chance of MAJ Damage, and for each point over 200, there is a 1% chance of REP Damage. For each point over 300, there is a 1% chance that the equipment is Destroyed. For rules governing damage to equipment, see Section 5.13.

Hand-to-Hand Attacks Against Aliens

Aliens are too well protected to take serious damage from a Human with a normal Hand-to-Hand weapon. If a Character attacks an Alien Hand-to-Hand, run the attack normally, with the Alien's Hand-to-Hand SRM equal to 0, and use the top line of **Table (7D)** for damage. If the Table says that damage should be taken, there is a 10% chance for each point of PD listed that the Alien is **Dazed** for one full Phase. A Dazed Alien takes no actions; it will not attack or flee. The Alien does not take damage, and no Acid Spray is generated.

6.12

SPECIAL COMBAT SITUATIONS

There are several unusual situations in combat, including the use of Flame Units and Shotguns and the attacks of Harvester life forms. Rules for these are given below.

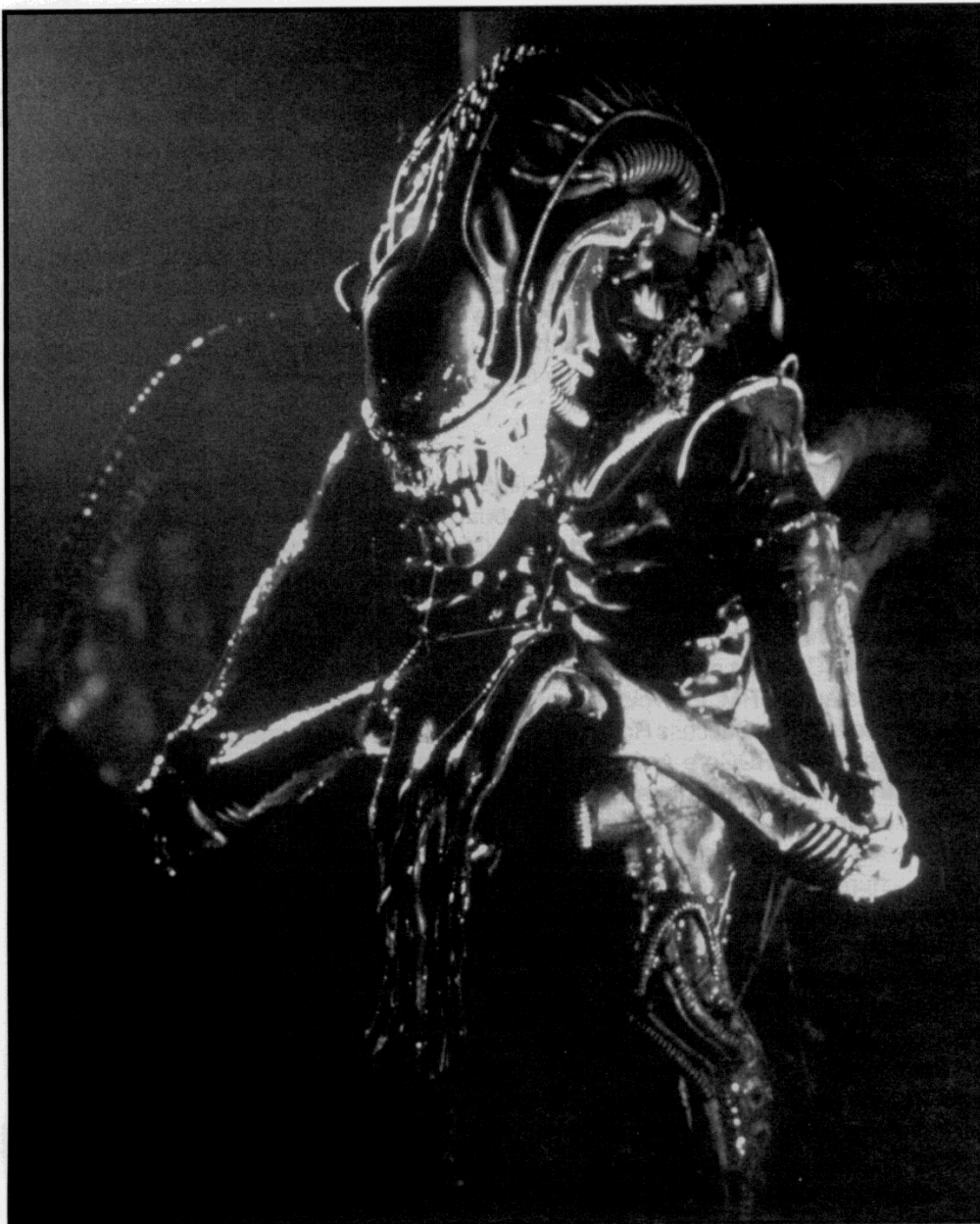
Flame Units

A Flame Unit is like a normal automatic weapon when finding the Odds of Hitting, except it always has a Target Size Modifier of +8, and if it hits it sets fire to everything and everyone within 3 feet of the target. It can only fire out to Very Close Range, and unlike other weapons a Flame Unit cannot fire past an obstacle; it hits the first target in its line of fire.

The damage done depends on how long the target is exposed to the flame. Targets hit directly by the jet will take 4,000 PD the Phase they are hit and continue to burn for 4 Phases. Each of these Phases the target takes 800 PD, unless the fire is put out.

A Flame Unit can also be used to start a fire in an area, rather than aiming at a target. The Odds of Hitting are determined normally, and the user spends an entire Phase shooting at the target area. The fire started is 6 feet across, and burns for 15 Phases. If there are flammable materials nearby, they also catch fire; the GM determines how fast the fire spreads, but for a highly flammable area it expands 2 feet every Phase. Any target trying to run through the fire will take 800 PD.

Aliens and Human-sized lifeforms are automatically killed if hit by a Flame Unit, and will not normally try to run through areas that are on fire. Targets in Fatigues with full Life Support take only half damage and Harvesters, Carriers, and those in **HARDCore** Armor take no damage for 2 Phases, and then half damage until the fire burns out.



Alien Warrior

Shotguns

A Shotgun has limited penetration and range but is very deadly. Although it can only be used on targets out to Short Range, its accuracy is essentially the same as a rifle and normal Odds of Hitting apply. If a target is hit, the Pistol Line of the Hit Location and Damage Table is used to determine if the shot penetrates. If the Glancing Roll is on at least the first column of the table, the shot penetrates and the actual damage is taken from the far right column of the Table. This represents the increased damage inflicted by the multiple projectiles hitting the target.

Example: Hicks shoots an Alien with a shotgun. He rolls a 02 for the Hit Location, hitting the Alien in the Jaw. The Pistol Line of the Alien Hit Location and Damage Table (6D) is used to determine if the shot penetrates. Hicks rolls an 8 for the Glancing Roll and the shot penetrates. The damage inflicted is taken from the far right column and results in a Dead Alien.

"I've got a bad feeling about this drop."

Frost

"Get back to Operations. It's game time."

Hicks

"Movement. Signal's clean. Range twenty meters."

Hudson

"They found a way in. Something we missed."

Ripley

"We didn't miss anything."

Hicks

Smoke Grenades and Mortar Rounds

Smoke rounds are used to create smoke screens to conceal the Strike Team or the APC. The smoke screen produced by a Smoke Grenade or Mortar round is a sphere 24 feet in diameter if it detonates in still air or vacuum, or a wall 6 feet wide, 6 feet tall, and 36 feet long if a wind is present. The smoke screen lasts for one minute (30 Phases).

Gas Mortar Rounds

Gas Mortar Rounds create a deadly cloud the same size and duration as the Smoke Rounds described above, and are designed to kill dangerous life forms. Creatures of roughly human size which are not protected by a full life support system are killed by the Gas in 1 Phase, while very large creatures are killed after 2 Phases of exposure if they do not leave the Gas cloud. Aliens, other highly unusual life forms, and creatures which do not have to breathe are not affected by Gas. Using Gas Rounds on human targets is a war crime and is punishable by death.

Harvesters in Combat

There are three types of Harvester lifeforms that can be encountered; the large Harvester that attacks settlements above ground, the Carrier that lurks in the underground lairs, and the small Drone that is part of the Carrier, and defends the lairs.

The **Harvester** and the **Carrier** are very similar, and have identical combat abilities. They are immense creatures over nine feet tall and twenty feet long, run at up to 24 feet per second (8 hexes per Phase) and attack by **Overrunning** their targets. Anyone in the Harvester's or Carrier's path must make a Success Roll of Average Difficulty, modified by his or her Balance SRM, to avoid being Overrun. Few obstacles provide any protection. If the person fails this Success Roll, he or she has been Overrun and takes 1,000 to 10,000 PD. Targets in **HARDCore** Armor take half damage.

The **Drone** is a smaller, boar size creature whose purpose is defense against small animals and creatures which threaten the underground chambers where Harvesters live. The Drone's movement abilities are comparable to those of a mountain lion, in that it can climb and jump as well as attain speeds of 42 feet per second (14 hexes per Phase). Once it reaches its target it locks its jaws onto its victim and will not release its grip. The jaws actually ratchet shut and cannot be opened short of breaking the thick skull and mandibles. To determine damage, use the **Cutting Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)**. The Drone inflicts 3 ten-sided dice of ID the Phase it bites and 3 more dice in each of the next four Phases. The ID inflicted each additional Phase is cumulative. The Base Odds for a Drone to **Bite** someone is 12 and is adjusted by the person's Hand-to-Hand Combat SRM.

Once a person has been bitten, the Drone's mass and closeness prevent the target from effectively resisting. The best that a person can do is attempt to use a Pistol to shoot the Drone. Normal rules apply for Shot Accuracy and Damage.

If other Characters want to shoot the Drone they run the risk of hitting the bitten person. Normal Odds of Hitting apply, but the shooter rolls twice. If the shooter is successful on both rolls, he hits the Drone and inflicts normal damage. If he fails one roll and makes one, he hits both the Drone and the person, and if he fails both rolls he misses everything. Note that killing a Drone before it has fully bitten a person limits the amount of ID inflicted but does not remove the Drone. Dead or alive, the Drone is firmly attached to anything it has bitten. To remove a Drone, someone other than the victim must expend at least 20 Actions. For each 20 Actions spent, the rescuer can attempt to remove the jaws; this is a Very Difficult task, and is modified by the rescuer's Hand-to-Hand SRM.

Both Harvesters and Drones are immune to Hand-to-Hand damage from humans; if their Hand-to-Hand SRM is necessary for any reason, assume it is 0.

Example: A Marine in Light Armor and Combat Fatigues is attacked by a Drone. The Drone has a Success Roll of 12 (Base Odds) - 0 (Marine's Hand-to-Hand SRM) = 12. The Drone rolls a 10 on three six sided dice and Bites the Marine. The Drone rolls a 52 for Hit Location and closes its jaws on the Marine's Lower Chest (Cutting Hand-to-Hand Damage Table (7D)). The Phase it bites it does 3 ten sided dice of ID. The Drone rolls a 4, 2, and 4 for a total of 10. This is entered on the top line of the table (Glance



"They ain't payin' us enough for this, man."

Drake

Hypersleep Pods

Mod of 0) and inflicts no damage on the target as it does not penetrate the Armor. The next Phase the Drone does another 3 dice of damage. If it rolls a 6, 8, and 9 the total Impact Damage is now $10 + 6 + 8 + 9 = 33$. This inflicts 3 PD. If the Drone is not stopped, in the third Phase it rolls another three dice. If the total is 17, the new ID total would be 50; this would raise the PD done to 25. This process could continue for another two Phases, after which the Drone would have done its maximum damage.

6.13

MEDICAL AID

Whenever someone has been wounded, the Medical Aid and Recovery rules are used to determine if he or she will survive. Since there are no "hit points", there are few hard and fast rules about how much damage it takes to kill a Character. Instead, serious injuries simply increase the risk of fatality, and make more sophisticated medical care a necessity.

Whether a Character lives or dies and how long it takes to recover from injuries, are determined using the **Medical Aid and Recovery Table (8A)**. The following terms are used on the table.

DT = Damage Total: This is the total of the Physical Damage (PD) modified to account for the Character's Health.

HT = Healing Time: This is the number of days required for a Character to fully recover from wounds.

CTP = Critical Time Period: When a Character is injured, there is this much time to seek Medical Aid before the player rolls to see if he or she survives.

RR = Recovery Roll: This is the percentage chance that the Character has of surviving the wounds. If no Recovery Roll is given, then the Character will automatically die at the end of the Critical Time Period unless better Medical Aid is found.

"Man, this is a big signal."

Hudson

"Eight meters...
Seven... Six..."

Hudson

The Basis for Recovery

During combat, the player keeps a running total of the PD taken. After the battle, this is entered on the **Medical Aid and Recovery Table (8A)** as the **Damage Total (DT)** to determine the Character's chance of surviving; the greater the Damage Total, the more severe the injuries and the smaller the chance of surviving. If there is no entry for the Character's DT, then the next lower entry should be used. A DT of 34 would use the DT 30 line, for example. Move down 2 lines on the DT column (this increases the effective DT) if the Character's Health is 5 or less, down 1 line for Health 6 through 8, up 1 line for Health 13 to 15, and up 2 lines for Health of 16 or better.

How much time a Character has to seek and receive Medical Aid is determined by the **Critical Time Period (CTP)**. At the end of the CTP, the Character must make the **Recovery Roll**; if the Character makes the roll, then he or she survives. If the Character fails, then he or she dies. The length of the CTP is given opposite the DT on **Table 8A** and depends on the type of Medical Aid available.

Consider Hudson, with a DT of 59. This uses the 50 line on the table. Since Hudson's Health is 12, the line is not modified up or down. To find the CTP for Hudson before he receives any Medical Aid, read across to the No Aid column; Hudson has 51 Hours to receive Aid. If he does not receive Aid, his RR will be 60; on a 60 or less, he will survive.

Medical Aid

Naturally, Medical Aid greatly improves the chance of survival. This improvement depends on the type of aid available, and each type is listed in a separate column on the **Medical Aid and Recovery Table (8A)**.

Medical Aid has been divided into five general types; No Aid, First Aid, Aid Station, Field Hospital, and Trauma Centers of three different grades. Each type has its own Critical Time Period and Recovery Roll opposite the Damage Total. The Trauma Center grades are based on the quality of medical care found on various worlds.

The treatment of an injured Character is very similar to the method used in modern warfare. Usually, First Aid is applied as soon as possible after a Character is wounded. This immediately lengthens the CTP, to the number shown in the First Aid column. (This represents stopping the external bleeding of the wounds.) At that point, the Character is moved to a better facility, depending on what is available. The goal is to get the Character to the best hospital possible, and to use the intermediate steps as ways of stabilizing his or her condition.

Note that when the CTP is increased, the time available is still assumed to have begun when the injury took place.

There is one other possible modifier to the CTP. If a Character is placed in Hypersleep, the time spent in Hypersleep passes at 1/100 the normal rate. Once the Character is removed from Hypersleep, the CTP begins moving at the normal rate again.

Example: A Character has a Damage Total of 3500. This uses the 3000 line on the Medical Aid and Recovery Table (8A). Checking a DT of 3000 under the column labelled No Aid, the CTP is 81 Phases with no Recovery Roll given. This means that without medical attention the Character cannot survive, and has only 81 Phases to receive help. Luckily, a medic arrives before the end of the CTP and treats the Character. Referring to the column labelled First Aid at a DT of 3000, we see the medic has increased the CTP to 2 hours. Unfortunately, the Character still has no RR. The First Aid has at least stabilized the condition temporarily, and the Character is rushed to a Colonial Trauma Center before the end of 2 hours. The new CTP is now 18 days, and the RR is 52. So, 18 days after the injury, the Character makes a 00-99 Recovery Roll. If less than or equal to 52 is rolled, the Character survives; if greater than a 52 is rolled, he or she dies.

If the Character survives, then the Healing Time (HT) for the wounds is 88 days. It takes this long for the injuries to completely heal.

"That can't be. That's
inside the room."

Ripley

"It's readin' right,
man. Look!"

Hudson



"I only need to
know one thing...
Where they are."

Vasquez

Vasquez with Machine Gun

Wounded Capabilities and Healing

Whenever a Character is suffering the effects of an unhealed injury, his or her physical capabilities are reduced. This reduction depends on the Character's status, which will fall into one of the following categories: Recent Wounds - Character Makes Knockout Roll; Recent Wounds - Character Fails Knockout Roll; and Old Healing Injuries.

"Well, you're not
reading it right."

Hicks

"Do something,
Gorman!"

Burke



Hadley Station Control Center

"Medical! Get
to Medical!"

Ripley

Recent Wounds - Character Makes Knockout Roll: Recent wounds are ones which have been suffered during the current combat. (Once one hour has passed since the injury, they are considered Old Healing Injuries.) As long as the Character makes the Knockout Roll, he or she is affected only by Disabling Injuries (Section 6.7) and can continue combat subject only to those limitations. These fresh injuries, if not Disabling, are ignored due to the effects of adrenalin and other adjustments made by the body during crisis. Disabling Injuries remain in effect until completely healed.

Recent Wounds - Character Fails Knockout Roll: A Character who fails the Knockout Roll is Incapacitated. With inexperienced combatants (people with low Knockout Values), this often represents a rapid descent into shock, or being immobilized out of fear and confusion. With more serious wounds, it represents incapacitation due to extreme pain, shock due to blood loss, or an actual loss of consciousness.

The time a Character remains dazed or knocked out is found on the **Incapacitation Time Table (8B)** by cross-indexing a 0 to 9 roll with the PD Total. Round the PD down to the nearest entry. Note that more serious wounds generally result in a longer period of Incapacitation. After the Incapacitation Time has passed, the Character is once again capable of action and has a penalty of Healing Time / 20 points subtracted from his or her Combat Actions, along with any problems from Disabling Injuries.

Example: A Character has failed his Knockout Roll and has a PD total of 30. He uses the 0 PD line on Table 8B, and rolls a 2; he regains consciousness after 1 Phase. The Healing Time for a 30 PD wound is 41 days, so after regaining consciousness, he suffers a HT / 20 or $41 / 20 = 2$ point penalty to his Combat Actions.

Old Healing Injuries: From one hour after the injury until the time the wounds heal, the Character suffers a "Days" / 20 penalty to his or her Combat Actions. "Days" are the number of days remaining until the injuries heal.

Example: A Marine has a Damage Total of 15 and a Healing Time of 30 days. So, from one hour after his injury to the end of the first day, he has a $30 / 20 = 1.5$ point penalty to his Combat Actions. This rounds to 2. The next day, he has a Healing Time of 30 days minus 1, or 29, and a $29 / 20 = 1.45$ point penalty, which rounds down to 1.

"Burke! Open this
door! Burke!
Open it!"

Ripley

7

VEHICLE COMBAT

This Chapter contains the rules for Vehicles in combat. They apply to Ground Vehicles, Aircraft, and Spacecraft, and guidelines are given for combat among the three classes.

7.1

The time scale in Vehicle Combat is different from Personal Combat. Where normal Combat is done in 2 second Phases, the Vehicle System is based on groups of 4 Phases, called **Turns**. All combat among Vehicles uses this 8 second Turn, although if a Vehicle is in action against individuals the GM may find that running everything Phase by Phase is easier. If this is done the GM should be careful to adjust the Vehicle's attributes; a weapon that normally fires once per Turn would fire once every 4 Phases, for example.

The flow of Vehicle Combat is very simple; all Vehicles Move, which consists of finding Advantage and determining Range, and then all Vehicles Fire their weapons as desired. If there are any hits the damage is resolved, and play proceeds to the next Turn.

SCALE

7.2

As with normal combat, the GM keeps track of the positions of the combatants. For Air and Space battles it is only necessary to track the location of the battle itself instead of each Vehicle, because Aircraft and Spacecraft move so quickly. In these battles, each Vehicle will be moving so much that even the Range between them does not have to be kept track of. The actual Range when they fire at each other is determined using the rules that follow.

MOVEMENT

Advantage: Aircraft and Spacecraft

In battles among Aircraft or Spacecraft, the action is like a World War I dogfight; each Pilot tries to get behind his or her opponent, to fire from a place the enemy's weapons cannot easily reach. Maneuverability and the skill of the Pilot are vital in this type of action. When a Pilot gets into a superior position, he or she has the **Advantage**.

Advantage is checked each Turn. To do this, each Pilot rolls 3 six-sided dice and adds the Vehicle's Maneuver Number (from the Vehicle's Status Sheet) and his or her Piloting SRM to the total. If one Pilot has a total that is 2 or more greater than the other, then he or she has the Advantage. If the difference between the two values is 1 or less, there is no Advantage for either Pilot. If one Vehicle holds the Advantage over another from the preceding Turn, the Vehicle with Advantage adds 1 to its Advantage roll on the next Turn.

A Vehicle with the Advantage has a better chance of hitting the enemy. Rules for this are in the next Section. Ground Vehicles do not use the normal Advantage rules; their special rules are given in Section 6.4. The basic rules about Advantage are repeated in the **Aircraft and Spacecraft Combat Table (9D)**, for ease of reference.

Note that these rules are for Aircraft against Aircraft, and Spacecraft against Spacecraft. When Aircraft are in action against Spacecraft, the Spacecraft automatically has Advantage and selects the Range for Fire. Additionally, Aircraft can only hit Spacecraft with their Disruptors; all other weapons are too slow or too short-ranged to be effective.

"Die! Come on, come on, come get it, baby! Come on, I don't got all day. Come on! Come on, come on, you bastards! Come on, you too! Oh, you want some of this?... Hicks!... Hicks!"

Hudson

"Burke! Damn you,
open this door!"

Ripley

Range

The Ranges in Vehicle Combat are longer than those in normal Combat. The Range categories for Aircraft and Ground Vehicle Combat are: Near for distances up to 1,200 feet or 200 hexes, Mid for 2,400 feet or 400 hexes, Far for 3,600 feet or 600 hexes, and Extreme for distances of up to 4,800 feet or 800 hexes. The Range categories for Spacecraft combat are much larger, with Near representing up to 200 miles, Mid being 400 miles, Far being 600 miles, and Extreme being 800 miles.

Because of the high speeds and constant maneuvering in combat involving Aircraft and Spacecraft, Vehicles often move from Extreme to Near Range within one Turn; the question is when the Pilot or Weapons Officer is able to take a shot at the enemy. The **Aircraft and Spacecraft Combat Table (9D)** is used to find the Range a shot is taken at.

If one Vehicle has Advantage over an opponent, find the difference between the two Advantage rolls. Enter this difference on **Table 9D** to find the Range for that Turn. If there is return fire from a Vehicle which has the Advantage against it, it is executed at the same Range as from the Vehicle with Advantage.

When there is no Advantage between two Vehicles, both Vehicles execute their fire at Extreme Range. For determining the Odds of Hitting, both Vehicles have No Advantage.

The Range is checked every Turn, immediately after Advantage is determined.

The Range for battle between Ground Vehicles is determined by the GM and the situation. Rules for Ground Vehicles in combat are in Section 6.4.

Disengaging From Combat

When a Vehicle wants to flee from combat, it can try to Disengage. To do this, it must have a Combat Speed greater than or equal to any opponents who try to follow it. After announcing that it is Disengaging, the Vehicle must go for 3 Turns without any opposing Vehicle having Advantage over it; if it does this, it has left the battle and evaded pursuit.

If a Vehicle is slower than any of its opponents, it cannot Disengage.

7.3

FIRE

"Gorman, get out
of the way."

Hicks

All Vehicle Weapons have a Shot Accuracy (SA), just like in normal Combat; they are shown in the **Weapon Accuracy Table (9A)**. There are two columns of SA's on the Table; one for Vehicles with Advantage, and the other for those without it. Note that some weapons do not have an SA listed in the No Advantage column; this means they cannot be fired if the Vehicle does not have Advantage. SA's are modified by the following factors.

First, add the appropriate Weapon SRM of the firing Pilot or Weapons Officer, and subtract the Piloting SRM of the target Vehicle's Pilot. Also add or subtract the target Vehicle's Vulnerability, as shown on that Vehicle's **Status Sheet**. Note that Spacecraft have two Vulnerabilities; one based on the Maneuver Number, and the other based on the Combat Speed. Only the worse (higher) of these two numbers is applied to the SA.

The final SA is entered on the **Vehicle Odds of Hitting Table (9C)**, and cross-indexed with the Range to determine the odds. As in normal Combat, a 00 to 99 number is rolled; if the roll is less than or equal to the Odds of Hitting, then the target has been hit.

For ease of reference, all of the modifiers are listed below.

Weapon Shot Accuracy taken from **Table 9A**

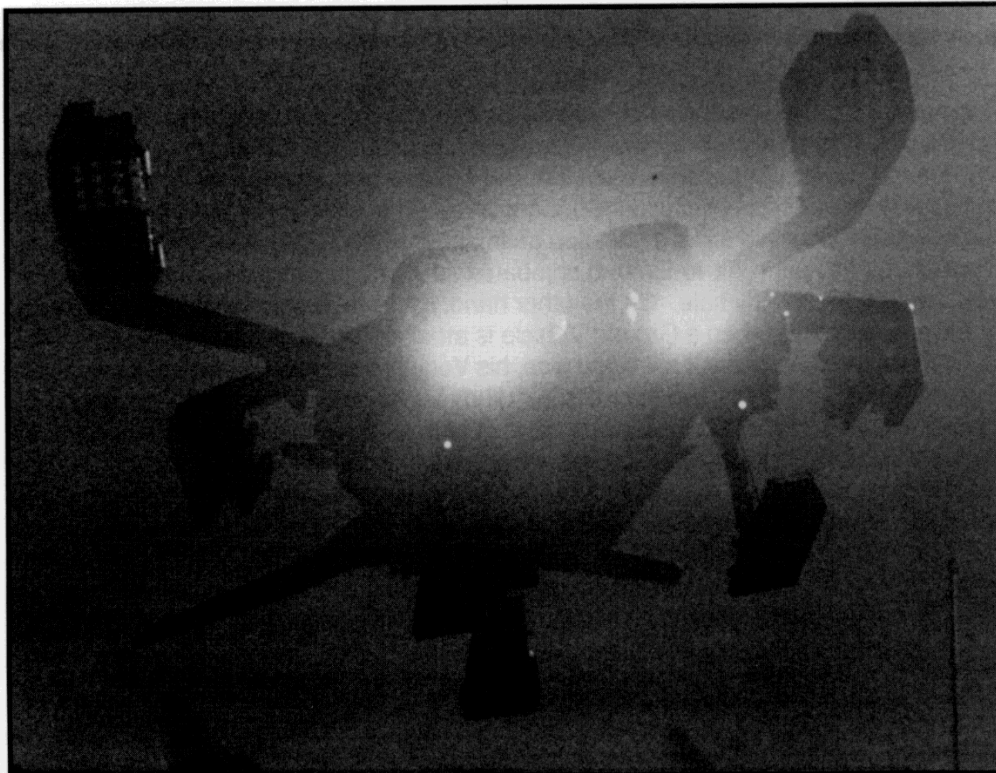
Add the appropriate Weapon SRM of the Pilot or Weapons Officer

Subtract the Piloting SRM of the target's Pilot

Add or subtract the target's Vulnerability, taken from its **Status Sheet**

Example:

Ferro has Advantage on her target and has a Certified Weapon Skill Rating. She fires a Chain Gun at a target with Vulnerability of +3 and a Pilot whose Skill Rating is Professional. Ferro's Shot Accuracy is 2 (Chain Gun with Advantage) + 0 (Ferro's Weapon SRM) - 4 (SRM of target's Pilot) + 3 (target Vulnerability) = 1. If the Range were Mid, Ferro's Odds of Hitting would be 07, as shown on Table 9C.



Dropship

Anti-Missile Fire

The major exception to this pattern is when the attacking weapon is a Missile. Missiles take one Turn to reach the target, and the target can try to shoot down the incoming Missile with any anti-Missile weaponry it has on board. Anti-Missile systems include the Lase Cannon and all Missile Systems, and they always have Advantage when firing at incoming Missiles. The Odds of Hitting with the Anti-Missile system are calculated normally, using the **Vulnerability** listed on the **Missile And Ground Vehicle Table (9B)** for the Missile in question. The Anti-Missile system receives a single chance to fire at Near Range. If the Missile survives all appropriate Anti-Missile fire, it has the normal chance of hitting its target. Note that all Anti-Missile fire is resolved before Missiles have a chance to hit.

Example:

Two Sprint Light Missiles are fired at a Dropship during Turn 1. On Turn 2, the target Dropship uses its Lase Cannon to intercept one of the Missiles, and fires a Sprint Light Missile with a Cluster Warhead at the other. The incoming Missiles have a Missile Vulnerability of -2, and the Lase Cannon has a Shot Accuracy of 4. The Dropship's pilot has a Certified Rating in Aircraft Weapons. The adjusted Shot Accuracy for the Lase Cannon is $4 + 0 - 2 = 2$; at Near Range, the Lase Cannon needs a 44 to hit.

The intercepting Sprint Missile with a Cluster Warhead has a Shot Accuracy of +6, so the Shot Accuracy here is $6 + 0 - 2 = 4$, and a 78 to hit. All of this Anti-Missile fire is resolved on Turn 2. If either Missile is not intercepted, it would then roll to hit using normal odds.

Multiple Vehicles in Combat

All the rules above apply when there are more than two Vehicles involved in a battle. Each Vehicle decides secretly what opposing Vehicle it will attempt to gain Advantage over, and all decisions are revealed simultaneously. Advantage rolls are then made normally. A Vehicle can only fire at the opponent it attempted to gain Advantage over.

All Vehicles with Advantage over some other Vehicle fire first, and all of this fire is resolved simultaneously. Then all other Vehicles fire, and this fire is also resolved simultaneously.

"Ripley, this way."

Newt

"Whatever you're gonna do, do it fast!"

Vasquez

7.4

AIR-TO-GROUND AND GROUND-TO-GROUND FIRE

"Which way is it
to the landing field
from here?"

Ripley

The maneuverability and speed of Aircraft give them an edge when fighting opponents on the ground. Aircraft always fire with Advantage against ground targets and can maintain any desired Range. Ground fire also uses the Advantage column when firing at Aircraft, and uses normal Air-to-Air rules for Shot Accuracy. The odds for Air-to-Ground fire have one special modifier, which is a variation on the normal Advantage roll. It represents the importance of cover in Air-to-Ground combat; if the Ground Vehicle's Driver uses cover well, the Vehicle is fairly safe. On the other hand, if it is in the open it is very vulnerable.

To represent this, when a Ground Vehicle is attacked by an Aircraft the Driver makes an Advantage roll, totalling 3 six-sided dice, his Vehicle's Maneuver Number (from Table 9B), and his Driving SRM. The Aircraft's Pilot finds his Advantage roll the normal way. The Driver then subtracts his Advantage roll from the Aircraft's and enters the **Air-to-Ground Combat Table (9E)** to find the **Ground Vehicle Vulnerability (GVV)**. If the Aircraft has a higher total, the GVV is a positive number and the target is easier to hit; the opposite is also true. The GVV is applied to the SA of all fire from the Aircraft at the Ground Vehicle that Turn, but not to the Ground Vehicle's return fire. If the terrain includes a lot of natural cover, the GM should modify the Advantage roll in the Ground Vehicle's favor; add two to the Driver's roll for broken terrain, and add four for dense, mountainous areas.

Example:

An APC attempts to reach concealment in an area several Turns away. A Gunship whose Pilot is Certified in the Aircraft Weapon Skill circles the area. On the first Turn, the Driver (a Professional) rolls 3 six-sided dice for a total of 10. The Driver adds his Vehicle's Maneuver Number of +2 and his Driving SRM of +4, for a Total of $10 + 2 + 4 = 16$. The Gunship's Pilot rolls 3 six-sided dice for a total of 12, adds his Aircraft's Maneuver Number of 6, and his Aircraft Weapon SRM of 0, for a Total of $12 + 6 + 0 = 18$. The APC's total is 2 less than the Aircraft's; on Table 9E, that gives the APC a Ground Vehicle Vulnerability of +2 for the Turn. If the Gunship fires its Chain Gun at the APC, it will have a Shot Accuracy of 2 (Chain Gun Firing with Advantage) + 0 (Pilot's Weapon SRM) + 2 (GVV that Turn) = 4. If the Gunship is at Extreme Range, it would have an Odds of Hitting of 04.

If the APC were to fire its Light Disruptor that Turn at the Gunship, its Shot Accuracy would be 0 (Light Disruptor with Advantage) + 0 (APC Vehicle Weapon SRM) - 1 (Gunship's Vulnerability from Status Sheet) = -1. This shot would have an Odds of Hitting of 00 at Extreme range. Note that the GVV does not apply to Ground to Air fire.

This process would be repeated each Turn, with new Advantage rolls and the Gunship selecting its Range, until the APC reaches concealment or is destroyed.

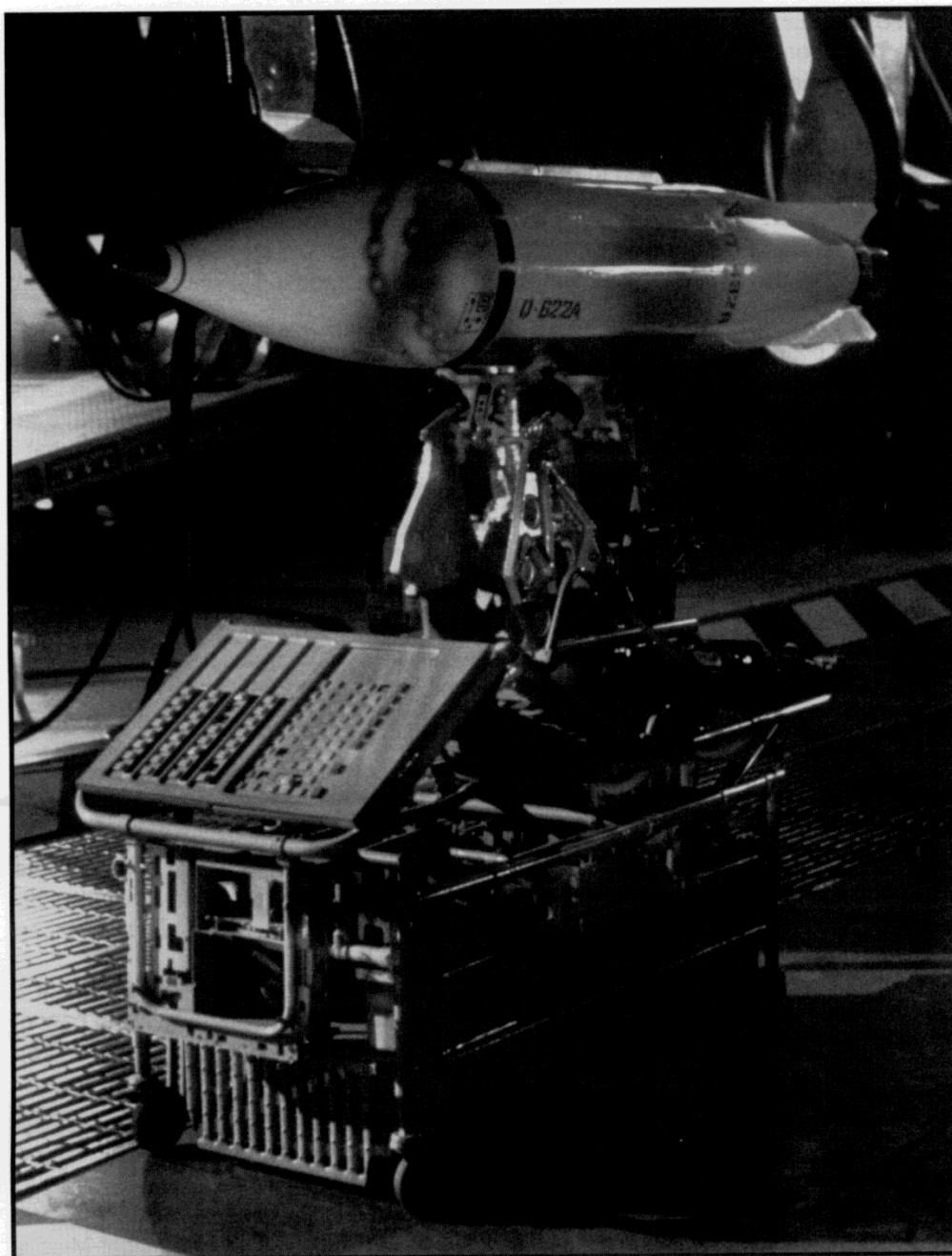
Ground to Ground Fire

When Ground Vehicles engage each other, they try to use terrain and mobility to their advantage. Each Turn, each Driver attempts a Success Roll for an Average task, modified by his or her Driving SRM. If the roll is successful, any fire at the Vehicle from another Ground Vehicle has its SA reduced by the amount the Driver made the roll by; for example, if the Driver needed a 10 and rolled an 8, all fire at the Vehicle would have 2 subtracted from its SA. The Range is determined by the GM, and can change as the Vehicles move.

7.5

WEAPON SYSTEMS

This Section includes descriptions of the weapons carried by Vehicles. All weapons have a **Gun Class**, which is used in the Vehicle Damage System; this is an open ended scale, beginning with the Lase Cannon, with a Gun Class of 1, and going up to Spacecraft Disruptors with Gun Classes of 9 or more. If these weapons are used in Personal Combat, use the Advantage column to determine the Shot Accuracy and the Machine Gun line of **Table 6** to determine Penetration and Damage. Rates of Fire are given where appropriate, and the explosive effects of the weapons are on the **Explosive Damage Table (6C)**.



"The ship is on
it's way. E.T.A.,
sixteen minutes."

Bishop

WARHEADS
AND MISSILES

Heavy Missile on Hangar Deck

Lase Cannon: This is a short range Cannon designed for anti-missile duty. It has a wide field of fire and is mounted on the upper middeck of most Aircraft. For Vehicle Combat, it is only capable of Near Range fire and it has a Gun Class of 1. When used in Personal Combat, it can fire out to Very Long Range and has a High Rate of Fire.

Chain Gun: This is an automatic 30mm Cannon which is mounted to the nose of many Aircraft. Against Vehicles it has a Range of Extreme and a Gun Class of 5. In Personal Combat it is a very effective weapon for attacking ground targets, since it has a High Rate of Fire and is useful out to Very Long Range.

Mortar: Each APC carries one of these light, autoloading weapons on its roof. It is controlled from within the Vehicle and is used as fire support for the infantry. It can fire one round each Turn, can reach out to Far Range, and has a Gun Class of 4.

"Good. Stand
by there, we're
on our way."

Hicks

Light Disruptor: This weapon damages its targets by the transfer of energy directly from the Disruptor to the target at the speed of light. This makes the weapon faster than any Missile, which is vital in long range and high velocity combat. It fires out to Extreme Range and has a Gun Class of 3. In Personal Combat, it is a Single Shot weapon that fires out to Very Long Range; if it hits a person, the target takes the Explosive damage listed in **Table 6C** in addition to the normal damage done by a Machine Gun.

Heavy Disruptor: This weapon is similar to the Light Disruptor, although it packs a greater punch. Its Range is Extreme and it has a Gun Class of 5. Like the Light Disruptor, it does Explosive Damage in addition to the normal damage in Personal Combat.

Spacecraft Disruptors: These are the heaviest weapons available in the game. They are rated by their Gun Class, with a standard Disruptor having a Gun Class of 7, and those used by Cruisers having a Gun Class of 9. Fortified space stations and large Spacecraft have Disruptors of even greater power. Spacecraft Disruptors have far greater ranges than Aircraft weapons and are specially designed for space combat.

Light Missile Launcher: Light Missile Launchers are carried by Ground Vehicles and Aircraft, and are capable of firing any of the Light Missiles listed in the next Section. One Missile per Launcher can be fired each Turn on Ground Vehicles, while the Launchers on Aircraft are in multiple tubes, and any or all can be fired at once. Launchers on Ground Vehicles are automatically reloaded and can be fired every Turn until empty.

Heavy Missile Launcher: These fire the Heavy Missiles listed below, and the Rate of Fire and Reload rules are exactly the same as for Light Missile Launchers.

7.6

MISSILES AND WARHEADS

There are three basic Missiles available for Aircraft and Ground Vehicles; two are Light Missiles and one is Heavy. Each Missile can be fitted with either of two types of Warheads; a Cluster Munition with multiple bomblets, or a single explosive charge. Each of these Missiles and Warheads is discussed below.

As mentioned earlier, Missiles cannot be used against a Spacecraft in Combat. If a Missile is fired at a Spacecraft that is disabled or docked, it hits automatically but cannot penetrate beyond the first column on the Hit Location and Damage Table (Section 6.8).

Sprint Light Missile

This is a High Speed Intercept Missile, which uses its great velocity as a defense against Anti-Missile systems. It locks onto its desired target at launch and homes in at comparatively low speed using internal gyros and jets. Once all course corrections have been made, it fires a high acceleration solid motor which boosts it to a top speed of Mach 4. The **Range** of the Sprint is Extreme, and its **Missile Vulnerability** is -2. Any Light Missile Warhead may be used.

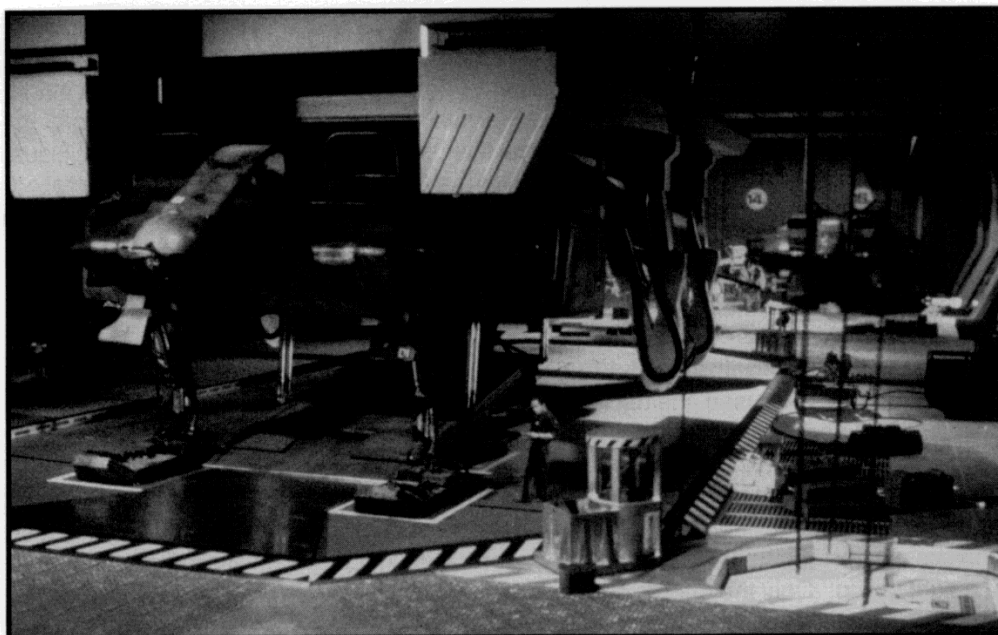
Dogleg Light Missile

This is a Twin Stage Intercept Missile, which is very similar to the Sprint Missile except that it is capable of making a second course correction for self-defense purposes. Although it possesses a shorter **Range** (Far), the **Missile Vulnerability** of -3 makes the Dogleg a popular weapon. It can carry any Light Missile Warhead.

Light Missile Warheads

Blast Warhead: This is a single charge designed to create a large explosion while penetrating armor. Its Gun Class is 4.

Cluster Warhead: This Warhead carries a number of smaller explosive devices, each of which has a powerful shaped charge capable of penetrating the armor of most Vehicles; their Gun Class is 3. The effects of bomblets are discussed in Section 7.8.



Dropship in the Sulaco's Hangar Deck

Hammer Heavy Missile

Although this Heavy Missile uses many of the same systems as the Light Missiles, there are some significant differences. The tracking and targeting systems are of similar quality, but the final burst of speed provided by the solid motor is not as impressive; a Hammer reaches a maximum speed of only Mach 2, and the cruising speed of the Missile is 300 Miles per Hour. Its **Missile Vulnerability** is +0.

Heavy Missile Warheads

Blast Warhead: Like its Light Missile counterpart, the Blast Warhead is a single devastating charge of high explosives. Its Gun Class is 5

Cluster Warhead: This is also very similar to the Light Missile Cluster Warhead, except that it contains 6 smaller Warheads which are each the same size and effectiveness of normal Light Missile Blast Warheads (Gun Class 4). This is run exactly as the Light Missile Cluster Warhead, except that each of the explosions is larger.

The rules for the Odds of Hitting and damage done by Vehicle-mounted Explosive Weapons are fairly standard. The normal Vehicular Odds of Hitting are used, with the modifiers listed in the Tables.

Missiles That Miss

Whenever a Missile fails to hit its target, the Warhead detonates 3 feet away from the target for each percent that the Success Roll was failed by. For example, if the Odds of Hitting were 25 and a 45 was rolled, the Warhead would detonate 3 times 20 = 60 feet away from the target. The GM should determine randomly exactly where the Warhead detonates. In general, the Missile will be roughly on line with the target, and there is a 50 / 50 chance of it being either long or short. In many cases the exact location of the detonation will not matter, in which case this rule can be ignored.

"You always were an ass, Gorman."

Vasquez

**EXPLOSIVE
WEAPONS AND
VEHICLES**

"Stay where you are,
Newt. We're coming!"

Ripley

Cluster Warheads

A Cluster Warhead's Shot Accuracy is higher than a Blast Warhead's because it releases a cloud of bomblets near the target. For simplicity, assume that only a single bomblet strikes the target when a Cluster Warhead scores a hit.

For players who want more detail, the number of bomblets that hit the target is equal to the number of full 20 percent blocks between the Odds of Hitting and the number rolled. For example, if the Odds of Hitting were 45 and a 25 was rolled, then 2 of the charges in the Warhead would hit the target. (On a roll of 26 through 45, there would be 1 hit; 6 through 25 would be 2, and so forth.) For each percent that the roll is failed by, the nearest Warhead is 3 feet away. The other Warheads are in a dense cloud beyond it.

Missile Warheads Against Individuals

When Missiles are used against individuals, the following rules apply. First, the normal rules are followed to see if the targeted area is hit; when determining the SA, assume that people have a Maneuver Number of 0. The area that is hit is centered on the point of impact, and is 60 feet by 60 feet. Everyone in that area rolls on the table below to determine how far away they are from an explosion. Each person rolls separately, except for those who are clustered within 3 feet of each other; a single roll is made for all of the members of a tight group. Only the effects of the closest explosion are applied to each Character.

DISTANCE FROM NEAREST BLAST		
Roll	Blast Warhead	Cluster Warhead
0 - 3	Point Blank	Point Blank
4 - 5	Very Close	Point Blank
6 - 7	Close	Point Blank
8	Close	Very Close
9	Short	Very Close

7.8

HIT LOCATION AND DAMAGE FOR VEHICLES

Each Vehicle has its own **Status Sheet**, which is divided into two sections. The top half is the System Status portion, and the bottom is the Vehicle's Hit Location and Damage Table. All Status Sheets may be photocopied freely by players, for their personal use only.

In the **System Status** section, there is a list of all the Systems on the Vehicle, as well as room for indicating damage to the Crew or Passengers and usually an Ammunition Status section for keeping track of how many times the weapons have fired. Next to each System there is a box, which is crossed off when the System is destroyed or used up. Once the box has been crossed off, that System cannot be used. Some Systems have more than one box; if so, they are not destroyed by a single hit, but stop working when all of their boxes have been crossed off. Details about the Systems are in Sections 7.11 and 7.12.

The **Hit Location and Damage Table** at the bottom of each Status Sheet is used in the same general way as the one used for Humans. The Weapon which hits the Vehicle determines which Glancing Line to use, and a **Glancing Roll** (0 to 9) is made to determine which damage column is used. Then a Hit Location Roll is made, and cross-indexed with the damage column. As mentioned above, any System which is hit should be crossed off at the top of the Status Sheet. It should also be crossed off in the Hit Location and Damage Table, so it cannot be destroyed a second time.

The one difference between this and Personal Combat is that each line of the Hit Location and Damage Table represents a path for the incoming round, and the Glancing Roll determines how far the round penetrates. Every system that the round hits is damaged. If the first column is used, then the round has barely penetrated the Vehicle and only the System listed in the first column for that Hit Location roll is damaged. If it goes



"Rough air ahead...
we're in for some
chop."

Ferro

Ferro Piloting Dropship

to the second column, then both Systems are damaged, and so forth. A round which penetrates all the way through a Vehicle, to the last column, will pass through and damage all of the Systems listed for that Hit Location Roll.

Example:

A Heavy Disruptor hits an APC, and a 5 is rolled for Glance. Checking the Heavy Disruptor line on the APC Hit Location and Damage Table (the top line), any Glancing Roll of 4 or greater goes all the way through the Vehicle. A 57 is rolled for the Hit Location, so the GM reads across on this line on the Table. In the first column is a Fuel Tank; the first Fuel Tank box is crossed off on the top half of the sheet. The next column is a dash; it is an empty area, and no damage is done. The third column says "Crew 5 - 6", meaning the round has passed through the fifth and sixth passenger seats; the next two Sections have the rules for Crew Damage. Next is another empty area, and in the last column the round is exiting the APC through the Door on the far side; the APC Door box is crossed off. The effects of the damage are given in Section 7.11. Note that if the Glancing Roll had been a 1, only the Fuel Tank and the first empty area would have been hit.

System Damage Level

The level of damage done to the system is found by using the following table. A 0 to 9 number is rolled, and the appropriate column for the attacking weapon is consulted. The **Damage Level** is noted on the Vehicle's Hit Location and Damage Table.

EQUIPMENT LEVEL OF DAMAGE			
Damage Level	Small Arms	Disruptors Chain Gun	Explosives
Superficial	0	0	—
Minor (MIN)	1 - 3	1 - 2	0
Major (MAJ)	4 - 6	3 - 4	1
Repair (REP)	7 - 8	5 - 6	2 - 3
Destroyed	9	7 - 9	4 - 9

"Where are you, can
you hear me?"

Ripley

These Damage Levels are used with the Repair rules of Section 5.13 when Vehicles are being fixed. Any Damage will shut down a system for the duration of a combat; if the Damage is MIN or worse it requires significant work to restore the system, while systems that take Superficial damage just need to be cooled off and restarted after the battle.

Spacecraft Glancing Lines and Aircraft Weapons

The Spacecraft Status Sheet Glancing Lines cover Gun Classes from 5 to 9. There may be times, however, when a Spacecraft is hit by weapons of higher or lower Gun Class. If a Spacecraft is hit by a weapon with a Gun Class larger than 9, use the Gun Class 9 Glancing Line and add 3 to the Glancing Roll for each Gun Class over 9. For example, a weapon with Gun Class 11 would use the Gun Class 9 Glancing Line and add 6 to the Roll. If a Spacecraft is hit by a weapon whose Gun Class is less than 5, use the Gun Class 5 Glancing Line and subtract 1 from the Glancing Roll for each Gun Class under 5.

7.9

CREW DAMAGE IN GROUND VEHICLES AND AIRCRAFT

In Ground Vehicles and Aircraft, whenever there is a hit to a Hit Location that has Crew in it, all the Crew in that area must check to see if they take damage. If the attacking weapon was small arms fire, a Lase Cannon, a Disruptor, or a Chain Gun, then each Character in the seats for that Hit Location rolls a 0 to 9 number. Characters that roll a 0 through 3 are missed; those that roll 4 through 9 are hit.

If the attacking weapon was explosive, then all Crew in the entire compartment are automatically damaged. No rolls are made, and the damage is not limited to the Hit Location. For example, if an Explosive Weapon hits any part of the Crew section of an APC, the entire Crew compartment including the Officer and up to 12 Crew are damaged.

Damage to the Crew from small arms fire is handled normally; the **Hit Location and Damage Table (6)** is used exactly as if it were a regular attack on a target In The Open. The damage done by Explosive Weapons is found on the **Explosive Damage Table (6C)**, using Point Blank Range for the weapon.

Disruptors and Chain Guns do the worst of both types of damage if they hit. A Hit Location is generated normally using **Table 6**, with the target automatically suffering the damage in the far right column, which is used for full penetration of Machine Guns. In addition, the target takes the explosive damage from **Table 6C**, for Point Blank Range.

7.10

CREW DAMAGE IN SPACECRAFT AND CRASHES

Spacecraft Disruptors have tremendous destructive power and can devastate any area of a Spacecraft they hit. If a Disruptor hits an area that has people in it, the following table is used to determine the damage done to the Crew. A 0 to 9 number is rolled for each Character in the area, and the PD is read off the table.

This table is also used whenever an **Aircraft Crashes**. Any Crewmember who parachutes out of the Aircraft (a standard subsystem on all Aircraft) adds 3 to his or her Damage Roll. On the other hand, if the Pilot is incapacitated or has parachuted out of the Vehicle, all personnel left on board subtract 2 from their Damage Rolls.

AIRCRAFT CRASH CREW DAMAGE SPACECRAFT DISRUPTOR CREW DAMAGE			
Roll	PD	Roll	PD
0	Dead	5	2000
1	10000	6	1000
2	6000	7	800
3	4000	8	600
4	3000	9	400



"Hold at 40. Give me a slow circle of the compound."

Gorman

"They don't kill you! They don't kill you! She's alive, she's alive!"

Ripley

Dropship over Hadley Station

During combat, the Crew will either be on the Bridge or in the Cargo Bay. If people are in other areas for some reason, the GM decides if they are endangered by a given hit.

Each Crewmember can reduce the damage he or she takes by making a Success Roll. It is a Very Difficult task (Base Odds 7), and the Character adds in the highest of his or her Gun Combat, Hand-to-Hand Combat, or Survival SRM's. The Character attempts the Success Roll; if he or she succeeds, then the PD taken is halved and the Character can roll again. The Character keeps rolling and halving damage until the roll is failed, or until the Character has halved the damage three times. If the original result on the table is Dead, the damage cannot be reduced in any way.

For example, if Hudson is in an area that gets hit, a 0 to 9 number is rolled. On a 9, he takes 400 PD. He then tries a Success Roll; his odds are 7 + 4 (Professional SRM in Gun Combat) = 11. He gets a total of 9; he has succeeded, and his damage is halved. He rolls again, against the same odds, and gets a 12. This fails, so he takes 200 PD.

"Climb down, honey. We've gotta cut through... Now don't move. Stay very still."

Ripley

7.11

The Systems in Ground Vehicles and in Aircraft are similar, at least in game terms. These Systems are listed below in alphabetical order, with brief descriptions of their purposes and the effects of damage.

Airframe Units: These determine the Maneuverability of an Aircraft. Once all the boxes under a given Maneuverability are crossed off, the Vehicle's Maneuverability drops to the next lower value. This is described at the end of this Section.

Airlock: This maintains the pressurization of the Vehicle's hull. If destroyed, it self-seals. Pressurization is maintained, but it is no longer possible to use the Airlock. If the Crew wants to leave the Vehicle, it must be depressurized; this means that the outside atmosphere will get in, or the internal atmosphere will escape, depending on the situation. In either case, the Life Support of the Vehicle will no longer protect the Crew from outside atmospheric conditions.

Ammo Bay: Ammunition storage. If destroyed, that weapon cannot be used.

APC Door: This is the simple airtight door which allows the APC's crew and passengers to enter and exit. If it is destroyed there is only a ragged gap at the back of the Vehicle; the Life Support system of the APC will no longer protect the crew from a hostile environment, and hostile lifeforms can get inside.

Bathroom: Basic sanitation facilities. If destroyed, it cannot be used.

SYSTEMS: GROUND VEHICLES AND AIRCRAFT

"They don't kill
you! They don't
kill you! She's
alive, she's alive!"

Ripley

Bay Door: This is the combination door and ramp used on Aircraft, which allows an APC or Cargo Pallets to be loaded and unloaded.

Cargo Bay: This is the major storage area within the Vehicle, where APC's and Cargo Pallets are kept. If this area is destroyed, the cargo is damaged per the Level of Damage rules of Section 7.8.

Cargo Pods: Each Cargo Pod can carry 2,000 pounds of Cargo. If destroyed, the items within the Pod are also damaged using the rules of Section 7.8.

C. G. Ammo: Chain Gun Ammunition Bay. If it is destroyed, the Chain Gun cannot be fired.

Comm: Communications systems, including radio and microwave. If disabled, communications using these systems cease; this includes an APC's link to its Dropship.

Cmdnd Post: Command Post, used by a unit commander to track his or her Strike Team. This is described in full in Section 5.7; if damaged, it cannot be used.

Cold Stores: This is where fresh food is kept refrigerated. It is only present on the civilian-oriented Ground Exploration Vehicles.

Critical Electronics: This represents the internal computer and other electronic components which are vital to keep the Vehicle running. If this System is crossed off, the Vehicle loses all normal Systems, although independently powered functions such as Life Support and emergency lighting continue to operate normally.

Drive System: This is the Grav Drive for Aircraft. Without it, the Aircraft Crashes (Section 7.10) if it is in the air, cannot maneuver if in space, and cannot move if it is on the ground.

Emerg Power: Emergency power system which is used to operate Life Support and Communications equipment if the Vehicle is stranded. Emergency power will operate Life Support and Communications for one Week, or Communications alone for two Months.

Engine: This is a Ground Vehicle Engine; when lost, the Vehicle can no longer move or generate power for its Lase Cannon or Disruptors.

Expendable Stores: This space is for miscellaneous tools and equipment being carried on board a Ground Exploration Vehicle.

Fuel Tanks: As mentioned in Section 5.7, Ground Vehicles use a mix of Fuel and Oxygen for propulsion. If one of these Tanks is damaged, the remaining distance the Vehicle can travel is halved. If both are eliminated, the Vehicle cannot move or generate power for its Lase Cannon or Disruptors.

Intakes: The Intakes are cooling and aerodynamic vents used by the power system aboard each Aircraft. If they are all destroyed, the Vehicle's Power System must shut down immediately. This is a controlled shutdown, and will allow the Vehicle to glide to a relatively safe Landing, with a Difficulty Level one greater than normal.

Kitchen: A rudimentary food storage and cooking area. If destroyed, it cannot be used.

Landing Gear: For each box damaged, the Difficulty Level of a Landing is increased by one. If the Aircraft fails its Landing Success Roll it crashes, with a +2 modifier to the Crew Damage rolls in the Crash rules of Section 7.10.

Life Support: If this System is destroyed, the Vehicle has only two Hours of breathable air left. If it is not within a safe atmosphere when the air runs out, the Crew will suffocate or be exposed to the effects of the hazardous atmosphere or vacuum.

Nav Unit: The vehicle's Navigation equipment. On a Ground Vehicle, this consists of an inertial navigation compass and a Map Computer with all known geographical information about the world. On an Aircraft, the Nav Unit contains all data regarding orbits and communicates with the Vehicle's computer during critical orbital maneuvers. It is not possible to reenter an atmosphere or attain orbit without a functioning Nav Unit.

"Alright, I believe
you, she's alive.
But we've gotta go."

Hicks



Ground Exploration Vehicle

Non-Critical Electronics: This system covers an assortment of internal lighting, non-vital computers, and other devices designed for convenience or comfort. Loss of this system is annoying, but the Vehicle is still entirely functional and combat-worthy without it.

Orbital Trans: Orbital Transponder. This device, used on Ground Vehicles, is necessary for communications with a companion Spacecraft in orbit.

Ox Tanks: Oxygen Tanks, for the mix of Oxygen and Fuel used for propulsion. If one Tank is lost, the remaining Vehicle Range is halved. If both are lost, the Vehicle cannot move or generate power for its Lase Cannon or Disruptors.

Photo Recon: This allows the Vehicle to record surrounding areas, and to conduct basic espionage missions such as Jamming and Tracing radio communications. The system has sound pickups, video recording, passive electromagnetic imaging, and active radar imaging. If it is destroyed these capabilities are lost, along with all current recordings.

Power System: This generates the power which operates the Grav Drive in Aircraft. Without it, all systems without independent power shut down.

Power Train: This transmits power from the Engine to the wheels in a Ground Vehicle; if lost, the Vehicle can no longer move.

Radar: Standard radar unit, used by Aircraft for detection, navigation, and combat. If destroyed, the Aircraft can operate on visual navigation only, and all weapons fire with a -3 to Shot Accuracy.

Sensors: This covers a range of sophisticated Sensors necessary for navigation and gunnery. Only crude course corrections can be made without them, and gunnery is impossible if they are destroyed.

Sleep Away: Each box represents a bunk. If destroyed, the Sleep Away cannot be used.

Spares: This is simply a trunk with an assortment of spare parts. If the Tool Bin is not destroyed, they can be used to perform up to MIN Repairs on any system in the Vehicle.

Suspension (Front and Rear): When all of the Suspension boxes for a given location are crossed off, the Vehicle is immobilized.

"We're not leaving."

Ripley

"We're not?"

Bishop

"I don't want to hear about it, Bishop. She's alive. There's still time."

Ripley

Tail: The Difficulty Level of all maneuvers is increased by one for each box damaged. If the Tail is destroyed, the effective Maneuver Number of the Vehicle drops to 1.

Tool Bin: This contains a variety of basic tools. If destroyed, the tools cannot be used.

Weapon Controls: This is the Console used by the Weapons Operator aboard the Vehicle. If destroyed, the Vehicle's Weapon Systems are unusable.

Weapon Systems: Vehicle Weapon Systems are described in full in Section 7.5. Whenever a System is destroyed, it cannot be used.

Winch: This is a utility Winch, valuable for moving large objects, getting Vehicles out of ditches, and so forth. It runs off the Vehicle's Engine and Power Train, which must be functional for it to be used. If the Winch is destroyed, it cannot be used.

Maneuver Section (Aircraft)

Status Sheets for Aircraft have a section containing information about Combat Speed and Maneuverability. The **Combat Speed** is listed at the top of this section. Combat Speed is never reduced for Aircraft, until the Vehicle's Drive is disabled in some way. At that point, of course, the Vehicle Crashes (Section 7.10).

Below the Combat Speed are a number of boxes for the Vehicle's **Maneuver Number** and **Vulnerability**. These boxes represent the aerodynamic quality of the Vehicle, and are called **Airframe Units**. In combat, the Maneuver Number of the Vehicle starts out at the highest value listed in the Maneuver Section. Whenever an Airframe hit is taken, one box is crossed off, starting at the right and moving to the left. When all the boxes for a given Maneuver Number are crossed off, the Vehicle's Maneuver Number is reduced to the next lower value. The lower the Maneuver Number, the less maneuverable the vehicle. Note that the vehicle's Vulnerability changes as the vehicle's Maneuver Number changes.

As mentioned above, each Airframe hit is a specific location, and can only be destroyed once. The appropriate part of the Hit Location and Damage Table should be crossed off at the same time a box is marked in the Maneuver Section.

Ammunition Status Section

All Vehicles with weapons have a section on the Status Sheet for **Ammunition Status**. Each box listed under a particular weapon represents one time that the weapon can be fired, and each time the weapon is fired, one box should be crossed off. When all the boxes are crossed off, the weapon is empty and cannot be fired until it is reloaded at base.

7.12

SYSTEMS: SPACECRAFT

The following Systems are found on Spacecraft. A brief description of each System is given, as well as the effects of the destruction of the System.

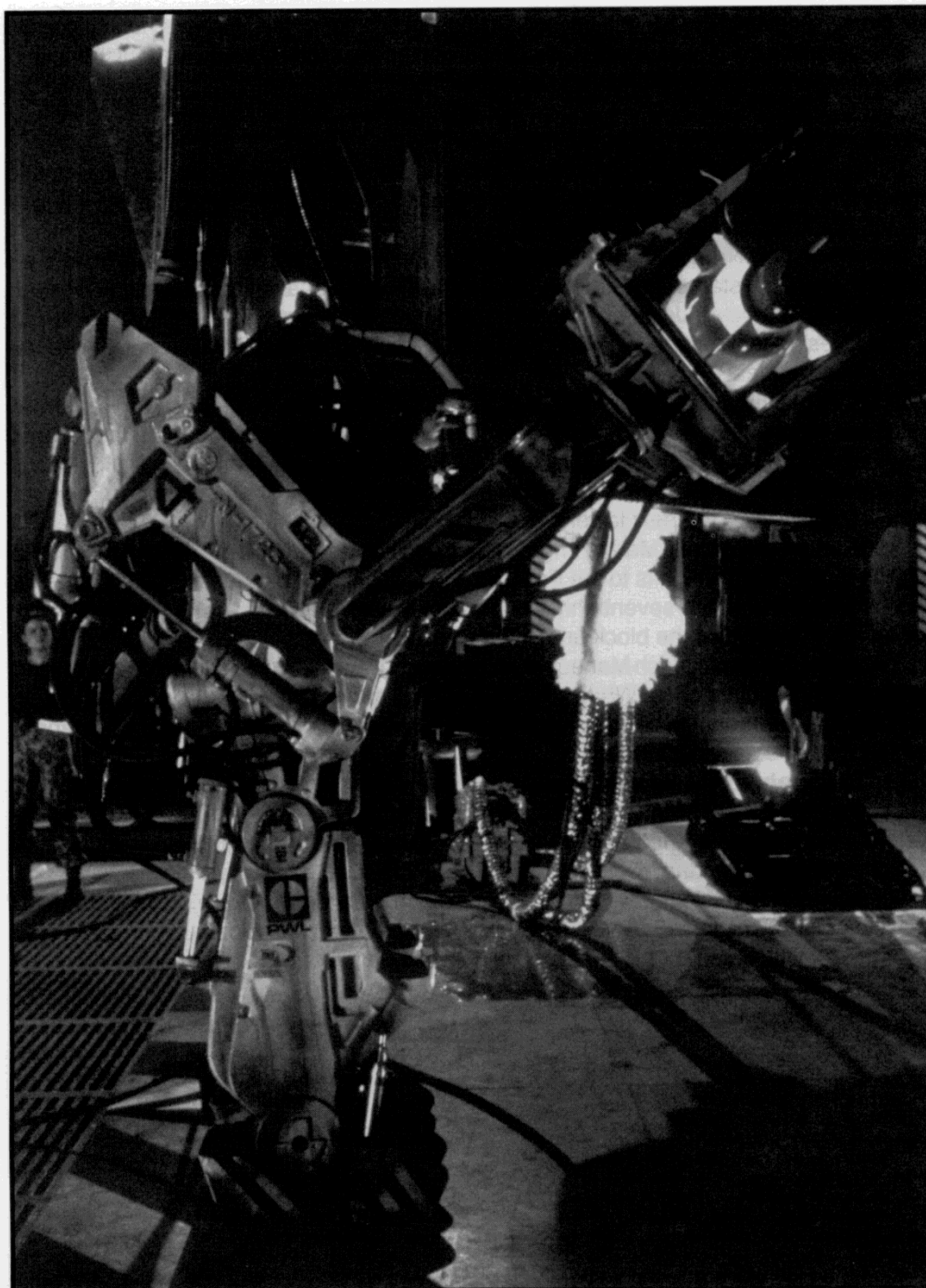
Bridge: This is where the command personnel of the Vehicle are stationed. If it is destroyed, the Vehicle cannot maneuver and cannot fire its weapons, and a general shutdown of all systems except Life Support occurs.

Cargo Bay: Each Cargo Bay has its own contents. When the Bay is destroyed, the contents take damage according to the rules in Section 7.8.

Disruptors: These are oversized versions of the weapons found on smaller Vehicles. There are several sizes of Disruptor, rated by their Gun Class; they are described in Section 7.5. If damaged, a Disruptor cannot be used.

Drive System: The Displacement Drive of the vessel. If destroyed, the Spaceship decelerates and cannot maneuver. The Jump Drive is also disabled by a hit to the Drive System.

Hypersleep: These are the Hypersleep Pods, used when the Vehicle is using Jump Drive. If destroyed, the Crew cannot go into Hypersleep, and the Vehicle cannot Jump.



Power Loader placing a Heavy Missile into a Dropship

Jump Clock: This is a device which monitors the Jump Drive; if destroyed, the Vehicle cannot Jump.

Jump Drive: The Vehicle's interstellar Drive; if destroyed, the Vehicle cannot Jump.

Life Support: The complex systems which maintain a survivable environment within the Vehicle. If all of the Life Support boxes are destroyed, the Vehicle becomes uninhabitable in 30 days. The crew may elect to enter Hypersleep and await rescue, if the Power and Hypersleep systems are functional.

"Hicks, don't let him leave."

Ripley

"Is there anything I can do?"

Ripley

"I don't know. Is there anything you can do?"

Apone

"We ain't going anywhere."

Hicks

"In nineteen minutes, this area's going to be a cloud of vapor the size of Nebraska."

Bishop

"Hicks, don't let him leave."

Ripley

"We ain't goin' anywhere."

Hicks

Sensors: As with Aircraft, this covers a range of sophisticated Sensors necessary for navigation and gunnery. Only crude course corrections can be made without them, and gunnery is impossible if they are destroyed.

Maneuverability Section (Spacecraft)

Status Sheets for Spacecraft have a section containing information about Combat Speed and Maneuverability. These values are used when determining Odds of Hitting in the Vehicle Combat System (Section 7.3).

The **Maneuver Number** is determined by the number of functioning **Maneuver Jets** on the Vehicle. At the start of combat, the Maneuverability is equal to the largest value listed. Whenever a Maneuver Jet is hit, cross off the box which is furthest to the right. When all of the boxes under a given value are crossed off, the Maneuverability is decreased to the next lower number.

In the same way, the **Combat Speed** is determined by the number of **Power Units** which are functioning. At the beginning of the combat, the Speed is equal to the highest value, and whenever a Power Unit hit is taken, one of the boxes from the rightmost block is crossed off. When all of the boxes in this block are crossed off, the Combat Speed of the Vehicle drops to the next lower value.

For example, a Colonial Marine Frigate has a Combat Speed of 4, and there are 7 boxes in each block. The first 7 hits to the Frigate's Power Units will be crossed off in the block under Speed 4; after the seventh hit, the Combat Speed is reduced to 3, and further hits will be marked off from the block under 3, and so forth.

As mentioned above, each Maneuver Jet and each Power Unit is a specific location, and can only be destroyed once. When a hit is taken, the appropriate spot on the Hit Location and Damage Table should be crossed off at the same time that a box in the Maneuverability section is marked.

The **Vulnerability** for the Vehicle is listed in two places; below the Maneuver Jet boxes and again below the Power Unit boxes. For all combat purposes, the Spacecraft's Vulnerability is the higher of these two Vulnerability values. The Vulnerability starts out at the far right values, but as the Vehicle takes damage the Vulnerability will increase.

For example, if a Colonial Marine Frigate has lost three Maneuver Jets and four Power Units, the Maneuver Jet Vulnerability would be +3, and the Power Unit Vulnerability would be 0 (the original value). The Frigate's Vulnerability is the higher of the two, +3.

8

FOR THE GAMEMASTER

This Chapter includes special Sections that are for the GM, including some pre-generated Characters and Non-Player Characters, several ideas for Campaigns, and a number of sample Missions. Also included are the rules for converting this game system to the ones used in the **Phoenix Command Combat System** and the **Living Steel Adventure Game**, for players of those games.

8.1

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

There are two sets of Pre-Generated Characters. For the curious, the full stats for Characters from the movie are shown in the **ALIENS Movie Characters Table (10)**; everyone is included, even Burke and Newt. These Characters can be used in the Movie Scenario, given in Section 8.3. If nothing else, they should satisfy curiosity.

More Characters are given in the **Pre-Generated Colonial Marines Table (11)**. This table includes several Specialists and some other unusual Characters, ranging from Garrison troops to experienced, talented professionals. These Characters can be used for games where a quick startup is desired, as it saves the players the trouble of generating their own Characters. They are also handy for learning the rules of the game; the players can take these Characters on a Mission without worrying too much about the outcome. Lastly, they are ideal for use as Specialists added to the Strike Team for unusual Missions, and as Non-Player Characters to flesh out a Team.

Both tables are organized the same way and give the same types of information. The first column is labelled **Name / Game Values**. It includes the Character's name or description and three of the most important values needed for the game; the number of Combat Actions, the Knockout Value, and the Learning Roll. The next two columns are for **Primary** and **Secondary Characteristics**. For convenience, each Character's Will and Health are assumed to be the same value; if players want more realism, the Health Characteristic can be rolled separately, taking the higher of two rolls. Also, many of the Pre-Generated Colonial Marine Characters have their Troop Grade listed. This gives the GM an idea of the abilities of various Grades of troops, from Garrison to Guard.

The central column is labelled **Primary Equipment**, and lists the most important articles being carried by the Character. In addition to the items listed, Colonial Marine Characters also have the rest of the normal kit described in Section 1.5.

The last three columns give the Character's Skills, starting with the General Skills and then listing the most important Support Skills. A letter appears after each Skill name, signifying the Rating; U for Unskilled, N for Novice, C for Certified, and so forth. Some of the Skill names have been abbreviated; common abbreviations include Rep for Repair, AC for Aircraft, and Veh for Vehicle. If there is no other indication, the Skill is an Operation Skill. For the Pre-Generated Colonial Marines, some Skills can be chosen. For example, if it says "2 Gen of Choice", the player can choose to give the Rating listed to any two of the General Skills. The same holds true for "2 Rep Skills", for Repair Skills, and so forth. In all cases, the Skills must be chosen from those appropriate to the Character's Branch.

**"Attention.
Emergency. All
personnel must
evacuate immediately.
You now have
fifteen minutes to
reach minimum
safe distance."**

Automated Voice

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Sixteen Non-Player Characters (NPC's) are given in the **Non-Player Character Table (12)**. They represent typical citizens of the ICC from various walks of life; the GM may decide to use them as they are, or modify them to fit various situations. Again, the greatest value of these NPC's is to save the GM some work when running a quick Mission.

The information is presented in exactly the same way as Tables 10 and 11. Descriptions of the NPC's on the table are as follows.

Civilian - Poor: These are the residents of the worst parts of Earth's crowded cities. They lack technical Skills, but are good at surviving in the harsh, brutal conditions of Earth's slums.

Civilian: The majority of Earth's people fall into this category. Their Skills are focussed on their jobs, which could be anything from semi-skilled manual labor to well-paid management positions with governments or Corporations.

Civilian - Rich: The shareholders of the Corporations and other rich and privileged members of society, as well as their families. These people spend most of their time in leisure activities, and are escorted by bodyguards whenever they are exposed to even the slightest risk.

Colonist: Colonists are like the Civilians of Earth, except they are generally better educated and more dedicated to their work. The harsh conditions on most Colonies have given these people good Survival skills.

Corporate Agent: Highly trained and very effective Agents who fulfill a variety of roles for Corporations. They can handle intelligence and espionage missions, participate in battles with rival forces, and act as liaison with Mercenaries.

Corporate Auditor: These are the men and women who keep track of a Corporation's money and its legal matters.

Corporate Bodyguard: Important people of all types require protection from their enemies, and Bodyguards are well trained in the simple, direct, and often violent skills necessary to guard their charges.

Corporate Executive: Executives are the leaders and decision makers of the ICC. They are men and women of power and confidence, and most of them put their goals first and all other considerations a distant second.

Explorer: On new worlds, in deep space, and at every other Human frontier, Explorers confront the forces of nature, new life forms, and even opposition from other Humans. They are durable and courageous people, and they possess a wide range of valuable skills.

Paramedic: Paramedics handle the basic medical emergencies of the ICC, and have several Skills necessary for dealing with people in crisis.

Medical - Surgeon: These are highly trained doctors; their Expert Skill Rating in Medical Aid makes them vital to all major surgery.

Scientist: The designers and developers of technology. Each Scientist will have a set of Skills that suits his or her particular field of research.

Spacecraft Engineer: These are the people who run Spacecraft. In most military applications, Synthetics are used for this task, but Synthetics are not suitable for active combat roles, and they are too expensive for many small commercial craft.

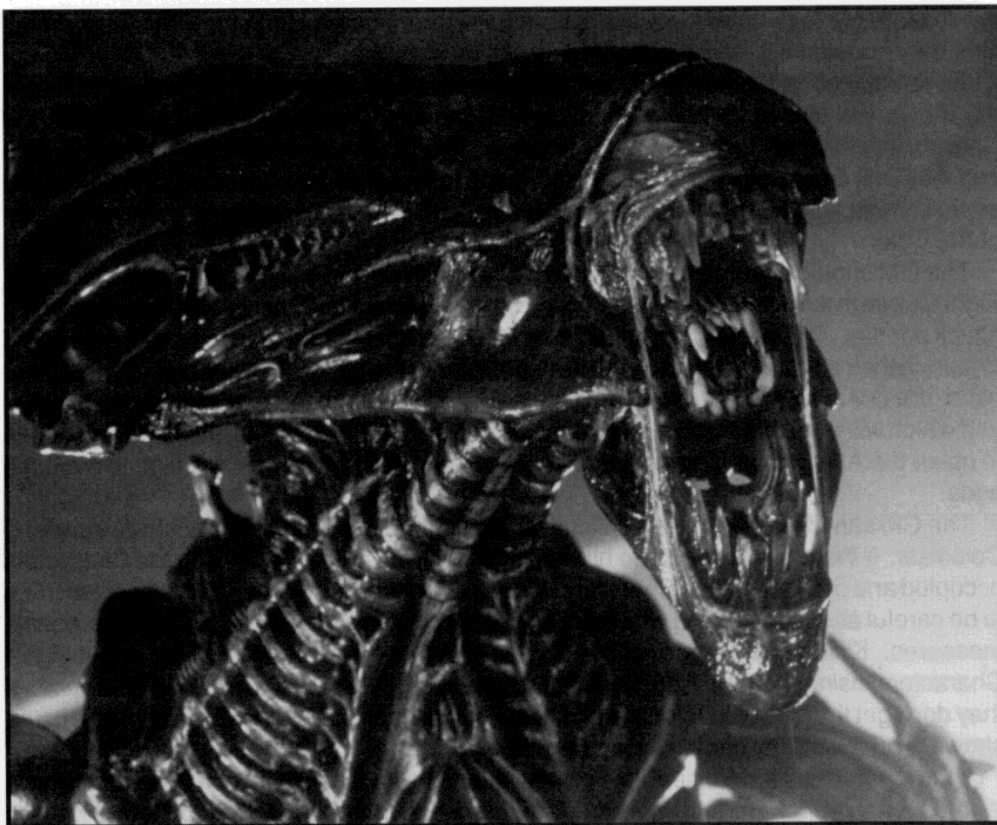
Spacecraft Officer: The commanders of Spacecraft. Like Spacecraft Engineers, they are used for combat-oriented tasks and decision making, and by small operations that cannot afford the high price of a Synthetic.

"...You now have four minutes to reach minimum safe distance."

Automated Voice

"... You now have two minutes to reach minimum safe distance."

Automated Voice



Enraged Queen

Technician: These are the people who keep the technology running. There are dozens of types of Technicians, who work on the countless machines of the ICC.

Senior Technician: A little older and a lot more experienced than a normal Technician.

Other NPC's

If the GM wants to create other NPC's than those listed, he or she can begin with the closest match from Tables 10, 11, and 12 and modify it to suit the situation, or create an entirely new NPC. The Other Backgrounds portion of Section 1.4 gives a good basis for building NPC's from scratch, and the Opponent Skill Rating Generator of Section 2.2 can also be used. The creation of interesting NPC's is one of the most important and most rewarding jobs for the GM, and he or she should experiment freely with new types of NPC's that challenge the Characters.

"Let's just bug
out and call it
even, okay?"

Hudson

MOVIE SCENARIO

"Punch it, Bishop!"

Ripley

Some players may want to use the Movie Characters from **Table 10** and face the same challenges found in the film. This can be especially valuable for those who are new to role-playing, as the Characters and situations are already clearly defined. While it is possible to simply duplicate the action of the movie, a more interesting option is to allow the players to significantly change the actions of the Characters.

The Scenario begins when the Strike Team enters Hadley Station. From that point forward, the players make all the decisions and can try to avoid the disasters that happened in the movie. The GM should prevent the players from acting on knowledge they do not have, such as the location of the Colonists. On the other hand, it is neither possible

"Hey, we made it."

Ripley

"I knew you'd come."

Newt

**"He's gonna be alright.
He's just out. I had to
give him another shot
for the pain. We need
a stretcher to carry
him up to Medical."**

Bishop

nor reasonable to prevent the players from being more careful than the Characters in the film; they should be allowed to be as prudent as they like.

As mentioned in Section 8.1, the Characteristics and Skills of all of the Characters in the movie are shown in **Table 10**. The GM can sketch basic maps of any areas the Characters enter, using the film as a guideline. Those who own the **ALIENS Boardgame** and **ALIENS Expansion** will find that the maps in those games are ideal for role-playing as well; the **ALIENS Expansion** map in particular can be used to represent any typical area of the Colony.

The GM should assume that there are 150 Alien Warriors, six Sentries, and one Stage Eight Queen in the Aliens' Lair. In general, the Aliens should be allowed to make one major attack per day. This allows the Strike Team time to prepare defenses and make plans, and to launch their own counterattacks. It is also similar to the action in the movie. On the other hand, the GM is facing a Strike Team that is very familiar with the way the Aliens operate, and which will treat them with a great deal of caution. Because of this, the GM can choose to make the Aliens more aggressive or more crafty than they were in the film, to even the odds.

The GM can also make things difficult for the Characters by introducing more surviving Colonists. If there are two or three hiding out in different areas, it will keep the Characters occupied and prevent them from just shooting at everything they see. It will also force them to be careful about destroying whole areas of the Colony with explosives and other drastic measures. Killing one or more of the Colonists they came to rescue would result in the Characters losing the Scenario, so the GM should provide clues about their presence. If they don't get the hint, the Colonists should be placed more directly in their path; one could show up on a security camera, for example.

If the Characters fire Pulse Rifles or Machine Guns in the vicinity of the Reactor, there is a 3% chance per Burst of fire that it takes critical damage, and a 10% chance per Grenade that explodes there. Once the Reactor has taken critical damage, the GM rolls a 00 to 99 number to find out how many hours it will be before the Reactor explodes. This can greatly shorten the Scenario, of course. If the Reactor is going to explode, the Characters must at least gather up any Colonists before evacuating. Of course, if the Aliens have managed to destroy the Characters' Dropship, it gets even more difficult.

There are two types of victory for the players. The first, and most obvious, is to have as many survivors as possible. Regardless of how many Characters survive, however, the players lose if the Colony is destroyed. Note that everyone lost in the movie; most of the Characters died and the Colony was completely destroyed, and the Aliens were wiped out as well.

As a final note, a GM with the **ALIENS Expansion** supplement can use Chapter 5 of that product as a source of variations on the basic movie plot, and to link events together.

8.4

CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

This is a starting point for a Campaign which begins shortly after the end of the movie. The Characters should be a normal Strike Team of about eight Colonial Marines, plus an Officer and two Auxiliaries, and they should have a normal Frigate with full equipment on board. If there are no Characters who can fill the roles of the Officer and the Auxiliaries, then the GM should assign NPC's with the appropriate qualifications. The players will probably want to use their own Characters rather than any of the pre-generated ones. The Campaign's first portion is called Investigating Acheron; after that is completed, there are several different plotlines that can be followed, depending on what everyone wants to do.

This setting will serve as the point of departure for many groups. It allows the players to stay closely involved with the Aliens, which will certainly keep their interest, while exposing them to the greed of certain Corporations and the complexity of life in the ICC.



"I'm sorry if I scared you. That platform was just becoming too unstable. I had to circle and hope that things didn't get too rough to take you off."

Bishop

Bishop after Queen's Attack

Investigating Acheron

This is a basic Mission that introduces the players to most of the rules, without putting them in too much danger. The Strike Team's job is the one described in the Preface at the beginning of this book; to investigate what happened to the Colony, and to find out what happened to the first Strike Team who went there. What happened was, obviously, the movie **ALIENS**. For the sake of this adventure, Ripley, Hicks, and Newt are assumed to be quarantined by Weyland-Yutani, to prevent their information from getting out.

When they get to Acheron, they will find a Frigate from Weyland-Yutani in orbit around the planet, and two Dropships with Strike Teams on the surface. Each Strike Team has a pair of Scientists with it, specializing in xenobiology. The Weyland-Yutani forces will refuse to deal with the Characters, claiming that the situation is a private one and does not involve the Colonial Marines. If the Characters insist on getting involved, they will be told that they cannot visit the Colony site due to radiation hazards. Only one of the Teams is at the Colony site, however; the other is guarding the Ship which contains the Alien Eggs. They are keeping radio silence and trying to keep the location of the Ship a secret. The Characters will only have a chance of tracking them down if they manage to interrogate one of the other Weyland-Yutani troops. If the Team at the Ship is found, they will claim that the Ship is Corporate property, and off limits to the Colonial Marines.

The Characters have several options here, ranging from negotiation with the Weyland-Yutani forces, to infiltration of their areas, to direct physical confrontation. Before things get out of hand, the GM should introduce a wild card; a Ground Exploration Vehicle which has survived the destruction of the Colony.

This Vehicle has six Colonists in it. None of them are trained as soldiers, and their only weapons are a single Sub-Machinegun and two Pistols. They were a hundred miles from the Colony when it was destroyed, hiding from the Aliens and hoping for rescue. They drove back to the Colony after the explosion, hoping to find out what happened. They failed, but did find out that three Aliens had survived the destruction as well; presumably they were away from the Colony and scouting for food. The Aliens are now chasing the Vehicle, which is out of Fuel in the middle of a large patch of broken, rocky terrain.

The Colonists blame Weyland-Yutani for the discovery of the Aliens and the destruction of the Colony, and were avoiding contacting the Corporate troops. The presence of the Aliens and the arrival of the Characters has convinced them to break radio silence and ask for help from the Colonial Marines. The Characters can go to their aid, and will find that the Aliens have laid siege to the Colonists.

"Bishop, you did okay."

Ripley

"I did?"

Bishop

**"Get away from her,
you bitch!"**

Ripley

This is an opportunity for the Characters to enter the rocks and crags of the area to hunt the Aliens, who will naturally be hunting the Characters in return. The Characters have a big edge here, with superior firepower, but they will still have to be careful about the Aliens Stalking them. If they can kill the Aliens and bring the Colonists to safety, they will acquire enough information to take the next step.

Alien Smuggling

Upon questioning the Colonists, the Characters will find out how the Colony was overrun by the Aliens and a little about the Aliens' metabolism and reproductive cycles. The Colonists know about the Giants' Ship and about the Eggs inside it. If the Characters ask the right questions, they will also learn that the Colonists picked up transmissions from another Weyland-Yutani Spacecraft in the days after the destruction of the Colony. Apparently, it left the system just a few days ago.

Weyland-Yutani has been hard at work. They have up to date information from the Colonial Marine Corps about what is going on, as well as all of Burke's files. Acting on information in Burke's personal notes, they sent a Recon Ship to Acheron as soon as they found out the first mission had failed. It went directly to the Giants' Ship and conducted a quick investigation. Two Weyland-Yutani soldiers fell victim to Facehuggers, and 12 unopened Eggs were also recovered. The Recon Ship then left the system, with the incapacitated troopers in Hypersleep. They are on their way back to Weyland-Yutani, via the Arcturus Loop. In the meantime, another Frigate has arrived and is conducting more detailed studies of the two critical locations, the Colony and the Ship. Because of the danger of the Aliens, they have stayed out of the Egg chamber in the Ship.

The Characters need to find out what the Recon Ship was up to, and where it has gone. To do this, they will have to question the Weyland-Yutani Scientists at the Giants' Ship; they are the only people who know what has happened. Again, the Characters can negotiate, infiltrate, or simply attack.

If the Characters cannot track the Recon Ship down, it has only one obstacle in its way. Hyperdyne, an old enemy of Weyland-Yutani's, has found out a little about what is happening. They know that a valuable life form is involved, and that it has potential military value. Their efforts are described below.

Aliens on the Loose

The focus of this section of the Campaign is the release of one or more Aliens on an Outpost world. The Characters can get involved as a result of a successful investigation of the earlier scenarios, or in response to a direct order from High Command. The GM can work this in as desired; perhaps the Strike Team has been called in after its investigation on Acheron as the most qualified unit available. It is also easy to run this section independently, with the Strike Team assigned to investigate reports that a dangerous life form has been smuggled to a nearby world.

When the Weyland-Yutani ship docked at Eyesore, on the Arcturus Loop, it was intercepted by a Hyperdyne Frigate. Knowing that they were about to be boarded, the crew of the Weyland-Yutani ship descended to the surface in a Dropship, carrying the incapacitated troopers and all of the Eggs with them. Once on the surface, they attempted to conceal their valuable cargo in the small Outpost. Hyperdyne soldiers also landed, and the two groups began negotiating, maneuvering, and preparing for battle. In the course of this, one of the Eggs opened, and a Facehugger escaped.

The Characters arrive just a few hours after Chestbursters erupt from the two soldiers who had Facehuggers on them. The population of Eyesore is only 400 people, along with two Strike Teams of Corporate soldiers. These two Strike Teams are not cooperating with each other at all, and each accuses the other of being to blame for the trouble. No assistance from Weyland-Yutani or Hyperdyne is expected for 12 days. The Colonial Marine Corps has no regular patrols here, so the Characters cannot expect any support at all.

The Weyland-Yutani Strike Team includes one Officer, two Auxiliaries, and six surviving Line quality soldiers, and is based in one of the old mining buildings. The entire Team has been badly shaken by their experiences, and their hunt for the missing Aliens (one

Facehugger and two rapidly-growing Chestbursters) is disorganized and ineffective. Their Officer believes that he is going to be blamed for this disaster, and he is very desperate.

The Strike Team from Hyperdyne is in much better condition, and consists of one Officer, two Auxiliaries, and nine Line soldiers. They have taken over another old building as their command post and rarely leave it. They send patrols into the community, to keep an eye out for Aliens and to watch what the Weyland-Yutani forces are doing. They also have guards posted at all entrances to their building, and believe that they are very secure. The Officer has decided to keep out of the current trouble as much as possible, and to wait for backup. This Strike Team will make one effort to fight any adult Aliens that appear, but if they are defeated they will retire to the "safety" of their headquarters. The only other action this group will undertake on its own is an attempt to steal one or more Eggs, if an opportunity presents itself.

The GM can choose to change the Scenario by putting the Eggs on a different Outpost. Any rationale can be used; perhaps another Corporation got to Acheron first, or perhaps the crew on the Weyland-Yutani ship has decided to sell the Eggs to a higher bidder. Regardless, this allows the GM to incorporate an Outpost world that he or she finds interesting, or to drop this Scenario into a campaign that is already in progress.

The Scenario can be made into an even more difficult scenario by placing it on Arcturus, instead of Eyesore. The population there is 25,000, and in addition there are unknown numbers of Arcturians for the Aliens to feed on. One or more of the Aliens will definitely head deep into the burrows of the Arcturians, where there will soon be one or more Queens well established. In this version, the Characters will be faced with huge numbers of Aliens, and will probably be part of a larger effort to defeat them; large Colonial Marine and Corporate forces would certainly be brought in. Again, the GM can certainly find other excuses to place it on almost any Colony or Major World, or even on Earth. The larger the world, however, the more work for the GM.

Alien Hunt

This storyline is best for an inventive GM. Once the ICC and the Colonial Marine Corps High Command find out about the Giants' Ship, they will need to find out what its secrets are and where it came from. The Characters are sent into the Ship to perform a careful reconnaissance. In addition to the mysteries of the Giants' technologies and the presence of the immense Egg Chamber, there is more bad news for the Characters; there is an entire Lair of Aliens aboard the Ship. They have been dormant for ages, but might awaken in response to the Characters' actions.

In the attempt to understand the Giants' machines, there will be numerous non-combat tests of the Characters' abilities. Engineering, Science, and Repair Skills will be used at very high levels of Difficulty, as the Characters try to decipher the Ship's Beacon and other communications equipment, figure out how to power up the Ship, and learn how to operate the Ship's computers and Bridge. In the course of their wanderings they might awaken the Lair. If they do, they will face 200 Alien Warriors and a Stage 10 Queen. Whether to put the Characters through such a severe challenge is of course up to the GM.

If they survive that challenge and find out how to work with the devices and machines aboard the Giants' Ship, they will be able to decipher the Navigation Coordinates used by the Giants. This opens an entire network of stars for the Characters, and sets them out on an immense adventure. They will be able to travel out past Pandora, to explore new systems and try to track down the Giants.

The GM must make many decisions in this setting. The Giants may still be out there, with their own Spacecraft and unusual technologies, but it is also very possible that they are gone, that they were destroyed long ago, whether by themselves, by another life form, or by the Aliens. They might even be involved in a desperate war for survival against the Aliens on dozens of worlds. Whatever decisions are made, the GM will need to do a great deal of work in this setting, including developing new worlds and new life forms, and giving a concrete shape to the Giants themselves.

A major issue is the relationship between the Giants and the Aliens, and there are several options here. The GM can decide that the Giants simply found the Aliens on some strange world, and were transporting them for study. Another choice is to assume that the

**"Not bad, for
a Human."**

Bishop

**"Are we gonna sleep
all the way home?"**

Newt

"Can I dream?"

Newt

Giants created the Aliens as a biological weapon, for use in their own wars. It is easy to see the Aliens as a sort of nuclear weapon; to use the Aliens on a world almost guarantees that world's destruction.

Space Exploration

This is a separate Campaign setting, which is focused on the Characters travelling to new systems and new worlds. A setting like this one is very demanding for the GM, but is also an excellent way for a GM with his or her own ideas to introduce them into the game. Almost anything is possible once the GM decides to leave the ICC behind.

For a GM who wants an exploration-oriented game, it is easy to get around the restrictions of the Navigation Coordinates. The first option is to provide the Characters with access to Corporate information, which would allow them to reach beyond the area described in this product. This makes it easy for the GM to control where the Characters can go, and minimizes the number of worlds and situations that have to be developed. Another intriguing alternative, as mentioned above, is to let the Characters translate the Navigation Coordinates used by the Giants' ship and let them roam through the Giants' empire. Lastly, the GM can elect to run the game without the restrictions imposed by the Navigation Coordinates, and assume that to get from one star to another you simply point your ship and push the button. This is liable to result in Characters roaming all across the stars and putting the GM to an immense amount of work, but it is an alternative.

8.5

MISSION IDEAS

The Mission Generation system of Section 3.5 makes it easy for the GM to create basic Missions. The notes that follow are examples of how those Missions can be fleshed out, to bring them to life. In most cases, the GM can place them in any desired system, and should add details as appropriate.

Hostage Rescue

A small commercial Spacecraft that was being used by ICC authorities to transport eight criminals from one world to another has been seized by the criminals. On a routine pause between Jumps, a programming error caused the Hypersleep Pods of the criminals to open, instead of the Pods for the six crewmembers and the two ICC Security Agents. The criminals took full advantage of their opportunity, of course. They figured out how to operate the emergency beacon and basic communications, and informed the first Spacecraft that stopped to help them that they had taken the crew and the Security Agents hostage, and that the ICC had better start negotiating quickly.

The criminals are a mixed bag, including three violent criminals, a former Colonial Marine accused of treason, three white-collar criminals, and a sociopath. They are armed with eight Pistols and four Sub-Machineguns. They are demanding a Synthetic as a pilot so they can get the ship underway; they are probably hoping to lose themselves among the stars, and find their way to a frontier world where the ICC is weak.

The Characters are supposed to defuse this situation, without loss of innocent life and without significant damage to the Spacecraft. They have been given the right to negotiate freely, with the knowledge that no promises they make will be honored. The GM can use this as an opportunity for in-depth role-playing. One or both sides might set deadlines, and the Characters have to solve the problem before the criminals kill any hostages. On the other hand, if the GM can get the Characters to sympathize with the criminals, the Characters might even try to convince their superiors to give the criminals what they want. This makes for another round of interesting role-playing, and will certainly result in the loss of Merit Points for any Character who sides with the criminals.

The GM could also make the prisoners political leaders instead of criminals. If they were Alexandrian rebels, there might be four alleged terrorists accused of bombings and other violence, three organizers or politicians, and an important leader. When they awaken, it is not the result of an accident, but of deliberate sabotage by rebel sympathizers. The

"Yes, honey. I think we both can."

Ripley



"Oh, man, and I was getting short, too. Four more weeks and out. Now I'm gonna buy it on this rock. It ain't half fair, man!"

Hudson

"Hudson, give us a break."

Vasquez

Hudson, Burke, and Vasquez Planning Defense

sympathizers have leaked the situation to the press, and suddenly the rebels have an excellent platform for drawing attention to their cause. The justice of their cause, or the lack of it, is up to the GM. These people might be great leaders like Jefferson and Paine in the United States or Gandhi in India, or they might be irrational fanatics, terrorists, and madmen. The presence of political pressure puts a different spin on the Mission, and there is also the possibility that Alexandrian forces or other rebel sympathizers might attempt to intervene.

Renegade Military

This scenario allows the Strike Team to operate at all levels; on the ground, in the air, and even in space. It is almost entirely combat-oriented, although the GM can amend it to emphasize role-playing.

NM Enterprises, a mid-sized Corporation, was recently bought out by one of the major Corporations of the ICC in a hostile takeover. (The GM should make this the largest Corporation in the Character's area; Hyperdyne, CSC, and New Eden/JV are good candidates.) There was only a little violence, but the military forces of NM have resisted the efforts of the new owners to absorb them. Most of the forces have disbanded or have become Mercenaries, but the commander and crew of one of NM's Frigates have gone renegade. They slipped away from ICC authorities and escaped into space fully armed. Since that time, the Frigate has been raiding merchant craft in nearby systems, especially those which belong to or trade with the new owning Corporation.

It is unlikely that they will be able to continue this career for very long; the Frigate will eventually need maintenance, and piracy is a very unreliable way of getting supplies. The pirates do not seem to care, however. They are disrupting traffic all over the area, and security costs are making merchant traffic here very expensive. Their Spacecraft is a Corporate Frigate that has lost 2 Maneuver Jets, 4 Power Units, and one of its Cargo Bays. The pirates are left with a Dropship, an APC, and a Line quality Strike Team of 13 NM troops, including three survivors of the Strike Team that was lost in the destroyed Cargo Bay. They are essentially identical to Colonial Marines; they are Certified in Gun Combat, are equipped with Light Armor, and have one Machine Gun.

The new owning Corporation has asked the Colonial Marine Corps for assistance (alternatively, they might be offering Contracts to Mercenary units). There are three stages of the battle to stop these pirates.

The first is to defeat them in space. A Colonial Marine Frigate is a logical choice for this assignment, and the Characters would probably find space combat an interesting challenge. The GM should let the Characters escort commercial ships through the area with appropriate minor hassles and false alarms until the Pirate attacks. The Characters will have the advantage of an undamaged ship; if the Characters are Mercenaries, they will be aboard a Corporate Frigate and will not actually have control of the ship, but the players should be allowed to run the battle anyway. If they are losing, they can withdraw for repairs, while the Pirate does not have that luxury. Even if it takes more than one battle, the Characters' Spacecraft should eventually defeat the Pirate.

When defeat looks likely, the Pirate will flee to a nearby world; in case the Pirate is crippled by a lucky hit, the GM should make sure the battle occurs close to the planet. The world should be habitable, with a good sized population. The crew of the Pirate will flee to the surface in their Dropship, and the Characters can follow.

The Pirate Dropship is low on Missiles; the GM can roll a 0 to 9 number twice, to determine the number of Heavy and Light Missiles left. The duel between the two Dropships should be a short one, as the Pirate Dropship does not want to take any chances. The GM should try to get the Pirate Dropship safely to ground as soon as possible, so their APC can be dropped off and the chase can continue on that level.

The Pirate APC will get under cover and the Strike Team inside will deploy into the surrounding area. If both Dropships are still functioning, this allows the GM to run a two-level battle, with a dogfight going on in the air (and occasional attacks being made on the ground troops), while the two Strike Teams face off on the surface. The battle will be more challenging if it takes place in interesting terrain; a network of canyons and dry riverbeds, for example, with plenty of large rocks for cover and a modifier of 4 to Ground Vehicles' Advantage rolls for Vulnerability. This allows the Strike Teams and the APC's to maneuver and to sneak up on each other, as well as protecting them (most of the time) from the opposing Dropship.

8.6

RULES AND STATS FOR PHOENIX COMMAND AND LIVING STEEL

The game systems for ALIENS are drawn directly from those used in the **Phoenix Command Combat System** and the **Living Steel High-Tech Adventure Game** from Leading Edge Games. Throughout this product, the terms and concepts are those which were developed for the earlier games. For those who are already playing Phoenix Command and Living Steel, this Section contains the information necessary to convert the ALIENS data to the other systems. Other players will find little they need here, unless they are curious about some of the underlying concepts of the system.

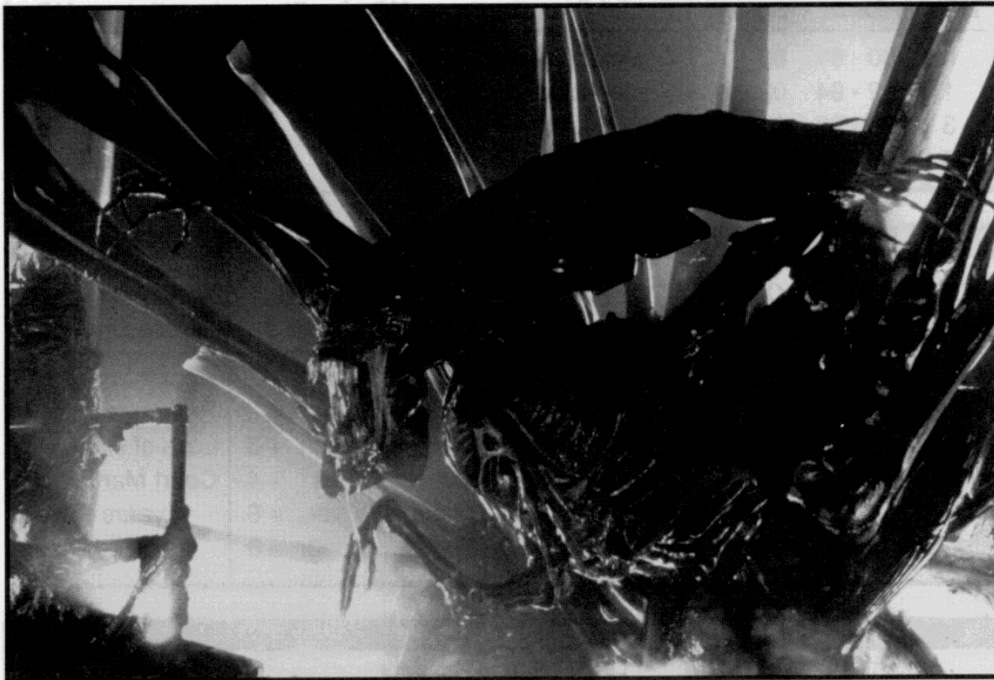
Chapter One

The Characteristics are exactly the same as those from our other games, with the exception that Living Steel's Telepathic Sensitivity has been changed to Perception here. The Background information can be used as desired by creative GM's; information on how the Skills convert is in the next subsection. The Combat Skill Rating Modifier in Step 3 of Character Generation is used in place of the Intelligence Skill Level; the ISL is a more accurate measure, and should be used by Phoenix Command and Living Steel players.

Chapter Two

The Skill Ratings are simply a compacted form of the usual 0 to 20 Skill Level system. Unskilled is Level 0, Novice is 2nd, Certified is 4th, Professional is 8th, Expert is 10th, Master is 12th, and Grand Master is 14th. The Base Odds Modifiers used here already include the SAL Modifier; in all cases, just substitute the regular system for this one.

Some of the Living Steel Skills have been combined or altered slightly for ALIENS. For example, Balance & Footwork and Fall Recovery have been combined into the Balance Skill. For Living Steel play, assume the Character has full ability in both Skills. Common



Queen attached to Egg Sack

sense should be used to resolve any conflicts in this area. The new Skills apply in Living Steel without alteration, and are simply those Skills which are most appropriate to the situations and equipment available in the ALIENS setting.

The Training and Experience systems are major simplifications, and are designed to mesh with Skill Ratings rather than Skill Levels; simply substitute the Living Steel system as desired.

Chapter Three

The Setting is somewhat similar to the Second Corporate Wars period of the Living Steel storyline, as described in **Dragonstar Rising**. While this Setting is clearly designed specifically for **ALIENS**, a GM who is interested in running campaigns set in the early years of the Seven Worlds storyline should find the necessary information here. The Seven Worlds system would be placed far beyond the end of the Borodino Sector.

Space travel also uses a difference scale, as different assumptions about the rarity of habitable planets have been made. Each Jump Unit in Living Steel is 200 Light Years, instead of five.

Chapter Four

The Phoenix Command and Living Steel statistics for the various Alien types and other xenomorphs are contained in **Alien Lifeforms Data Table (13)**. The data and statistics should be familiar to players.

Chapter Five

Most of the equipment here can be used in Phoenix Command and Living Steel without change. The Ground Vehicle, Aircraft, and Spacecraft rules may be applied as desired, and can certainly be used with appropriate modifications in virtually any Living Steel setting. Weapon Data for all the weapons used in the game is contained in the **Phoenix Command Weapon Data Table (14)**.

Chapters Six and Seven

The Combat System is just a simplified version of the ones used in Phoenix Command and Living Steel, and may be adapted without difficulty. As noted above, the Vehicle, Aircraft, and Spacecraft rules may be applied as desired.

ALIENS™

ADVENTURE GAME



Included are Sections covering:

- Character Generation
- Colonial Marine Background
- Other Character Backgrounds
- General and Professional Skills
- Specialized Skills and Training
- Personal Equipment
- Individual Combat
- Ground, Air, and
Space Vehicles and Combat
- Worlds, Colonies, and Outposts
- Missions and Campaign Settings
- Alien Lifeforms and, of course,
The **ALIENS** - Abilities, Metabolism
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