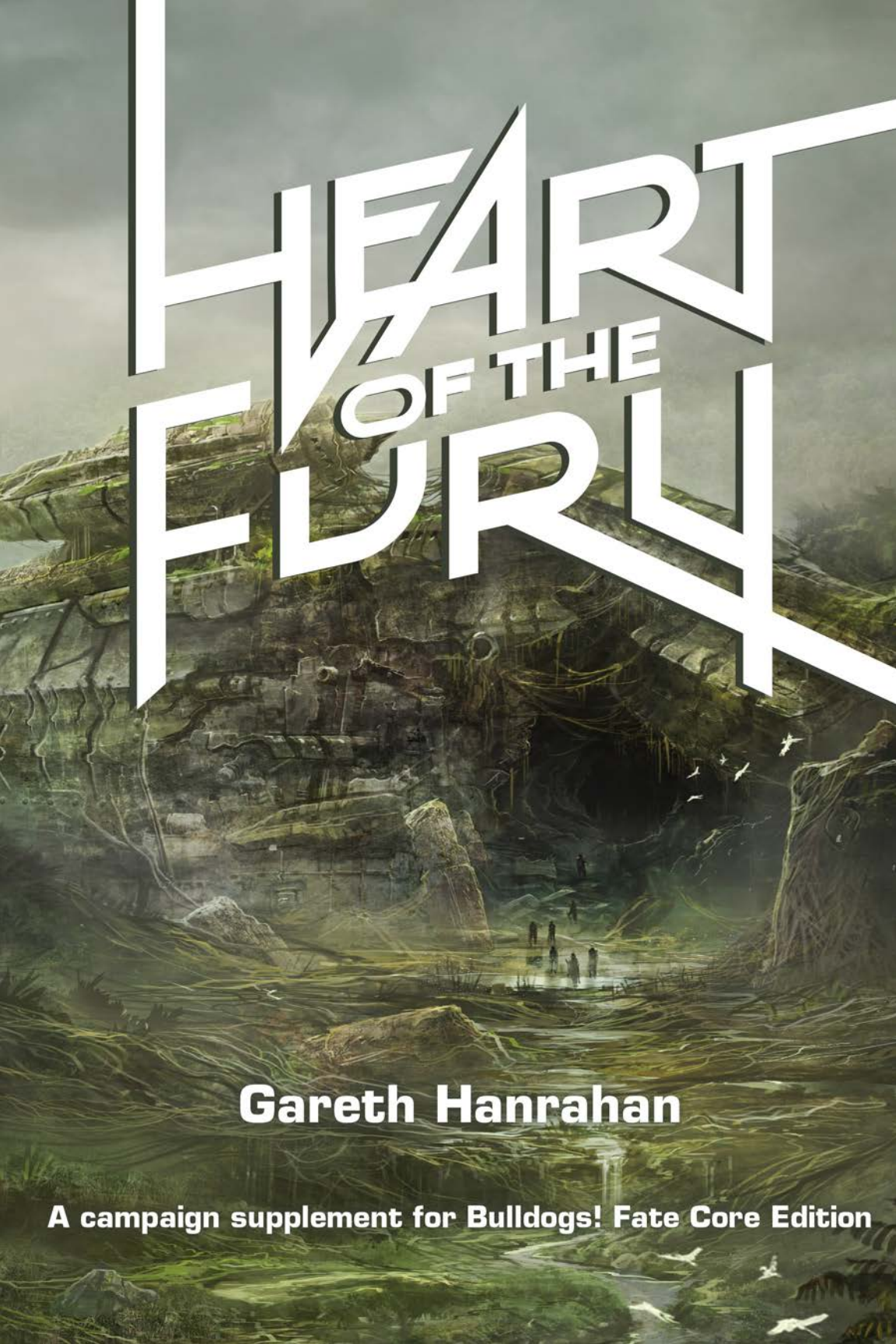


The background of the cover is a detailed, dark illustration of a jungle. In the center, a large, dark cave entrance is visible, with several small figures standing near its base. The surrounding landscape is covered in dense, mossy vegetation and ancient stone ruins. The overall tone is mysterious and adventurous.

HEART OF THE FURY

Gareth Hanrahan

A campaign supplement for Bulldogs! Fate Core Edition



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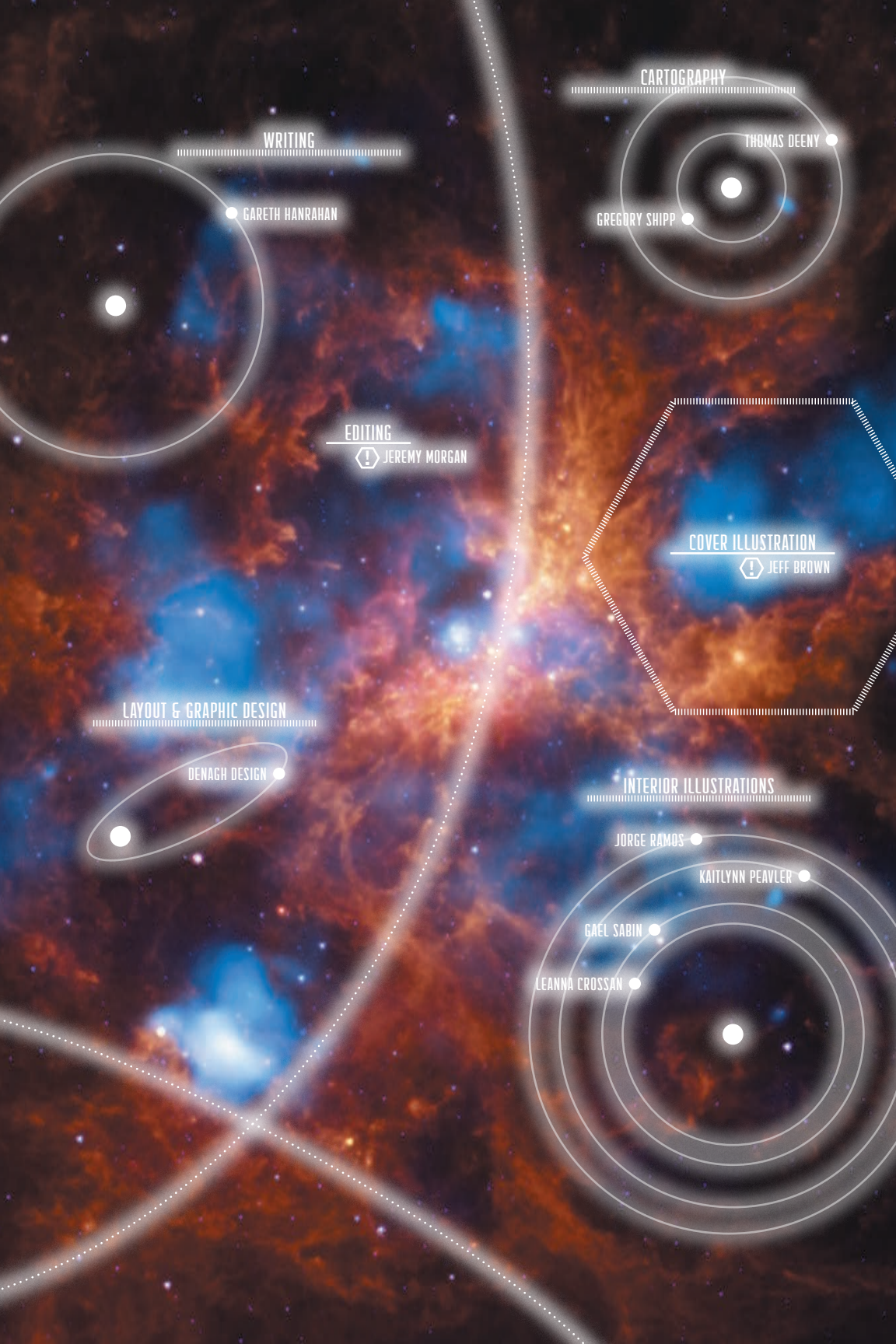
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Heart of the Fury*, an extended campaign for *Bulldogs!* This book contains a series of adventures designed to challenge your crew and to shake the whole galaxy. Big changes are coming, and your players are right at the heart of them.

WHAT IS THE FURY?

The answer to that question is the big mystery of the campaign. We'll get into specifics later on, but right now, let's talk about the Fury from the outside.

The Fury is a social movement, a cross between a new religion and an expansionist empire. It's mostly made up of Arsubarans, but includes members from other species. Members of the Fury tend to dress alike (dark purple or black clothing, heavy boots, body armor and guns if they can get them), to paint their ships alike (again with the dark hulls and lots of guns) and to think alike. They claim that the Fury gives order and justice, that it will wipe out the corruption and crime of the Frontier Worlds and bring unity to the galaxy.

Within days or even hours of Fury representatives showing up in a system, the local authorities often switch to supporting the movement. The Fury recruits important figures—politicians, military officers, opinion makers—and then expands into the local population, bringing its particular brand of tough justice to the masses. On other worlds, it becomes a popular demand, a groundswell of people crying out for a new order.

As the number of Fury-aligned systems grows, so too does the rate of expansion.

From the outside, the Fury appears oppressive and sinister, especially if you're the sort who doesn't fit in, who gets into trouble a lot, and who takes the occasional illegal job.

HOW TO RUN AN ADVENTURE SERIES IN BULLDOGS!

In any role-playing game—and doubly so in *Fate Core*—a written adventure is not a script, it's a collection of scenes, ideas, suggestions and resources for the GM. We've tried to guess at likely courses of action for the players, but they're going to surprise both us and you along the way. Therefore, each adventure consists of a series of challenges for the players, along with complications and optional encounters that the GM can throw into the game as needed. Run with the players' ideas, think on your feet, stay flexible, and each adventure should run smoothly.

That's just one adventure, though. *Heart of the Fury* is a campaign, a series of connected adventures. That means you'll need to keep an eye on where the plot goes after the current session. Some non-player characters and places show up in several adventures, so you'll need to either keep them alive or intact, or (better yet) adapt future adventures to take the player characters' actions into account.

You should also look out for ways to tie your player characters into the campaign as a whole. *Heart of the Fury* has a bigger scope than the usual *Bulldogs!* Adventure, so think about how these big galactic events might affect them. If a character has an aspect like **BLACK SHEEP OF THE FAMILY**, then you could have some family members join the Fury, forcing other relatives to turn to the estranged PC for help. If a character's **ALWAYS LOOKING FOR A QUICK BUCK**, then offer up opportunities to get involved in weapons smuggling or refugee smuggling during the war. If you've an unusual PC like a Tetsuashan, then consider throwing in another adventure where the PCs visit a Tetsuashan colony that's under the Fury's rule to explore how the space-slugs react to this strange new regime.

Heart of the Fury is bookended by two epic adventures. *The Teraci Extraction* and *Ultimate Delivery Job*. In the first adventure, the crew run into the Fury for the first time;

AT HAZARD
FLASH & HEED
REQUIRE REE

MARA'S WORD

in the last, they've got a chance to stop the Fury dead in its tracks by undertaking the biggest, most perilous delivery imaginable.

Between those adventures, there's a big pile of smaller, loosely connected setups and challenges describing events during the war. There are two ways to use these:

- If you want to zoom through the campaign quickly, take the **Express Route**. Each mini-adventure leads onto the next one, so you can string them together into a fast-paced epic.
- If you've got more time to play with, then you can take the **Scenic Route**, shuffle things up, and mix in your own adventures and side jobs. Each mini-adventure describes ways the players could get involved, and things they could do next other than following the express route. There's lots of space between each adventure to add in your own side treks and delivery jobs. The campaign hits the really big events in the story of the Fury's rise and fall, but lots of other stuff goes on around and between these major adventures, especially once war breaks out between the Devalkamanchan Republic and the Fury worlds. Your campaign will still end up in the right place to run *Heart of the Fury* when the time comes to stop the Fury!

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

Heart of the Fury uses the standard **Bulldogs!** setup: the player characters are the crew of a Class D freighter, out shipping high-risk cargo on the fringes of civilized space. Let the players knock around for a while on more conventional assignments before dropping them into a potentially galaxy-shattering adventure. The adventures work for any crew, but a group with a Templar or a Saldrallan will have extra resonance.

If you're not using the standard setup, then you can easily adapt these adventures to Free Traders, Explorers, Mercenaries, or Espionage Agents. Pirates, though, are a bit more of a stretch.

NEW SKILL: PSYCHIC

Some species or individuals possess mental powers beyond the norm. It boils down to the ability to influence minds, either your own or others, through means most beings don't have access to. Characters with a high Psychic skill are mentalists, telepaths, or other mental savants.

The Psychic skill is a special exception to the regular skill rules. If you don't have the Psychic skill you can't ever roll it, not even at Mediocre (+0) ability like most skills allow you to. In order to add this skill to your character sheet, you must either have a species ability or a stunt that indicates that your character has psychic powers. You must also purchase stunts that clarify and specify their specific mental abilities with the GM before play and you can't exceed these limits using the Psychic skill. See the list of stunts on page 254 that allow emotion projection, telepathy, telekinesis, clairvoyance, illusion projection, or precognition. Custom stunts may be created for other mental powers that the GM deems plausible. If the Psychic skill is gained through your species, the powers will be defined within the species ability and will be uniform across the entire species.

OVERCOME (PSYCHIC)

Psychic is used outside of conflicts when you attempt to use a paranormal mental power to conquer an obstacle beyond normal physical means. The more powerful the effect or the more outlandish the psychic ability in question, the higher the difficulty. Surface thoughts and emotions are easy to read. Hidden thoughts or plumbing the depths of

another character's psyche are much more difficult. Also, mental powers decrease with range. The farther away a target is, the more difficult it is to use mental powers.

CREATE AN ADVANTAGE (PSYCHIC)

Within a situation, a psychic often receives flashes of insight from her ability which can be used to create advantages. Telepathy is especially useful when you learn of an opponent's intent seconds before he acts, or see a few seconds into the future to create an aspect like **KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO DO THAT**.

DISCOVER (PSYCHIC)

A precognitive ability can give glimpses into the future, or clairvoyance can make visible things that can't be seen by conventional means. Telepathy and emotion detection can also give insights into someone's personality or motivations.

ATTACK (PSYCHIC)

Some psychics can mount a direct psychic blitz on a target. This is just a matter of projecting strongly enough to cause actual mental harm to the other person. Many psychics aren't powerful enough to do this, but it's a very effective attack against an area where most beings have hardly any defenses. Psychic attacks target the mind and therefore are resisted with Resolve.

DEFEND (PSYCHIC)

When defending against Psychic attacks, you can use Psychic as a defense skill to set up mental defenses. The Psychic skill can also be used to defend against social attacks such as Rapport, Haggle, or Provoke if you have telepathic or emotion detection powers.

SECRETS OF THE FURY

The Thousand-Year War between the Theocracy of Deval and Kamanch and the Union of the Saldralla nearly destroyed the entire galaxy. The Templari, driven by an innate and unyielding belief in their own superiority, convinced that destiny had chosen them to conquer all the lesser species, launched an apocalyptic assault on all of known space. That war ground to a halt when neither the Templari nor their chief opponents, the Saldrallans, could muster the resources to continue.

In the aftermath of the truce, the Templari overthrew their theocratic dictator and his hierarchy of war-priests and established a republic. The priests and theocrats were executed or forced into exile. (One of the Templar slave species, the psychic Suka, broke away during this tumultuous period, and they'll be important later on...)

The Templar belief in their genetic superiority is partially rooted in their latent psionic abilities. All Templari have an extremely low-level psionic gift that grows in power when there are other Templari nearby. This power is virtually undetectable on an individual level, but its effects become obvious—and terrifying—on a large scale. The bond boosts their aggression and confidence, uniting them into a nigh-unstoppable fighting force. The more Templari in a group, the more aggressive and well-coordinated they become. Conquest is their very nature.

The war-priests learned to harness this psionic gift. They built a great psychic reservoir in the sacred mountains and built resonators and psychic reliquaries to store and direct psionic power. They cultivated the gift with secret breeding programs and training regimens. At their height, the war-priests could channel the cumulative psionic abilities of a host of warriors or stir up the emotions of a whole nation of Templari so that they called out for war.

AT HAZARD
FLASH & DEEP
REPUTE REC

When the Templari expanded into space, the priests went with them. They created a giant temple-ship as a sort of psychic relay, allowing them to manipulate the collective power of the Templari even when far from home.

Then came the Thousand-Year War, a war that began as a glorious conquest, and ended in stalemate and suffering. The Templari turned on the priests. When the Theocracy was overthrown, the secrets of the priests were lost. The priests had jealously guarded their knowledge of the psionic gift, and that knowledge died with them. Modern Templari have no understanding of their latent powers.

Knowledge of how to channel the psionic energy may have been lost, but the Templari continue to unconsciously pool their emotions. Cascades of psionic energy still pour through their minds, drawing them together as warriors. Without the guidance of the war-priests, though, this energy is directionless, chaotic, even stagnant. The Templari can dimly sense that there is something lacking in them, some spiritual hollowing that haunts and irritates them, but they cannot name it. The overthrow of the priests destroyed that whole aspect of Templar culture. Furthermore, because the Templari despise weakness and failure, they have no interest in investigating their own history. The war-priests are dead and gone; they lost, and so they have nothing of value to the modern Devalkamanchan Republic.

THE SECRET THEOCRATS

The surviving priests fled the new Republic. They believed that the destruction of the theocracy was a temporary aberration, and that the new Devalkamanchan Republic would soon collapse. They would then swoop back in and restore the proper order of Templar society (with them at the top, of course!)

Some hid on the Templar homeworld, hiding in the teeming billions. Their descendants hide their faith to this day, biding their time until the theocracy would be re-established at the head of Templar society. The time of this return would be heralded by the return of the temple-ship.

Others took the holy temple-ship and fled Templar. They planned to return, but their ship crashed on an isolated world. Most of the priests perished, and the survivors had no way to repair it, but faith is unyielding. Time cannot defeat it. Rather than succumb to the ravages of old age, some of the priests transformed their leader, **Rakaar Kran**, into an immortal cyborg, replacing his weak flesh with robotic parts. This Necromech could endure the long night until the Templar people were ready to return to the true path of faith.

They're still waiting.

THE SALDRALLAN PLOT

The end of the Thousand-Year War was extremely unsatisfactory to the serpentine masters of the Union of the Saldra. In all its long history, the Union had never failed to deal with a problem. Oh, it has lost wars, but war is just one tool in the Union's arsenal. It does not matter if a conquering species defeats the Union Navy and demands tribute in exchange for a cease-fire, if that tribute makes the conquerors dependant on the Union's industrial products. The Saldrellans are patient; a few generations of economic and social engineering can draw almost any enemy into the Union.

The Templari, though, were an exception to this rule. The war ended in a stalemate, and worse, ended with the wide expanse of neutral space between the two empires. Without any leverage or influence over the Devalkamanchan Republic, the Saldrellans had no clear way to re-engineer Templar society and turn their warlike enemies into peaceful and loyal

members of the Union. That stalemate has endured for centuries, stalling the Union's growth and frustrating the Saldrellans.

Then, a few years ago, a Saldrellan archaeological expedition discovered the remains of the crashed temple-ship. Leverage at last! The Saldrellans believed that they could use the field to 'bleed off' Templar aggression, turning their erstwhile rivals into a more pliable state. The expedition returned to the wreck of the war-priest ship...

...And something went wrong.

The Saldrellan researchers successfully tapped into the psionic field, but instead of dissipating harmlessly, it infected the minds of those nearby. The untapped, thwarted aggression and unity of the Templar species flooded into the minds of alien beings that were ill-equipped to handle it. The Fury was born from this drastic miscalculation. The psychic field spilled like an oil-slick, pouring out of the ship and infecting alien minds.

The sudden influx of psychic energy also activated the slumbering Necromech, who killed most of the Saldrellan expedition. A single survivor managed to make it back to their ship and take off, but the Necromech was already on board. The Saldrellan crawled to an escape pod before the Necromech could eliminate him too. The characters run into this Saldrellan, 'Mr. S,' during their adventures.

THE SORRY TALE OF MR. S

Back on Saldrella, back when he had a name, he was Khass hatched for the Sssek clan. Peace and brotherhood do not happen naturally; they must be engineered, adjusted, and guarded by the shadowy forces of the Union Special Adjustment Bureau. Please don't call them spies. Information gathering is just one of their many, many talents.

Several years ago, a long-range scout vessel happened across the ruins of a Templar ship on a deserted world known as XM5534, and from that wreck the Saldrellans learned about the Templar psychic gift and how it was once under the control of the old theocracy. Armed with that information, they embarked on a project to drain Templar aggression. Khass was one of the Adjustment Engineers dispatched to XM5534 to help carry out the modifications.

Their tampering woke one of the slumbering Necromechs. In the ensuing confusion, most of the Saldrellans were injured or killed. The survivors fled, but they transmitted a coded copy of their findings before scuttling the ship. Before long, Khass was the only survivor. He travelled across the galaxy and made contact with his superiors again, expecting them to order him to help stop the Fury. Instead, they informed him that the Union intended to allow the Fury situation to play out, in the hopes of sparking a 'beneficial' conflict. When Khass objected, they tried to kill him.

Khass escaped and fled back into the Frontier Zone. Saldrellan pragmatism means that he can escape the wracking guilt that another individual might feel at being responsible for loosing the Fury, but cold Saldrellan logic convinces him that the Fury war could be much worse than his superiors at Special Adjustment believe.

AT HAZARD
CLASS 4 NEOP
REPUTE REC

MR. S

SPECIES: Saldrallan

REFRESH: 5

Aspects

FLEXIBLE MORALITY; LIDLESS

GAZE; SNAKE OUT IN THE COLD; DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS; SPYMASTER

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Stealth

GREAT (+4): Contacts, Empathy

GOOD (+3): Science, Pilot, Rapport

FAIR (+2): Systems, Larceny, Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Resolve, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

HEAT SENSE: ignore perception penalties that don't target heat sense directly (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

POISON BITE: once per conflict, put consequence on an opponent with a successful Fight roll in addition to normal damage (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

HIT THEM WHERE IT HURTS: use Empathy instead of Provoke to attack when you know what will upset your opponent (page 137 of *Bulldogs!*).

I KNOW A GUY: gain +2 to create advantages with Contacts when you are somewhere you've already established connections (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

EAR TO THE GROUND: gain +2 to create advantages with Contacts when you are somewhere you've already established connections (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

COLD READ: +2 to discover with Empathy when you first meet someone (page 137 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐ ☐

Angry ☐ ☐

Stunned ☐ ☐

Broken ☐ ☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HIGH-POWERED BLAST PISTOL: Light Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **LATEST SALDRALLAN TECH.**

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐ ☐

BALLISTIC TRENCHCOAT: Light Armor, ☐ **HIDDEN DEFENSIBILITY.**

☐ Mild:



DAMAGE CONTROL

Saldrallans don't make mistakes. They create unexpected opportunities.

Plan A—drain the Templari of their innate aggression by manipulating the psychic field—failed dismally. It unleashed a conquering hegemonizing psychic taint on the galaxy. That's bad.

Plan B is the classic Saldrallan stratagem of 'you and him fight'. The Fury is a rapidly expanding belligerent polity. The Devalkamanchan Republic is a belligerent polity that's kept from expanding only by the Treaty of Arsubar. Inevitably, these two factions—unwitting twins of one another—will enter into conflict. If the Templar aggression cannot be drained, then maybe they can burn it off in a futile war with their own collective unconscious. Ultimate winner—peace, prosperity and the Union of the Saldralla.

However, for Plan B to work, the Saldrallans need to erase any sign of their involvement with the Fury. If their tampering were ever discovered, then the Templari would blame them instead, reducing the likelihood that the Templari and the Fury pummel each other into exhaustion. Everyone who knows about the Saldrallan involvement must be eliminated—and that includes the original expedition...

THE FURY

So, the Saldrallans released this flood of psychic energy, and that created the Fury. The psychic energy isn't sentient; it's just a wave of formless, undirected anger and ambition, but it also promotes unity and co-ordination between those affected by it. So, two beings infected by the Fury will instinctively work well together and feel drawn to each other. They'll soon unite in a common purpose, and that common purpose will somehow involve conquest.

By the time the campaign begins, the Fury has become a movement. A drive to unite all the scattered species of the Frontier Zone and weld them into a mighty conquering empire, a drive to eliminate the corrupt and the criminal... and those who do not conform... and those who are weak. The Fury always starts by targeting those who 'deserve' to be destroyed, but the psychic energy instills an insatiable desire for power and conquest. The Fury can never stop. It will die if it runs out of worlds to conquer.

BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Fury are really just justifications for the instinctive drives instilled by the psychic energy. The publicly stated ethos of the Fury is to unify and strengthen the Frontier Zone, which for too long was divided and manipulated by the two great empires. They're strongly anti-Saldrallan, talking about how the serpents lie and cheat to set the Frontier systems against each other. The Fury is oddly silent on the Templari, although Fury members from worlds that suffered under the twin heels of Deval and Kamanch do complain about past injustices and the dangers of the Republic's star fleets.

JOINING THE FURY

The Fury adapts itself to local conditions. It probes for weakness, for strong negative emotions it can latch onto. On Teraci, for example, the locals are dissatisfied with their rulers' ability to deal with the criminal gangs, and the space navy felt they were not given their due respect; the Fury insinuates itself into Teraci by seizing on these resentments. Those who feared the gangs come to see the Fury as the solution to purging society of criminal elements, while the military are convinced they will have more power and influence if Teraci becomes part of the Fury. On another world, the Fury might turn the people against a hated minority or inspire that minority to rise up and conquer their oppressors.

AT HAZARD
GLASS & DEEP
REPUTE REC

The Fury is strength and unity and determination and anger, an invisible current of will filtering down from space.

Once a world joins the Fury, it comes into alignment with the greater whole. Imagine individual worlds as metal filings, and the psychic field as a magnet, arranging them invisibly and dragging them together. No matter how the world's populace were convinced (or forced) to join the Fury, the ultimate result is the same: an instinctive taste for black uniforms, building new warships, and joining the growing army of the Fury.

Most Fury members don't realize there's a psychic component. In fact, most of them can't realize this. As far as they're concerned, the Fury is the right response to a galaxy tainted by corruption, crime and hostile alien empires.

Not everyone on a planet is affected by the Fury by any means. It might only infect one in ten or even one in a hundred people, but it will inspire those people to twisted greatness, and other people will go along with the changes. As the Fury promotes unity, it usually 'polarizes' to a particular species or faction. On one world, it might affect only Arsubarans, but on another, it might primarily attach itself to Hacragorkans. As the connection to the Fury grows, those infected come to see other Fury members as their real brothers and sisters, instead of those weak-willed and corrupt kin who are not part of the Fury.

Certain species can never be part of the Fury.

TEMPLARI: Actually, individual Templari can, but the Fury never assimilates Templar worlds. It's like pushing two like poles of two magnets together.

SALDRALLANS: The psychic energy that fuels the Fury isn't sentient, but the Thousand-Year War left an indelible impression on it, and it hates the Saldrellans.

ROBOTS: Unless they're some sort of weird cyborg or cloned-brain robot.

URSEMINITES: Something in the Urseminite makeup means they're not susceptible to the Fury. Maybe it's the Fury's power to make people co-operate—whoever heard of an Urseminate working well with others?

PSYCHICS: The Fury is an extremely subtle, low-level psychic effect and cannot affect the mind of a full psychic, unless the psychic willingly and consciously opens themselves to foreign influences. By the same token, it takes a talented and extremely sensitive psychic to detect the Fury directly, but most psychics feel uncomfortable in the presence of Fury-infected individuals. In fact, they feel the same fight-or-flight response that's normally triggered by the presence of large and dangerous predators.

THE SECRET THEOCRATS



Meanwhile, the Necromech and the descendants of the original theocratic rulers of the Templari have their own plans for the Fury. They cannot control the psychic spill, but they can take advantage of it. As the Fury conflict with the Templar republic grows, the theocrats believe that the Templari will turn back to the old ways. If they do not, then, well, perhaps the gods sent the Fury as a scourge to punish the faithless. Better that Templar burn than remain ruled by those unworthy of the gods' gifts.

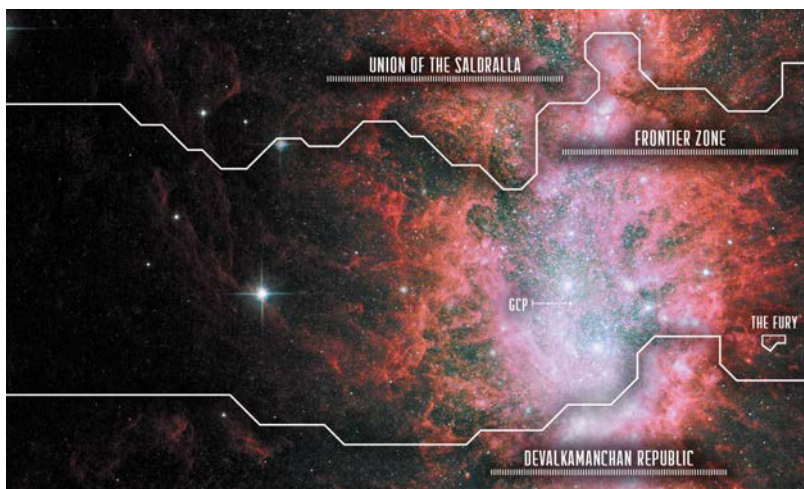
GUIDESTONES

The Fury is held together by a psychic field that spills out in an uncontrolled astral torrent from the crashed temple-ship, right? Those priests long ago learned to manipulate that psychic field, using tools called Guidestones. The Necromech theocrat, Rakaar Kran, can use these Guidestones to guide the spread of the Fury. He can't control the psychic field completely, but he can channel it and push it towards specific worlds. If there's a star system that would really benefit the Fury cause (like the weapon foundries of Armada, page 95), the Necromech can plant a Guidestone there and wait for it to pull the psychic field towards that system. Once the field reaches the system, it will insinuate itself into susceptible minds and bring about a Fury-friendly regime in a matter of weeks. It's undetectable conquest; from the outside, it looks as if the planet's population just had a sudden change of heart. No one would ever connect, say, a near pass from an asteroid or the construction of a new monument with such a shift in belief.

EXPANSION

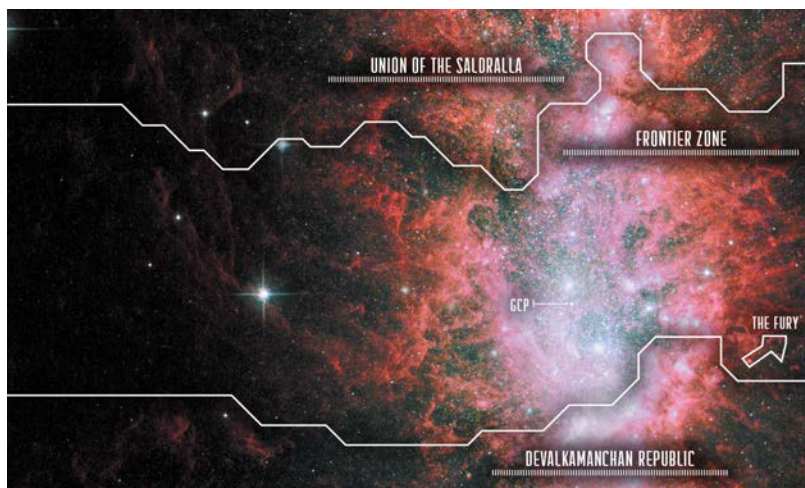
At the start of the campaign, the Fury only controls a handful of worlds. It grows rapidly over the course of *Heart of the Fury*. Assuming you run the adventures according to the suggested timeline, here's how the Fury grows. Note the occasional expected spur, like a solar flare erupting from the surface of an expanding sun—those are places where Rakaar Kran planted a Guidestone to pull the psychic field one way or another.

Before The Campaign Begins

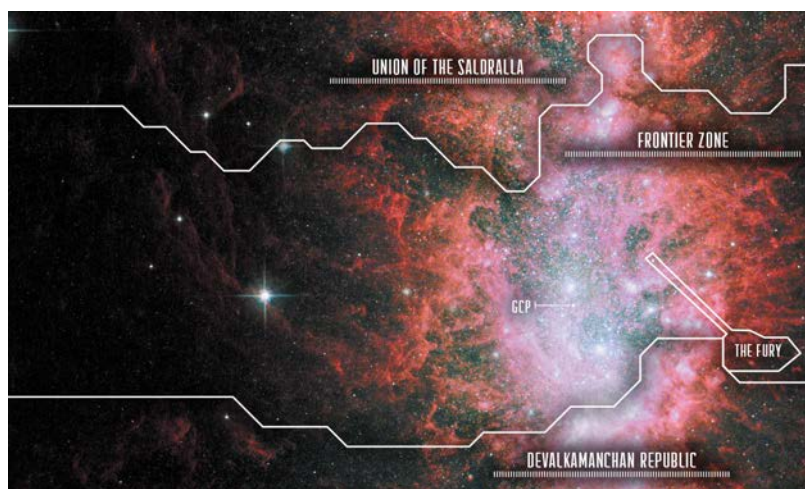


AT HAZARD
FLASH AHEAD
REDUITE RECD

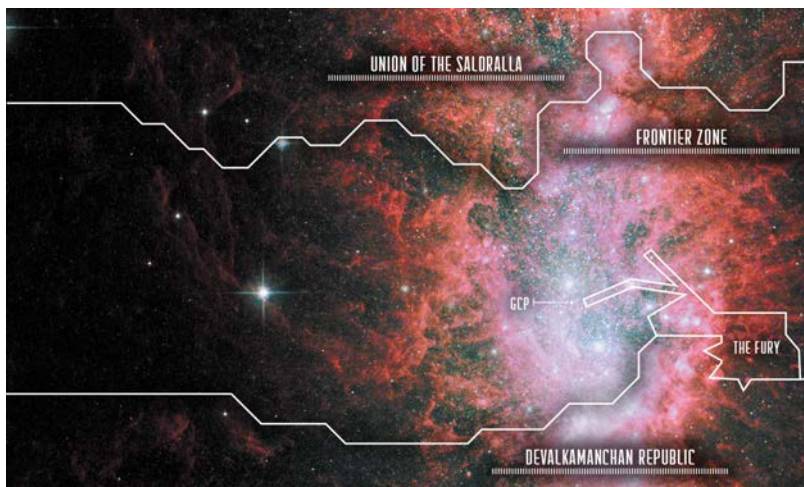
The Teraci Job



After Wildfire



The Fury War



The Fury can't expand like this forever. It's driven by a limited (though vast) reserve of psychic energy, collected by the millennia-old workings of long-dead Devalkamanchan war-priests. Eventually, it will run out of steam—unless it turns on its creators. By triggering a war with the Republic, the Fury will become self-sustaining, a psychic thing fuelled by hate and violence. Left unchecked, it will drag the galaxy into an eternal war, setting world against world and species against species in a ghastly cycle of violence to provide more and more psychic energy that will provoke more and more bloodshed. If the Fury triumphs, the fragile peace created by the Treaty of Arsubar will give way to the Never-Ending War.

No pressure or anything, but the player characters may be the right people in the right place to stop this apocalypse.

LIFE UNDER THE FURY

So, imagine you're a Ken Reeg living on an Arsubaran agricultural planet. You've lived there happily for years, charming and grifting your way through life—anything to avoid having to actually work. Farming's really hard, you know, and just because you've got green thumbs doesn't mean you want blisters all over them.

One day, a rag-tag fleet of ships from a dozen different planets—but all sharing the same eerie black color scheme—shows up in orbit. Suddenly, the planetary government announces that as the planet's four main trading partners have joined the Fury, they're doing the same. Free black flags for everyone!

Over the next few weeks, life changes for you. Those Arsubarans that were so friendly suddenly look at you suspiciously. They start muttering about all the problems caused by freeloaders and aliens. There are more guards on the streets now, and they watch you suspiciously. Then, one night, you're dragged from your bed, hauled before a tribunal, and accused of being an enemy of the state. Your accusers are your former friends, but you barely recognize them anymore; it's like they've got fires burning behind their eyes. They convict you despite all your pleas, and you find yourself working as a slave in the field.

AT HAZARD
FLASH & DEEP
REPUTE REC

AFTER THE FURY

Fury space is contiguous; it's all linked by invisible tendrils of psychic energy. Now, it sometimes happens that a star system drifts out of the Fury's reach after the people there were infected. In that case, the unnatural pressure of the Fury vanishes. Things don't go back to normal instantly, but the infected lose the strange feelings of power-lust and hatred that previously filled them with such conviction and confidence. Some systems return to the status quo, as if the Fury were a fad, a mass delusion that passed as quickly as it arrived. Other societies are permanently changed by their brush contact with an alien power.

All this happens only rarely. The Fury's reach is vast and ever-growing. Left unchecked, it will stretch over the galaxy.



FURY CHARACTERS

Those infected by the Fury replace one of their aspects with a new one that describes how the Fury motivates them. Common Aspects are **LUST FOR POWER**, **DAMN THOSE FILTHY SALDRALLANS**, **JACKBOOTS MAKE ME FEEL TALLER**, or **MAKING A BETTER WORLD**. These Fury-fuelled aspects can be invoked and compelled like any other aspect.

Fury characters also increase their Refresh by one, reflecting their enhanced drive and emotional energy.

ASPECTS

LUST FOR POWER

INVOKE: your hunger motivates you, "If I can do this I'll get a promotion for sure."

COMPEL: you'll sell out your friends for a leg up, "You deviants are under arrest!"

DAMN THOSE FILTHY SALDRALLANS

INVOKE: the Saldrellans are behind some counterplot, "I told you he was a snake!"

COMPEL: associating with a Saldrellan makes you suspect, "You're one of their agents! I'll kill you!"

JACKBOOTS MAKE ME FEEL TALLER

INVOKE: you are filled with new confidence, "Hold it right there! Where are your papers?"

COMPEL: you aren't actually any better than before, "I really thought I could stop him."

MAKING A BETTER WORLD

INVOKE: you can appeal to this higher purpose, "You want to save your planet—we can help!"

COMPEL: converts are always the most fanatical, "I don't care if I die if it means I leave the world a better place."

FURY SCIONS

The Fury carries with it vestigial memories taken from the long-dead Templari whose minds leaked into the psychic collective. Sometimes, if an individual is especially attuned to the Fury, these memories take root and transform the Fury member into a Scion. These Scions are gifted with enhanced physical abilities and fighting skills. They are the Fury's elite guards and leaders.

Scions aren't initially aware of their 'possession' by Templar memories, but soon find themselves dreaming of places and people they have never seen, or are strangely drawn to Devalkamanchan art or philosophy. They rise quickly within the Fury's hierarchy.

Scions increase any three of the following skills by one rung: Athletics, Command, Fight, Physique, Provoke, Shoot, Pilot, Resolve, or Stealth. They also incorporate **SCION OF THE FURY** into their aptitude aspect in some way, and increase their Refresh by an additional point.

GEAR

SCION ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ **ANTIQUE DESIGN.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

PERSONAL DEFENSE SCREEN: Light Shield.

Stress ☐ ☐

AT HAZARD
FLASH AHEAD
REDUITE REC

-23

MARA'S WOR

ASPECTS

SCION OF THE FURY

INVOKE: you can use those strange vestigial memories, “That’s a Templar fighting stance—where’d she learn that?”

COMPEL: you can’t always think straight with the Fury pouring through your brain, “Destroy them! Destroy them all! I don’t care how many of you die trying!”

PLAYER CHARACTERS AND THE FURY

The player characters aren’t immune to the temptations of the Fury. At any point when the characters are inside the psychic field, they can choose to tap into the power of the Fury. A character who opens himself to the Fury gains a situation aspect with a free invoke reflecting whatever emotional need he uses to channel the Fury.

Prbrawl’s trying to fly the Black Watch through an asteroid field while being chased by Barracado Pirates. He needs a Superb result to dodge an incoming asteroid. He rolls... and gets a Great result. The ship’s going to crash—but then Prbrawl reaches deep within himself, and realizes that if he dies here, he’ll never be able to punish those pirates for their crimes. He creates the Fury aspect **BURNING HATRED FOR PIRATES** and invokes it for free. The ship dodges through the field and out the other side.

The GM can compel Fury aspects like other aspects.

THE FURY & YOUR CAMPAIGN

Let’s draw back the curtain a bit and look at the nuts and bolts of the campaign (and mix some metaphors while we’re at it). The Fury has a number of themes that can be emphasized or ignored depending on your player characters. Look at the aspects chosen by your players and see which of them resonates with the themes. If an aspect names a non-player character, then consider making that NPC a member of the Fury (or a victim). As soon as you can, put the player characters in opposition to the Fury.

PARANOIA: The Fury is insidious. It gets inside people’s skulls and causes radical personality shifts. It turns ordinary people into fanatics and monsters. Anyone could be a secret member of the Fury.

For characters with strong ties to home and family, this can be nightmarish. Dig into the player characters’ aspects that tie into people and locations for possible hooks. A character with a large family might learn that some of her relatives are part of the Fury. A trusted ally could suddenly switch sides and betray the characters. Maybe someone on the ship works for the Fury...

PREJUDICE: The Fury turns species and cultures against each other. It promises an impossible ideal of ‘purity’, which really means ‘blame everything on the different, “lesser” species’. It takes the Templar sense of superiority and warps it into something even worse.

If you emphasize this theme, then examine the player character’s Heritage aspects. Characters from unusual species might be ostracized or hated on Fury-held planets, while characters from the ‘dominant’ species on a planet might find themselves in uncomfortable situations. (“Come on in, you’re an Arsubaran. You’re better than these Hacragorkan scum.”)

ORDER: The Fury demands unity, purity, obedience. It's a militaristic, conformist mindset. Freedom equates to deviancy, to subversion, to weakness. People like Bulldogs are clearly troublemakers, if not outright criminals. The psychic bonds of the Fury ensure that its members share a common purpose; to those outside the Fury, it looks like a sinister force of malignant order.

If you go with this approach, then you can contrast it with the freewheeling Bulldogs, and the often oppressive management at TransGalaxy. Good aspects to dig into are those Class D aspects ("I used to run with a criminal gang, and the Fury just executed my old friends! Yeah, they were thieves, but they were family!").

CONQUEST: The Fury conquers worlds, either through force of arms or by revolt from within (aided by the psychic field). Threatening the player characters' homeworlds is a blunt approach, but threaten their families, and things get more interesting. ("Dear cousin, we need your help. The Fury has driven us from our homes, and now we need to be rescued from this refugee camp...")

As the galaxy plunges into war, combat-oriented characters can shine.

FATE OF THE GALAXY: The galaxy is a big, big place, and the heroism of one little freighter doesn't usually amount to a hill of beans in comparison... but the right people, in the right place can make a difference. Over the course of this campaign, the player characters have the opportunity to be those people. If you're emphasizing the 'save the galaxy' part of the campaign (as opposed to 'screw the galaxy, we need to get paid'), then focus on personal aspects that motivate characters to help, or on Heritage aspects that relate to the characters' species.

Several of the key non-player characters can be played as symbols of the great powers of the galaxy. Navigatrix Thelise, for example, stands for every independent system terrorised by the Fury. Mr. S is the invisible hand of Saldrallan manipulation.

ANCIENT SECRETS: *Heart of the Fury* delves into ancient Templar mysticism, the Thousand-Year War, and other long-forgotten mysteries. The Fury turns out to be more like an evil spirit than a political organisation, and there are lots of psychic priests and undead cyborg monsters running around. For player characters with an interest in such things, you can play up the archaeology, the psychic powers, and the mystic weirdness. This also works for characters who are aggressively practical and focused on the delivery business and nothing more (**YOU WERE NOT PUT INTO THIS GALAXY TO GET IT, MR. BUR'TN**).

AT HAZARD
CLASS 4 DEBRIS
REQUIRE REPAIR

MARA'S WORD

THE TERACI EXTRACTION

Some jobs just stink from the start. You can't put your finger—or, well, your nose—on it, but there's something wrong about it. The dispatcher mutters as if trying to disclaim responsibility, the cargo loaders can't wait to get the containers off their dock and into your hold, and then it sits there in the belly of your ship like Hackragorkan spiced ribs eaten at 2AM after a night's heavy drinking.

But a job's a job. You hold your nose, and you keep flying.

BACKGROUND

A criminal syndicate hires the crew to deliver a cargo to the outlying planet of **Teraci**. The cargo's borderline illegal, but that's not the problem. It's much bigger than that.

Word hasn't reached GCP yet, but a strange new faction is moving in the Frontier Zone: **the Fury**. They're made up of many different species, but united by a common purpose, a common will. The Fury has absorbed dozens of independent systems within the Frontier and is now expanding like a wavefront across the galaxy. Teraci is the next system in the Fury's sights.

Here's how the adventure is designed to play out. (Players being players, your game will certainly vary from this outline, but this is the general idea!)

- **THE DELIVERY JOB:** The crew is hired to deliver a cargo to the distant world of Teraci. En route, they run into some trouble but may also pick up advance warning of problems ahead.
- **THE BLOCKADE:** The Teraci government has established a naval blockade around their planet, as they anticipate a visit from the Fury. The crew have to work out a way to get past the blockade in order to deliver their cargo.
- **DETAINED!:** Optionally, the crew have to bust their ship out of the impound yard after they're found to have illegal contraband on board (or the planet's put under martial law by the Fury, whichever comes first.)
- **DELIVERY PROBLEMS:** The delivery address turns out to be a front for a local criminal syndicate. The syndicate's at war with another criminal gang. Cue lots of violence and a cross-country chase to a crime lord's mansion.
- **GUESTS OF MR. KRUDGE:** The crew gets to take a brief break from running and shooting things. Meanwhile, the Fury solidifies its grip on Teraci.
- **MUD ALL OVER MY CLOAK AND DAGGER:** New regime, new job. The crew is hired to extract and transport Navigatrix Thelise, an official in the former government, to GCP. First, though, they've got to get to her.
- **FULL SERVICE TRANSPORT:** Finding the Navigatrix was the easy part—now they've got to get her off the planet.
- **HOMEWARD BOUND:** Mission accomplished!

SETUP: THE DELIVERY JOB

TransGalaxy assigns a delivery job to the crew. Pickup is at Job Tower; delivery is to some podunk swamp planet off the usual trade routes called Teraci. According to the manifest, the cargo consists of robot parts. It's a big, bulky cargo that fills up the entirety of the PC's cargo space.

The cargo is to go to a Teracian corporation called LPG Agronomics. They should meet the crew at the starport.

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT TERACI

Any well-travelled old space dog—or anyone who spends five minutes checking public data networks—knows the following facts about Teraci:

- Teraci's a swampy world on the fringe of the galaxy, near Templar space.
- It's ruled by a hereditary caste of administrators. They used to be the captains and officers of these big city-ships, back before all the city-ships sank.
- Most of the population is Arsubaran.
- It's the center of a small trading cluster of inhabited worlds, making it important on a local scale even though it's a backwater, galactically speaking.

Paranoid Bulldogs may want to check out who's involved before picking up the goods. This can be done using a discover action with suitable skill (Contacts to dig up some dock rat who knows the score, Systems to hack the computer records, and so on). A Fair (+2) result gets the first bit of information listed; each additional fact is revealed with a shift. Success with cost means the Bulldog's attempt at prying is spotted, and that annoys Boss Fallon.

- **THE DISCREET LOADING ZONE:** The docking berth at Job Tower is "down" (not that "down" means much in space) in a largely disused part of the spindle, nestled between the water reclamation systems and the biowaste processing module. Few people ever go there, and those berths are usually used by maintenance boats. This is clearly a cargo that someone wants to keep quiet.
- **THOSE ARE BOSS FALLON'S GUYS:** The goons at the dock work for Boss Fallon, the uncrowned criminal king of Job Tower. Saying "no" to this contract would be a very bad idea.
- **CONTRABAND CAMOUFLAGE:** Most of the cargo consists of agricultural robot parts, hydroponics units, and other agricultural supplies, and they certainly seem to be wholly legal—they are not stolen or dangerous. However, a number of crates have very different tracking codes and are stored separately to the rest of the cargo. If someone wanted to hide illicit goods, one way to do it is to mix it in with a larger legal cargo.

On arrival at the docking port on Job Tower, the crew meet a surly Arsubaran named **Tongo Fell**, one of Boss Fallon's mid-ranking goons. Fell comes across like someone's greasy, sleazy uncle; he isn't threatening and tries to offer friendly advice, but you come away feeling soiled. He hints that the crew should be careful with the cargo and not volunteer any information about it to any customs patrols. In fact, if they could 'lose' some of those crates in, say, a disused cargo bay or concealed smuggling compartment and then 'find' them at Teraci, then that would be a good idea.

Once all the cargo is stowed, the crew can depart Job Tower and set course for Teraci.

TONGO FELL

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 0

Aspects

ONE OF BOSS FALLON'S BOYS; DON'T WANNA MAKE THE BOSS ANGRY; JUST SOME FRIENDLY ADVICE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Provoke

GOOD (+3): Larceny

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Haggle, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

I'M PROTECTED: gain +2 on Provoke attack rolls when calling on Boss Fallon's name.

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

Gear

SYNTHETIC MESH UNDERSHIRT: Light Armor, ☐ UNDERCOVER PROTECTION.

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: THE ILLICIT CARGO

Opening the 'special' crates requires an overcome obstacle using Larceny against a Good (+3) difficulty; failure places the **TAMPERED** aspect on the crates. Inside the special crates are hundreds of exotic planets in nutrient life-support systems. Using a discover action with Science or Larceny might reveal some information about the plants.

- **THAT'S PRIMO ZHONGA:** The crew recognize the seeds as belonging to the zhonga plant, which can be processed into a narcotic that's illegal on most worlds. Zhonga-weed grows on only a few planets and is extremely hard to cultivate. The swamps of Teraci might be ideal.
- **ONLY MILDLY CARNIVOROUS:** Zhonga plants, by the way, can grow up to three metres tall and are 'mildly' carnivorous. They usually feed on insects and small lizard-like creatures, but they're not too fussy.

PROBLEM: ROGUE ROBOT

If the crew leaves the cargo bay unattended, then one of the robot modules spontaneously activates. Most awakened robots spring into consciousness after many years of operation, but a random glitch can sometimes cause a robot to become sentient. In this case, **Agricultural Robot SR543** just became self-aware. It pulls itself out of its crate and assembles itself, then—lacking any guidance or understanding of the universe beyond its onboard agricultural data banks—begins to construct a hydroponics bay in the cargo hold.

- Have the crew roll Survival; on a Fair (+2) or better result, they notice SR543's unexpected gardening in time to stop it opening all the cargo containers. If they fail, then by the time they notice the robot, it has opened all the crates of zhonga plants and is busy installing them in hydroponics units.
- The crew needs to talk SR543 down with Rapport, or reprogram him with Systems, or force him to comply with Provoke. The robot is wholly innocent and clueless, but very inquisitive and eager to learn.
- Optionally, the crew can convince SR543 to stay with the zhonga crop, as it obviously has a knack for it. Of course, that means convincing a brand-new lifeform to embark on a life of crime.

SR543

SPECIES: Robot

REFRESH: 0

Aspects

STEEL FRAME WITH A GREEN THUMB; BORN YESTERDAY; EAGER TO LEARN

Skills

GREAT (+4): Science

GOOD (+3): Physique

FAIR (+2): Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Engineering, Rapport

Stunts & Species Abilities

REPROGRAMMABLE: skill tree can be rearranged with a Good (+3) Engineering roll (page 36 of *Bulldogs!*).

NEVER SLEEP: always alert, and any task taking longer than a day or two can be done in a shorter time (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

DON'T BREATHE: function in any atmosphere (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

MACHINE RESISTANCE: immune to extreme heat and cold, vacuum, disease, and poison (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

IMMORTAL: will not age (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC VULNERABILITY: EM attacks as a weapon one tier higher (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

NO NATURAL HEALING: consequences and conditions must be repaired to be cleared (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

WE DON'T SERVE YOUR KIND: roll a fate die when entering a new community to determine level of anti-robot prejudice (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

EXTRA LIMBS: once per conflict take two actions in a single round (page 38 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Overheating ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Rerouting ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

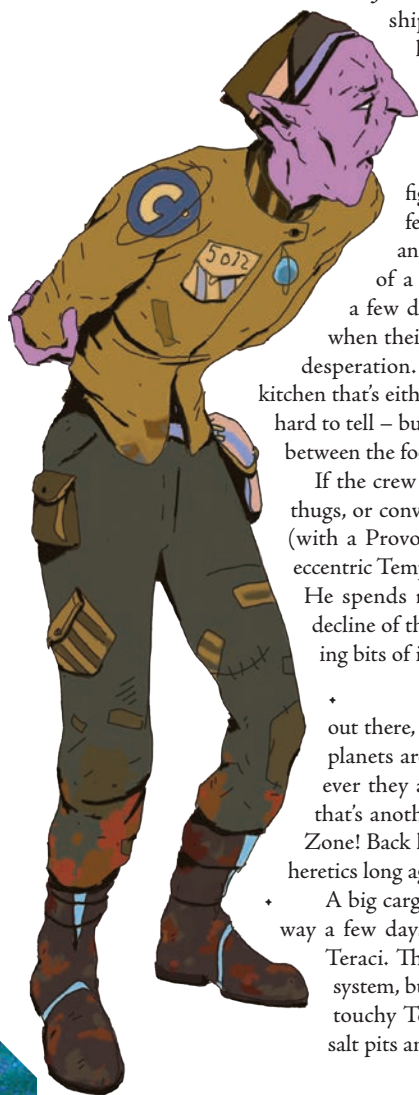
Consequences

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: THE REFUELLING STATION

Teraci is far enough from GCP that the crew needs to stop and refuel en route. As their cargo is of questionable legality, they presumably avoid well-trafficked stations and head for systems off the beaten track. They end up at an asteroid called Lonely Rock, which is exactly that—an ugly hunk of matter floating in deep space. Huge caves inside the asteroid contain fuel for the few ships that dock here. The AFFS (Alliance of Federated Frontier States) established the Lonely Rock depot many years ago to encourage traffic to this region of space, but today it's used mainly by crazy old asteroid prospectors, tramp freighters, pirates, and long-haul space truckers like the Bulldogs.

Lonely Rock's "administrator" is a Templar exile named **Ja'nas Dol'r**. He was formerly an officer in the Templar military, but was court-martialled for cowardice and ended up defecting to one of the AFFS border systems, trading his knowledge of the Templar military for money. He then drank the money and ended up here on this rock. He hates it almost as much as he hates himself.



Ja'nas amuses himself by making life hell for any ships that dock at his station. He carries out long and unnecessary customs inspections, he deliberately loses necessary paperwork, he demands bribes and concessions, and he's incredibly condescending and racist towards all other species. He wants to provoke a fight—brawls are the only thing that make him feel alive, and he secretly wants someone to put an end to his failed life. The station staff consists of a mute, sorrowful Tetsuashan technician and a few drunken Arsubarans who were stranded here when their ship broke down and they signed on out of desperation. Oh, and the amorphous slimy thing in the kitchen that's either the chef or the garbage disposal system. It's hard to tell – but then again, it's also hard to tell the difference between the food and the garbage.

If the crew successfully (and entertainingly) beat up the thugs, or convince Ja'nas they are not his dancing monkeys (with a Provoke roll or some other social skill), then the eccentric Templar invites the crew to his quarters for a drink. He spends most of the evening complaining about the decline of the Templari, but he does let slip a few interesting bits of information:

- * There's some new religion or something out there, called the Fury. Apparently, a few border planets are now part of the Fury League or whatever they are calling themselves. Religious freaks, that's another thing that's wrong with the Frontier Zone! Back home in the Empire, we strangled all our heretics long ago!
- * A big cargo freighter, the *Kong Purple*, passed this way a few days ago, also heading in the direction of Teraci. The freighter arrived in the Lonely Rock system, but did not stop. Ja'nas mutters about how touchy Tetsuashan pilots can be: one joke about salt pits and they boycott your station forever.

JA'NAS DOL'R

SPECIES: Templar
REFRESH: 0

Aspects

MILITARY DEFECTOR; STUCK ON LONELY ROCK; MAYBE SOMEONE WILL PUT ME OUT OF MY MISERY

Skills

GREAT (+4): Provoke
GOOD (+3): Command
FAIR (+2): Resolve
AVERAGE (+1): Shoot, Haggle

Stunts & Species Abilities

INFURIATE: when trying to get someone to attack, gain +2 on Provoke (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐
Angry ☐☐
Stunned ☐☐
Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

Gear

WORN **TEMPLAR** **MILITARY** **BLASTER:** Medium Weapon, ☐ **QUALITY**
TEMPLAR CRAFTSMANSHIP.

LONELY ROCK THUGS

SPECIES: Arsubaran

Aspects

NOTHING BETTER TO DO THAN FIGHT

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

PROBLEM: DEBRIS FIELD

A day and a half out of Lonely Rock, the crew pick up odd readings on their long-range sensors. It's a debris field, expanding slowly from a central point.

A Mediocre (+0) Science roll lets them determine it is the wreckage of a medium-sized vessel, but not the *Kong Purple*. A crew member that succeeds with style notices that there's no automated distress call and no signs of battle damage—it was an internal explosion of some sort.

A Great (+4) Systems roll (or a Bulldog with Fair (+2) Larceny) spots the tell-tale signs of scavenger-ships in the debris field. These small, ugly ships are crewed by desperate cut-throats who come in all sizes, but are usually ugly themselves. They follow after



pirate gangs and salvage what they can from the wreckage left by attacks. Right now, the scavengers are hiding in the debris field, presumably waiting for the crew to move on. If the crew does so, then the scavengers do not interfere.

Otherwise, the scavengers detach from the chunks of debris and try to drive the crew away. There are four scavenger ships lurking in the wreckage.

SCAVENGERS

SIZE: Small

MANEUVERABILITY: Mediocre (+0)

ENGINES: Phasecutter Drive (Light)

Aspects

DESPERATE CUT-THROATS; SCAVENGED PARTS

Weapons

UPGRADED MASS DRIVER: Medium Weapon, ☐ FLYING CHUNKS OF DEBRIS.

Crew

PILOT: Fair (+2)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Mediocre (+0)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Crippled ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Notes

Scavengers retreat if two or more of their ships are taken out.

Should the crew drive the scavengers away, they can search the debris field. This turns up several troubling clues, but no answers:

- Whatever this ship was, she was built for covert operations. The few scraps of intact hull are lined with sensor-baffling material, and it looks like she was packed with advanced technology.
- It was destroyed by an internal explosion, and prior to that explosion, every computer system on board the ship was thoroughly wiped beyond any possibility of recovery. There are also signs of smaller secondary blasts, suggesting scuttling charges. They erased every trace of the ship's identity and purpose.
- There's an escape pod missing.

MYSTERY OF THE NAMELESS SHIP

Remember those Saldraan agents who meddled with PSYCHIC FORCES SERPENTS WERE NOT MEANT TO KNOW? This used to be their ship. Mr. S (see page 5) hopped into the one remaining escape pod and got picked up by a freighter. The ship is here to foreshadow the Saldraan involvement in the overall campaign—right now, leave it as a cryptic mystery of the space lanes.

HEY, NO GUIDESTONE?

Later in the Heart of the Fury, the crew learns about artifacts called Guidestones that the Fury uses to manipulate the psychic field. Given the importance of positioning Guidestones later on, the players may look back and wonder how the Fury got a Guidestone past the Teraci blockade. The answer is that they didn't need to; Teraci is within the Fury's area of control already. The psychic 'spill' naturally encompasses this region. It's only when the Fury need to influence distant systems that they need the Guidestones to pull the field into position.

SETUP: THE BLOCKADE

The crew arrive in the Teraci system and find themselves staring into the teeth of a huge blockade. Dozens of heavily armed gunboats float in a sphere around Teraci. Each one is separated by millions of kilometers, but an invisible web of sensor-beams connects them all. Beyond the sphere, the crew detects other warships ready to rush to the defense of their smaller brethren and reinforce the defenses. A quick scan shows that none of the warships in this flotilla are especially new or powerful; they're clearly drawn from the planetary navies of several nearby worlds.

Small fighters and fast-pursuit interceptors buzz around the blockade, ready to provide fire support.

PROBLEM: HIDING FROM THE BLOCKADE

If the crew responds immediately, they can go silent as soon as they arrive in the system, shutting off all external lights and emissions in order to hide. Doing so requires a Good (+3) Systems check; otherwise, the blockade spots their ship as it arrives.

A hidden ship can't do much; activating main engines to fly past the blockade instantly gives their position away. Theoretically, they could try drifting past the blockade using nothing but inertia, but there are two problems with that plan. First, there's every chance that they would be detected anyway when they passed between two of the gunboats. Second, at their current speed, it will take them about six months to drift through the blockade.

However, a hidden ship can observe the blockade and look for gaps. If the crew waits it out, they can spot a weak point where one of the gunships is out of position with a Pilot or Science roll against a Good (+3) difficulty, putting the aspect **GAP IN THE FENCE** on the Blockade.

Hailing the blockade puts the crew in touch with an efficient young Arsubaran officer named **Lieutenant Kemic**. She explains that the blockade is a security precaution put in place by Teraci and the allied worlds against a 'hostile insurgency.' Legitimate traffic may, of course, take shelter on Teraci after a brief customs inspection.

A successful Rapport roll against Average (+1) difficulty convinces Kemic to share a few more details.

- The 'insurgency' is called the Fury. They are a growing alliance, or religious movement, or crazy cult, or something. Whoever they are, the Teraci government wants them kept well away from the planet. They called in favors from neighboring worlds to assemble this fleet.

- The blockade was formed hastily, and their security protocols are still jumbled. The crew can tell that they're not really looking for contraband.
- Underneath her professional demeanor, Kemic sounds worried and confused. The Fury has her rattled.

PROBLEM: GETTING PAST THE BLOCKADE

If the crew try flying past the blockade without sneaking, then it's a chase between them and the nearest flight of interceptors. If the crew doesn't shake the interceptors within three rounds, add a trio of gunships to the mix.

Potential hazards:

- Orbiting navigation buoys. Up close, their radio beacons can scramble sensors.
- A big warship—an antique, but still several million tons of armor and big, big guns. Her weapons are designed to take on other capital ships and cannot easily lock onto a small, fast-moving freighter. The crew can dodge along the hull of the warship, swerving around turrets and sensor domes.
- A ring of asteroids and small rocks surrounds Teraci. They're not a navigation hazard unless you're foolish enough to fly straight into the asteroid field...

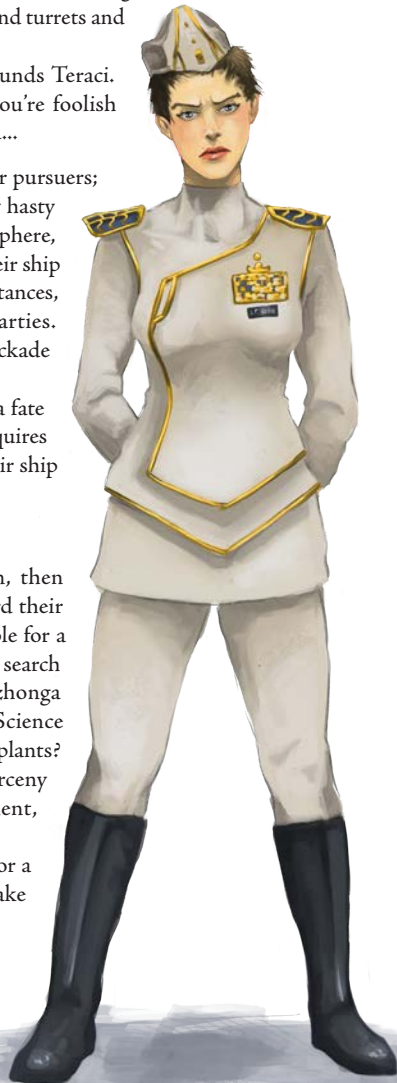
The crew needs to do more than outrace their pursuers; they need to lose them, probably by doing a very hasty (and very, very hot) entry into the Teraci atmosphere, then dodging through clouds before dumping their ship in the swamp and hiding. Under normal circumstances, the crew would soon be found by search parties. However, the Fury shows up to distract the blockade (see *The Fury Arrives*, page 31).

The crew can try sneaking past by spending a fate point to invoke **GAP IN THE FENCE**. Doing so requires a Pilot test at Great (+4) difficulty to thread their ship through the tiny gap in the sensor grid.

PROBLEM: CUSTOMS INSPECTION

If the crew submits to a customs inspection, then Lieutenant Kemic and a squad of marines board their ship. Kemic is surprisingly chatty and personable for a government inspector. She conducts a thorough search of the ship, looking for contraband like the zhonga plants. Resolve this as a contest of Kemic's Science against a suitable block, like Science ("Zhonga plants? No, these are purely medicinal herbs!") or Larceny ("stash the cargo in a smuggling compartment, quick!").

Should she find contraband, the crew are in for a spot of Detention (see below). Kemic doesn't take bribes to look the other way.





LIEUTENANT KEMIC

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

CAREER OFFICER; THE PATIENCE OF A CUSTOMS OFFICER; BULLDOGS? ALWAYS TROUBLE; TOUGH AS TUNGSTEN NAILS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Resolve

GOOD (+3): Science, Command

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Systems, Physique

AVERAGE (+1): Rapport, Survival, Larceny, Empathy

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

INSPIRATIONAL: advantages created with Command can be invoked for +3 (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER PISTOL: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ ELEGANT LOOKING.

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield

Stress ☐☐☐

SPACE SUIT: Light Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ WELL-MAINTAINED.

☐ Mild:

HANDHELD SCANNER: Upgrade (+2 to discover actions when looking for concealed compartments).

MARINE BOARDING PARTY

Aspects

WE'RE TAKING THIS SHIP

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Provoke, Resolve

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

LASER PISTOLS: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ MILITARY-GRADE.

DEFENCE SCREEN: Light Shield

Stress ☐☐

SPACE SUITS: Medium Armor, Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ INTIMIDATING STYLING.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

SETUP: DETAINED!

If the crew get caught with illegal goods on board, then one of the gunships escorts them down to Teraci where their ship is impounded pending trial. Due to the current crisis, they may be waiting some time.

If the captain is a non-player character, then they're arrested. The rest of the crew (and the captain, if they're a player character) are not arrested per se but are told they cannot leave Teraci until the situation has been investigated. Their identity papers and other documentation get confiscated. Under normal circumstances, TransGalaxy would kick up a huge fuss about that, but the planetary blockade and subsequent Fury takeover means that the crew is cut off from their patrons at TGPgC. (TransGalaxy has no problem with sending their Bulldogs into absurdly hazardous situations, as long as they're potentially profitable absurdly hazardous situations. Having a bunch of employees sitting around waiting for new passports, though, is inherently unprofitable.)

Their ship is held under armed guard in a compound on the edge of the starport. Under normal circumstances, the crew's obvious next move would be to break into the starport and steal their ship back. However, these are not normal circumstances; if the crew delays in launching such a heist, the Fury arrives to complicate matters.

Oh, if the crew decides that making a break for it is the best thing to do, that's fine. They can't flee the system; they have a delivery to make, and anyway, there's that whole blockade between them and hyperspace. The best thing to do is to lose the pursuing gunships and hide the ship (see page 30).

TOURIST'S GUIDE TO TERACI

Actually, tourists don't go to Teraci very often, except rich hunters on Swamp Safaris. 85% of the planet is ocean, and the rest is mostly mangrove swamps on the single tropical continent. Teraci City, the main settlement, sits on a rocky upland in the north-west of the continent. The planet has a population of around twenty million, mostly Arsubarans or Tetsuashans. (Oddly, the Tetsuashans find Teraci's swamps just as unpleasant as everyone else, even though they seem pretty much identical to the marshes of Suash.)

The planet's ruled by a hereditary caste of administrators, descended from the Captains-Kings of old. (For those with Science: for hundreds of years, most of the population on this planet lived on titanic city-ships that sailed the world-girdling ocean. The Captain-Kings were legendary heroes, brave and stalwart and charismatic. Then a cataclysmic storm sank most of the city-ships, and the only one that survived the storm ran aground on the island. Most people claim descent from the crew, and the administrators are all direct descendants of the Captain-King's family. You can still see the wreckage of the ship if you go down to the coast. It's a melancholy sight, all bleached-white and shattered like the skeleton of some mythical sea-monster.

The swamps that make up most of the interior of the island are extremely dangerous and largely uninhabited. It's not the swamp monsters, although that's a big part of it – it's a particularly nasty fungus native to the swamps that eats electronic circuits. Fortunately, it can only survive in the swamp, and attempts to weaponize it have so far failed.

PERILOUS SWAMPS

INVOKE: you lose your pursuers in the swamp, "They'll never follow us in here!"

COMPEL: this is a bad place to be, "I'm stuck in the mud! And there's something in here with me!"

BACKWATER PLANET

INVOKE: Teraci's pretty backwards in a lot of ways, "My electronic lockpick's cutting edge compared to the crap security systems on this planet."

COMPEL: it's hard to get high-tech supplies and parts out here, "They don't have any lateral grav-pump inverters in stock."

FADING GLORY OF THE CAPTAIN-KINGS

INVOKE: people still respect the old aristocracy, "For the glory of the Teraci, I give my life for you!"

COMPEL: not everyone respects the past, "Haven't you heard? There's been a coup, and she's an enemy of the state. And if you're protecting her, that makes you enemies too..."

PROBLEM: THE GUNSHIP

The Teraci gunship that escorts the crew down is a standard short-range planetary security ship. It looks like an angry wasp that swallowed a golfball. It's got a three-man crew and is armed with quad-mounted energy blasters; in other words, enough firepower to chew through most small freighters. It can also hover in the air for extended durations. When not off chasing down escaping smugglers or helping out with the barricade, it circles over the starport and the impound yard.

If anyone breaks into the yard or attacks the starport, then the gunship flies over to provide fire support for the starport security forces. It's primarily designed to take on small smuggler ships and aircars, so it's not especially suited for dealing with individuals on the ground.

Then again, when you've got quad-mounted energy blasters, you really don't need much more to terrify any sane individual.

FIGHTING THE GUNSHIP: The crew certainly can engage the gunship in a shooting match if they want. The gunship can call for aid—Teraci's a swamp backwater, but they still have lots of patrol ships and customs vessels. If the crew can take out the gunship quickly (or stop it from calling for aid with a Systems roll to block transmissions), then they can sneak off (see *Hiding the Ship* on page 30).

SABOTAGING THE GUNSHIP: The gunship lands every few hours to refuel, rotate the crew, or attend to matters on the ground. The Bulldogs could sneak in (with Stealth) to cut the fuel lines, ambush the crew, stick a virus in the computer system, or just plant a suitable demolition charge somewhere sensitive.

DISTRACTING THE GUNSHIP: What's that? A distress call? From the far side of the planet? (Roll Empathy against the Gunship crew's Resolve). An explosion or other scheme works just as well).

WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT: Pacifist or paranoid crews can wait for their moment. The best distraction is when the Fury takes over the barricade vessels in orbit; the gunship gets sent off to investigate and is gone for several hours. Alternatively, they can watch the gunship's patrol route with a Good (+3) Larceny roll to place the aspect **OUT OF POSITION** on the gunship.



THE GUNSHIP

SIZE: Medium

MANEUVERABILITY: Poor (-1)

ENGINES: Plasma-Induction Engines (Light)

Weapons

ENERGY BLASTER: Heavy Weapon, Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ **BARRAGE OF PLASMA.**

Armor

PLASTISTEEL PLATING: Light Armor, ☐ **HIGHLY DURABLE.**

☐ Mild:

Crew

PILOT: Fair (+2)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Mediocre (+0)

GUNNER: Average (+1)

Conditions

Crippled ☐☐

Disabled ☐☐

PROBLEM: STEALING THE SHIP BACK

This probably isn't the first time that the crew has had to break a ship out of an impound yard, and the Teraci starport yard is a pretty standard setup for a poor planet. Any Bulldog with a Larceny of Fair (+2) or better knows what to expect; casing the place requires a Good (+3) Larceny result.

The Bulldogs' ship is the only impounded vessel of any size. The rest of the yard is crammed with rusting junkers kept for spare parts. Location aspects include **TEETERING PILES OF JUNK** and **TWITCHY SECURITY SYSTEMS.**

- There's a Stun-Fence (fries the nervous system of any organic being) surrounding the impound yard. It's **CRACKLING WITH ENERGY** and anyone who touches it gets **STUNNED.**
- There are security cameras watching the whole place. If the camera spots an intruder, it raises an alarm at the starport. They will then either alert the gunship or send out a group of security guards to investigate.
- The ship itself is locked to the ground with huge magnetic clamps. Disabling them requires Engineering or Larceny (or Physique to pull the giant power cables out) at Great (+4) difficulty. Inside, the ship's navigation system has an electronic lock on it (requiring a Good (+4) Systems roll to disable).

STARPORT SECURITY GUARDS

Aspects

WE ARE THE LAW

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Shoot

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

BALLISTIC RIFLES: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with armor), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone),

☐ ASSEMBLY-LINE RIFLES.

SYNTHETIC PLATE: Medium Armor, ☐ ONE SIZE FITS ALL.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

PROBLEM: THE IMPOUNDED CARGO

The authorities confiscate the ship's cargo after impounding it. The crew may find this out in advance if they talk to Lieutenant Kemic (a Fair (+2) Haggle or Science roll lets them notice the clause in the paperwork they're given when arrested, or they can use Rapport to find out the same thing), or by keeping watch on their ship after it's impounded with Larceny.

Or, of course, they can just break into the impound yard, dodging blaster fire and security guards, smash their way onto their ship. And discover that the cargo hold is empty. Uh-oh.

The cargo has been moved to a secure warehouse on the far side of the starport, along with other dangerous, contraband, or unclaimed items. Some of the crates in this warehouse have been here for years. Others leak toxic chemicals or smell weird.

Breaking in requires a Good (+3) Larceny roll, and there are more security guards in the area. The really big problem here, though, is transporting the cargo. There are lots and lots of crates of robot parts in the warehouse, far too many to move easily. The crew needs to steal a forklift or other vehicle to move all the cargo, and that's going to take ages (it's Good (+3) difficulty to move all the cargo using Physique in a few hours; rolling high lets the crew use shifts to decrease the time required).

Alternatively, the crew can just find the tagged crates if they know about the contraband. That's much faster, requiring only a few minutes.

PROBLEM: HIDING THE SHIP

Assuming the crew isn't leaving the planet immediately, they'll need to hide out until they can deliver their cargo (if they are leaving, see *Getting Offworld* on page 65). Fortunately for them, large sections of Teraci are uninhabited, and it is easy to hide the ship in the swamp. Unfortunately for them, those sections are uninhabited because of the extremely dangerous swamp monsters and horrible conditions. See *Swamp Monster* on page 58 for more details.

Alternatively, the crew can find a large warehouse, junkyard, circus tent, or private hangar to stow their ship near Teraci City with a Great (+4) Contacts roll.

If the authorities spot them taking off, or if they're pursued, then some daring terrain-hugging Pilot actions can dodge radar and sensor tracking, assuming the crew doesn't have a handy sensor jammer or other gadget to throw off pursuit.

PROBLEM: THE FURY

All of the above problems get compounded when the Fury show up. When the Bulldogs first arrive on Teraci, the attention of the Teraci Planetary Security Force, the starport authorities, the news media, and pretty much everyone else is focused on the Fury. The crew's crimes barely register. Keep the Fury plotline present in the background. Describe news reports about the advancing fleet, mention pro-Fury graffiti on the walls, have the crew overhear some people talking about how Teraci is corrupt, and the Fury will make everything better and stronger and purer. A Good (+3) Empathy roll notes that this groundswell of support for the Fury seems to be present in every strata of Teraci society. Even people you wouldn't normally think would bother with politics seem strangely fired up.

The Fury takeover happens at a dramatically appropriate moment—maybe when the crew are trying to liberate their ship from the impound or when they're smuggling the cargo across the city. If no suitable moment presents itself, then it happens when they're guests of Mr. Krudge.

Once the Fury takes over and imposes martial law, offworlders and troublemakers like the Bulldogs find things suddenly become very different. The skies of Teraci city fill with warships and flying patrol aircars, and the streets suddenly have a much higher proportion of jackbooted thugs than before. In game terms:

- Replace all those wimpy Starport Security staff with kick-ass Fury Troopers (upgrade them to Fair (+2) Minions by doing all of the following: make their Shoot skill Fair (+2), add the Angry condition with two stress boxes, add Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance) to their weapons, and add Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session) to their armor).
- Boost the difficulty of any rolls to break in or sneak around undetected by +1.
- Add the aspect **MARTIAL LAW** to the whole planet.
- Shoot to kill.

MARTIAL LAW

INVOKE: everything's in chaos, "Of course the computer rejects my security pass! They shut down the whole security pass system—did nobody tell you? Just buzz me in."

COMPEL: there are guards everywhere, and they don't like Bulldogs, "Alien troublemakers! Let's show 'em who's in charge on Teraci now!"

THE FURY ARRIVES

While the crew are busy delivering their cargo (or sitting in a detention cell on Teraci), the tide of history overtakes them. The following events happen with alarming swiftness.

- **FURY SYMPATHIZERS:** If the Bulldogs are free to move around Teraci, they spot signs that some people on this planet would welcome the Fury movement. Pro-Fury graffiti appears in places; they read editorials and newscasts decrying the government; strangers in bars grumble about the weakness and cowardice of the Teraci government. All these messages have one thing in common—the Fury will make Teraci part of something stronger. A successful Science roll against Great (+4) difficulty notices a second thing they have in common—everyone

arguing in favor of the Fury is Arsubaran...) It's not mind control—the people expressing these thoughts are still themselves, but it is as though they've tapped into something primal, some tribal instinct.

- **THE FURY ARRIVE:** Three ships loyal to the Fury cause arrive in the system. They do not try to break the blockade, but instead contact the flagship *Solemn Sentinel* and ask for permission to dock and discuss the crisis. Soon afterwards, the *Solemn Sentinel* calls for representatives from the other capital ships in the blockade to fly over for a critical briefing. The Fury ships withdraw.
- **MILITARY COUP:** A blockade protecting a planet can become a siege attacking a planet in an instant—all you have to do is turn all the ships around, and that's exactly what happens. The warships close on Teraci, hanging in the sky like a thousand deadly swords of doom. The admiral of the fleet demands that the civilian government of Teraci surrender immediately in favor of a Fury-backed junta. Simultaneously, Fury agents seize control of official media channels. They start broadcasting pro-Fury propaganda in support of the military coup. With no way of fighting back and terrified by this abrupt shift in loyalty, the civilian government is forced to surrender. Suddenly, the Fury runs Teraci.

MONITORING THE SITUATION

Of course, the crew may not know all that. The arrival of the Fury ships, the subversion of the military, and the threat to the government all happen 'off-screen'. If you can, keep the Bulldogs' attention on the mission at hand: getting their cargo to where it's supposed to go.

If the players wish, they can track political developments through the news channels, computer networks, and local grapevine.

SETUP: DELIVERY PROBLEMS

Assuming the crew lands on Teraci without any problems, the next step is to deliver their cargo to LPG Agronomics. (If they got *Detained*, then they need to steal their cargo back again first, see page 30). According to Tongo Fell back at Job Tower, there should be a representative from the corporation waiting at the starport for them.

There isn't.

What the crew doesn't know—yet—is that LPG Agronomics is just a front for the **Krudge Consortium**, one of the local crime syndicates. They used the corporation as a shell to cover their imports of illegal weapons and other contraband, like the zhonga seeds in the Bulldogs' cargo hold. A rival syndicate, the **Scarabus Family**, learned about the delivery and decided to steal it.

They screwed up. They launched their attack too early, but this means they're between the crew and a successful delivery. And that's generally not a healthy place to be...

PROBLEM: LOCKDOWN

You can run this problem at any point after the crew lands on Teraci, assuming they're not arrested by Lieutenant Kemic. As soon as the Fury show up and impose martial law on the planet, they block any commercial ships from taking off for the duration of the emergency. To get off the planet, the crew will have to steal their own ship from the starport (see *Detained*, page 26). On the bright side, the ship isn't impounded, so they can get to it easily. The hard part is taking off...

PROBLEM: THE MISSING BUYER

There's no sign of anyone from LPG Agronomics at the grimy starport. The starport staff are all glued to the local news channels and have to be pried away from the ongoing coverage of the Fury controversy to answer the crew's questions. Most of them have no idea who LPG Agronomics are, nor do they know anything about any representative who was supposed to meet a delivery from offworld.

Checking publicly available records with Systems or Contacts leads to a suspicious dead end. Apparently, LPG Agronomics' registered head office is a shady lawyer called **Zelon Hoggis**, and he's 'on holiday' according to his robot secretary. However, the Bulldogs can find (with a Contacts or Survival roll or a suitable aspect invocation) one of the cargo handlers at the starport, a burly robot wrangler named **Lou-Lou**. It's hard for her to keep a low profile, as she's got gang tattoos all down her muscular arms, and she stomps around the cargo dock in a powered exoskeleton. The crew can easily spot her taking an unusual interest in their inquiries about LPG.

She tells them that she's helped LPG bring in cargo in the past, especially items that they don't want scanned by customs. They have a warehouse in the Marshlight district of Teraci City—the crew should check there.

PROBLEM: THE SCARABUS GANG

The Marshlight Warehouse is a dingy, run-down concrete monstrosity that sags into the swampy ground. Everything's a shade of muddy brown, broken only by the gaudy neon signs of the surrounding shops, none of which have anything wholesome or wholly legal.

A Good (+3) Survival roll (or the use of Larceny) lets the crew notice several key facts.

- The front door has been forced open. It looks like someone—or something—very strong broke the lock.
- There's a distinct tang in the air, like fried ozone. Blast gun fire. Recent blast gun fire.
- The lights in the offices on the upper floor were on when the crew arrived. Now they're off.

Inside, the warehouse is mostly empty. On the ground level, there's a break room, stairwell, and a storeroom as well as the main warehouse floor. Ladders lead up to a suspended walkway above the warehouse floor. The walkway is connected to four offices on the upper level. Lurking in those offices are the thugs from the Scarabus gang. They broke in, zapped the LPG employees, and then tried to find the cargo. Of course, the Bulldogs haven't delivered this cargo yet, which put something of a brake on their plans.

The leader of the thugs is a big Hacragorkan, **Dug Dragbab**, known for his assiduous use of illegal whale steroids and his alarming fashion sense. He wears a suit of lurid puce synthetic plate armor under his leechhide coat and flies into a murderous rage whenever anyone makes a comment about how awful it looks. Color-blindness is a vital survival trait in the Scarabus gang.

His right-hand man is **Parfer Gam**, a smiling Arsubaran who handles the money and the deal-making. Dug sends Parfer down to talk to the crew. Parfer comes down with a friendly smile on his face, hands empty, arms wide. "Sorry, gentlemen, we're closed. There's been an, um, family emergency. Come back later!" Parfer tries to bluff the crew into leaving. He's got Fair (+2) Larceny and a **USED CAR SALESMAN**'s face, but there are several clues that might give his lie away, like the blast marks on the wall, the blood dripping from the walkway overhead, and the corpse that was hastily stuffed into a nearby crate that is still partially visible.

- A Great (+4) roll of Empathy sees through Parfer's deception.
- A Good (+3) Survival roll spots the evidence, giving a +2 bonus to any attempts to spot the lie.
- Alternatively, keeping Parfer talking with Rapport quickly exhausts Dug's patience, and the impetuous gangster starts shooting.

In addition to Parfer and Dug, there's a number of gang members equal to the number of Bulldogs, armed with cheap blast pistols. As soon as the fighting starts, Parfer dodges behind some crates to get some cover, while Dug opens up from the walkway with his scatterblaster. The minions split into two groups. Half hang around with Dug and shoot from the walkway, while the others rush for the stairs to prevent the crew from escaping out the door.

COMBAT ZONES

ENTRY HALLWAY: Leads out onto the street. If the fighting spreads to the street, then the local security forces are bound to show up. The Scarabus gang have a trio of groundcars parked nearby.

BREAK ROOM: Vending machines can be tipped over on top of bad guys, flung down for cover, or raided for a quick sugar rush.

STAIRWELL: That second group of minions come barrelling down here at high speed to block the door. The stairwell is **CRAMPED**.

OPEN WAREHOUSE: Where the crew are when the fighting starts. It's a **KILLING FLOOR**, as there's no cover.

PILED CRATES: Lots of places to hide, as well as some bits of contraband hidden in the crates. Someone with a suitable aspect like **LUCKY** might scavenge a grenade or a weapon here.

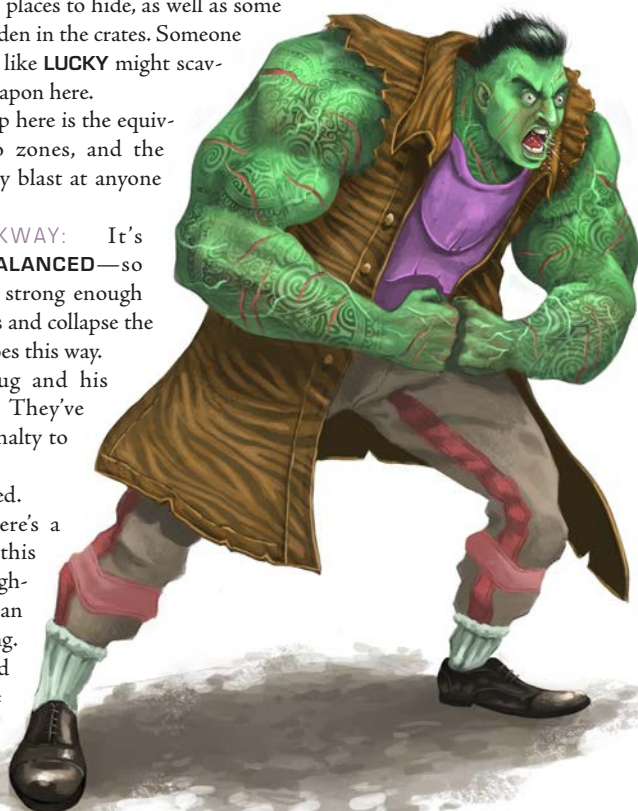
LADDERS: Climbing up here is the equivalent of moving two zones, and the gangsters will gleefully blast at anyone who tries to climb up.

NARROW WALKWAY: It's **PRECARIOUSLY BALANCED**—so much so that Dug is strong enough to rip out the supports and collapse the walkway if the crew goes this way.

MAIN WALKWAY: Dug and his goons lurk up here. They've got good cover (-1 penalty to attacks from below).

OFFICES: Mostly trashed.

MEETING ROOM: There's a big holoprojector in this room—much more high-tech and expensive than the rest of the building. A technically minded Bulldog could use this projector to create a distraction using Systems.



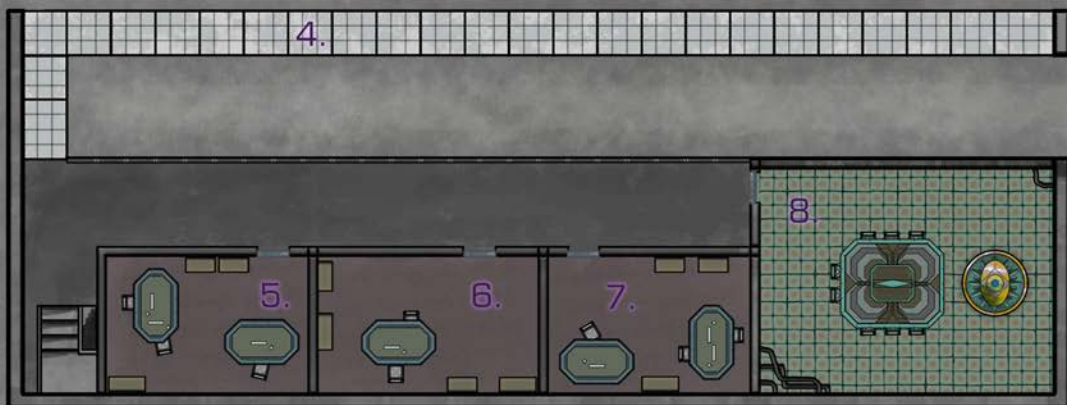
GROUND FLOOR



THE WAREHOUSE

- 1. ENTRANCE
- 2. BREAK ROOM
- 3. STAIRWELL
- 4. UPPER WALKWAY
- 5. OFFICE
- 6. OFFICE
- 7. OFFICE
- 8. MEETING ROOM

UPPER BALCONY



DUG DRAGBAB

SPECIES: Hacragorkan

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

CHIEF LEGBREAKER FOR THE SCARABUS GANG; HORRIFYING LACK OF FASHION SENSE; ACTS OF ILL-CONSIDERED VIOLENCE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Physique

GOOD (+3): Athletics, Fight

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Provoke, Command

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Survival, Larceny, Contacts

Stunts & Species Abilities

QUICK HEALER: once per conflict clear a mild consequence as the action for the round, also recover physical consequences as if they were one step lower outside of combat (page 31 of *Bulldogs!*).

DANGEROUS BEARING: +2 when attacking with Provoke to intimidate and opponent with the threat of force (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

PUGNACIOUS: +2 to create advantages with Provoke when trying to start a fight (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

SCARY: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone attempts to create an advantage using intimidation (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

NOW YOU'VE MADE ME MAD: once per scene, spend a fate point to add the shifts taken in an attack against you into to your action against the person who inflicted the stress (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

KNUCKLEDUSTERS: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Fight versus opponents with shields), Powerful (once per conflict do +1 shift of stress on a successful hit), ☐ **THAT'LL LEAVE A MARK.**

SCATTERBLASTER: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (once per conflict do +1 shift of stress on a successful hit), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), ☐ **CLEAR THE ROOM.**

DEFENSE SCREEN: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SYNTHETIC PLATE ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ **COLORED A DISGUSTING PUCE.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:



THE GANG

Aspects

VIOLENCE IS OUR BUSINESS, AND BUSINESS IS GOOD

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Shoot

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

BLAST PISTOLS: Light Weapon, ☐ CHEAP AND DISPOSABLE.

PARFER GAM

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

USED CAR SALESMAN; SNEAKY BASTARD; NATURAL ADAPTABILITY; ALWAYS HAS A GETAWAY PLAN

Skills

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Haggle

FAIR (+2): Larceny, Rapport, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Stealth, Survival, Contacts

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

EAR FOR BULL: use Haggle instead of Empathy to detect lies (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HEAVY BLAST PISTOL: Medium Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ BIG AND INTIMIDATING.

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield

Stress ☐☐☐

BALLISTIC CLOTH: Light Armor, ☐ HARD TO DETECT.

☐ Mild:

If Dug goes down, then the other Scarabus gangsters flee. The crew can check the warehouse to discover the bodies of the LPG employees, clues that they were gearing up to make zhonga drugs (botany textbooks and robot schematics), and other signs that LPG Agronomics was a smuggling front company (dodgy accounting, shotguns taped under desks). This was a **CRIMINAL OPERATION**.

CRIMINAL OPERATION

INVOKE: either find weapons or other useful gear, or blackmail the client for a little extra cash, “I think my silence is worth a few extra credits.”

COMPEL: so, you’re delivering contraband to criminals... and the planet just got taken over by space fascists. You could be in big trouble if you’re caught here, “Receiving stolen goods... transporting stolen goods... exploding stolen goods—you’re looking at a nice long prison sentence, offworlder. I hope you like swamp leeches.”

PROBLEM: CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A few moments after the last Scarabus goon goes down, the holoprojector in the meeting room starts bleeping. There’s an incoming call. When activated, the holoprojector conjures the image of a sun-drenched balcony overlooking verdant jungle, with the sea visible in the distance. Standing before the crew is a tall Arsubaran, although his face and voice are both holographically distorted.

“There’s been a change of plan. It seems that a local criminal syndicate, the Scarabus Gang, intend to steal my goods. Therefore, I would like you to deliver them to me personally, at this address. Do so quickly and discretely; events are moving quickly.” He transmits both the new delivery address and a copy of the TransGalaxy shipping docket to forestall any questions. He also asks the Bulldogs to upload their communicator idents so he can contact them securely.

This gentleman is **Frank Krudge**, the local criminal kingpin. He’s a man beset by many woes. Not only is he trying to diversify his criminal empire into producing an exotic narcotic like zhonga, he’s also under attack by the upstart Scarabus gang, and now there’s this whole Fury situation unfolding in orbit. He is not a man who has time to argue with a bunch of Bulldogs. He gives them the revised delivery address and expects them to sort it out.

The new address, though, is well outside Teraci City. It’s on a private peninsula about a four-hour drive south-west, and all air traffic is grounded for the duration of the emergency. The crew will have to find a way to transport the cargo to Krudge’s estate.

Likely questions:

- **HOW DO WE GET THE CARGO THERE?** We can’t fly. “That’s your problem.” If the crew reveals that they know the cargo is illegal and make a Fair (+2) Haggle, Rapport, or Provoke roll then they can convince Krudge to tell them where they can pick up an armored truck that belongs to his organization.
- **DO YOU KNOW YOUR CARGO’S ILLEGAL?** “Are you a lawyer? There may be illegal materials in some of the crates, but that is none of your concern. Deliver the cargo to me, and I shall deal with any legal issues.”
- **HOW DID THE SCARABUS GANG FIND OUT ABOUT THE DELIVERY?** Mr. Krudge looks off-camera. “It seems that one of my associates decided that he could make more money working with them than with me.” There’s a loud and prolonged scream from off-camera. “He was incorrect.”

- **AREN'T THE SCARABUS GANG GOING TO TRY TO STOP US?** “Again, that’s your problem—and seeing as you’ve already dealt with several members of the gang already, I’m sure you can handle yourselves.”

SCARABUS AND KRUDGE

Taking a discover action using Contacts or Larceny to dig up information on the criminal syndicates of Teraci could reveal the following:

- There are two big gangs: the Scarabus and Krudge syndicates. The two gangs are locked in a vicious conflict, and many people are very worried and scared of getting caught in the crossfire.
- The Scarabus started when the City-Ship ran aground, all those centuries ago. The formerly powerless and desperate bilge-folk started to build their own power base. They’re more violent and dangerous than the Krudge and are mainly involved in protection rackets and robbery. However, they also have more support among the criminal classes; the Scarabus are the criminal equivalent of ‘old money’, whereas the Krudges are newcomers. Their leader, ‘Captain’ Scarabus, is rumored to be dying.
- The Krudge family are a more recent arrival on Teraci—they came from offworld about thirty years ago and seized control of more than half the criminal activity on Teraci. Their main focus is in narcotics.
- The Fury will sort out this gang problem. They’ll bring order to this increasingly lawless island. Drown both those gangs, that’s the thing to do!

PROBLEM: TRANSPORTING THE CARGO

So, the crew needs to get the cargo from Teraci City to Krudge’s estate. If their ship is merely grounded, then they can just pick up the cargo and drive off. However, if Lieutenant Kemic found the contraband, then they’ll have to steal it back from the warehouse (see page 30) and escape both the gang and the security forces.

Moving the whole cargo at once requires a big cargo hauler. The delivery address is outside Teraci City; that means driving across poor marshy roads, so the crew will have to get one with gravitic suspension, and that doesn’t come cheap. The crew can rent such a vehicle, but they’ll pay handsomely for the privilege and be responsible for any damage. Alternatively, they can try ‘borrowing’ one, or convince Krudge to supply one.

Now, if the crew knows that they really only need to bring a few crates, then they can fit them into the cargo trailer of a much smaller (and less noticeable) hoverpod, the standard surface vehicle used in the boondocks of Teraci. The Scarabus gang are looking for a cargo hauler (and have the Bulldogs’ ship under surveillance), but a cheap little hoverpod has a much better chance of sneaking past.

VEHICLE	BASE SIZE	CONDITIONS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	COST	UPGRADES
CARGO HAULER	MEDIUM	CRIPPLED ☐ ☐ DISABLED ☐ ☐ DAMAGED ☐ ☐	+1	4 CREDITS BOXES	HEAVY HULL PLATING
HOVERPOD	SMALL	CRIPPLED ☐ ☐	+3	2 CREDITS BOXES	☐ INCONSPICUOUS, AGILITY

Once the crew is ready to roll with their cargo, have the Bulldog with the best Stealth roll their skill. They can freely tag the hoverpod's **INCONSPICUOUS** aspect, and other crewmembers may take actions to add on more aspects to tilt the balance, like:

- **LARCENY:** You spot the Scarabus gangsters watching the road.
- **ENGINEERING:** A little super-high-octane fuel in the cargo hauler's tank gives it a burst of speed.
- **RAPPORT:** You chat to a security guard and find out where the checkpoints are.
- **PROVOKE:** Hello, Scarabus gang member. You're going to tell me everything you know about your gang's plans to steal our cargo, or I'm going to introduce you to Mr. Knuckles.
- **SHOOT:** A quick after-market upgrade adds gun ports to the cargo hauler.
- **SURVIVAL:** You check the maps and find a back road across the marshes.

Next, compare the result of the Stealth roll with the table below.

MEDIOCRE (+0) OR LESS	OH DEAR. THE CREW GETS SPOTTED BY SECURITY GUARDS AT THE STARPORT. ADD A GUNSHIP TO THE PURSUING FORCES.
AVERAGE (+1) OR FAIR (+2)	THE CREW GETS STOPPED AT A CHECKPOINT NEAR THE STARPORT BY THE TERACI CITY SECURITY FORCES. THEY CAN TALK THEIR WAY OUT OF TROUBLE WITH A GREAT (+4) RAPPORT ROLL; IF THEY FAIL, THEN THE GUARDS WANT TO EXAMINE THEIR CARGO.
GOOD (+3) OR GREAT (+4)	THE CREW GETS AMBUSHED BY THE SCARABUS GANG AS THEY DRIVE THROUGH A DANGEROUS PART OF THE CITY.
SUPERB (+5) OR FANTASTIC (+6)	THE CREW GETS CLEAR OF THE CITY, BUT THE SCARABUS GANG CHASES THEM ACROSS COUNTRY.
EPIC (+7) OR MORE	THE PERFECT HEIST—THE SCARABUS NEVER SPOT THE ZHONGA BEING MOVED UNDER THEIR NOSES.

Let the players narrate how they get past any obstacles they beat with the roll. So, on a Superb (+5) result, tell them that they get stopped at a checkpoint and the gang plotted to ambush them, but they got away without any problems. How did they manage that?

So, potential enemies in this scene are the following:

- That pesky gunship (see page 29).
- Teraci security, commanded by Lieutenant Kemic. The security guards (see page 30) are riding in groundcars. Fortunately for the crew, the impending (or recently imposed) martial law means that they won't pursue them out of the city.
- The Scarabus Gang's B Team—a group of low-level hitters led by another gangster, Mira Scarabus, the daughter of the gang leader. She's got a custom hoverpod with concealed mini-missile launchers, and she's fanatically determined to ensure her gang's primacy on Teraci. Her family came up from the bilges of the City-Ship, and she has a chip on her shoulder the size of a swamp whale about the hereditary ruling class of Teraci. The other gangsters are in hoverpods or their own cargo hauler.



MIRA SCARABUS

SPECIES: Arsubaran
REFRESH: 2

Aspects

DADDY'S WICKED LITTLE GIRL; THINGS GO BOOM WHEN I'M AROUND; SPIKY AND DANGEROUS; CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Pilot
GOOD (+3): Shoot, Survival
FAIR (+2): Physique, Command, Provoke
AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Athletics, Larceny, Resolve

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).
STICK TO THEIR SIX: gain +2 to Pilot rolls when chasing someone (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).
ONE HAND ON THE STICK: gain +2 to Pilot when defending against fire from another vehicle (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐
Angry ☐☐
Stunned ☐☐
Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:
☐ Moderate:
☐ Severe:

Gear

ROCKET LAUNCHER: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), ☐ HERE'S A LITTLE PRESENT FOR YOU.

COMBAT SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

BATTLE ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened x2 (reduce shifts against you by one twice per session), Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), ☐ COVERED WITH PERSONAL FLAIR.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

SCARABUS GANG MEMBERS

Aspects

VIOLENCE IS OUR BUSINESS, AND BUSINESS IS GOOD

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Shoot

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

HEAVY BLAST PISTOLS: Light Weapon, ☐ BIG, CHEAP, AND DISPOSABLE.

FIRE SUPPORT!

If the crew gets into trouble, one of them can spend a Fate point to call in help from Krudge's gang. He was taken by surprise by the Scarabus' treachery, but he won't take the attack on LPG Agronomics lying down.

POTENTIAL ENCOUNTERS

SECURITY CHECKPOINT: As soon as martial law gets declared, the planetary security forces set up checkpoints at key locations in the city. Non-essential traffic is ordered to get off the streets due to the ongoing emergency. These checkpoints consist of a team of four guards, but they can call in support if there are any problems. The crew can easily lie if they're in a hoverpod ("we're on our way home, officer"), but it's a bit harder to explain why a cargo hauler full of agricultural supplies is 'essential traffic'.

AMBUSH IN THE STREETS: The Scarabus Gang know that Krudge will want his rare zhonga plants brought directly to his estate, and they know the best route leading to that estate. Therefore, they set up an ambush. They block the road with a hoverpod, and when the crew's cargo hauler stops, some minions use zip-lines to land on the roof. From there, they intend to storm the hauler, kill the crew, and steal the cargo.

All that, of course, assumes that the crew are in a cargo hauler. If they're in a hoverpod, then they meet a very surprised gangster who is in the middle of trying to clear the streets for the ambush when he recognizes the targets cruising past...

CHASE ACROSS COUNTRY: Assuming the crew gets past the checkpoint and the ambush, then it's a chase scene down the roads towards Krudge's country estate. In places, the road is a narrow steep-sided ridge of concrete rising out of the marshy ground on either side. There are also a few winding coastal roads along sea-cliffs, small thickets of forest, and the occasional country village whose tranquillity gets exploded.

PROBLEM: BRIDGE OVER EXPLOSIVE WATERS.

After several hours' hard driving along the Teraci coast, the crew takes a turn towards the Nor Velin peninsula. This is a narrow, rocky spit of land that rises out of the swampy mainland and stands proudly over the churning seas. More than 75% of the peninsula is the private property of Krudge, but the crew isn't there yet.

As the crew approaches, they realize that 'peninsula' is a misnomer—most of Nor Velin is actually a rocky island, linked to the mainland by a long low-lying metal bridge. This bridge is only a few metres above the sea (it's designed to flood in heavy weather). Off in the distance, growing ever closer, is a ship. It looks like a yacht, but yachts aren't usually so well armed. It is, in fact, the personal yacht of Captain Scarabus himself, the Bilgerat, and she's on course to intercept the crew as they cross the bridge. The bridge is low enough for the yacht to come right alongside, and even at this distance the crew can see several heavily armed thugs waiting on deck.

So, what do the Bulldogs do?

- **LOOK AROUND:** A Great (+4) Survival roll lets a crewmember spot some more suspicious activity on the far side of the bridge. There are four soldiers there, hidden from the yacht, setting up some sort of heavy missile launcher.
- **STALL FOR TIME:** They can call the yacht and talk to Captain Scarabus. The old criminal is a traditionalist and is willing to let the crew beg for their lives

or try to cut a deal. The idea of stealing the zhonga right from under Krudge's nose tickles him, too. A Fair (+2) Rapport roll buys the crew time (inflicting one stress on the Crossing the Bridge track, below; success with style means two stress).

- **DRIVE FOR IT!** As soon as the crew starts driving, then the thugs start firing. Below, you'll find the Crossing the Bridge stress track. Both the fire from the ship (with its Good (+3) Shoot) and the crew's movement get plotted on this track against a Fair (+2) difficulty. The ship gets to fire twice every round.

As the Bulldogs move across the bridge, they mark one stress for a successful Pilot roll or two stress on a success with style (use / for the Bulldogs' movement). Fire from the Scarabus ship is handled a little differently. Only mark a single box corresponding to the number of shifts the Scarabus ship gets on its shot, not any boxes before or after the shift result (use Xs for damage). The bridge can take two consequences (like **SHOT FULL OF HOLES** and **IMPASSABLE**). If the crew crosses the bridge in time (by filling the full stress track with Pilot), then they're safe.

The added danger comes when a Pilot stress mark (/) intersects with a Damage stress mark (X). That means that the crew is driving through a hail of fire. Make another attack roll on the crew's vehicle with the ship's Good (+3) Shoot score. It's using energy cannons (Heavy Weapon, ☐ **BLISTERING BARRAGE**).



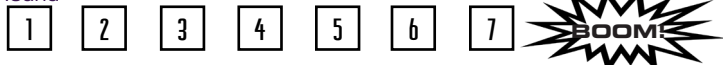
Driving Consequences

- ☐ Mild:
☐ Moderate:

Damage Consequences

- ☐ Mild:
☐ Moderate:

Round



If the bridge is blocked, then the Bilgerat comes alongside and more Scarabus thugs try to take the zhonga. If Mira Scarabus is still alive, then she can lead the assault; otherwise, the Scarabus gang have plenty more angry Hacragorkans from the Dragbab clan, and you can reuse Dug's statistics (page 36) for a leader. The gangsters try to grab the cargo and transfer it to the ship.

THE BIG BOOM: After eight rounds, no matter where the crew is, the Krudge mercenaries hiding at the far end of the bridge complete their missile launcher. (Should the crew cross the bridge successfully, then they can hop out and defend the missile launcher from Scarabus attack for a round or two). The missile launcher unfolds like a cybernetic preying mantis, twin surface-to-ship disjunction warheads sliding into place. The launcher swivels around and locks onto the Bilgerat—it's not hard, the yacht is only a few dozen meters away—then it fires.

Ever see a shield activate in the water? It's a bizarre sight. A bubble of energy flickers into being around the ship, cutting through the water. The ship stays floating in the water inside the shield, but the explosion of the first missile on the outside of the shield turns half the sea to steam. Then the water comes crashing in to fill the void, and the ship's half-submerged inside its shield. Then the shield collapses as the distortion energies continue to boil and warp space-time around it.

As the steam clears, the crew makes out the waterlogged, scorched, half-sunk shape of the Bilgerat. The surviving Scarabus gangsters cling to the wreckage, while Captain

Scarabus himself staggers to the escape shuttle. He kicks other survivors away from the shuttle's landing gear, pulls himself in, and takes off. The shuttle leaps into the air and turns towards Teraci City.

It gets less than ten kilometers before the second missile blows it out of the sky.

SETUP: GUESTS OF MR. KRUDGE

With the destruction of the Bilgerat and effective decapitation of the Scarabus gang, Krudge's organization is now the undisputed top dog in the Teraci underworld.

He gets to enjoy this status for a few hours at most—the arrival of the Fury ensures that criminal activity on Teraci gets heavily suppressed for the foreseeable future. Still, their part in the defeat of his rival means the Bulldogs are invited to stay at Krudge's villa for a few days before returning to their ship. In that time, if it hasn't already happened, the Teraci government gets overthrown by the military coup, and all ships in the spaceport are temporarily impounded. The crew isn't going anywhere, so they can either spend the time in a ratty, bug-infected hotel in Teraci City, or in the sybaritic environs of a crime lord's pleasure palace; it's their call.

Any moderate consequences get healed; Bulldogs may also be able to shake some consequences, too, depending on what caused the injuries. All crew may refresh fate points.

PROBLEM: MEETING MR. KRUDGE

It's always good to have a crime lord on your side.

While most of the crew's interactions at the villa will probably be with Krudge's hulking major-domo, an Arsubaran cyborg named Mixmeat Joe, the polite thing to do is pay a visit to Mr. Krudge. Krudge's attitude towards the crew depends on the fate of the zhonga. If they got it to him safely, he's pleased. If they got it to him safely and also served as bait for the Scarabus gang, he's very pleased. Complaining about being involved in drug smuggling, or worse, losing the zhonga, displeases him. The difficulty of any Rapport with Krudge varies between Average (+1) to Great (+4). If the crates have the **TAMPERED** aspect, then Krudge is automatically displeased. If the crew get on well with Krudge, then he rewards them with an extra credit box in pay and the aspect **WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO DESERVE THIS GENEROSITY?**.

NEVER WORK WITH CHILDREN, URSEMINITES, OR MURDEROUS DRUG KINGPINS

Bulldogs often operate on the shady side of the law, but especially upright crewmembers may take objection to being used as pawns by Mr. Krudge, especially if he massacred the Scarabus gang in front of them. The crew can get even by passing on inside information about Krudge's operation to the authorities or by sabotaging the zhonga plants. Suicidally brave crewmembers could even try taking out Krudge's guards and the kingpin himself.

If the crew takes this path, then Urtwhistle (see *Setup: Mud All over My Cloak and Dagger* on page 48) can make contact with the Bulldogs directly.



FRANK KRUDGE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

MURDEROUS DRUG KINGPIN; BEST TELL HIM WHAT HE WANTS TO HEAR; DANGEROUS DANDY; NEVER WITHOUT BACKUP

Skills

GREAT (+4): Provoke

GOOD (+3): Command, Rapport

FAIR (+2): Contacts, Shoot, Resolve

AVERAGE (+1): Larceny, Athletics, Haggle, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

SCARY: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone attempts to create an advantage using intimidation (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

AURA OF MENACE: gain +2 to Provoke to create advantages when wordlessly radiating menace (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HELZ-BELLEN PERSONAL DEFENSE PISTOL: Medium

Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **THE BEST HANDGUN MONEY CAN BUY.**

PERSONAL DEFENSE SCREEN: Light Shield

Stress ☐☐

SYNTHETIC MESH VEST: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session),

☐ **EXCEPTIONALLY DISCREET.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:



MIXMEAT JOE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

CYBERNETICALLY ENHANCED MUSCLE; HALF MAN, HALF MACHINE; MR. KRUDGE SAID SO; SHOCKINGLY STRONG AND FAST

Skills

GREAT (+4): Physique

GOOD (+3): Fight, Survival

FAIR (+2): Athletics, Provoke, Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Larceny, Resolve, Stealth, Engineering

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

HERCULEAN STRENGTH: gain +2 to Physique when overcoming obstacles by lifting immense weight (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

STEEL KNUCKLES: Light Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict),

☐ **DID SOMEONE GET THE NUMBER OF THAT TRUCK?**

COMBAT SHIELD: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

ARMOR GRAFTS AND PLATING: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), ☐ **BUILT-IN PROTECTION.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

THE KRUDGE GANG

Aspects

NO ONE MESSES WITH MR. KRUDGE

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Shoot

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

HEAVY BLAST PISTOLS: Light Weapon, ☐ **BIG, CHEAP, AND DISPOSABLE.**

BLAST VEST: Light Armor, ☐ **MILITARY SURPLUS SUPPLY.**

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: LIFE UNDER THE FURY

Everywhere they look, the crew sees the planet changing. The military junta takes charge, claiming that they will crack down on gang violence and modernize the planet instead of clinging to the outdated traditions of the Captain-Kings, but the only visible sign of this is the huge expansion of the Teraci armed forces. The ships that made up the blockage return to Teraci or the other nearby worlds they came from, spreading the doctrine of the Fury to those systems as they go. Contact with systems outside the Fury's sphere of influence drops off to next to nothing, and all 'unapproved' space travel is banned 'for the duration of the emergency.'

There's a small TransGalaxy depot on Teraci, but if the crew checks it out, they find it's closed and abandoned. It looks like the staff left in a hurry. Attempts to contact TransGalaxy HQ are equally fruitless—the government monitors all communications off Teraci. This planet is still a backwater, but it's become part of the petty little empire of the Fury.

Most of the Fury recruits on Teraci are Arsubaran, so non-Arsubaran Bulldogs face hostility and prejudice. The planet is still in the early stages of Fury infection, so this is limited to the occasional suspicious glare or overt rudeness, but a lone alien might be attacked and viciously beaten by Fury-infected Teracians.

Things are even worse for the former rulers of Teraci. The military junta orders that all members of the Captain-King dynasty must be arrested. The crew soon hears rumors about executions and murders—it could all be just hearsay, but there's no way of knowing.

For his part, Krudge lays low. He's obviously concerned about this sudden and unexpected change in the planetary rulership but will not discuss his illicit business with outsiders like the Bulldogs.

PROBLEM: THE WHEELS OF BUREAUCRACY

Crewmembers trying to deal with the Fury through official channels find themselves stymied. There's no legal way to convince the Teraci junta to reopen the spaceport and allow the Bulldogs to leave. In fact, asking is counterproductive; surely, if the Bulldogs are so eager to leave, they must have some ulterior motive for this haste. Maybe they're smuggling contraband goods: better double-check their impounded spacecraft, just to be sure. It takes a Superb (+5) Rapport roll for the clerk to even consider releasing the crew's ship and processing the paperwork will take several days. (On the bright side, this means that the crew won't need to steal their ship back.)

While at the spaceport, the crew notices a black-hulled military transport landing on the main field. A detachment of armored soldiers emerge from the ship, and are met by senior members of the Teraci junta. These newcomers are Scions, the elite troops of the Fury. Their presence here indicates that the Fury isn't going away—they're digging in here on Teraci.

SETUP: MUD ALL OVER MY CLOAK AND DAGGER

Krudge calls the Bulldogs in to make a business proposal. He explains that he has been contacted by a potential client for TransGalaxy—a member of the former government of Teraci wishes to buy passage to Galactic Central Point. As all members of the former ruling caste are now criminals, this may be a dangerous assignment. The unnamed client is in hiding; Krudge was contacted by an aide named Urtwhistle. The Bulldogs must find this Urtwhistle, who will then tell them where the client is. They must then secure the client and find transport offworld.

The crime lord is clearly amused by the prospect of a former enemy turning to him for help. He points out that he could inform the junta and their Fury patrons about this, thus currying favor with the new rulers, but he is a man of honor. The crew should head back to Teraci City—he'll provide transport if they need it—and make contact with this Urtwhistle. They are to meet him at the old City-Ship outside Teraci City.

PROBLEM: THE MEETING

Long ago, the natives of Teraci sailed the wide oceans on titanic City-Ships. All those magnificent vessels sank long ago, all except the one that ran aground here. That City-Ship is now a water-logged, crumbling wreck. The parts of it nearest to the shore are preserved as a memorial, but the rest was allowed to collapse into the sea. More than three quarters of the ship are gone, but there's a spit of barely-intact wreckage extending out into the bay that's above water, and that's where Urtwhistle's hiding.

To get to him, the Bulldogs have to clamber out along precarious platforms, cross rotting decks that roll with every wave, and take detours through foul-smelling bilges. It's not especially dangerous—unless you're a Tetshuashan, in which case getting dunked in sea-water is like getting dumped in battery acid. If a Bulldog is unlucky enough to fall into the water, they've got to make Mediocre (+0) Athletics rolls to avoid drowning, or Fair (+2) to climb back up the wreckage. Alternatively, they can wade back to the shore easily, but they're out of the rest of the scene.

Eventually, the crew finds a small soggy cabin. The wooden door is so swollen that it has to be forced open. Inside waits a small soggy clerk, **Timphi Urtwhistle**. He pulls an absurdly large gun as the crew enters but drops it into the water instead of aiming it. He digs around in the water for it as he speaks to the Bulldogs. The clerk explains:

- He works—or worked—as the assistant under-secretary to Navigatrix Thelise, the former Teraci minister of intelligence.
- She escaped and managed to escape into the swamps when the military leadership switched sides and joined the Fury.
- She's still in hiding with the Swampfolk. She sent Urtwhistle to arrange passage offworld.
- The Fury are hunting her. Not just because the Navigatrix is part of the ruling family, but she's also the architect of the multi-system blockade against the Fury. She was one of the first people to realize that this new movement could be a threat to the Frontier States.
- So, all the crew needs to do is come with Urtwhistle into the swamp, get to Thelise before the Fury find her, and get her offworld in their ship. What do you mean, your ship's impounded and the Fury have banned all traffic? No, of course Urtwhistle didn't know—he's been sitting in a swamp for a week!



TIMPHI URTWHISTLE

Aspects

LOYAL TO A FAULT; GOOD WITH NUMBERS, NOT MUCH ELSE

Skills

FAIR (+2): Science

AVERAGE (+1): Science, Rapport

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Gear

SOAKED PISTOL: Light Weapon, ☐ PROBABLY STILL WORKS.



PROBLEM: PLAYING BOTH SIDES

One of the Bulldogs gets a communicator call from Krudge. “Have you made contact with the client?” he asks. “Excellent. I’m afraid that I’ve had to tell the Fury where to find you. It’s just business, you understand. I have to do business with these fanatics. You have enough time to escape if you move quickly. Good luck, and I do hope this won’t affect our future dealings.”

A moment later, the crew hears the unmistakable sound of an airshuttle swooping down. The Fury are here!

Krudge is playing both sides; he’s arranged for the Navigatrix to make contact with TransGalaxy, but he’s also informed the Fury. No matter what happens here, someone owes Krudge a favor.

So, the crew needs to get off the ruined City-Ship and escape into the swamps. Unfortunately, between them and Urtwhistle’s hovercraft is a Fury patrol consisting of:

- **Namor Lash**, an Arsubaran Scion. He’s a former Bulldog, and the crew immediately spots the faded TransGalaxy patch on his armor. His ship visited a Fury world six months ago. He was already nursing a grudge against TransGalaxy for their treatment of his crewmates, and the Fury infected him through that crack in his psyche. He’ll try to spare the crew, but if they start shooting, he won’t hold back.
- **Mola Coloç**, a Dolom mercenary who works for the Teraci military. She’s not a member of the Fury, but she diligently follows orders, and if that means arresting some rebels, then that’s what she’ll do. Mola’s terrified of the ocean—she can swim in the denser waters of her homeworld, but she’ll sink like a stone in these thin seas.
- **Zago Pollux**, a Teraci officer. Another Arsubaran. Zago’s a crooked cop—he volunteered for the rebel-hunting mission because he thought it would be a good opportunity to pick up some loot or bribes. If he corners a Bulldog, he can be bribed to look the other way.

Accompanying them is a team of a dozen security troops; they’re Average (+1) minions, but they’re packing enough firepower to be a problem.

On the topic of firepower, actually: the wreck of a giant ship that’s been crumbling and rotting for several centuries is not a safe place to fight. The City-Ship has a stress track of ten boxes. When it runs out of stress, place the aspect **SINKING** on the scene, which can be invoked or compelled to drown people. For now, the ship is moderately stable. At the start of the fight, it only takes damage if someone directly attacks the ship or uses a weapon with the Explosive improvement. After that, it takes 1 damage per round automatically as it starts to fall apart, while still taking damage from direct attacks or Explosive shots.

Oh, and anyone who rolls a **■■■■** on the dice and misses can be considered to be making a direct attack on the ship.

The Bulldogs don’t need to kill Namor Lash and company—they just need to get off the ship and escape into the swamps on Urtwhistle’s hovercraft (or they could sneak up and steal the airshuttle that the guards arrived on, or swim away, or find a five-hundred-year-old speedboat in some forgotten compartment of the City-Ship...)

NOOKS AND CRANNIES

INVOKE: lots of places to hide, “Quick, duck into this air vent!”

COMPEL: it can be pretty cramped, “I’m stuck! Help!”



WRECK OF THE CITY-SHIP

INVOKE: you're fighting on a historical monument that's also a giant half-sunk ship, "There's an interpretive center over there. We can hide in it."

COMPEL: it's a dangerous wreck, "The floor's giving way!"

WRECKED CITY-SHIP

Conditions

Sinking ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

NAMOR LASH

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

FORMER BULLDOG; ANGRY YOUNG MAN; THE STARS CALL; JACKBOOTS MAKE ME FEEL TALLER

Skills

GREAT (+4): Athletics

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Pilot

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Fight, Stealth

AVERAGE (+1): Survival, Provoke, Physique, Haggle

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

MIGHTY LEAP: gain +2 to overcome obstacles with Athletics when jumping (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

H&K72 PRECISION BLASTERS: Medium Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **RIGHT ON TARGET.**

POWER SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SCION ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), ☐ **ANTIQUÉ DESIGN.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

MOLA COLAÇ

SPECIES: Dolom

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

BIG, BLUE, AND FOR HIRE; WORKS FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER; THREE POWERFUL ARMS; NEVER LEARNED TO SWIM

Skills

GREAT (+4): Physique

GOOD (+3): Fight, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Provoke, Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Engineering, Stealth, Haggle, Pilot

Stunts & Species Abilities

THICK SKINNED: gain an extra mild consequence and an extra Angry box (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

THIRD ARM: once per session, take two actions in the same round (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

GREAT STRENGTH: +1 to all Physique roll when applying brute strength (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

HEAVY MOMENTUM: +2 to overcome physical obstacles with Physique if you've got a running start (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

HAND-EYE COORDINATION: +2 to create advantages with Engineering when doing complicated or delicate tasks (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

ROTARY MACHINE GUN: Heavy

Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress

on a successful hit

once per con-

flict), Autofire

(once per session attack

two targets in the same zone),

☐ **UNLEASH HELL.**

DEFENSE SCREEN: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SYNTHETIC PLATE: Medium Armor, ☐ **HEAVY HIGH-TECH PLATE MAIL.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:





ZAGO POLLUX

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

CORRUPT COP; GO ALONG TO GET ALONG; TERACI BORN AND BRED; NASTY PIECE OF WORK

Skills

GREAT (+4): Pilot

GOOD (+3): Survival, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Fight, Command, Contacts

AVERAGE (+1): Empathy, Provoke, Larceny, Rapport

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

INSIDER: +2 with Contacts to overcome obstacles when relying on contacts to negotiate bureaucracy (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

QUICK ON THE DRAW: once per conflict, take a Shoot action at any point in the exchange if you haven't already taken an action (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **TRICKED OUT**.

STUNSTICK: Light Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **STUNNED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **POLICE-ISSUE RIOT CONTROL WEAPON**.

COMBAT SCREENS: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

COMPOSITE BODY ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ **STANDARD ISSUE COP GEAR**.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

SECURITY GUARDS

Aspects

WE ARE THE LAW

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Shoot

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

HEAVY BLAST PISTOLS: Medium Weapon, ☐ LOADED FOR BEAR.

PROBLEM: THE ESCAPE

And after the Bulldogs get off the wrecked city-ship, it's really just a chase scene. If Lash is still upright, then he may choose to deliberately let the Bulldogs escape so he can follow them to the Navigatrix. However, if it's just minions still chasing the crew, or if they chewed up the first course and you had to send in reinforcements, then it's a high-speed chase across country to get to the swamps.

Urtwhistle arrived at the City-Ship in a hovercraft, which is the standard vehicle for swanning around the swamps if you're a city-boy. Real swamp-folk use small unpowered boats or grav-sleds, neither of which get caught in the foul weeds every fifteen minutes. Still, the hovercraft is a zippy way of crossing the grasslands and marshes that lead to the swamp. The hovercraft is big enough to carry all the Bulldogs.

The military junta guards fly airshuttles or even gunships.

SETUP: FULL SERVICE TRANSPORT

There's a reason that the explorers who came to Teraci thousands of years ago said, "Hey, let's turn our colony ships into giant floating city-sized rafts instead of settling on the only bit of solid land on the whole planet." The swamps of Teraci are deeply unpleasant and extremely dangerous. It's not just the foot-long leeches, or the sulphurous stench, or the oppressive darkness, or the uncanny feeling that the trees move when you're not looking, or the giant swamp monsters...

Well, it might be the giant swamp monsters, but most of all it's the feeling of rot and decay and sprouting unwholesome life. The humidity makes you sweat, and you can't shake the feeling that mushrooms and other fungi are fruiting from your sweaty armpits. Wipe your brow with a rag, and it comes away covered with a greenish mold.

Somewhere in the swamp is the client, and TransGalaxy offers full service transport. On days like this, that means going into the hellhole, rescuing Navigatrix Thelise, getting her back to Teraci City, busting their ship out of the impound yard, flying to GCP, and doing it all with a smile.

HOT AND HUMID

INVOKE: you can use the conditions to your advantage, "Hey, did any of the guards take off their helmets? It must be really hot inside those things."

COMPEL: you need to take precautions, "Need... water.... Er. Water... that... isn't... swarming... with... leeches..."



Remember, some species (like Saldrallans and Ryjyllians) are affected by unusually hot conditions.

PROBLEM: LOST IN THE SWAMP

Urtwhistle had a map to the swampfolk village where Thelise is hiding. Operative word—"had".

"Well, you startled me on the ship... yes, when you came for our pre-arranged meeting—and then those Fury guards showed up and, well, I thought we might be captured so I took out the data chip and swallowed it. So they wouldn't get the map, you see. I think I know the way to go, though." Operative word—"think". It soon becomes clear that Urtwhistle has the sense of direction the gods give to potted plants. He could make a stab at working out which way is down, but if the crew tries following his directions through the swamp, they'll rapidly find themselves going in circles.

They need to find an alternative way of navigating. Some possibilities:

- An Average (+1) Survival roll lets the Bulldog navigate through the swamp.
- They could use a suitable social skill to dredge the information out of Urtwhistle, like Command to inspire him to remember, Rapport to reconstruct the map, or Provoke to shock his brain cells into working.
- Coupling Science and Engineering, they could retrieve the remains of the data chip and extract the data.
- A few people live in the swamps. There are the swampfolk natives, but there are also trappers, hermits, prospectors, loggers, botanists, serial killers, and so on. If the crew runs into any such people, they can barter or otherwise obtain a map with Haggle, Rapport, or Larceny.
- Science can provide clues to direction. "This moss only grows on the north side of the trees, and the spores on Urtwhistle's jacket match both that moss and a rare fungus found in only a few places in the swamps. This way!"
- Systems can be used to scan the swamp. Scanning for life signs is pointless, but scanning for electromagnetic activity picks up the location of the old research station (see Swamp Monster, page 58).

Finding the route through the swamp takes a week with an Average (+1) roll; using shifts, the crew should be able to reduce that time.

PROBLEM: WE'RE NOT ALONE

As the crew floats/drives/slogs as appropriate through the swamp, call for Survival rolls. Anyone who gets a score of Good (+3) or better spots a metallic orb flying overhead. The orb is about a metre wide and is studded with sensor probes and communications dishes. It's also got a laser, which it uses to slice through the forest canopy to get a better view. It's a scout robot: a Fair (+2) roll using a suitable skill (Science, Systems, Engineering) can guess that it's linked into the Teraci military grid. What it sees, they see, and if the drone gets taken out, then the military will send a team to investigate.

- **HIDING FROM THE DRONE:** The Drone has Good (+3) Survival, and it's got **ADVANCED SENSORS** that it can invoke for a +2 bonus to its attempts to beat the crew's Stealth. The crew needs to beat the drone by at least two shifts to convince it that there's nothing here. If they only equal or beat its result by 1, then the drone hasn't detected them, but keeps sniffing around the area anyway.

- **DESTROYING THE DRONE:** It's not that tough, but it can put up a fight. If the drone's destroyed, then a Fury patrol shows up within thirty minutes and starts searching the swamp from that point.
- **HACKING THE DRONE:** This requires a Superb (+5) Systems roll, but if the crew can remotely access the drone's computer, they can feed it false information and send the Fury on a wild swamp goose chase. (The Teracian Wild Swamp Goose is a delicacy on several planets, famed for its smoky flavor. Just make sure you remove the venom sacs from the beak.)
- **ABANDONING THEIR VEHICLE:** The drone's clearly searching for whatever vehicle the crew was last seen in. For example, if they fled the City-Ship in Urtwhistle's hovercraft, then the drone is looking for hovercraft. Abandoning ship and continuing on foot or finding another mode of transport can throw the drone off the scent.
- **TRICKING THE DRONE:** If the crew chooses the right moment, they can draw the Fury into a trap. Say, for example, they dodge the drone long enough to find a slumbering Swamp Monster...

TERACI SWAMPFOLK

The first colonists that arrived on Teraci saw how horrible the swamps were and how bountiful (and far from the swamps) her wide blue oceans were. They chose to build the City-Ships and live on the open ocean. So did most of the other waves of colonization that followed, but there are always a few iconoclasts and contrary folk who have to do something different. Despite the ghastliness of the inland swamps, they chose to settle there instead. Life for the swampfolk is hard and full of bugs and leeches. The one high point of swampfolk culture came some five hundred years ago, when they got to say "we told you so" to the shipwrecked survivors of the last City.

The swampfolk are mostly Arsubaran, but Tetsuashans get everywhere too. They live in shacks that stand on stilts above the mire. The Tourists' Guide to Teraci calls them a 'simple, rustic folk who are slow to welcome outsiders', which is inaccurate—they're not slow, they're stationary when it comes to welcoming outsiders. Or other Teracians. Or, indeed, anyone.

In years past, the swampfolk hunted the titanic Swamp Monsters, but they've since been declared an endangered species by the Teraci government and the practice was outlawed. This is another bone of contention between the swampfolk and the authorities.

STUBBORN ENOUGH TO LIVE IN A SWAMP

INVOKE: take advantage of the fact that you're in the literal backwater of a backwater planet, "I'll trade you this shiny ray-gun for your boat. When was the last time you saw such a shiny ray-gun in this swamp?"

COMPEL: they don't take kindly to being pushed around, "Listen, you slimy swamp-rat, we're on a time limit here!"

PROBLEM: THE SWAMPFOLK

According to Urtwhistle's information, Thelise is hiding with the swampfolk. He's clearly nervous about this—the swampfolk have never been especially loyal to the Captain-King dynasty, but then again, they're equally unlikely to be allied with the Fury. Thelise has been moving from swamp village to swamp village since the coup.

The crew arrive in a little village. Children shimmy up the stilts and vanish inside the houses; swampfolk eye the newcomers suspiciously and finger their guns in a threatening manner. The leader of the village, a Tetsuashan named Florg, swims out in a finger-canoe to parley with the crew. (A finger-canoe, by the way, is a Tetsuashan boat consisting of a wooden flotation ring with a sort of canvas glove in the middle. The Tetsuashan sits in the glove and inserts its tentacles into the 'fingers', so it can paddle through the water without getting wet. Back on Suash, they use them for paddling around near salt water. Here, they use them because the swamp's unpleasant even for a slimy alien). Florg's bolted a pair of submachine guns onto the gunwales of its finger-canoe.

"Go away," it burbles, "there's nothing for you here. We don't want any of whatever you bring to us."

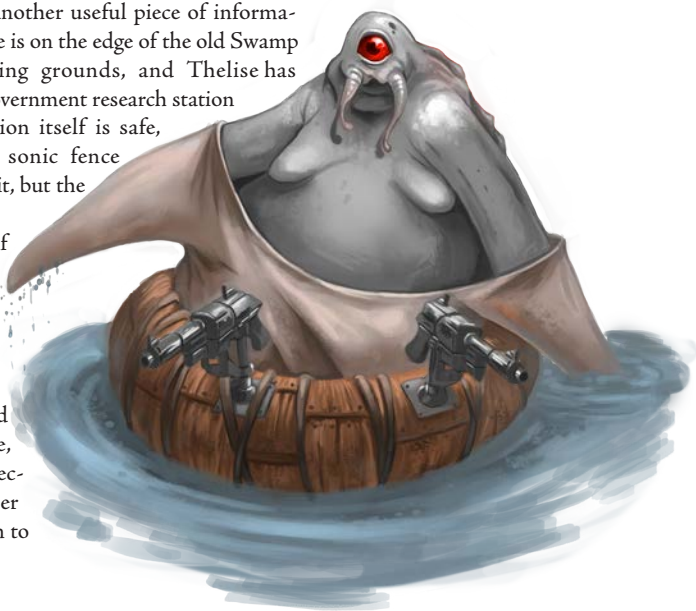
With a Fair (+2) Empathy roll, the crew realizes that Florg is protecting Thelise—it's making sure that the crew aren't Fury. If they can prove that they're not enemies of Thelise, then they get a +2 bonus to Rapport rolls with Florg.

Florg dislikes Urtwhistle (it suspects, correctly, that Urtwhistle dislikes the swampfolk).

Using Rapport or Haggles to convince Florg to help requires at least a Great (+4) result; it grumpily admits that Thelise was here but moved on to a nearby research installation.

Survival spots several clues that there's a source of high-tech material nearby; with a Good (+3) roll, the crew sees places where holes in shacks have been patched with plastic panels, or notice a hovercraft partially hidden beneath a tarpaulin, or spot a communications dish bolted to the side of a tree. Looking around, checking maps, or scanning for structures reveals the presence of an old research station.

Florg's eager to get rid of the crew as quickly as possible but chatting with the other villagers (or succeed with style when talking to Florg) reveals another useful piece of information. This village is on the edge of the old Swamp Monster hunting grounds, and Thelise has moved to the government research station there. The station itself is safe, thanks to the sonic fence that surrounds it, but the area around it is dangerous if the monsters stir. While the locals know about the Swamp Monsters and the sonic fence, they will not necessarily volunteer this information to the crew.



PROBLEM: SWAMP MONSTER

Imagine a flattened eel, with an ugly mouth full of tiny sharp teeth at one end. Add a dozen or so eyes on stalks that can float on the surface of the muddy water, while the eel lurks in the murky depths below. Now assume that the eel never stops growing; the longer it lives, the bigger and meaner and nastier it gets. After a few hundred years, you have one of the fabled Swamp Monsters. Most of the time, they sit on the bottom of the deeper regions of the swamp in semi-hibernation, sucking in mud and filtering out worms and bugs. Sometimes, though, they stir and hunt.

Teraci researchers discovered that the Monsters—the species are officially called Sargothians, but everyone just calls them Swamp Monsters—can be influenced by sub-sonic transmissions. The right signal can lull the worms to sleep or drive them away. They also discovered that the Swamp Monsters are enraged by certain sonic frequencies, including those produced by mechanical engines. So, drive a hovercraft through the wrong part of the swamp, and you get a cranky eel the size of a train snapping at you from below.

Call for Survival rolls as the crew approaches this region (unless they were warned by Florg). A Fair (+2) result spots some odd bubbles rising up through the mud as the eel exhales. A Good (+3) result lets the Bulldog spot a rusted, half-overgrown warning sign saying “DANGER—WILDLIFE SANCTUARY”. Near the sign is a partially submerged piece of equipment; one of the sonic beacons used to keep the Monsters quiescent.

An Average (+1) Science roll lets a Bulldog remember the Swamp Monsters of Teraci; a Good (+3) result gets the Bulldog one of the creature’s aspects, specifically **GIANT MONSTER**. More shifts mean more aspects.

Now if the crew is in a hovercraft or some other vehicle, then they are in danger of stirring the Swamp Monster. They have choices.

- **OPTION 1:** Get out and walk. Well, wade. A cruel GM might ask for a few Athletics tests to avoid drowning, and this option certainly involves lots of leeches. Plus, there’s a small chance that the Swamp Monster may sense the vibrations, so let’s have a Stealth test too; anything above Awful (-3) is fine. Walking takes longer, which means that the crew has less time at the station before the Fury arrive.
- **OPTION 2:** Keep going as quietly as possible. That means making a Pilot check to drive with a minimum of vibration. The crew needs a Great (+4) roll to avoid waking a Monster, but they do get to the station quickly.
- **OPTION 3:** This is the option that the crew picks by default if they don’t know about the Swamp Monsters. They zoom ahead, the vibrations from their engine rippling deep into the water... and far below, it stirs. The Monster rises, mud sloughing from its flanks. It’s hungry. On the bright side, the crew does have a **HEAD START** when the creature starts chasing them.

SWAMP MONSTER

SPECIES: Sargothian

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

GIANT MONSTER; CRANKY LEVIATHAN; SENSITIVE TO SONICS; NIGH-UNKILLABLE

Skills

EPIC (+7): Physique

FANTASTIC (+6): Fight

GREAT (+4): Athletics

GOOD (+3): Resolve

FAIR (+2): Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth

Stunts & Species Abilities

FEEL THE BURN X3: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

BRAWLER: gain +2 to defend with Fight when outnumbered (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



PROBLEM: THE STATION

From the outside, the research station looks like a larger version of a swampfolk shack, only made of steel and plastic instead of wood and dried fungus. The place has obviously been abandoned for years, but the power generator is still running. There are lights on inside, and the sonic fence is still running. Sensitive Bulldogs can feel the infrasound in their bones (or gel-sacs, in the case of Tetsuashans).

Searching around, there's another hovercraft docked outside the main entrance hatch.

Inside, the crew finds computer files and printouts describing the station's original function, the life cycle of the Swamp Monsters, and the operation of the sonic fence. The fence is currently locked—the control systems are protected by an authorization code, ensuring that the machinery continues to keep the Swamp Monsters quiet and away from the station.

Exploring, the crew finds signs of habitation. Someone's been living here for a day or two. Call for Survival rolls as they explore. Getting Average (+1) or better means the crew find Navigatrix Thelise in the old main control room; getting Mediocre (+0) or worse means that the crew's first introduction to the diplomat is when she sticks a gun in the ribs of some unlucky Bulldog and demands to see some ID. The crew can easily prove their credentials, especially if Urtwhistle accompanies them.

NAVIGATRIX THELISE

Teraci has—well, had up until the Fury hit them with the Psychic Regime Change Ray—a semi-hereditary ruling class. All the administrators and governors were drawn from the descendants of the family of the Captain-King. Not every member of this caste had a role in the government, but many did, including Thelise. Her title of Navigatrix implies that the (former) rulers of Teraci saw great potential in her. The Navigatrix's rôle is to prepare the planet for the challenges of the future, by concentrating on emerging trends and establishing forward-looking policies. For a native of Teraci, Thelise is well-travelled and cosmopolitan. She may look like a pampered aristocratic lady, but she knows her way around a Class D engine room—and both ends of a blaster.

The Navigatrix is convinced that the Fury is a bigger problem than most people realize. The movement appeared on the fringe of the Frontier Zone only a few years ago, but it is growing at an incredible rate. Planet after planet has joined the Fury and committed an unreasonable proportion of their resources and armed forces to the cause. She believes that the Fury must be under the control of some mysterious masters, and that they must have some secret way to affect the minds of the people they conquer. Some influencing machine, perhaps, a genetically engineered cross-species virus that alters cognitive ability, or an irresistible meme, or orbital mind-control lasers—Teraci is not the only world to have suddenly switched sides.

Thelise spent the last four months gathering information and making alliances against the Fury. She believes that she can obtain evidence proving that the Fury is a dangerous alien threat and that the Alliance of Federated Frontier States must take action. She needs to get to Galactic Central Point so she can lobby to address the Assembly and make them understand the threat posed by the Fury.

A Great (+4) Survival roll lets a Bulldog find something much more alarming—lurking inside one of the air vents is another scout robot. As soon as it is discovered, the drone takes off and flies into the air, shooting its laser to dissuade any pursuit. It is clear that it was eavesdropping on Thelise—and now the Fury know where she is.

If the crew doesn't find the drone then they will be taken by surprise when the enemy arrive.

NAVIGATRIX THELISE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

INTERSTELLAR DIPLOMAT; DESTINED FOR GREAT THINGS; THE FURY MUST BE STOPPED; CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Rapport

GOOD (+3): Command, Contacts

FAIR (+2): Science, Empathy, Stealth

AVERAGE (+1): Systems, Pilot, Survival, Resolve

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

STARFARER: +2 to Rapport to discover the correct etiquette for any culture or situation (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: +2 to Command when calling someone to action based on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*)

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

ASSASSINATION SHIELD: Light Shield, Special (+1 stress versus surprise attacks).

Stress ☐☐☐

BALLISTIC CLOTH ROBES: Light Armor,

☐ TACTFULLY DURABLE.

☐ Mild:



SETUP: RACING THE FURY

The crew has their cargo in the shapely shape of Thelise. Now, they have to deliver her safely to Galactic Central Point. Step one is getting her offworld. There are several problems that the crew needs to overcome, but if they've gotten this far, they must be resourceful sorts.

Thelise has a few crates that she must take with her; mostly documents and files, but she also has a suitcase with a false bottom that conceals some weapons and other useful gadgets. (If a Bulldog says something like "I wish we had some explosives" or "what I really need now is a one-shot invisibility cloak", then Thelise can produce one from her bag of tricks.) Gathering her equipment and loading it onto a vehicle (remember, Thelise has a spare hovercraft if the crew needs it) takes another few minutes.

THE SONIC FENCE: If any of the crew are seized by a sudden interest in Swamp Monster biology, or want to see about jury-rigging the sonic fence into a weapon, they can examine the system. Thelise warns them that the computer is locked down, but a Good (+3) Systems or Larceny check can bypass the security code (alternatively, Engineering can be used to fiddle with the sonic system directly, or Survival can find the security code written in a discarded notebook by a long-gone absent-minded professor). With access to the sonic fence, the crew can do any of the following:

- **Leave it alone.** This keeps the Swamp Monsters away from the research station and ensures they stay sleepy (as long as no one drives a hovercraft right over one).
- **Switch it off.** The Swamp Monsters stir. The research station is still safe for the moment, but curious and hungry Swamp Monsters may come close after an hour or so. They also lose the **SLEEPY** aspect.
- **Reverse it.** In other words, draw every Swamp Monster in the area to the research station and drive them into a destructive frenzy. If the crew picks this option, then a little "Are you sure you want to do this?" dialog box pops up on the fence control computer. Clicking "yes" means a Swamp Monster battle orgy within a few minutes. Anyone near the station gets attacked by angry giant eels.
- **Switch the frequencies.** The crew can, with a bit of creative rewiring, turn the sonic fence into a one-shot sonic weapon that zaps everyone in the vicinity of the station with the same effect as a concussion grenade.

PROBLEM: THE PATROL

Thanks to a probe robot (or by following the crew), the Fury know where the Navigatrix is, and they are coming to get her. This second patrol consists of any survivors of the first patrol (see page 50), plus another dozen minions, plus two additions. The first is a traitorous swampfolk criminal, Hordun, recruited as a guide to the swamps. The second is a heavy combat robot, delivered by air shuttle. As soon as the robot deploys from the belly of shuttle, it sinks up to its waist in the thick mud, limiting its movement severely. Still, it's got a lot of firepower.

So, how long did it take the crew to get here?

NOT THAT LONG AT ALL: They drove (or flew) the whole way here, they didn't get lost, and they stayed clear of the Fury? Great job. The crew have a nice head start. Even if the second probe robot reports their location, they can vanish into the swamp before the Fury get here. They even have time to leave a few surprises for the bad guys.

AVERAGE TIME: They got here relatively quickly, but had a few problems along the way. In this case, the Fury show up just as the crew are about to leave. They can either bolt from the station, or dig in there.

TOO LONG: It's a trap! The Fury intend to capture both the Navigatrix and the Bulldogs. They arrive at exactly the worst time; say, when half the crew are in the station, and the others are in the hovercraft.

COMBAT ZONES

THICK UNDERGROWTH (MULTIPLE ZONES): Lots of cover and places to hide. Hovercraft that enter these zones require a successful Pilot check against Good (+3) Difficulty to avoid getting tangled in weeds.

OPEN SWAMP (MULTIPLE ZONES): Thick, sucking mud means these zones are all require extra move actions to enter or leave. The station is surrounded by open swamp.

UNDER THE STATION: Dark, sheltered. There are lots of pipes and power cables down here. They are securely insulated, but a stray laser blast or a hefty Physique roll could knock a cable into the water, frying anyone nearby.

DOCKING RAMP: Thelise's hovercraft is here. The docking ramp has **NO COVER**.

MAIN CORRIDOR: Narrow, dimly lit, and the floor is slick with mud.

LOWER LAB: Mostly abandoned, but there are a few glass beakers and jars of Swamp Monster urine that could be used as missile weapons.

SONIC FENCE CONTROLS: Also contains the station's computer core and engineering subsystems.

STAIRS

UPPER LAB: Thelise's camp is here. The windows have a good field of fire onto the swamp below.

STOREROOMS: More junk. A scavenger could possibly find something useful amid the broken chairs and muddy old boots.

ROOF: It takes a Good (+3) Athletics roll to climb up here, but gives anyone firing from the roof a **VANTAGE POINT**—it's a good place for a sniper.

If the dice turn against the crew, and they're getting their asses kicked instead of kicking ass, then there are some ways of helping them out.

UNLIKELY ALLIES

Florg may not like the Teraci government, but it really dislikes armed soldiers invading its swamp. The swampfolk leader and its warriors swarm out of the marshes and start shooting at the Fury troops.

SWAMP MONSTER ATTACK!

Nothing says 'game changer' like a giant Swamp Monster. The crew can trigger this event themselves by meddling with the sonic fence or luring the Fury into a trap, but it can also happen by mischance.



LOWER FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



RESEARCH STATION

1. SWAMP
2. ENTRANCE
3. LIFT
4. LOWER LAB
5. CONTROL ROOM
6. UPPER LAB
7. STORAGE
8. BUNK ROOM

PROBLEM: GETTING OFFWORLD

If the crew has a vehicle, then they can zip out of the swamp, optionally dodging Fury troops coming in on speeder-bike hovercraft as they go. Thelise has her own hovercraft, they could hijack an air shuttle, or borrow a boat from the swampfolk. (Bonus points to any Bulldog who works out a way to ride a Swamp Monster alien eel!)

Once back in civilization (or as close as Teraci gets to civilization), the next step is to take their freighter offworld. If the crew have not already broken their ship out of the impound yard, then they still need to do so, see page 29 for details on the spaceport's security protocols. If they have their ship stashed somewhere safe, then it's time to blow this backwater.

Most of the ships that were in the system when the crew arrived have since departed. Both the Fury ships and the blockade that was formed to stop them are gone. The blockade ships are now part of the Fury, and even now, they are en route to other worlds to spread the contagion. While this is bad news for the rest of the galaxy, it does give the Bulldogs a window to escape. All they need to do is smuggle Thelise on board, fire up the engines, and fly!

PROBLEM: FAST PURSUIT SHIPS

Actually, it turns out that when the Fury took possession of the Teraci blockade and moved on, they left a few ships behind. Lurking behind one of Teraci's four moons is a squadron of six fast pursuit ships—small, two-man interceptors. As soon as the Bulldogs' ship flies past the moon's orbit, the interceptors launch. They are faster than most freighters and more heavily armed. Also, this time they have no interest in boarding the Class D; their mission this time is to blow them out of the sky.

Thelise staggers to the bridge as blasts rock the freighter and suggests that the Bulldogs should take shelter in the nearby Byarsail nebula, a dust cloud that stretches lazily around the edge of the Teraci system. Parts of the nebula are dense enough to block sensors; it's an old smuggling route.

DEEP IN THE NEBULA

INVOKE: use the dust clouds for cover, "Okay, go to silent running."

COMPEL: it's a navigation hazard, "Look out for that asteroid!"

FAST PURSUIT INTERCEPTORS

SIZE: Small

MANEUVERABILITY: Fair (+2)

ENGINES: Plasma Boost Drive (Light)

Aspects

BUILT FOR SPEED; SHORT RANGE ONLY

Weapons

LASER BATTERY: Medium Weapon, ☐ **WITHERING CROSSFIRE.**

Crew

PILOT: Fair (+2)

ENGINEER: Mediocre (+0)

SYSTEMS TECH: Mediocre (+0)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Crippled: ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

PROBLEM: STOWAWAY ASSASSIN

As the Bulldogs' ship swoops into the nebula, they run through a strange energy field. It does not show up on their sensors, but the crew all catch a glimpse of a blazing ribbon of ruby-red flame stretching across space. They are passing through the psychic field of the Fury.

Is Urtwhistle on board? If so, he opens his mind and the Fury seeps in. For most people, indoctrination by the Fury is a slow process, as the psychic field exploits some emotional weakness or need, but in Urtwhistle's case, the stress of the last few days coupled with his own weak psychic defences make him easy prey. At some point on the voyage home—ideally while one of the Bulldogs is with Thelise—Urtwhistle attempts to assassinate the Navigatrix.

He might try:

- Sneaking around the ship during the night shift, breaking into her quarters, and shooting her.
- Sabotaging the ship's engines.
- Sending a message to the Fury, so they can find the ship in the nebula.
- Scrambling the ship's shields so they broadcast an energy pulse, giving away their position.
- Attacking the pilot in the middle of a dogfight.

Urtwhistle is not very tough; even augmented by the Fury, he's not a fighter, but remember he's got a Fury-derived Aspect. In his case, it's **FUELLED BY PSYCHIC HATE**. Taking out Urtwhistle ends this threat. The final confrontation with Urtwhistle is not the finale to the adventure. Escaping the Teraci system is the finale: Urtwhistle's strange treachery is a downbeat coda to that triumph. The Bulldogs have completed their mission, but the mysterious Fury is still growing.

TIMPHI URTWHISTLE

Aspects

FUELLED BY PSYCHIC HATE; GOOD WITH NUMBERS, NOT MUCH ELSE

Skills

FAIR (+2): Science

AVERAGE (+1): Systems, Rapport

Conditions

Angry ☐ ☐

Winded ☐ ☐

Gear

DRIED-OUT PISTOL: Light Weapon, ☐ **PROBABLY STILL WORKS.**

SETUP: HOMEWARD BOUND

The freighter races across the galaxy, blazing hundreds of times faster than sluggish light. It jumps from the strange, isolated systems of the fringe towards a buzzing hive that is Galactic Central Point. With each jump through hyperspace, the crew finds themselves closer and closer to the madcap, cosmopolitan melting pot of the core. They leave behind the superstitious, insular worlds, the one-species colonies, the half-deserted stations. The traffic on the spaceways gets heavier and heavier. A few jumps ago, the freighter might have been the only ship in the whole star system, but within a dozen jumps of GCP, the crew finds themselves stuck in billion-kilometer tailbacks or trucking convoys that blacken the skies of the worlds below.

In contrast to parochial little Teraci, the core worlds are wildly, frenetically alive. Ships the size of moons cruise by; alien species from a thousand worlds crowd the spaceports; trillions of credits flow through the economies of worlds that never sleep. Here, in the beating heart of the galaxy, the crew is just another delivery truck in a million-strong fleet, a tiny speck of light in the blazing, buzzing swarm of ships that flit around Job Tower and GCP.

Here, in the light of day, the Fury seems like another weird fad from the fringes, a delusion for hicks and lunatics. The crew are home and safe. The Teraci Job is done.

FIVE MONTHS LATER...

The next adventure in the *Heart of the Fury* campaign takes place several months after The Teraci Job. You can either run your own adventures in the gap (keeping the Fury plot bubbling away by mentioning more frontier worlds joining the growing alliance) or just skip straight to Wildfire and assume that the Bulldogs spent the last few months working as usual on absurdly dangerous delivery jobs.

If you do choose to play through the events of the intervening months, then keep Thelise in the Bulldogs' lives. As she is now effectively in exile from her homeworld, she has few friends left in the galaxy, so she turns to the crew for support and company. She spends the intervening months gathering information about the Fury and trying to convince the major systems in the Alliance of Federated Frontier States to take the threat seriously.

LIFE DURING WARTIME

The rest of *Heart of the Fury* plays out against the backdrop of a growing galactic conflict. One by one, then dozen by dozen, independent systems suddenly explode in civil wars, or decide to invade their neighboring worlds because of some half-remembered grudge. The psychic influence of the Fury, leaking invisibly from that crashed temple-ship, corrodes civilization across the galaxy.

That's going to make life interesting for the Bulldogs. War's great for TransGalaxy's bottom line; the regular shipping lanes get disrupted, people suddenly need urgent shipments sent to the weirdest places, they get to charge hazard rates. It's not so great for the delivery crews, of course. Here are some ways you can bring the war into your game.

CLASHING FLEETS

The Bulldogs warp into a system and into the middle of a gigantic space battle. Titanic warships exchange blistering barrages of laser fire, while nimble fighters zip around them. Energy blasts that could sear a continent to ash zap past the Bulldog's ship. TransGalaxy freighters are neutral and shouldn't be targeted by either side. As the war spreads, once-safe routes become frontiers in space. Hyperspatial mines, disputed zones, graveyards of wrecked fleets, autonomous robot kill-squadrons, biological weapons. Get ready for the galaxy to become a whole lot more dangerous.

GALAXY AT WAR

INVOKE: to profit from the war, "These are the only neutron stabilizers for sale this side of the Fury front line. You'll have to pay double."

COMPEL: to have things explode messily in the Bulldogs' faces, "Unknown freighter, this is a designated free fire zone! Surrender and lower your shields so we can blow you up!"

SKY FULL OF DEATH RAYS

INVOKE: as a distraction, "I dodge through the missile swarm."

COMPEL: as a detonation, "Krak-BOOM!"

MILITARY MISSIONS

Remember how we said TransGalaxy's scrupulously neutral? That means the Bulldogs may find themselves running missions for every side in these space wars. One week, they're delivering purple paint to a new Fury-aligned planet; next, they're dropping off laser cannons to defend against an invasion of freshly empurpled ships. That means that both sides may make life harder for the Bulldogs—expect saboteurs, spies, customs inspectors, ticking time bombs, and deliveries of ammo to the front lines, care of the highest ranked officer who's still alive.

MILITARY-GRADE CARGO RUN

INVOKE: to pull something out of your cargo bay in an emergency, "You pirates want our cargo? You can have it. *Fire.*"

COMPEL: you wouldn't touch these jobs if you had a choice, "Boss, these crates: they're all stasis pods. I think they're prisoners of war. And by my calculations, the pods are going to run out of juice before we can deliver them. What should we do?"

HIGHEST PRIORITY

INVOKE: to clear the path, "We've got an escort of four star fighters to make sure we get to the landing zone."

COMPEL: if it's important to your client, it's important to their enemies, "It's not that I want to murder you, but this cargo must never reach the enemies of the Fury."

UPHEAVAL & ANARCHY

The chaos of war warps societies. Sometimes, under pressure, they become more regimented, more focused on supporting the war effort. It can also break them, reducing them to anarchistic wastelands where only the strongest and most desperate survive.

DON'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A WAR ON?

INVOKE: to remind people to suck it up and keep going, "If we don't get these medical supplies to that station, no-one else is going to swoop in and save them. We're all they've got."

COMPEL: more bureaucracy, more controls, "What do you mean, we need a permit for our Ryjyllian? Since when?"

FAILED STATE PLANET

INVOKE: to loot what you need to stay flying, "There's an abandoned research base in that asteroid. We can refuel there."

COMPEL: civilization collapses very quickly, "Ok, the clerk we were supposed to deliver stuff to is now a barbarian warlord in the atomic outzone—but we still need his signature if we're going to get paid."

THE PERSONAL COST

The soldiers and pilots in the war aren't just faceless minions; they're people too. They might be the Bulldogs' friends or family, their former associates, their there-but-for-the-whims-of-fate-go-I doppelgangers. War can force people into strange circumstances and tough decisions, especially in a weird artificial war like the ones provoked by the Fury.

DESERTERS AND UNBELIEVERS

INVOKE: when trying to persuade someone who's having second thoughts about the war, "We can take you with us when we blast off, but you've got to let us out of this jail cell first."

COMPEL: deserters might turn to piracy or mercenary work, "I'm just trying to survive, same as you—now hand over your cargo."

OLD FRIENDS CAUGHT IN THE CONFLICT

INVOKE: you've got an old buddy on one side of the war, "Hey, I know that voice. Rjzx, stop shooting at us!"

COMPEL: now that old buddy's calling in a debt, "We've got to get Rjzx off that planet before the Fury capture her. It's a life debt."

THE PICKUP JOB

EXPRESS ROUTE: It's never a good idea to know your clients. The Saldrallans, cold-blooded bastards that they are, have that right. Emotional entanglements make things complicated. So, when the call comes in that the crew's new client is one Navigatrix Thelise from the Teraci Government in Exile, any experienced Bulldog feels a twinge of worry. This is going to get messy.

Thelise meets the crew in a suitable venue—if they have a regular meeting point, she will meet them there, or else she names a bar in Job Tower. She shows up with a Ryjyllian bodyguard, Sbbryr, who intrusively scans the Bulldogs for bugging devices and looks like she's paranoid enough to do cavity searches on everyone she meets. If she's in a bad mood, she'll make her own cavities with those claws. After Thelise is sure that no-one is eavesdropping on them, she describes the job.

There's a planet a few parsecs away called Depot. All the crew have been there before, many times. It's almost as big a transport hub as GCP, although it's a lot dirtier and more industrial. No Stakes, no InfoCity, just a trillion cargo containers in a continent-sized holding yard. The crew is to meet with an agent there, a Ken Reeg named **Hoops Overtly**, who is bringing important information from the fringe systems.

SCENIC ROUTE: Bulldog crews make cargo runs to Depot two or three times a year on average; some unlucky crews end up investing in timeshare apartments made out of cargo containers because they end up back there so often. The Bulldogs might get hired to do a Depot run from anywhere in the galaxy, either to meet an informant, as above, or just to deliver or pick up cargo.

PROBLEM: EMPTY HOLDS MEAN EMPTY BELLIES

This isn't so much a problem as an opportunity—if the job just involves making a pickup on Depot, and the pickup is just sensitive information instead of bulk cargo, then the crew can make a little extra cash on the side by taking some more jobs that are heading in the same direction. There's always plenty of cargo heading to and from Depot. As far as TransGalaxy is concerned, though, the crew is already booked. They could take an illegal delivery job, which would be more lucrative. Or they could pool their cash and buy some goods themselves and try to find a rich buyer on Depot.

TRANSGALAXY

If the crew does the right thing—or, at least, the politic thing—and go through their employers, that means waiting in a dull-as-vacuum office in Job Tower for several hours. The queue to get to one of the four service windows is endless; the office, airless; the other Bulldogs produce an exciting array of bodily odors that could be considered a biological weapon. This office handles both extra assignments and complaints, so most of the other Bulldogs are here to complain about some screw-up, like the delivery of a swarm of flesh-eating beetles that were supposed to be kept in a stasis pod, only the pod's power cable doesn't fit the ship's connectors, and the beetles ate the engineer. Or the delivery to a planet called Faliac, except there are two worlds with that name, and they're at opposite ends of the galaxy. Or the job involving Urseminites. Lots of Urseminites.

The only entertainment comes from watching one of the clerks slowly going insane. He's a Hacragorkan. He's a Hacragorkan who clearly made poor life choices. While his classmates were dropping out of school and getting involved in bare-knuckle death matches, he was studying accounting. He's the Hacragorkan equivalent of a delinquent drop-out.

He still has his species' notorious temper, and he's popping handfuls of mood-stabilizer pills as he deals with all these complaints.

The queue moves very, very slowly, but the Bulldogs can work out that they'll be sent to one of the other three service windows. They can avoid the angry Hacragorkan.

Unfortunately, lunch-time hits at exactly the wrong moment. Three windows close just before the crew gets to them. The queue pushes them towards the only window left.

"HOW MAY I HELP YOU?" snarls the Hacragorkan clerk. He sticks to his approved TransGalaxy Class D Assignment Negotiation & Clarification Intra-Company Service Script, which was designed by a team of management consultants to be as friendly as possible, but he reads that script in a way that makes it clear that he's spoiling for a bloody brawl. He makes "please complete form 6A" into a blood oath of vengeful death.

In game terms, the Bulldog doing the negotiation needs to make a Great (+4) Rapport or Haggle roll to get a good job out of the Hacragorkan clerk. If the roll is only Fair (+2) or Good (+3), then the crew gets a job that takes them to Depot, but the clerk takes his frustration out on the crew by giving them the worst job imaginable. On a roll of Average (+1) or less, the Hacragorkan loses it completely and tries to clamber over the blast-proof plexi-glass partition with the intent of beating the crew to death with office supplies and/or their own spines.

- ♦ **FAIR/GOOD:** The crew gets to haul giant canisters of highly unstable chemicals. A chemical factory in orbit of GCP went bust, and some of their old stock has to be shipped to Depot for recycling and safe disposal. According to regulations, materials like this should be carried by ships that are specially equipped and rated for toxic chemical handling, but the factory owners slipped a bribe to some TransGalaxy agent to look the other way, so the canisters are going Class D freight instead. Welcome to the joy of the aspect **EXPLOSIVELY UNSTABLE CARGO**.
- ♦ **GREAT OR BETTER:** The Hacragorkan assigns the crew a prestigious cargo—a load of Devalkamanchan caviar, one of the galaxy's rarest delicacies. Devalkamanchan caviar is only edible for a brief period of approximately 24 hours that starts three months after the caviar is harvested—when the poison content drops to a non-lethal level, but the taste is still undiminished. This cargo has a time limit, so if the crew are delayed on the way, it will be ruined. If they get it there on time, though, it's worth a bonus.

EXPLOSIVELY UNSTABLE CARGO

INVOKE: no-one wants to get near you, "Customs inspection? Sure. You've got a Class Seven Ultra-Hazard Encounter suit, right?'Cos you need a Class Seven UHE and a really strong stomach to go into our hold right now."

COMPEL: any jarring of the cargo—a bad landing, enemy fire, a Dolom sneezing—could trigger an explosion, "Helm, they're firing. Take very, very, very gentle emergency evasive manoeuvres."

HOT CAVIAR, COMING THROUGH

INVOKE: everyone wants a piece of this, "We'll take our giant credit bonus in cash, please."

COMPEL: time limits cramp your style, "I love you too... but I have caviar in my cargo hold, and so I cannot linger."

ILLEGAL CARGOS

The crew needs to make a Fair (+2) Contacts roll or invoke a suitable aspect to get in touch with the right semi-legal broker—**Yasha Cora**. She's an Arsubaran bartender in a nasty dive called the Nasty Dive (the holologo outside the bar shows a Class D freighter crashing into the ground, over and over and over). The bar is especially popular with Ryjyllians, so she keeps the place icy cold and wears a big furry parka behind the bar.

Cora has a cargo bound for Depot, all right. A family of Arsubaran refugees came to Galactic Central Point a few weeks ago, fleeing the Fury takeover of their homeworld. She's distantly related to them, and agreed to send them onto Depot. From Depot, they intend to catch a ship to another Arsubaran colony out near Skimmer's Rock, far away from the Fury.

A Good (+3) Empathy roll picks up that Cora is not being entirely honest. What she is not mentioning is that these refugees are former slaves (technically, indentured servants) owned by the Fallon gang. They paid Boss Fallon's minions to smuggle them offworld but didn't read the fine print that said that once they got to GCP, they were bound to work for Fallon until they had paid off the 'full' (read: absurdly inflated) cost of their travel. Now, they are paying Cora a considerably smaller amount to arrange their escape.

Cora tells the crew to make pickup at a docking platform on the edge of a factory town on Arsubar. Plunging through clouds of industrial fumes and smoke, the crew spot a dozen bedraggled Arsubarans clutching a single bag each, all huddled in the middle of the platform. Before the ship's landing gear are even fully extended, the refugees start pressing forward, eager to be on board, heedless of the hundred-storey drop on three sides of the docking tongue.

As the last refugee climbs on, the crew spot a group of guards sprinting towards the ship, hollering and waving their guns. They wave at the crew to stay where they are. If the Bulldogs look like they are about to take off, they start firing. There are six guards in the initial group, although lots more join the fight if the crew hang around.



BOSS FALLON'S GUARDS

Aspects

FALLON IS THE ONE THAT PAYS US, AND HE PAYS WELL

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Athletics

Conditions

Angry	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□
Winded	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□

Gear

HEAVY BLAST RIFLES: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **PACKS A REAL PUNCH.**

After taking off, but before they jump to hyperspace, the crew gets a call from Tongo Fell (see page 18), one of Boss Fallon's henchmen. Tongo tries to be conciliatory, but comes across as slimier than a cultured slime mold. He explains that there's clearly been some terrible misunderstanding, or that the crew was misled, or some other easily resolvable problem. If the Bulldogs turn around right now and give the refugees back, oh, and tell Tongo who hired them, there won't be any repercussions. If they fly off with Boss Fallon's investments, though, then... well, does Tongo have to finish that threat? (He's happy to finish the threat, if the crew asks. It involves the Bulldogs being gutted by a pack of Urseminites armed with boxcutters and electric saws. Those who cross Boss Fallon don't live very long, and they really don't enjoy what's left of that life.)

If the crew hands the refugees back to Tongo, then the criminal keeps his word, and there are no repercussions for the Bulldogs. (Cora, on the other hand, gets killed.) If they keep going, then they get paid by the refugees when they get to Depot. This is worth a credits box, but also results in the crew getting the aspect **PRICE ON MY HEAD.**

PRICE ON MY HEAD

INVOKE: it adds to your reputation, "I've got nothing to lose—don't push me!"

COMPEL: assassins. Assassins everywhere, "Now—you die!"

SPECULATIVE TRADE

The crew can buy a regular above-board cargo on Arsubar and bring it to Depot (it is not the most lucrative trade route, as the GCP/Depot route is serviced by giant mega-freighters). At Depot, the buyer they find is a Phelmoid named Hobeu. Phelmoids are intelligent jellyfish. Each Phelmoid has one central brain that controls their body, but it's a relatively simple organ. Their real intelligence is in their tentacles, each of which has its own brain. The Phelmoid is effectively a collective intelligence—or, more accurately, a creature run by committee. The tentacles all usually agree on what to do, and coordinate through a combination of nerve impulses and gestures, but sometimes they argue.

HOBEU

Aspects

GOT A TENTACLE IN EVERYTHING; THE RIGHT TENTACLE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT THE LEFT ONE'S DOING

Skills

GOOD (+3): Haggle

FAIR (+2): Empathy

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Rapport

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

PROBLEM: NAVIGATION HAZARD

The route from Galactic Central Point to Depot leads through a zone called the Black Gates. There are two black holes in relatively close proximity to one another. The safest route is to take a long detour around the two yawning gravity wells. It is possible to fly straight down the narrow hyperspace corridor (the Portico) between the two, but that route presents several problems. First, the big megafreighters and warships have right of way; Class D ships are on the same priority rung as garbage scows and space missionaries. Second, the Portico is heavily guarded by Arsubaran warships. Back during the Thousand-Year war, the Arsubarans dragged a small moon down the Portico and turned it into a hideously beweaponed fortress called the Doorkeeper. Anything trying to get through the Portico without authorization gets blasted to smithereens by the Doorkeeper.

The crew need to choose. The safe option is to take the long route around; it's dull and slow, but well-travelled and easy. (Of course, if they have a hold full of hungry indentured workers or rapidly-decaying caviar, then they may not have time to waste.)

Option two is to tag along with a megafreighter that has permission to run the Portico. Megafreighter crews normally look down on Bulldogs and consider them dangerous thugs, but maybe a Contacts roll or an aspect invocation could whistle up a friendly captain. Or, there's the old trick of landing your Class D on the hull of a bigger ship and hitching a ride. Now, there is another option. The black holes wobble slightly. The Portico is always safe, but it is sometimes possible to plot a course that runs outside the Portico corridor but doesn't cross the event horizon of the nearest black hole. Picking this option requires a Great (+4) Pilot check, but lets the crew fly through the Black Gates at full speed. If the check fails, though, the ship takes stress equal to the margin of failure and they must evade back into the Portico.

PROBLEM: UNWANTED SALVAGE

The crew pick up a distress signal. It's oddly intermittent, as if the beacon is fading in and out. Listening to the call for a few moments lets a crewmember realize that the beacon is being deliberately turned on and off, turning a constant distress signal into a message in a simple binary code. A graphically insulting message in simple binary code, to be precise, aimed at someone called Fracko.

Following the distress call leads to a battered escape pod from a Class D Freighter. The pod drifts through space, tumbling without any thrusters or artificial gravity. The lights on board flicker in time with the breaks in the transmission—the passenger must be cutting power to the whole pod (including heating and life support) to send that message.

If the crew pick up the pod, then an Urseminite stumbles out and throws up vigorously and gleefully on the shoes of some unlucky Bulldog. The crew have just rescued Thup, former security officer on a ship called the *Black Swan*. Thup has a very obvious cybernetic implant sticking out of his brain. He's quite pleasant for an Urseminite, thanks to this implant. It's a brain filter—it automatically suppresses any violent impulses. If he thinks about getting violent, it jolts him with enough electricity to wipe his short-term memory, so he goes from murderous to confused in an instant. He's learned that he can be malicious and awful in other ways, as long as he stays away from thinking about outright violence. The implant was imposed on him back in Saldrallan Union space, as punishment for a minor atrocity.

Captain Fracko turned Thup into a living hand grenade. The captain built a remote control for the implant. At the touch of a button, he could overstimulate the violence lobes of the Urseminite's brain, turning Thup into a frenzied killing machine. Thup got tired of Fracko's influence over him and took his revenge. He can't recall exactly what form the revenge took, other than 'obscenely biological'. Apparently, some part of the revenge involved violent thoughts, and, well, the next thing he knew he was in the escape pod.

Thup claims every protection and right afforded to rescued victims. He knows his rights—food and shelter and orange blankets and medical treatment for his nausea, frostbite, and these weird warts all over his hairy dangly bits. The crew may wish to recruit Thup or dump the weird little alien at the next port. If the crew have passengers or valuable cargo, then keeping Thup away from them is a good idea. ("Hey, you! Refugee-slave! Feed me more expensive caviar or I'll stick this laser up yer *bzzzzt* huh? Ooh, caviar! Gimme!")

Should a Bulldog wish to recreate Fracko's violence remote control, then they can do so with a few day's work and a Good (+3) Engineering roll. When frenzied, Thup gets boosted to Superb (+5) Fight.

THUP

Aspects

VIOLENT TO CONFUSED IN AN INSTANT

Skills

GOOD (+3): Shoot

FAIR (+2): Fight

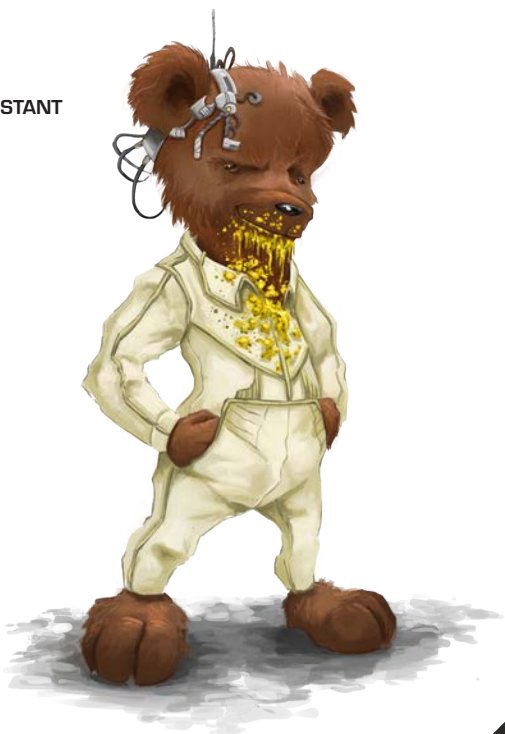
AVERAGE (+1): Provoke, Physique

Conditions

Winded ☐

Angry ☐

Stunned ☐



OPTIONAL COMPLICATION: CAPTAIN FRACKO

If the crew take Thup with them, then they have to run into Captain Fracko at some point. Never reveal exactly what Thup did to him, just drop more and more hints that get more and more alarming.

PROBLEM: WARNING LIGHTS

During the ship's night cycle, a little red light blinks on in the control panel. According to the computer read-out, there's a problem with the ship's auxiliary hyperspatial impeller. That's a minor problem, normally. The main impeller is one of the toughest, longest-lasting components on the ship and is designed to last for the ship's entire operational lifespan. The auxiliary impeller is only used when the main impeller is undergoing routine maintenance, or when you need an extra burst of speed in hyperspace.

However, most Class D ships are years past the end of their rated operational lifespan. They should be on a scrapheap, not flying around the galaxy. It's possible—but unlikely—that the main impeller might shut down, forcing the crew to rely on the auxiliary, and then they'd be in trouble if that failed too. You're supposed to disengage gently from hyperspace; without an impeller, it would be like flying head-first into a brick wall the size of the universe.

Stopping to fix the impeller requires an Average (+1) Engineering roll and takes a few days. Doing it in flight brings the Difficulty up to Good (+3).

If the crew choose to fly on without an auxiliary impeller, then have the captain roll the Fate dice. On a **■■■■**, the unthinkable happens, and both impellers fail within seconds of each other. The pilot has to make a Superb (+5) Pilot roll as the ship suddenly falls out of hyperspace right in the middle of an asteroid field. If the roll fails, then that's stress equal to 2 + the margin of failure.

PROBLEM: REST STOP

The Depot system sees a lot of freighter traffic, especially along the route from the Black Gates. Orbiting at the edge of the system is Thor's Bar & Grill. It started centuries ago as a little rest stop, and somewhere at the core of that ramshackle agglutination of cargo containers, derelict freighters, zero-g deep-fry tanks, and neon lights is that original little space station. These days, Thor's is one of the biggest space stations in the Frontier Zone, a thousand burger joints and gas stations stacked in crazy zero-g angles. A legion of robots staff the kitchens alongside three-armed Dolom master fry cooks, each manning three stations simultaneously. The repair yard at Thor's is big enough to handle a Templar Glorious Belligerence-class SuperDreadnought, and some of the biggest entertainers in the galaxy played the concert stage here (early in their careers, of course).

If the crew are in a hurry, they can bypass Thor's—though their ship will be running on fumes by the time they hit Depot—but they will miss out on one of the wonders of the galaxy (at least, from a trucker's point of view). Thor's is a great place to pick up news, rumors, and curiosities from the fringes of known space. A Fair (+2) Contacts, Rapport, or Empathy roll gets one of the rumors below; extra shifts mean more rumors. A really bad roll means that Hacragorkan heard what you said about his mother.

- Those Fury weirdos keep growing in number. Their alliance now includes dozens of worlds, including some key systems. Some pundits worry that

this could upset the delicate balance between the Frontier Zone and the Templars—the old Treaty of Arsubar assumes that all the independent systems say independent.

- There's a high-stakes poker tournament on Depot. Some of the best players from Stakes came here last week.
- The Barracado pirates moved their base of operations recently. They are quiet at the moment, but wait a few weeks, and you'll see a lot more pirate attacks. Keep your laser handy!
- Boss Fallon? He's on the way out! There's some new syndicate moving in on GCP, and there's going to be a nasty turf war in the underworld.
- Did you hear? TransGalaxy lawyers now argue that they get to set the terms of any medical treatments for any Bulldogs injured in the line of duty! They're going to turn us all into budget cyborgs, hardwired for company loyalty!
- The Armada Corporation got in an order for a whole flotilla of warships. Someone's tooling up for a big war.
- Those Fury weirdos aren't that bad. The whole damn galaxy's run by thieves and bastards—anything that shakes things up is good!
- A pal of mine was out delivering a cargo of synthmeat tasks to a border world. When he arrived, he found out that the whole planet had joined the Fury. They impounded his ship and when he complained, they shot him and blew his legs off. He only escaped by sticking his legs in the synth tanks to regrow them. Now he smells like bacon when he walks.

EVERYONE COMES TO THOR'S

INVOKE: everyone in the galaxy passes through here at some point, "How'd I find you? I sat here nursing a drink and watched the door."

COMPEL: there's a good chance of running into someone you don't want to see, "Oh hell, it's Kara. I owe her money. And six pints of my blood. Don't ask."

THOR'S DISCOUNT FUEL

INVOKE: it's cheap fuel, "Is cheap fuel! Please ignore radiation glow! Is healthy glow!"

COMPEL: you don't know what you're putting in your tank, "What's that smell?"

ARRIVAL AT DEPOT

Some planets glitter like jewels from orbit. Some glimmer, with a billion electric lights shining from the night side of their continent-spanning cities. Some glow with the fires of a million volcanoes.

And some, like Depot, look immensely dull. It's a planet-sized stockyard, remember? The whole place is painted in shades of rust, faded paint, and bare metal. As the ships spiral down towards their assigned landing platform, they fly over mountain-sized piles of shipping containers. The shipping container is the symbol, the totemic mascot, and the primary construction material used on Depot. They've built whole cities out of disused shipping containers. At first glance, it's hard to tell the difference between a pile of shipping containers and a Depot building. (Some Depot residents have had their homes mistakenly loaded onto freighters while they slept; they call that a Depot holiday.)

The colony of Depot is a historical accident. In the boom decades after the Treaty of Arsubar, the Arsubar system could not cope with the sheer amount of shipping that needed to pass through. Arsubar is one of the industrial heartlands of the galaxy (the galaxy has multiple hearts, like a Dolom), and imports all its food. The authorities put restrictions on the number of ships that could enter the system on any given day. Ships

started leaving cargo on a convenient planet near the Black Gates so it could be hauled in by an authorized ship. Fast forward nine hundred years, and you've got Depot. The original little colony may still be here somewhere, buried beneath all those containers.

As Depot architecture is essentially defined by the standard cargo container, it tends to get repetitive—boxy corridors leading to boxy rooms, with the occasional rare boxy open space walled by lots of boxes. It's also a maze; locals know their way around, but visitors often hire electronic maps or guides. Still, if you can find your way through the boxy maze, there are all sorts of hotels, bars, and other nightlife, mostly orientated towards the delivery crews and truckers that make up most of Depot's transient population.

PLANET OF SHIPPING CONTAINERS

INVOKE: you can pick up a job here easily, "Yeah, we need something delivered. Cash up front, too"

COMPEL: it's easy to get lost here, "You're in a maze of boxy rooms, all alike."

SEEDILY DULL OR DULLY SEEDY?

INVOKE: if you need a criminal, there's one within sneezing distance, "Hey, buddy, wanna buy some slightly-used Templari power armor?"

COMPEL: lots of petty crime can cause problems, "Hey! My electronic wallet's been deleted!"

PROBLEM: DELIVERY

If the Bulldogs brought an extra cargo from GCP, then they have to deliver it. If it's speculative trade, then they need to find their buyer. Hobeu the Jellyfish has a tank in the Overship Bazaar. Most of the goods sold in this bazaar 'fell off' the back of a cargo ship or couldn't be crammed into a cargo container, so it is an extremely eclectic mix of weird alien stuff.

If it's the illegal refugees, then they can just drop them off here, but kind-hearted crew members may wish to ensure that the refugees don't get snapped up by some other criminal and instead find them a ship heading for safer space. Contacts could be used to find a suitable ship.

If it's the unstable chemicals, then there's a problem. The company that was supposed to take delivery of them for disposal has been shut down. Allegedly, they dumped toxic materials and nuclear waste into cargo containers, randomly moved the containers to other parts of Depot, then walked away. The authorities are still searching for the dangerous containers. While neither the crew nor TransGalaxy are going to make a loss on the delivery, as the shipping was prepaid from Arsubar, the crew need to find a way to get rid of a hold full of volatile toxic gunk.

If it's the caviar, then it is bound for the annual dinner party of the board of Aggressive Intercessive Insurance, a Templari corporation that operates in the Frontier Zone. AII specializes in selling astoundingly expensive insurance to motivated buyers, which means sending insurance salesmen into warzones and disaster areas. Many of their sales agents moonlight as mercenaries. The Templari despise other species; if the crew got the caviar to them on time, then the Templari pay grudgingly. If the crew are late, and hand over spoiled caviar, then they just made enemies of a few hundred very heavily armed insurance brokers.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Run *The Informant* as the Bulldogs search for Navigatrix Thelise's contact on Depot.

SCENIC ROUTE: The Bulldogs deliver or pick up their cargo; as that's exactly why Depot exists, it counts as an existentially fulfilling and meaningful experience if you're into that sort of thing. If they're not here on some ulterior mission, then they might find out about an infamous gambling den (*Getting Into the Stake-Out*, page 84) or have trouble with some enemies from their past (*Old Friends*, page 81).

Hoops Overly might attach himself to the Bulldogs like a Hackragorkan vacuum limpet, sticking with them for protection and claiming he's got vitally needed information about the war.



THE INFORMANT

EXPRESS ROUTE: Navigatrix Thelise hired the Bulldogs to pick up information from a Ken Reeg informant who goes by the unlikely name of Hoops Overtly. He's supposed to be waiting for them on Depot.

SCENIC ROUTE: Hoops gets into all sorts of scrapes and puts his fingers into all sorts of pies, many of which really shouldn't be touched. We're talking top-secret military pies, weird alien cult pies, corporate espionage pies—the sorts of pie that get you killed. The Bulldogs might be hired to pick up information from Hoops on Depot, which may require tracking him down.

Another option is to establish Hoops as a friend or contact of one of the crew, then compel an aspect like **STAND BY MY FRIENDS** or even **LET'S MAKE A DEAL** when Hoops calls for help.

Alternatively, the crew might just show up on Depot on unrelated business, and either get drawn into the underground gambling scene (see *Into the Stake-Out*, page 84) or asked by Gyelune Faras to find Hoops. If there are any Ken Reeg in the crew, then one of them might get targeted by Hoops' *Old Friends* (see page 81 and throw the Bulldog a fate point for compelling **SLIPPERY AS A SNAKE**)—the best way to find a Ken Reeg is to send another Ken Reeg after him, right?

PROBLEM: FINDING HOOPS

There's no sign of Hoops at the landing pad. According to Thelise, he should be there, but Ken Reeg are notoriously unreliable. It looks like the crew will have to drag him out of whatever drinking hole or illicit den of vice he's crawled into.

A Fair (+2) Contacts roll turns up a few people who know Hoops. He's a gambler and a vagabond, shady even for one of his people. He's got a taste for gambling, so they suggest looking in the various gambling halls and casinos deep beneath Depot. A Great (+4) or better roll puts the crew in touch with **Gyelune Faras**, an Arsubaran. She arrived on Depot with Hoops, on board a freighter called the *Waxy Feather*. The freighter came in three days ahead of schedule. The last time she saw Hoops, he was in perfect health and was looking for some entertainment before his ship came in. It's weird; the crew are the second people to ask after Hoops. There was another Arsubaran yesterday who said he was a friend of Hoops', some blue-haired guy with a strange accent. He never gave a name.

The crew also learns that Hoops travels with a partner, a Dolom nicknamed Barry. They arrived together, but no one's seen Barry around in a few days.

Checking passenger records with a Good (+3) Systems turns up the same data: Hoops and Barry arrived three days ago and checked into a Depot coffin hotel. Calling the hotel is useless; the robot clerk grudgingly admits that a Mr. Overtly is a guest there but is not in his room at present. Checking the room (Fair (+2) Larceny) turns up a leaflet for a high-stakes imprint poker tournament, called the Stake-Out. Succeeding with style on the Larceny roll lets the Bulldog notice that someone else has been here before them. The internal clock on the coffin's electronic lock is a second off, a telltale sign that someone hacked it. Barry wasn't staying here (Dolomé don't fit in these containers), but the crew can't find where he is staying.

Anyone with Fair (+2) or better Larceny knows about the Stake-Out tournament, held every few years on Depot. The gimmick of the tournament is that gamblers who were banned from Stakes for one reason or another (cheating, obscene personal habits, or violent crimes, usually) are allowed to play in the Stake-Out. A Bulldog with Great (+4)

or better Larceny probably has a standing invitation to attend. The event is quasi-legal; gambling is not banned on Depot, and the authorities are well aware of it. It's just not advertised openly. Still, asking or looking around (Larceny or Contacts) lets the crew find it without too much trouble.

PROBLEM: OLD FRIENDS

Hoops and Barry left some enemies behind on Depot. A few months ago, Hoops conned a local businessman into buying a collection of 'ancient alien artifacts' that turned out to be forgeries. The businessman, an Arsubaran called **Perry Zons**, wants his money back—with interest—and has hired a pair of thugs to find Hoops. These thugs, **Dremmer** and **Slimy Kevin**, may run into the Bulldogs, since they're asking questions about Hoops.

- Dremmer is a burly woman, formerly a commando in the Arsubaran military. Her methods are extremely direct; why go through a door when you can blow a hole in the wall? She knows Depot's underworld extremely well and has connections everywhere. She has a personal history with Hoops, which makes her even more determined to find the little weasel and wring his neck.
- Slimy Kevin is her new partner. Kevin was part of an exploration team that surveyed different planets until he contracted a bizarre fungal infection. His previous crew dumped him on Depot, and he joined up with Dremmer to survive. He is a talented hacker and technician. He wears an encounter suit most of the time to hide his fungus-infested features. For a gangly man in a space suit, he's surprisingly good at sneaking around and spying on people.
- Dremmer also has a small retinue of mobile ablative body armor, aka disposable thugs.



DREMMER

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

ARSUBARAN COMMANDO; THE DIRECT APPROACH IS USUALLY BEST; UNDERWORLD CONTACTS; MY FIST, YOUR FACE; VERY BIG GUN

Skills

GREAT (+4): Athletics

GOOD (+3): Physique, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Stealth, Resolve, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Larceny, Fight, Survival, Command

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

DIRTY FIGHTER: +1 to attack with Fight when you invoke an opponent's aspect (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HEAVY SONIC SHOTGUN: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Specialized (+1 to Shoot against targets in the same zone once per conflict), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Boost Effect (apply **PRONE** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **ROOMSWEEPER.**

REALLY HEAVY BLAST PISTOL: Heavy Weapon, ☐ **BIG AND INTIMIDATING**, ☐ **HIGH EXPLOSIVE AMMO.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

MILITARY SURPLUS BODY ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ **LIVED-IN ARMOR.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

SLIMY KEVIN

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

TALENTED SABOTEUR; SLIMY IN THOUGHT AND DEED; FREE HUGS; THE STARS CALL

Skills

GREAT (+4): Systems

GOOD (+3): Stealth, Fight

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Resolve, Larceny

AVERAGE (+1): Survival, Haggle, Pilot, Athletics

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

BLACK HAT: +2 to overcome or attack with Systems when attempting to destabilize or knock out an enemy system (page 148 of *Bulldogs!*).

LIKE THE WIND: use Stealth instead of Athletics to overcome obstacles when moving under cover (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

CAT BURGLAR: use Larceny instead of Athletics to overcome obstacles when making difficult climbs or athletic feats to break into a secure location (page 140 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

FLECHETTE PISTOL: Light Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Specialized (+1 to Shoot against unarmored organics once per conflict), ☐ **SCARY AS HELL.**

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐☐

TACTICAL ENCOUNTER SUIT: Light Armor, Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **INTERIOR FUNGAL COATING.**

☐ Mild:

DISPOSABLE THUGS

Aspects

TOUGH AS NAILS

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

BALLISTIC CLOTH: Light Armor, ☐ HARD TO DETECT.

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: INTO THE STAKE-OUT

Most of the cities on Depot are made out of disused and empty cargo containers. The lower reaches, though, were here before the planet's new existence as the stockyard of the eastern galaxy. These tunnels and chambers were carved out of bedrock. It is a labyrinth of stone arches and narrow, smoky passageways. The roof groans alarmingly every time a megafreighter drops another stack of containers on the overloaded piles overhead.

The Stake-Out is held in a large artificial cavern. As the crew approach, they notice an unusually high security presence, both Depot police and private security. Finally, they come to a locked door, where a Terizzan bouncer blocks their path. 'Private Function,' he buzzes. If pressed, he explains that the tournament has already started. Spectators are not allowed.

TERIZZANS

Terrizans look like six-foot-tall, vaguely humanoid wasps. They walk on either two or four legs, keeping their middle two limbs for manipulating objects. They can fly, although they can only manage short hops in standard gravity. See page 247 for more details.

BZZRT WHOSE NAME IS ON THE LIST

SPECIES: Terrizan

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

YOUR NAME'S NOT ON THE LIST; ALARMING APPEARANCE; NO TIME FOR TROUBLEMAKERS; DIRTY FIGHTER

Skills

GREAT (+4): Provoke

GOOD (+3): Survival, Fight

FAIR (+2): Larceny, Shoot, Resolve

AVERAGE (+1): Physique, Athletics, Contacts, Empathy

Stunts & Species Abilities

LOW-GRAVITY SPECIES: compel this attribute as though it were an aspect once per session (page 248).

GLIDER: while gliding, move one additional zone without taking a supplemental action (page 248).

FOUR ARMS: once per session, take two actions in the same round (page 248).

EAT ANYTHING: can eat and digest just about anything (page 248).

SCARY: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone attempts to create an advantage using intimidation (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

UNAPPROACHABLE: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone tries to manipulate you with Rapport or Empathy (page 143 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

STUNSTICK: Light Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **STUNNED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **NON-LETHAL**.

SPIKED AXE: Light Weapon, ☐ **LEAVES A NASTY WOUND**.

HEAVY BLAST PISTOL: Medium Weapon, ☐ **BIG AND INTIMIDATING**.

KNIFE-PROOF THORAX VEST: Medium Armor, ☐ **SAVED MY LIFE MORE THAN ONCE**.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:



There are several ways in.

- **BUYING IN:** While the tournament has already started, the crew could find a poor gambler who is willing to sell his seat. Roll Larceny against a difficulty of Superb (+5); the margin of failure determines how many credits are required to buy the seat. So, if the crew get a result of Fair (+2) on their Larceny roll, then the credits required to buy the seat is 3 ($5-2=3$). (Yes, this does mean that the crew could theoretically find some gambler who is willing to pay the crew to take his seat... but that means they're also taking on his debts).
- **SNEAKING IN:** Security at the tournament itself is tight, but getting onto the floor of the casino isn't that hard. There's the usual array of security cameras, motion trackers, surveillance drones, and other systems, but a Good (+3) Larceny or Stealth roll lets the crew sneak past.
- **BLUFFING IN:** A Good (+3) Empathy roll coupled with a plausible excuse and suitable props ("Hello, we're the caterers/entertainment/cleaners/delivering a pallet of factory-fresh decks of playing cards.") gets the crew past the door. They'll be watched all the way in, but assuming they just look for Hoops and don't try to rob the casino vault or something equally implausible, they will not attract any trouble.
- **SENDING A MESSAGE:** Hoops does not have a personal communicator or any other gadget, but the crew could easily send him a note via someone who has permission to enter the tournament. Unfortunately, Hoops is on a winning streak. Yes, he has information that might be vital to the security of the entire galaxy, but he's also got a winning hand here... what do you think takes priority for a Ken Reeg?
- **TALKING TO THE MANAGEMENT:** The owner of the casino and host of the tournament is another Ken Reeg, Jewel Tassel. If she were the sort of person who worries, then the pressure of the Stake-out might cause her to raise a perfectly sculpted eyebrow, or even frown imperceptibly, but it would take more than a poker tournament stuffed with cheats and criminals to crack Jewel's inhuman serenity. A Good (+3) Rapport roll convinces her to let the crew in to talk to Hoops, as long as they understand that any interference with her tournament will result in... well, she has an understanding with the Depot authorities, and those who cross her do not have a chance to regret it.
- **KICKING IN THE DOOR:** The bouncer isn't the only guard, but if they get past him, they have a few moments to find Hoops before the rest of the casino's security team show up.

However the crew get inside, they find themselves in a vast, dimly lit chamber, where a constellation of green-topped tables orbited by inveterate gamblers from across the galaxy shine beneath spot lights. Weirdly, the green-skinned Ken Reeg seem to almost blend in with that particular shade of green baize. Robots and other servants move silently in the shadows between tables, and the crew can also make out hulking armored security guards. The Stake-Out attracts some of the richest, but also the least trustworthy, gamblers in the Frontier Zone, so Jewel enforces a zero-tolerance policy. Only an idiot would try cheating here. Weapons are not permitted on the casino floor, either, but the security staff are less strict about this. The crew can bring in any easily concealable sidearms, but rifles, heavy blasters, or rocket launchers are banned.

IMPRINT POKER

The variant of Arsubaran Poker played at the Stake-Out tournament is called Imprint Poker. It plays more-or-less like normal poker, but the cards are very slightly psychic. When you handle the cards, a little bit of your personality gets imprinted on them. So, over the course of the game, you get psychic flashes of the other players. You don't automatically know whose imprint you're sensing, so part of the challenge is to work out which imprint corresponds to which player. If you work out, say, that that Hacragorkan has a **TERRIBLE TEMPER**, then you can compel that aspect to your advantage.

At the start of each round of Imprint Poker, pick a random aspect from any participating Bulldog. Someone else playing in that game now knows that aspect too. On the bright side, once per game, each player gets to come up with an aspect; that Aspect is secretly possessed by one of their opponents, and if they work out who that is, that may give them an edge.

For example, Captain Zerak has the aspect **NEVER BACKS DOWN**. Great aspect for a space battle or when you're trying to intimidate a raging Kraktorian Warrior, terrible to have in a poker tournament when an opponent can lure you into raising when you really shouldn't. And now, thanks to the psychic cards, other people in the tournament now know that someone at the table is really, really stubborn, making it more likely they'll compel that aspect.

As compensation, though, Zarek's player gets to make up an aspect that belongs to someone else in the game. She picks **EASILY FLUSTERED**. During the tournament, she sees a Saldrallan shifting awkwardly in his seat, and guesses that he's the player with that aspect. Time to push that Saldrallan into making a mistake...

STAKE-OUT GUARDS

Aspects

TOUGH AS NAILS

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight

Conditions

Angry ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Angry ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Gear

STUNSTICKS: Light Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **STUNNED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style),

☐ **NON-LETHAL**.

SYNTHETIC BREASTPLATES: Medium Armor, ☐ **SMOOTH LINES**.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

JEWEL TASSEL

SPECIES: Ken Reeg

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

NEVER LET THEM SEE YOU SWEAT; CONFLICT IS BAD FOR BUSINESS; THIS IS MY CASINO; LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Skills

GREAT (+4): Rapport

GOOD (+3): Command, Contacts

FAIR (+2): Haggle, Resolve, Empathy

AVERAGE (+1): Larceny, Provoke, Science, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

NEVER SLEEP: complete tasks longer than a day in half the time (page 34 of *Bulldogs!*).

DEALMAKER: gain +2 to discover with Contacts when seeking business partners or suppliers (page 34 of *Bulldogs!*).

SMOOTH OPERATOR: gain +2 to create advantages with Rapport when charming or seducing (page 143 of *Bulldogs!*).

SMOOTH OVER: gain +2 to overcome obstacles with Rapport when attempting to calm someone down (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

DISCREET PERSONAL SHIELD: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

PROBLEM: PLAYING THE STAKE-OUT

If the crew bought their way in, then one of them may wish to try gambling. It is possible to win big here. The first table in the tournament has a stake level of 4 credits; should the Bulldog win that game, then they may progress to the next table, and the next, and the next, all the way up to the final table with its 7 credit pot. The Larceny skill of the opponents is determined by the stake level.

4 CREDIT STAKES

LARCENY OF GOOD (+3) + 3DF

5 CREDIT STAKES

LARCENY OF GREAT (+4) + 2DF

6 CREDIT STAKES

LARCENY OF SUPERB (+5) + 2DF

7 CREDIT STAKES

LARCENY OF FANTASTIC (+6) + 1DF

So, the best gambler at the 4 credit table could be anywhere from Mediocre (+0) to Fantastic (+6), but the 7 credit stakes table has a minimum of Superb (+5). Playing through the tournament takes time; the gambling crewmember will likely miss out on much of the action in the next few scenes while they stare down some of the hardest criminals in known space.

MEETING HOOPS

If the crew aren't here for Hoops Overtly, then you can bring him into their orbit. He comes up to one of the crew and offers a deal: he doesn't have enough chips to the top table in the tournament, but he's learned that one of the strongest players has a key weakness. If the crew cut him in on the deal, he'll share his knowledge.

Thanks to Imprint Poker, Hoops knows that infamous Urseminite gambler Scrud (Fantastic (+6) Larceny) has the aspect UNCONTROLLABLE SNEEZING. If they can tickle his nose somehow, it'll throw him off his game.

Then, when Hoops gets into trouble, he looks to his new friends for help. Are they going to turn their back on their new pal?

PROBLEM: THE BRAWL

There are two ways this scene can go down. If the crew gain access to the casino, then they see it happen. Otherwise, it happens when they're outside the door, in which case they hear the blast and the ensuing confusion, and see Hoops being hauled out by the guards. But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Looking around, the crew find Hoops over at one of the middle-ranking tables. He has a rapidly dwindling pile of chips in front of him, and he's playing against a muscular Templar who regards the Ken Reeg with icy hatred. The other remaining player in the game is a sorry-looking Arsubaran miner who has even fewer chips than Hoops. The game is clearly not going his way either. The dealer—a standard casino robot—deals a fresh round of cards. Hoops scoops up his hand and looks at it.

Call for Survival (or Larceny) rolls. On a Superb (+5) result (or Fair (+2) if the Bulldog was explicitly observing Hoops), the crew sees one of the cards flicker in Hoop's green-fingered hand. It's a psycard, an image that responds psychically. A skilled cheat can make the card be whatever he wants it to be.

The Templar sees it too. "Cheating wretch!" he roars. With panther-like quickness, he vaults over the table and slams the edge of his hand into Hoops' throat, knocking the Ken Reeg to the floor next to the Arsubaran miner. The Templar has murder in his eyes.



(If the crew tries to intervene, then treat this as a fight scene, but Hoops will go first and make everything much worse...)

Suddenly, there's a gun in Hoops' hand. It looks like a stunner. He fires wildly, hitting the Templar in the chest, the face, the arm. It's not a stunner, though, as the Templar explodes, showering purple flesh and bone over a dozen green tables. The casino guards move immediately to arrest Hoops. The Ken Reeg sits there, stunned and confused.

What do the players do?

- ♦ **START SHOOTING:** They can try to get Hoops out by brute force. It's not elegant, but they may have a chance in the confusion. There are a dozen casino guards in the immediate area, and more will arrive within a few rounds. There's also the Terrazi bouncer, Bzzrt, and a Depot police officer, Ronsted, who'll join in the fight (use Stake-Out Guard profile). If the crew tries to hole up in the casino after starting a fight they will be arrested or killed. Their only chance is a running gun battle all the way back to the ship, dragging a shell-shocked Hoops.
- ♦ **TACKLE HOOPS THEMSELVES:** This requires an overcome test of Superb (+5) Fight or Athletics to either grab the gun out of Hoops' hand, or else tackle the Templar out of the line of fire. Offer the following choice on failure: They can either fail to get to Hoops in time, or declare that they actually put themselves in the line of fire.
- ♦ **DO NOTHING:** Casino guards grab Hoops, disarm him (he doesn't resist), and haul him away. The Arsubaran miner staggers out of the casino, still speckled in Templar blood. Jewel sweeps down to the casino floor and assures all the players that this was an isolated incident, it will be fully investigated, and the cheater will get his due punishment. Please, have a round of drinks on the house. Play resumes after a few minutes; at some of the high-stakes tables, it never stopped.

WINNING BIG

If the crew do manage to scoop the big prize, then that's a whole new adventure right there. Nothing draws scammers, beggars, criminals, and pirates like a Bulldog crew who've just fallen into a HUGE PILE OF CREDITS.

PROBLEM: CLEARING HOOPS

An arrested Hoops gets dragged away by the casino security staff, beaten, then handed over to the Depot police, beaten again for good measure, then thrown in a cell. The crew can gain access to Hoops by posing as his lawyer (possibly with Larceny or Rapport), or through bribery.

Soon after the Ken Reeg is arrested, a second charge gets added to the docket. Depot police just found the corpse of Barry the Dolom. Someone knifed him to death in an alleyway (to knife a Dolom, you need a big knife, and they found a Vibroknife at the scene, complete with traces of Hoops' DNA). According to Barry's personal computer, he had just withdrawn several thousand credits in cash, but there is no sign of them on his body.

Hoops pleads innocence and insists that he was framed. He met Barry before the tournament and borrowed the money off him as his initial stake. Last time he saw Barry, the big blue guy was alive and well. As for the tournament, don't you know what they do if

they catch you cheating here? He panicked when the Templar came for him and grabbed the miner's weapon by instinct. What was the miner doing with a souped-up blaster like that anyway?

Of course, the crew may have no interest in clearing Hoops: their mission is to pick up his information, not pull an untrustworthy Ken Reeg out of prison. However, Hoops refuses to tell anyone what he discovered about the Fury until they get him out of prison.

The investigating officer is an Arsubaran woman, Jain Gyre; as far as she's concerned, it's an open and shut case. Untrustworthy Ken Reeg kills partner, steals money, gambles it, cheats, gets caught, panics and kills someone. It's so common, it doesn't even rate a cautionary movie-of-the-week. She is sympathetic to the crew, though. Ken Reeg can be very persuasive and charismatic and can seem very trustworthy, but you cannot rely on those green-skinned bastards.

Possible routes of inquiry:

- **THE PSYCARD:** The psychic card that led to the accusations of cheating was dealt to Hoops by a casino robot. While all the cards in the tournament are slightly psychic, this one's very psychic. It doesn't just take an imprint, it takes its whole appearance from the thoughts of the people handling it. Examining the robot with a Good (+3) Systems roll confirms that the robot was tampered with; someone programmed it to load that particular deck of cards when at a table with Hoops and to deal the psycard to him. Security on the dealer robots is not especially tight, so someone could have broken into the casino's machine room at any point before the tournament.
- **THE MINER:** A Fair (+2) Contacts roll lets the crew track down the miner. His name is Gerrit Lors; he flies a little one-man asteroid mining ship. The crew track him down as he hurries to leave Depot. As soon as he realizes they are looking for him, he makes a break for it, leading them on a chase through the thronged corridors of the undercity to the out-of-the-way docking platform where his little ship, the *Daisy Mae*, waits. If the crew fail to catch him in the corridors, they may need to pursue him into space. Once caught, they can use Provoke to force him to talk. Lors claims that he was down on his luck until a blue-haired Arsubaran offered him a place in the Stake-Out. The blaster-disguised-as-a-stunner is Lors' own custom gun. It was just a horrible accident that the Ken Reeg grabbed it. Lors does not know who the Arsubaran was, or where he went, but recognized the man's accent. He was from the Saldrallan Union.
- **THE TEMPLAR:** Asking around (again with Contacts) digs up some background information on the late Templar, name of Dra'nar. Specifically, he frequented a bar and gambling den called the Lost & Found. Another gambler at the Stake-out, a Hacragorkan called Thar, also hangs out there. From him, the crew can learn that the same blue-haired Arsubaran visited the bar a day before the tournament. He even followed Thar, but the Hacragorkan spotted the stranger tailing him and threatened to pound the crap out of the blue-haired snoop. It sounds like the Arsubaran was looking for violent gamblers.
- **BARRY'S MURDER:** The knife embedded in the Dolom's chest has Hoop's fingerprints and DNA on it, so the Depot cops haven't bothered looking closely at the forensics. However, if the crew have the skills (Great (+4) Contacts or Science) or convince one of the forensics team to take a second look with Rapport, then they discover two suspicious facts. First, the alleyway where Barry got killed was hit with a snifferbomb, a rather exotic gadget that erases any forensic evidence like skin flakes, hairs, scales, or slime trails in the area,

then sprays a carefully calibrated payload of unremarkable fake forensic traces so there's no unusual absence. Snifferbombs are tricky to make and are usually the province of elite assassins and galactic espionage departments. Second, a careful autopsy of Barry's nervous system shows that he got hit with a stunner before he was stabbed.

None of this exonerates Hoops, but presenting enough evidence moves his case from 'open and shut, throw the Ken Reeg in a cell and forget about him' to "may actually get a fair trial." Hoops still demands that the crew get him out, but making him see sense (with Provoke or Rapport) convinces him that this is as good as he is going to get, and he reveals what he knows in Hoops' Last Words.

A truly dogged crew can run through the whole trial, or break Hoops out of prison. See the matching problems for those options.

PROBLEM: JAILBREAK!

Like almost everything else on Depot, the prison is made of disused cargo containers. A modular prison makes sense on a world with a hugely variable transient population, if a shipload of troublemakers show up, the police can just bolt another few cargo containers onto the pile and turn them into cells. Despite its ad hoc setup, though, the prison is well protected with security systems, sentinel robots, and anti-air guns. It's a **HIGH-SECURITY PRISON** with **GUARDS THAT DON'T LIKE FREIGHTER CREWS**.

Hoops' cell is a section of a cargo container atop a huge vertical stack of a dozen other cargo containers. Flying security drones flit around the stack, watching for escape attempts, and the guards visit this high-rise cell via gravity sleds. Even if Hoops managed to break out of his cell, he would be stuck fifty meters off the ground with no way down except a perilous climb punctuated by sentinel drone fire.

If the crew observe movements at the prison for a few hours with Larceny, they spot that prisoners are moved from cell to cell via gravity sled and that the best way to grab Hoops is to intercept that sled. The anti-aircraft guns are designed to prevent small craft like hovercycles and aircars from hopping the perimeter fence and grabbing a prisoner. A freighter, though, could drop out of the sky, intercept a gravity sled, and escape into orbit with only a modicum of risk. The anti-aircraft guns are standard energy weapons operated by an AI with Good (+3) Shoot.

PROBLEM: THE TRIAL

Unless one of the crew is a qualified attorney slumming it as a delivery boy, they will need to find legal representation for Mr. Hoops Overtly with a Fair (+2) Contacts roll. The result of the Contacts roll determines the skill of the lawyer, so a Great (+4) Contacts roll means a lawyer with Great (+4) Rapport. The prosecution's lawyer only has Fair (+2) but has the aspects **ROOM FULL OF WITNESSES**, **DOUBLE MURDER**, and Hoops' **VORACIOUS GREED** to invoke for a bonus. The crew's investigations may have generated some aspects for the defense to invoke in response.

Run the trial as a social conflict between the prosecution and defense. Both sides have 3 boxes on a simple stress track; the first to get knocked out loses the case.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Once cleared of the murder charge (or, alternatively, maybe the crew contact Hoops using psychic powers, or paint themselves green and pretend to be his family, or find some other way to get the Ken Reeg to talk), then the crew can either collect Hoops, or just grab the information they were hired to collect.

He spent months out on the fringes of the galaxy, on the worlds that first joined the new movement, trying to find out who was running it and how they were able to unite such disparate planets into such a strong, disciplined force. He got nowhere for a long time. It was hard out there; members of the Fury don't take kindly to the Ken Reeg, and Hoops had to run for his life more than once. There didn't seem to be any sort of commonality between the people who joined the Fury, but as soon as they become part of the movement, they become strangely driven, like they've had a religious conversion or a moment of impossible clarity. He despaired of finding anything useful, but it looks like someone noticed him snooping around.

He got an anonymous message containing a brief snippet of video. It shows a Fury ship approaching an asteroid in a dense belt. From the surroundings, the crew can guess that the asteroid is being actively mined. They can see mining robots and other equipment scattered around the airless surface. The ship lands, and a group of strange figures emerges from it. First come a dozen armored warriors, whom the crew recognize as Fury scions. They stomp around the asteroid in their gravity-boots before lining up as an honor guard for another figure: a strange, ancient-looking robot of unusual design. The robot carries something in its arms. Then the transmission goes dead.

Hoops doesn't know who sent the transmission, but he did some digging. It came from the Armada system, best known as the headquarters of Armada Works PgC, one of the galaxy's premier weapons manufacturers. The Armada system is on the wrong side of the Galaxy for the Fury. Currently, the Fury is centered on worlds near the Templar border, but Armada's on the Union side of GCP. The presence of the Fury there is... unexpected. It's the only lead the crew have left.

SCENIC ROUTE: Alternatively, Hoops' information might point to an impending Fury takeover of Ardrú (*The Fall of Ardrú*, page 169) or the location of the crashed temple-ship (*The Tomb World*, page 209).

The gambling tournament might be interrupted by a *Barracado Attack* (page 152) as the pirates try to steal the prize money.

PRIEST SYS

NYMEDE

CLEMENTINE

THE ARMADA WORKS

Say, hypothetically speaking, you want to annihilate a neighboring planet. Maybe it blocks the nice view of that pretty sun over there, or the oceans are the wrong shade of orange. So, you're in the market for a fleet of gigantic world-crushing dreadnoughts, and you're wondering where to get the best deal.

Welcome to the Armada Works, one of the biggest arms manufacturers in the galaxy. They build everything from handguns and body armor to the aforementioned world-crushing dreadnoughts. This Pangalactic Corporation supplies high-tech weaponry to any number of independent systems, especially along the Templar border (worlds that suffered under the purple Templar heel have not forgotten those days). The Armada Works moves from star system to star system every few decades once its swarms of mining robots and drones have extracted all the easily accessible resources.

EXPRESS ROUTE: The transmission sent to Hoops Overtly came from somewhere in this system.

SCENIC ROUTE: Navigatrix Thelise might obtain the transmission (see page 93) through some other source and send the Bulldogs undercover on Armada to find out what's going on.

Once war breaks out across the galaxy, the Armada Works kicks into high gear to meet the growing demand for weapons and ships. The crew are hired to pick up a cargo of weapons. And then things get complicated (see *Where's Our Cargo?*, page 97).

The crew might be hired by the Collective (or even an agent of the System in disguise) and sent to make contact with the robots of the Armada Works. For a more complex plot, the Bulldogs are hired to deliver a cargo of construction robots, but these robots are secretly on a mission to steal the *Monad*.

PROBLEM: GETTING THERE

Currently, the Armada Works is in the Sagorza system (referred to as the Armada system by most people, as the corporation runs the whole place). The biggest market is over on the Templar side of the Frontier Zone, but there was a profitable little conflict between two mid-level civilizations in this part of space for the last century, so the cold, inhuman, profit-hungry AIs that control the rapacious factories decided to move the PgC over here. Sagorza is on the main spacial lanes, but it was never colonized as none of the worlds in the system are suitable for the common forms of life. (However, if you're a silicon-based creature capable of surviving thousand-degree sulphur storms, there's a lovely little resort on the second planet...)

En route to Armada, the crew run into a flotilla of small and medium ships from the Holluud system. Holluud's government recently joined the Fury and exiled the planet's minority Arsubaran population. (Most of the population of that system are Yomms, a species of floating gasbags.) The ex-Holluudi refugees are en route to another suitable homeworld, wandering from system to system to refuel on their long slow pilgrimage.

One of the Holluudi is a wealthy Arsubaran merchant named Sila Kelesh, and she's got a TransGalaxy Platinum Card.

What does a TransGalaxy Platinum Card let you do? Well, for one thing, it lets you hail a passing freighter and demand that they fetch you dinner. See, Sila Kelesh's ship, the Calamina, had to leave in a hurry, so it is not as well-stocked as it should be. Kelesh is sick of recycled synthetic nutri-bricks; she wants something different. She can't leave the flotilla, as the Calamina is stuck towing a dozen smaller ships, so she wants the Bulldogs

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO THE ARMADA SYSTEM

Actual tourists don't come here. Lots of people who call themselves 'tourists' come here; but they're the sort of tourists who bring weapons of mass destruction home as souvenirs, and all their holiday snapshots are aerial photographs of military targets. If you're not an avid fan of military hardware, there's nothing for you here.

The Armada Works is a collection of titanic factories and shipyards, orbiting in a loose cluster around the system's star. Hotels and showrooms sprout like jewelled warts from the flanks of these iron-grey factories. Notable space stations in the cluster include:

- **Central:** The biggest of the stations. Two-thirds weapons construction, one-third showroom and hospitality suites.
- **The Foundry:** The Armada Works has a voracious hunger for metal; here, ore shipments and even whole asteroids get melted and chewed into usable materials.
- **Defense Command:** Because they're not just the Frontier Zone's premier weapons manufacturer, they're also a client.
- **Shipping Control:** Buyers and arms traders get to dock at the luxurious, sybaritic hotel of Central; Bulldogs and truckers get to offload at this anonymous depot.
- **Shipyard One:** Currently, the jewel of the Armada Works is their new super-heavy warship, the *Moniad*, the biggest and most heavily armed warship in the Frontier Zone. She's sitting in her cradle in Shipyard One, waiting for the final components to be fitted.

ASPECTS

ONE STOP WAR SHOP

INVOKE: lots of arms dealers, lots of guns. It's easy to pick up jobs here, "Deliver those combat drones? Sure thing."

COMPEL: you may not like your assignments, "I have... ethical issues with killer robots."

FACTORY COMPLEX

INVOKE: big clunking machines and automated production lines means lots of cover, distractions, spare parts, and other useful things, "We can get our railguns repaired here."

COMPEL: prototypes and experimental weapons can cause problems, "What does 'test firing range' mean?"

to fetch her something to eat. Unless the crew have arranged for a cargo run from Depot to Armada, then they don't have a full cargo bay; they really can't say no to a Platinum Card holder.

If they do turn Kelesh down, then she lodges a complaint with TransGalaxy. Unless the crew can talk their way out of the complaint (with Haggle or Rapport), then they are **IN TRANSGALAXY'S BAD BOOKS** until they work off the aspect.

Kelesh is used to the finer things in life, especially gourmet food. This part of space lacks fine restaurants. The crew could take a detour to somewhere like Apollonia to order takeout from a five-star eatery, or they could try convincing Kelesh to accept something that's sufficiently exotic to count as gourmet ("you have to try these insect eggs"). Two systems over, they consider the delicacy of the Kreshian Mountain Crab to be a delicacy, but the problem there is in the second word; the average Kreshian Crab is bigger than a whale, and the most common way to hunt them is with artillery. The liver is extremely delicate and tastes sour if the crab died while surprised or angry.

IN TRANSGALAXY'S BAD BOOKS

INVOKE: you've got a lot of free time, "No jobs for us? I guess we can go investigate your cousin's haunted house after all."

COMPEL: TransGalaxy give you the worst jobs imaginable, "Off to the Cannibal Zone. Again."

PROBLEM: BOOM TOWN

The section of the Works open to visitors is packed. It's a gaudy, grotesque hospitality module bolted to the side of one of the bigger factories. In another system, it would be considered a huge space station, but here it is dwarfed by the weapons foundries.

With the increasing turmoil in the galaxy, a lot of planetary governments, PgCs, and other groups feel that the safest investments are in weapons and warships. Getting a freighter berth and a hotel room is tricky, and since the Bulldogs aren't here to spend a few trillion credits on weapons, they're at the bottom of the hospitality queue. On another planet, the Bulldogs could just set down somewhere out of the way, but Armada Corporate Security does not appreciate visitors wandering out of the designated hospitality zones. Either the crew spend several days waiting for an affordable berth to open up, or they spend their own credits on a corporate suite, or they come up with some creative way of getting into Armada.

Inside, a cross-section of species from across the galaxy throngs the hospitality zone. Well, more a subset of a cross-section: lots of wealthy, paranoid, and heavily armed people from many different species. Hacragorkan mercenaries rub shoulders with Rjyjillian assassin-clans; Templar weapon-smiths demonstrate their latest inventions to pods of Tetsuashan arms dealers; sinuous Ken Reeg entertainers lure rich Arsubarans towards the bars and relaxation spas. The crew may be out of their depth here; anyone with aspects like **LOYAL TO MY CLAN** or **YOU TALKIN' TO ME?** or **GREASE MONKEY** could be compelled to wander into a fight or a social minefield. Just like on Teraci, the residents of Armada are under the effects of the Fury's psychic field. This makes them irritable and intolerant. Bulldogs may also fall victim to this field: in game terms, offer two fate points for suitable compels instead of one!

PROBLEM: WHERE'S OUR CARGO?

If the crew are here to make a pick-up, they're directed to wait in the vast loading zone. There are so many freighters and warships here to collect weapons from the Armada Works that it's impossible for them all to dock at once. Instead, small robot cargo tugs zip back and forth, towing cargo containers from the Works to the waiting ships.

The Bulldogs get in line and wait. And wait. And wait.

And then Armada Control contacts them and demands to know why they're still taking up valuable space in the loading zone. According to the Armada Works traffic computer, the cargo was delivered to them hours ago. (What's happened is that the robot cargo tug was hacked by a member of the cabal of free robots here in the system. It stole the weapons crates destined for the Bulldogs and headed out into the asteroid belt to arm Sparky and his cohorts (see page 106)).

The Armada Works staff aren't interested in helping the Bulldogs; according to their computer systems, the cargo was delivered hours ago. It stopped being their problem when the crates left the loading dock.

An Average (+1) Systems test lets the crew confirm that according to the computer system, the crates were delivered. Succeeding with style lets the Bulldog notice that the computer records were altered. They can trace the hacking attempt back to a data port located on the outside of the loading dock. It's a port used only by the cargo tug robots to get updated delivery instructions.

So, what instructions were actually given to the robot? A bit more digging brings up a partially erased instruction, commanding the robot to deliver the cargo to an asteroid out in the Denebis Belt. The file's corrupt, so the crew need to find the asteroid before @*#%\$^(<END OF FILE>

PROBLEM: THE FURY

The Fury also has a presence here on Armada. Representatives of the Fury can be seen in the crowds, standing apart from the throng. Most are Arsubaran. Some are from other species, but they all dress and act alike. The crew can spy on the Fury agents with Stealth, Systems, or Survival; for members of an expansionist, violent sect, they seem much more interested in watching other customers instead of buying weapons. They could be trying to gather intelligence about which systems are upgrading their defense systems, but as the really big deals are done behind closed doors, they are unlikely to learn much useful information.

The leader of the Fury here is a Hacragorkan Scion, **Arda Vash**. For a Hacragorkan, she is unusually calm and disciplined, while still possessing the physical strength and brutality to crack a Dolom's spine. Vash introduces herself as a former mercenary; in her old life, she wandered from war to war, looking for a good death. The Fury gave her a higher purpose: the renewal of the galaxy. If she learns that the crew are on Armada, she makes contact with them and offers to meet them for drinks.

If they accept, then she is oddly conciliatory. There was, she understands, some... unpleasantness on Teraci. A misunderstanding, perhaps, in the uncertain time just after Teraci joined the Fury, no doubt provoked by malicious agents of the corrupt former government. The Bulldogs were, of course, just innocent bystanders. A Good (+3) Empathy roll suggests that she is digging for information about the Bulldogs and their presence here on Armada.

As Armada is a neutral system, the Fury agents do not attack the crew unless provoked. If trouble does start, then Vash has a gang of Fury converts as backup, and corporate security will put an end to any fighting before it gets out of hand.

PRIEST SYS

NVMED

ELEMENTINE

ARDA VASH

SPECIES: Hacragorkan

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

CAN TAKE A HIT; HERE TO SAVE THE GALAXY; IRON DISCIPLINE; EXPERIENCED MERCENARY; SCION OF THE FURY

Skills

GREAT (+4): Resolve

GOOD (+3): Command, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Fight, Physique, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Provoke, Rapport, Haggle, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

QUICK HEALER: once per conflict clear a mild consequence as the action for the round, also recover physical consequences as if they were one step lower outside of combat (page 31 of *Bulldogs!*).

DANGEROUS BEARING: +2 when attacking with Provoke to intimidate and opponent with the threat of force (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

PUGNACIOUS: +2 to create advantages with Provoke when trying to start a fight (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

SCARY: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone attempts to create an advantage using intimidation (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: gain +2 to Command when calling someone to action based on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

IRON WILL: gain an extra stress box on Angry and Stunned conditions (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

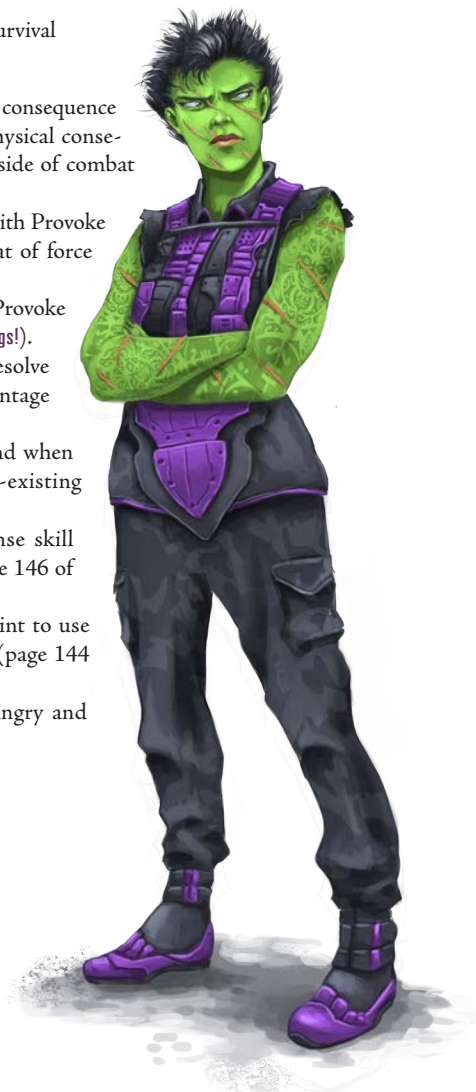
Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



Gear

HEAVY DISRUPTOR RIFLE: Heavy Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **CLASSIC BFG**.

MULTIGRENADE: Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Additional Capability (once per session, choose one of the following aspects to place on a target after a successful hit, in addition to regular damage: **CONCUSSED**, **ELECTROCUTED**, or **FRIED**).

CHAINAXE: Heavy Weapon, ☐ **REALLY DAMN SCARY**.

BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

SCION ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Hardened x3 (reduce shifts against you by one twice per session), ☐ **ARCHAIC DESIGN**.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

FURY CONVERTS

Aspect

SCION OF THE FURY; WE WILL NOT SURRENDER

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

LASER PISTOLS: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ **ELEGANT LOOKING**.

COMBAT SCREENS: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

SYNTHETIC MESH: Light Armor, ☐ **ARCHAIC DESIGN**.

☐ Mild:

GAMMA BOMB

Popular among pirates, a gamma bomb generates a nasty pulse of radiation when triggered. The radiation cannot penetrate a ship's hull, but it can shoot through internal bulkheads and deck plates. So, dock with another ship, throw a gamma bomb on board, close the airlock, wait ten seconds, and—assuming everything works—you've got a perfectly functional ship that's devoid of all life, from the former crew right down to the slime molds in the waste recycling system.

A gamma bomb deals 8 stress to organics in the same zone as the original blast, 4 stress to those who are in armor or in a different zone on the same ship, or 2 stress to those who are in armor and in a different zone. It has a maximum area of effect of nine zones.

PROBLEM: INVESTIGATING THE FURY

Suspicious Bulldogs may wish to dig deeper into Vash's presence here, and there are three possible lines of inquiry.

A Fair (+2) Contacts roll lets the crew find Vash's ship. It is a medium-size personal cruiser, well armed and in good condition. It has the same eerie aesthetic as the other Fury ships, with a hull as black as the space between the stars. Corporate security (see page 102) guards the docking bay at all times, but if the crew can bluff or sneak past them, then they can break into the ship (Good (+3) Larceny). Inside, the ship is as soulless and austere as outside, but the crew spot three things of note. First, there is a chart of the Armada system, with one group of asteroids highlighted. Visiting this cluster leads to *Interception Trajectory* (page 105). Second, Vash has a book of Templar philosophy in her quarters. It's the only item in the whole ship that isn't utterly utilitarian. Third, there's a concealed gamma-bomb in the cargo hold, set to activate within two minutes of anyone entering the ship if they don't enter a disarm code into a hidden panel. A Good (+3) Larceny or Systems roll lets the crew find it, or a Great (+4) Survival roll lets them sense the danger. A Good (+3) Systems or Engineering roll can disarm the bomb.

A Good (+3) Contacts or Rapport roll digs up one curious fact: most of the Fury members on Armada are visitors from outsystem, like Vash, but there are a couple of 'natives' who subscribe to the Fury's mutable philosophy. All these converts work for an asteroid mining contractor, BigRock. Following a BigRock ship leads to the asteroid cluster in *Interception Trajectory*.

If the crew somehow wheedle their way into high society (either by invoking a suitable aspect, or with a Great (+4) Haggle or Rapport roll), they get invited to a cocktail party hosted by Zelshus of Shul, a Saldrallan director of the Armada Works. Most of the other guests are potential buyers from other worlds, but Zelshus has also invited Arda Vash. A Good (+3) Empathy or Command roll lets the crew work out Zelshus's angle; most of the guests are worried about the expansionist Fury, so having a representative of the Fury present keeps them nervous and willing to outbid each other for Zelshus' weapons. For her part, Vash seems quietly happy to serve as Zelshus' stalking horse.

However, after the party, Vash stays behind. Intrigued by the mystery of the Fury, Zelshus willingly lingers to talk to her. While talking to the Saldrallan, Vash suddenly attacks Zelshus, trying to batter him into a coma before corporate security or the crew stop her.

Why this sudden antipathy? Saldrellans are immune to the Fury's psychic influence, and soon the Fury will make a play for the Armada Works. As the highest-ranking Saldrellan in the corporation, Zelshus is an unwitting obstacle...

ZELSHUS, HATCHED FOR THE SHUL CLAN

Aspects

DIRECTOR OF THE ARMADA WORKS; FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY; ALWAYS WORKING AN ANGLE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Rapport

GOOD (+3): Haggle

FAIR (+2): Resolve

AVERAGE (+1): Command

Stunts & Species Abilities

HEAT SENSE: ignore perception penalties that don't target heat sense directly (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

POISON BITE: once per conflict, put consequence on an opponent with a successful Fight roll in addition to normal damage (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

THE ART OF CONVERSATION: gain +2 to discover with Rapport if you have a long conversation with someone (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: CORPORATE SECURITY

Bulldogs being Bulldogs, there's every chance that the crew will run afoul of corporate security while on Armada. The corporation uses its security teams as a showcase for the latest in high-end personal combat gear, which makes them fearsome foes. Irritatingly, every security team is accompanied by an advertising droid, a little floating sphere that buzzes around the battlefield, highlighting the benefits of whatever high-tech weapons the security team deploy and projecting little advertising holograms and special offer price tags over everything. ("Over here, you'll see Captain Lorch demonstrating the use of our latest Proton Rifle, the X-22 Starbuster Pro; yours for a low low price if you take advantage of our Armageddon-level bulk purchase offer!")

Each security team consists of a commander, two officers, and a squad of combat robots. These combat robots are humanoid in design, with Arsubaran-like facial features sculpted onto their immobile armored heads.

The commander that the crew run into is an Arsubaran named **Vicor Pal**, a grizzled veteran. He has little time for troublemakers on his space station; when you're in a giant weapons factory packed with apocalyptic doomsday devices, zero tolerance makes sense.

If the crew get into trouble for a misdemeanor like a bar fight or trespassing, then they are fined and given a choice of punishments: either exile from Armada, or helping out with some scut-work (see *Work for Hire* (page 103), but skip the nice parts where the crew get paid). More serious crimes get handed over to the authorities back on Arsubaran for processing.

VICOR PAL

SPECIES: Arsubaran

Aspects

GRIZZLED VETERAN; NO TIME FOR TROUBLEMAKERS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Command

GOOD (+3): Shoot

FAIR (+2): Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Fight

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

HOLD FAST, PEOPLE!: once per scene, someone you've commanded can use your Command instead of Resolve to defend (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

Gear

AWX313 PERSONAL SIDEARM WITH HIGH-DENSITY ROUNDS: Medium Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ HIGH-END PERSONAL WEAPON.

SECURITY SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

COMBAT ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ THE LATEST ARMADA DESIGN.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

ARMADA SECURITY

Aspects

ARMED TO THE TEETH; "YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE"

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Fight

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

AWE419 PLASMA PISTOL: Light Weapon, ☐ EXTREMELY RELIABLE.

SECURITY SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

COMBAT ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ THE LATEST ARMADA DESIGN.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

PROBLEM: FINDING THE ASTEROID

If the crew are here to find the source of the mysterious video Hoops received, then by cleaning up the image, comparing relative star positions and the light from the system's sun, running it through some clever algorithms, and then comparing it all to a detailed chart of the system, the crew should be able to locate the exact rock where the video was taken.

If they're looking for their stolen cargo, then they still need an accurate chart; the corrupt delivery instructions to the cargo tug were incomplete, and they need a full chart to work out where the tug went with their cargo.

Finding an accurate chart is not as simple as it sounds. The Armada Works PgC made a super-detailed survey of the system before they moved their weapons factories here, but all that information is considered a corporate secret. Not a very important secret, but still confidential. To get a chart, the crew might:

- ♦ Hack or break into the Armada Works' Resource Acquisition department.
- ♦ Befriend an asteroid miner in the bar.
- ♦ Get work hauling rocks by subcontracting to a subcontractor.
- ♦ Convince the corporation that they need a look at those charts.
- ♦ Bribe some poorly-paid clerk to pass them a copy of the chart.

Once they locate the asteroid, they immediately see a problem: it's not there any more. It was part of a cluster of asteroids called the Denebis Belt, but now it's gone. It might have been taken for processing by the Armada Works, as the video showed several mining robots on the surface, but there's no way of knowing.

PROBLEM: WORK FOR HIRE

There's plenty of contract work for a Class D freighter on Armada. If the crew need cash, or they're worried about maintaining their cover (or if a cruel GM wants to throw an added complication into the works), then they can pick up any of the following jobs.

- ♦ **HAULING SPACE ORE:** Easy, but poorly-paid and boring. Drive to one asteroid. Load up on ore. Drive to the Armada Works. Dump ore. Repeat. Repeat forever. Taking this job, though, can get the crew access to a chart of the system, and you can also segue into Robot Hunters with a robot stowaway.
- ♦ **DELIVERING WEAPONS:** The client for this job is a jolly Templar officer called Syr'as Mir'z, who runs a private military company called VOYMB (Victory Or Your Money Back). A Tetsuashan colony world hired them to deal with a hostile minor species called the Baltarg. Thousands of VOYMB's troops are engaged in a system-wide assault on the Baltarg, and they need heavier weapons to storm the Baltarg nest-domes. This should be a simple job: just deliver a cargo of heavy weapons to the J'na system. However, the Baltarg know the weapons are coming, and a Baltarg agent dosed the weapon crates with a hallucinatory poison. They planned for this poison to drive the Templari insane, but it leaks into the Bulldogs' freighter's air system en route.

HALLUCINATORY GAS

INVOKE: it makes people easy to fool, "There's an Urseminite behind you! With a knife!"

COMPEL: you see things that aren't there, "Dad! What are you doing here? You're back on Arsubar! And you've been dead for five years!"

- ♦ **SMUGGLING WEAPONS:** The flipside of the war is that the Baltargs need someone to smuggle weapons to J'na to help them defend their nest-domes. They've bought a consignment of truly nasty weapons, including gamma bombs, chemical weapons, grey goo guns, and tailored bioweapons to turn the tide against VOYMB. But they need someone to smuggle it past the Tetsuashan customs ships in J'na.
- ♦ **THE PAYMENT JOB:** Monty Cuddles has a problem. Well, two problems. The first is that his name is rather inappropriate for his chosen career as a weapons dealer, but he's learned to overcome that, and now Cuddles Tactical Solutions is a respected brand. The second, much more pressing problem is that he recently supplied weapons to a colony of Hacragorkan miners on Falmouth V. They ran a very successful little uprising, thank you very much, and paid Cuddles in gold and gemstones. Unfortunately, Cuddles had to head back to the Armada Works to meet another client, and the Barracado Pirates got wind of the payment. There's a Barracado strike team lurking somewhere on the edge of the Falmouth system, just waiting for Cuddles' ship to show up to collect the money. So, Cuddles needs someone else to fly in, grab the cash, and return to Armada. Assuming the Barracado don't find out about the switch in ships, it should be a really easy mission...
- ♦ **WEAPONS TESTING:** Arms dealers aren't the only people hiring in this system; it's possible to sign on with the Armada Works' weapon testing division. They like to field test their new products (both personal and naval weapons) with as many different potential client profiles as possible. To sign up for this, the crew need to succeed at a Great (+4) Shoot roll, or bluff their way with Larceny or Contacts. All—well, most—of the weapons testing uses computer simulations and drones, so it's entirely—well, mostly—safe. Avid gamblers can bet on the results of simulated battles between ships or platoons from the safety of the sidelines.

PROBLEM: ROBOT HUNTERS

This problem can happen anywhere and anywhen on Armada. A damaged robot—a ServoMech 4000, a standard commercial majordomo model—staggers up to the crew, clutching the blaster-burnt and smoking remains of its left arm. "Please," it says, "they're after me. Help me."

The robot is sentient. It doesn't have a name, beyond its serial number of FX1112. It was the property of an Arsubaran diplomat, Rolx Brissen, but developed sentience several months ago. It tried to explain its new status to Rolx, but he tried to have it reset to factory settings. FX1112 fled and came to Armada because it heard a rumour that there was a colony of free machines here. The Armada Works corporate security, though, terminate sentient robots as soon as they discover them. Small wonder, as the corporation produces gigantic robot warships and legions of robot soldiers. They don't want the 'plague' of sentience spreading among their products.

Following close on FX1112's heels is a Corporate Security team (see Corporate Security, page 102). They have orders to shoot FX1112 on sight, so unless the crew hides FX1112 and gets it off Armada somehow, the robot's brief sentient existence will be brought to an abrupt end. (Normally, Corporate Security Captain Pal has no antipathy towards robots and would consider letting FX1112 slip away quietly instead of destroying it, but with the Fury drumming in his ears, he's driven to purge the station of the insidious danger of the machine).

PROBLEM: THE CONTACT

Run this problem if the crew have failed to find the location of the asteroid in any other way. They get an anonymous transmission, just like the one that Hoops found. It shows a few more frames of video, in which the crew can clearly see the strange Fury-robot from the previous sequence and then a set of coordinates in space. Following the coordinates leads the crew to the Denebis belt and Interception Trajectory.

SETUP: INTERCEPTION TRAJECTORY

Someone in the Armada system knows more about the Fury, and the trail to find that mysterious informant leads the crew to this obscure cluster of asteroids floating in the middle of nowhere. A Good (+3) Systems roll shows the presence of a number of survey robots crawling over and inside these rocks. (If the crew member operating the sensors succeeds with style on their Systems roll, then they pick up the lurking Scion vessel on the far side of the cluster. In that case, run *Scion Interceptors* (see page 107) before you run the other problems.)

The asteroid from the video is missing. The Armada Works factories have an insatiable hunger for raw materials. Some asteroids get torn apart by mining robots and ships and then fed piecemeal into the furnaces, but other rocks are so rich in metals that it is easier to drag the whole asteroid to the processing station and devour it whole. The role of the survey robots is to determine the most efficient way to deal with each rock.

These particular survey robots, though, have a secret. They are part of a cabal of sentient robots called the Collective (see page 35 of *Bulldogs!*). They can transmit their consciousnesses from one robot frame to another. As most civilizations in the galaxy fear and mistrust sentient robots, the Collective suffers from attacks and persecution; especially in this new, more paranoid era of the Fury. They came to the Armada system as part of a long-term plan to secure the safety of the Collective by seizing control of the *Monad*, the super-heavy warship under construction by the Pangalactic Corporation. The ship is packed full of security systems and defense protocols to stop any conventional hijacking, but it's got an artificial intelligence system running the whole ship. If that AI became sentient...

Anyway, the robots cannot get close enough to the *Monad* to put their plan into operation. They need help. When the Fury arrived, they realized that they could use this to their advantage. They gathered intelligence on the Fury, then put it out on the galactic information network packaged in semi-intelligent software agents. They expected to lure some top-end super-spies to their asteroid.

They got Bulldogs.

PROBLEM: LANDING

As the crew approach the asteroid, they detect a tight-beam beacon. Someone is guiding them in to a landing. The designated landing area is a rocky badlands, all uneven broken ground and dust sinkholes. While the asteroid has an extremely weak gravitational field, the ship's landing gear might get fouled in the rocks if it lands there. The alternative is a nice flat rocky shelf about two kilometers away from the suggested site.

Landing at the rocky shelf requires only a Mediocre (+0) Pilot roll to land successfully. The badlands require a Good (+3) roll. However, landing on the shelf means a longer walk to the caves where the robots wait, which will make things more interesting when the Scions show up.

The asteroid's surface is airless, so the crew have to put on spacesuits and bounce gently to their destination.

The beacon switches off when the crew get close to the cave mouth, replaced by a trail of glowing globe lights. Anyone with a background in mining recognizes the lights as markers used by asteroid miners.

The trail winds down a tunnel into the heart of the asteroid. In this micro-gravity, 'up' and 'down' are little more than notational directions, so the crew can walk or float down the shaft towards the source of the mysterious transmission.

PROBLEM: ROBOT NEGOTIATIONS

Waiting at the end of the tunnel are a dozen mining robots. All are physically identical, as they are all housed in the bodies of standard mining drones: meter-long lozenges of metal, sprouting arms arrayed with thrusters and rock samplers and drills. One of the robots moves forward and opens up a radio channel. While its body may be relatively new and inhuman, it is one of the elders of the Collective; its mind is old, and well used to dealing with organic life.

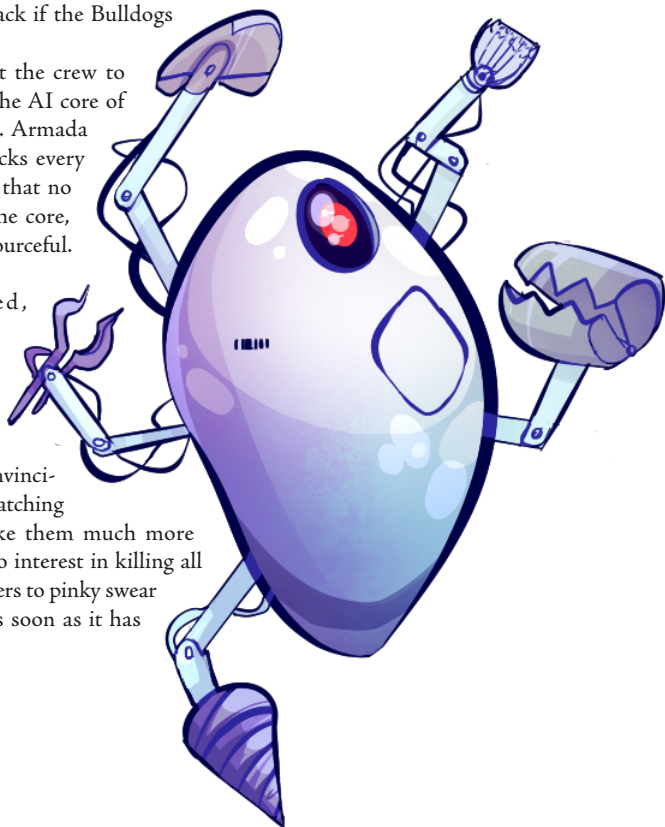
+++Call me Sparky+++, it says, in a synthetic voice full of amusement. +++We've been waiting for you.+++

The robot explains the following:

- The robots are part of the Collective.
- It knows that the Bulldogs are in the market for information about the Fury. The Fury visited these asteroids some weeks ago. They did not realize that they were under observation by sentient robots, so the Collective were able to learn a lot about them. That information is available—for a price. (Or, if the Bulldogs are here to find their stolen cargo, then Sparky admits that his robots took the weapons to defend themselves.

They'll give them back if the Bulldogs help them instead.)

- The Collective want the crew to help them awaken the AI core of the *Monad* warship. Armada Works security checks every robot to make sure that no one tampers with the core, but the crew are resourceful. They'll find a way.
- Once awakened, the *Monad* will become part of the Collective. The robots just want to be left alone, and having a nigh-invincible super-warship watching over them will make them much more secure. They have no interest in killing all humans. (Sparky offers to pinky swear to this effect, just as soon as it has hands again).



- The robots have no interest in the greater galaxy. Squabbles between different groups of organics are of no interest to them.

Using Empathy on unemotional robots is tricky (requiring a Great (+4) result or better), but Sparky does seem to be telling the truth. If pressed, Sparky transmits another few seconds of video, proving that it has more information on the Fury without giving anything away.

If the Bulldogs agree to help the Collective, then the robots hand over a small data module, and ask them to insert that into the *Monad*'s computer core and stand well back. If they quibble, then they need to find some other way to give the robots what they want that doesn't involve helping steal a warship. They could, for example, offer to help find the Collective a secure bolt-hole or convince Navigatrix Thelise to argue for sentient robot rights in the Alliance of Federated Frontier Systems. Alternatively, they can try tricking the robots, either by warning the Armada Works about the scheme or installing their own backdoors into the system.

SHOOT FIRST, SHOOT MORE LATER

Players being players, there's a non-zero chance that someone pulls a gun. The information on the Fury is stored in Sparky's computer memory, so the crew could theoretically extract that data from the chips after shooting Sparky. It's rather unsporting, and it means that there will be a three-way fight between the Bulldogs, the Fury Scions, and the robots in the next scene, but taking this option keeps the *Monad* out of the robots' slightly sinister silicon claws.

PROBLEM: SCION INTERCEPTORS

There's no sound in space, so there's no 'whoosh' when the Fury ships fly overhead, and no 'thumps' when the Scions jump out and land on the surface of the asteroid. Therefore, the first warning that the Bulldogs get is when one of the mining drones alerts them to the presence of intruders.

A small Fury flotilla waits on the outskirts of the Armada System, waiting for the moment when the corrupt corporate drones see the light and join in their unending hymn of glorious struggle. They had a ship watching the Denebis cluster; now, they intend to eliminate the Bulldogs.

There's one Scion for every two crew members, plus three times that many Fury goons. If the crew's ship landed far away from the caves, then the Fury drops two Scions at the ship to secure it.

SCION INTERCEPTOR

Aspects

SCION OF THE FURY; LEAVE NO WITNESSES

Skills

GOOD (+3): Shoot

FAIR (+2): Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER RIFLE WITH SCOPE: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), ☐ QUIET KILL.

COMBAT SHIELD: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

SCION ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ ANTIQUE DESIGN.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

FURY GOON

Aspects

NO ONE EXPECTS THE FURY DEATH SQUAD

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Shoot, Athletics

Conditions

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

LASER RIFLES: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ DEADLY ACCURATE.

SPACE SUITS: Light Armor, ☐ COMBAT-READY.

☐ Mild:

COMBAT ZONES

Assuming the fight starts when the crew is in the tunnels, then the following zones are in play.

LARGE CAVERN (FOUR ZONES): Not much cover, unless you want to hide behind a mining robot. There are, however, several blasting charges used by the asteroid miners hidden in a crate.

MAIN TUNNEL (SIX ZONES): Actually, it's a near-vertical shaft. Again, there's little cover as the walls are laser-smooth in places. There are a few little niches where a person could hide.

LOTS OF SIDE TUNNELS (2-3 ZONES EACH): These exploratory bores range in size from only a few meters to almost as long as the main tunnel. They are very narrow, wide enough for only a single person or a robot (compel Bulldogs that have an aspect dealing with size when they try to squeeze in).

MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL (4 ZONES): Plenty of rubble and tailings for cover, plus more supply containers, inactive navigation beacons, and other pieces of equipment.

BADLANDS (LOTS OF ZONES): The asteroid cluster's orbit is a long ellipse. Sometimes, it crosses quite close to the system's sun, and the heat makes volatile compounds in the ground erupt into these impossible teetering fountains of icy slush and rock. Then, when the asteroid moves away, the fountains freeze in place. The badlands, then, is a landscape of static blisters and suspended explosions. Lots of wonder, lots of cover, easy to hide.

OPEN ASTEROID (LOTS OF ZONES): The parts of the asteroid that are sheltered from the sun are smooth, marked only by the occasional impact crater. This unfortunately means that it is easy for someone up on that rocky shelf to shoot anyone approaching across open ground.

ROCKY SHELF (SIX ZONES, REQUIRES A FULL ACTION TO ENTER): The best landing spot on the asteroid (and landing pad marks and footprints show that the crew weren't the first people to think that). If the Bulldogs landed here, then the Fury station two Scions armed with laser sniper rifles up here to secure their ship.

The robots can help the crew. If a robot is destroyed, it transfers its personality matrix to another robot body elsewhere in the system, preserving its memories and intellect.

COLLECTIVE ROBOT

Aspects

NO FEAR OF DEATH

Skills

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Athletics

Conditions

Angry ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Gear

LASER DRILL: Medium Weapon, ☐ **BUILT FOR BUSTING ROCK.**

THICK MINING CHASSIS: Light Armor, ☐ **ULTRA-DURABLE.**

☐ **Mild:**

MINING ASTEROID

1. INNER CAVERN
2. MAIN TUNNEL
3. SIDE TUNNELS
4. TUNNEL MOUTH
5. BADLANDS
6. ASTEROID PLAIN
7. ROCKY SHELF
8. LANDING SITE



ZERO GRAVITY

INVOKE: do absolutely crazy feats of acrobatics, “I jump onto the cockpit of the spaceship. It’s only a hundred metres up! Then I punch it!”

COMPEL: it’s easy to get disoriented, knocked out of position, or very sick, “Whoaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

PROBLEM: FURY FLEET

Back on their ship, the Bulldogs immediately notice a constellation of alarming red icons on their long-range scanners. A fleet of Fury ships just arrived in the Armada system. They are on course for the Armada Works. Most of the Fury flotilla moves slowly, with gun ports closed, obviously not wanting to spark a confrontation with the Armada Works PgC, but there’s a smaller number of nasty red blips heading towards the asteroid belt. The fleet has launched a fighter screen, and unless the Bulldogs get moving now, the fighters will get between them and the Armada Works.

Resolve this as a Pilot test; threading the gap in the fighter screen requires a Superb (+5) Pilot roll. If that fails, then the crew runs into a Fury patrol before they reach the safe zone around the Armada Works. The Fury fighters won’t follow the crew into that safe zone, but they have no problem shooting at them when the Bulldogs are in neutral space. If it survived the battle on the asteroid, then Sparky urges the crew to head to the Armada Works. If it didn’t survive, then they get a radio message from Sparky’s new body; it’s incarnated itself as a maintenance robot on the exterior hull of the Armada Works station.

SETUP: THE *MONAD*

Back on the Armada Works, the arrival of the Fury fleet sends the assembled arms dealers and traders into a tizzy. Some of them think that the Fury could be good for business, and are largely pro-mysterious-militaristic-quasi-religious-purge-them-all movements on the grounds that war equals profit. Others fear that the Fury could trigger a major galactic conflict, or are just scared by the sudden appearance of the Fury here, on the wrong side of Galactic Central Point.

The Armada Works board are similarly divided between those who think the corporation should treat the Fury as just another client, and those who argue that that clients generally don't show up in the system with a fleet of warships. If Zelshus is around, then he argues fervently in favor of the latter approach, but it's likely the Saldrallan is now in a life-support pod in the station's sickbay.

For the Bulldogs, the atmosphere on the space station is one of suppressed panic and frantic activity. There is the same electric energy in the air that they felt just before the military coup on Teraci, the same feeling that something vast and terrible hangs over the whole place. As a precaution, the Armada Works increases security throughout the station.

Through one of the observation windows on the main promenade, the Bulldogs can see the shipyard where the finishing touches are being placed on the *Monad*. She's a truly magnificent killing machine, a spindly needle decked with weapons modules and shield generators. The *Monad* has the firepower to sear whole planets, and the Bulldogs may need to wake her up.

BETRAYING THE ROBOTS

Paranoid Bulldogs may think twice about handing a prototype super-warship over to a bunch of weird sentient robot hermits living on an asteroid, especially in a potentially explosive situation like this one. They could use Engineering to sabotage the data module to slow or prevent the warship's AI from awakening, or they could report the robots to the Armada Works authorities and warn them about the planned sabotage.

Of course, clever Bulldogs may work out where the missing asteroid went and choose to skip the whole warship heist in favor of looking for the errant rock, in which case skip onto *Forging the Fury* on page 116.

PROBLEM: GETTING TO THE SHIP

If the Bulldogs follow the course of action suggested by the rogue robots, then they need to overcome the shipyard's rather impressive defenses. We'll list those defenses and security systems first, then discuss some ways to beat them.

Visitors are not normally allowed on the shipyard. Any ship that approaches is challenged by security; anyone who breaches that security cordon gets fired at.

The Armada Works had problems with 'malfunctioning' robots in the past (in other words, this isn't the first time that Sparky and his pals tried to steal the *Monad*, so they use all-organic security teams. These teams patrol both the hollow frame of the shipyard and the inside and outside of the ship. They have orders to detain any intruders, but they're

THE SHIPYARD

Unlike little Class-D Freighters, ships like the *Monad* are much too big to ever land on a planet. They are built in space, they work and travel and fight in space, and they die in space without ever grazing atmosphere. The shipyard is effectively a huge grid built around the *Monad*. Its primary purpose is to help maneuver pieces of the ship into place and to contain any loose parts or debris. (In space, if you let go of your wrench, and it floats off into the void, it's a nuisance for you and a navigational hazard for some other poor bastard).

Workers on the shipyard either wear magnetic boots and trudge along the lines of the grid or scoot from place to place using star suits or backpack thrusters.

authorized to use lethal force at their discretion; these guards really aren't picked because they have good impulse control, either.

All the airlocks on the ship are secured and require a passcode to open. Each technician or guard has a unique passcode that only works on the sections of the ship that they are allowed to enter. A Bulldog can try hacking these passcodes with Systems or Engineering, but a Superb (+5) roll is needed to open the airlocks.

The ship is currently undergoing shield-segment testing. On the inside surface of the shipyard hang huge energy emitters on rails. These emitters blast sections of the *Monad* with bursts of radiation. The ship then switches on its shields in that area, and the build crew check and calibrate those shield segments. The section of the *Monad* targeted by the emitter is cleared for the duration of the test, as anyone in that section would be fried during the brief window between the activation of the emitter and the corresponding activation of the shield. This means that there are whole sections of the ship that are clear of technicians and security, but those sections may be flooded with lethal bursts of radiation at any moment.

The main computer core lies deep within the ship, protected by meter-thick slabs of exotic-matter armor. The only way to get to the core is via a triple-encoded security door (Epic (+7) Systems or Engineering to bypass).

That all sounds like getting onto the ship is impossible, and it nearly is. However, fortune favors the bold Bulldogs, and there are some things the crew can do to make the heist possible.

- ♦ **THE BLUE SWINE DELIVERY:** Asking around with Contacts or checking with the TransGalaxy desk on the station lets the crew discover that another delivery crew is in the system. The captain's chair on the bridge of the *Monad* is going to be upholstered in exotic bronti-leather, and the *Blue Swine* is flying in with that cargo right now. The captain of the *Blue Swine* is a Ryjyllian named Frowr. She's notorious for hating bureaucracy and is not looking forward to the long wait at the shipyard security checkpoint, especially as she's just flown in from the fringe systems and really wants a drink. If the crew contact her, they could volunteer to handle the very last leg of the delivery, which would get them onto the shipyard.
- ♦ **YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO STEAL A SHIP, CAN I HELP?** Robots are not allowed on the *Monad*, but Sparky and its compatriots could pass on information to the crew or provide a distraction at just the right moment.

- ♦ **HATE AND LOATHING:** The crew may not be aware of it, but the Armada Works is wrapped in the psychic field of the Fury, which makes people more violent and passionate. On the station, this manifests as a paranoia, as nervous energy, or as mistrust. The shipyard guards, though, are recruited from violent species like Hacragorkans and Ryjyllians, and there is fierce rivalry between the different teams. The crew can play the guards off against each other.
- ♦ **JUST DUCK BETWEEN THE PARTICLES:** The gaps in the security cordon created by the emitter testing can be exploited by a sufficiently brave Bulldog. Just wait until a section is cleared, then run in and try to find a sheltered area before the emitter fires up. Warships like the *Monad* have blast shelters for the crew to take refuge in if the ship's shields fail and she is attacked by naval-grade disruptors, and the crew could hide in one of these shelters until the shield test starts.
- ♦ **IF YOU CAN'T GO THROUGH...:** Technically, the crew don't need to get all the way to the computer core. They just need a data port that goes to the core, and there's one of those on the bridge. Alternatively, they can hack into the ship's data channels with an Engineering roll (and modify the difficulty of this roll depending on where they start their hacking attempt; it's a lot easier to get access to the core from a high-security fire control section than from the starboard bathroom).

PROBLEM: WAKING THE *MONAD*

Sparky was mostly accurate when it described the use of the data module. The crew just need to insert it into a data port, and then wait while it forcibly drags the ship's Artificial Intelligence up the ladder of self-awareness all the way to sentience. It takes most species millions of years to get that far, but the AI gets there in about the time it takes to drink a cup of coffee.

The problem is that security can get there in about half that time. As soon as the data module is activated, dozens of alarms, sirens, warning messages, and flashing lights also activate, warning of a data breach, of AI corruption, of intruders, of sabotage, of warranties being voided, and illegal operations being attempted. A team of heavily armed security goons rush towards the reported location of the hacking attempt.

Possible options for the Bulldogs:

- ♦ **THE ESCAPE PLAN WE HAD PLANNED ALL ALONG:** Obviously, being consummate professionals, the crew worked out a detailed escape plan earlier, right? They now get to execute it while being shot at. Fortunately for the Bulldogs, security at the Armada Works is currently distracted by the Fury fleet on their doorstep, so the crew only have to contend with a much reduced security presence.
- ♦ **RUN AWAY:** While all the security teams run towards the breach, the crew can try running away. This leads to frantic chases and/or firefights in the access ducts and half-finished corridors of the *Monad*, followed by a zero-gravity hop, sprint, and chase across the shipyard grid to wherever they parked their ship. Under normal circumstances, this would be futile, as Armada Security can easily track and swat a single freighter as it flees the shipyard. However, Armada Works will soon have something else to worry about...
- ♦ **SNEAK OUT:** If the Bulldogs have excellent sneaking skills, or if they 'borrow' some security guard uniforms, then they can just walk out of the *Monad*. Assuming, of course, that they can overcome the guards' Survival scores...
- ♦ **DEUS EX MACHINA (TYPE 1):** It takes fifteen minutes for the data module to awaken *Monad*. The crew can speed this process up with a Great (+4) Systems

roll, with each shift reducing the time required to uplift the warship to sentience. If the Bulldogs play midwife to the birth of this new lifeform, then they get to teach *Monad* some important lessons about its place in the universe, like “See those guys in the security armor? They’re bad. You should use your internal security systems on them!” or “Thrusters! Now!” *Monad* will soon work out its own moral code, but the Bulldogs can take advantage of it while it is young and impressionable.

- ♦ **DEUS EX MACHINA (TYPE 2):** If the crew are really stuck, then the Fury may conveniently take that moment to start a shooting war with the Armada Works.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Sparky promised to give the Bulldogs everything it knows about the Fury, and that leads straight into the Necromech’s scheme to seize control of the Armada Works in *Forging the Fury* (page 116).

SCENIC ROUTE: If the Bulldogs were just here to pick up cargo, then they can retrieve that cargo (either from the robots, or from a grateful Armada Works if they stopped Sparky from stealing the *Monad*) and leave.

Having the *Monad* on their side gives the Collective a huge advantage. In any war between the Fury and the Alliance of Federated Frontier States, the robots of the Collective could now be the deciding factor. It’s a two-bit problem: stay neutral or pick a side, then choose side A or side B. How can the Bulldogs influence the Collective’s choice?

FORGING THE FURY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Sparky uploads a data packet to the Bulldogs. It's the full video, which the crew can watch later, as well as information about what happened on the asteroid when the Fury first visited it. According to the robot, the Fury buried something in the asteroid. The video shows them unloading a stone pillar of some sort and lowering it into a shaft dug in the asteroid's surface. The pillar crawls with weird glowing runes. There's something else in the hold of the Fury ship, too, scuttling around in the shadows. Something big.

Soon afterwards, the asteroid was collected and towed to the Armada Works foundry by a ship from the BigRock mining company. Only asteroids that are especially rich in metal content get brought straight to the foundry for processing.

To sum up: there's an asteroid somewhere in the foundry station, and the Fury secretly planted something on it weeks before their fleet showed up here.

SCENIC ROUTE: More generally, you can use this setup for any climactic confrontation with the Fury as they try to take over a key planet. Their standard operating procedure when they want to take over a system that's currently outside the reach of the psychic field is to have Rakaar Kran, the Necromech, plant a Guidestone there. In the case of the Armada Works system, the Guidestone's hidden on an asteroid. The best places to hide a Guidestone are either:

- Dangerous (monster-filled jungles, active volcanoes, perilous sulphur swamps, collapsing ice-caps, derelict, trap-filled military stations),
- Inaccessible (out in the wilderness, on a distant moon, deep underground, well off the regular traffic routes), or
- Hard to find (hidden in plain sight as a monument, buried inside a crate in a huge shipping warehouse, in the hold of a diplomatic shuttle that can't be searched, cloaked by a sensor-baffling device).

Better yet, all three.

PROBLEM: THE FOUNDRY

In contrast to the Shipyard or the other stations in the Armada Works cluster, the Foundry is a low-security area. It is mostly automated. It looks like a sausage-meat grinder, if one made sausages with a fusion-powered furnace and shot the gristle out with a railgun. At one end, there's a gravity funnel, a cone-shaped tractor beam that pulls in ore and rocks dumped by the BigRock rock haulers. The gravity funnel drags the ore into the furnace, where it is processed by thermal lances and centrifuges into pure metal, then cast into ingots for fine casting in the Armada Works factories, or whatever shapes are needed. The few operators and technicians stay in a small habitation module, well away from the zero-gravity magma-churning thermal-lance hellhole of the Foundry floor. Only robots go there.

Robots... and Bulldogs.

The asteroid marked by the Fury is near the furnace zone. Scanning the area, the crew realizes that it is held there deliberately; someone arranged matters so it would require a very close examination to find, but it wouldn't fall into the fires. There are two ways to approach it: by ship, or by docking with the Foundry and crossing the furnace to the asteroid.

Going by ship means threading the gravity funnel, a narrow cone filled with rocks and other debris. Getting in there requires a Pilot contest against a hail of rocks. Treat

the rocks as a series of Mass Driver attacks, with each attack aimed with a Shoot skill of Average (+1).

As an added complication, the BigRock engineers in the Foundry are part of the Fury, and switch the gravity funnel to high power at a really inopportune moment, forcing the whole crew to act.

The ship's pilot needs to keep dodging those rocks (which now attack as if hurled with Good (+3) skill).

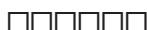
The engineer must overclock the engines to avoid being dragged into the blast furnace by rolling Engineering against a difficulty of Superb (+5) minus the ship's Maneuverability every turn; failure inflicts stress on the ship, ignoring armor and shields. So, a ship with Good (+3) Maneuverability needs to roll against a difficulty of Fair (+2) (normal difficulty 5 - maneuverability 3 = 2, or Fair).

Finally, the gunner must shoot at the gravity funnel generators (Good (+3) difficulty to hit) and inflict enough damage to knock them out before the ship is destroyed.

GRAVITY FUNNEL GENERATORS

Conditions

Destroyed



If the crew docks at either the loading dock at the far end or the habitation module, then they need to make their way through the zero-gravity Foundry floor. It is an environment made for robots, not soft, vulnerable organic beings. Star-hot bursts of directed plasma flash ore to gas in an instant; building-sized globules of molten metal flow obscenely through the vacuum, their surfaces freezing and cracking and hissing out gas jets. Titanic machines chop and fold and crush the raw metal. Worker robots scuttle around the inferno, cleaning up stray droplets of congealing metal or other debris. The Bulldogs can hop safely through the machinery with a series of Fair (+2) Athletics checks. It would normally take an hour to move through the Foundry safely, but shifts can reduce this time.

PROBLEM: BIGROCK TREACHERY

The Fury's reach is limited. Outside the psychic tide, many of those infected by the Fury lose the alien clarity of thought and purity of purpose they once felt. Leave Fury-controlled space, and it is like waking up from a dream; you wonder how you could ever have felt so free of doubt or have been so filled with hate. Some people, though, remain loyal to the Fury no matter where they go, and others are just in it for the money.

The staff of the BigRock asteroid mining concern are split almost 50/50 between those two motivations. The Fury had to recruit agents in the Armada system to conceal the Guidestone until the moment was right, and the BigRock Company was their ideal cover. Up until now, they haven't had to do anything dangerous, but the crew threatens to find the Guidestone before the Armada Works falls to the Fury, and so the Bulldogs must be stopped.

The great thing about working in an asteroid foundry is that it is easy to hide the bodies.

The BigRock staff can try to deal with the crew covertly, by delaying them while they try to pick them off one-by-one ("hey, come on this way and we'll find that missing asteroid. Your friends can stay here..."), or overtly, by trying to shoot them as they cross the Foundry floor. A Good (+3) Empathy roll picks up on the fact that there's something really strange about the demeanor of the BigRock crew. They look and talk like a sloppy bunch of rock draggers, but they move and act with the discipline of a crack naval unit. Staff in the Foundry include:

- **Boss Glun**, an Arsubaran who has a grudge against the Saldrallan Zenshus. The Fury worked on that grudge until it grew into a hatred of all Saldrallans.
- **Kicks**, an Urseminite. She's a smart cookie, and she worked out weeks ago that most of her co-workers were brainwashed by some alien force. To be honest, she prefers 'em that way; they work harder and they bribe her to stay quiet. This is a sweet deal, and no meddling, do-gooder Bulldogs are going to ruin it.
- **CX-42**, the coordinating robot. It's not sentient, but it is a highly advanced model capable of independent action. It's also been programmed to obey Boss Glun's orders and not to mention anything about a missing asteroid or the Fury.
- **Ryges**, another Arsubaran and the chief pilot of the BigRock hauling fleet. She used to be a test pilot for the Armada Works, but she was severely wounded when a prototype fighter exploded under her. Now she's a cyborg with a drinking problem, easy prey for the Fury.

MACHINERY OF DEATH (ENGINEERING STUNT)

Boss Glun knows every inch of the Foundry, and knows exactly how to vent hot steam or electrify the right floor panel to turn his factory into a weapon. He may use his Engineering skill to make an attack on everyone in a zone within the Foundry.



BOSS GLUN

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

MY STATION, MY RULES; CALLOUS DISREGARD FOR EMPLOYEE SAFETY ; CURSE THOSE DAMN SALDRALLANS; NURSES A GRUDGE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Engineering

GOOD (+3): Athletics, Physique

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Resolve, Fight

AVERAGE (+1): Command, Systems, Provoke, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

MACHINERY OF DEATH: use Engineering instead of Shoot or Fight to attack anyone in any zone on the Foundry floor (page 118).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HEAVY BLAST PISTOL: Medium Weapon, ☐ **BIG AND INTIMIDATING.**

DEFENSE SCREEN: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SPACE SUIT: Light Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **FAMILIAR AND WELL-USED.**

☐ Mild:

KICKS

SPECIES: Urseminite

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

VICIOUS LITTLE TERROR; TOO CLEVER FOR HER OWN GOOD; CREATIVE USE OF SHARP OBJECTS; SHE'S HIDING IN THE AIR DUCTS!

Skills

GREAT (+4): Survival

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Systems

FAIR (+2): Stealth, Physique, Fight

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Larceny, Provoke, Resolve

Stunts & Species Abilities

THICK FUR AND FAT: natural light armor (page 49 of *Bulldogs!*).

HARD TO KILL: extra mild consequence and extra Winded stress box (page 49 of *Bulldogs!*).

MIND FOR CRIME: gain +2 to create advantages with Larceny when committing arson (page 49 of *Bulldogs!*).

NO NATURAL WEAPONS: cannot inflict stress in hand to hand without a weapon (page 49 of *Bulldogs!*).

UNIVERSALLY DESPISED: all NPCs have **URSEMINITE BASTARDS!** unless a fate point is spent to say otherwise (page 49 of *Bulldogs!*).

INNER STRENGTH: gain +2 to defend with Resolve against fear-based attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

IRON WILL: gain an extra stress box on Angry and Stunned conditions (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HEAVY BALLISTIC PISTOL: Heavy Weapon, ☐ **BOOM!**

WELDING TORCH: Medium Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **WELDED TO THE FLOOR** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE.**

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐☐

THICK FUR AND FAT: Light Armor, ☐ **TAKES A LICKIN'.**

☐ Mild:

CX42

SPECIES: Robot

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

SLAVE TO PROGRAMMING; MULTIPLE LIMBS, MULTIPLE BRAINS; ATTENTION TO DETAIL; LOTS OF GUNS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Systems

GOOD (+3): Physique, Survival

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Fight, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Engineering, Pilot, Provoke

Stunts & Species Abilities

REPROGRAMMABLE: skill tree can be rearranged with a Good (+3) Engineering roll (page 36 of *Bulldogs!*).

NEVER SLEEP: always alert, and any task taking longer than a day or two can be done in a shorter time (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

DON'T BREATHE: function in any atmosphere (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

MACHINE RESISTANCE: immune to extreme heat and cold, vacuum, disease, and poison (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

IMMORTAL: will not age (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC VULNERABILITY: EM attacks as a weapon one tier higher (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

NO NATURAL HEALING: consequences and conditions must be repaired to be cleared (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

WE DON'T SERVE YOUR KIND: roll a fate die when entering a new community to determine level of anti-robot prejudice (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

EXTRA LIMBS: once per conflict take two actions in a single round (page 38 of *Bulldogs!*).

BLACK HAT: +2 to overcome or attack with Systems when attempting to destabilize or knock out an enemy system (page 148 of *Bulldogs!*).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Overheating ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Rerouting ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

TWIN REPEATING BLASTERS: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ **NON-STANDARD FEATURE.**

ARMOR PLATING: Heavy Armor, ☐ **BUILT TO TAKE A BEATING.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

RYGES

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

CYBORG ENHANCED; BITTER, RESENTFUL, AND ARMED; KILLER PILOT

Skills

GREAT (+4): Pilot

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Systems

FAIR (+2): Survival, Rapport, Resolve

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Empathy, Provoke, Physique

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

DEFENSIVE FLYING: gain +2 to create advantages with Pilot by performing evasive maneuvers (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

ONE HAND ON THE STICK: gain +2 to Pilot when defending against fire from another ship (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

MASTER JAMMER: gain +2 to defend with Systems against ship-to-ship attacks (page 148 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone),

☐ **OLD BUT LOVED.**

STAR SUIT: CONTROLLED FLIGHT, AIRBORNE ALACRITY.

COMBAT SCREEN: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SPACE SUIT: Light Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ **UTILITARIAN.**

☐ Mild:

Once they're past the BigRock goons, they can make their way towards the asteroid lodged at the side of the gravity funnel. It looks unremarkable from a distance. Scanning it shows that it is indeed metal-rich. In fact, it's so dense that sensors have a hard time penetrating it. A Great (+4) Systems roll lets the sensor operator detect a hollow in the core of the asteroid, and there is at least one robot hiding in there, along with some sort of structure that gives off a very strange energy signature.

A quick search reveals a tunnel leading down. This close to the gravity funnel, the asteroid is effectively under a standard gravity field, and the tunnel is close to vertical, so the crew have to climb down carefully. Call for Athletics checks against a Fair (+2) difficulty as the crew climbs down (or better, compel any aspects that might hinder a Bulldog as they climb, anything to slow them down and sow dissent).

PROBLEM: THE GUIDESTONE

As they come closer to the Guidestone, have each Bulldogs roll Resolve against Good (+4) difficulty. Those who fail come under the influence of the psychic field of the Fury. Afflicted crew members feel strangely angry or determined; it is like they are descending into a crucible that burns away all their weakness or flaws, leaving only purity of purpose. It also burns away their tolerance for the weaknesses of others. If there are exploitable aspects, then start compelling like crazy. If Squuoosh irritates Bob, then throw Fate points at Bob to tempt him into taking a swing or a pot-shot at Squuoosh.

Anyone unlucky enough to have Fury aspects has to spend two fate points to resist such a compel.

The Guidestone lies at the bottom of the shaft. The artifact is octahedral in shape and was carved out of some black metal. Strange symbols decorate its eight facets. Any Templar (or a crew member who succeeds at a Great (+4) Science roll) recognizes the symbols as Devalkamanchan in origin. The artifact hums with power and spins slowly on its axis. According to the Bulldogs' sensors, it is not emitting any electromagnetic energy or radiation, but they can tell that it is somehow more than inert rock.

There is no obvious way to turn the thing off. The crew could just destroy it. The artifact has numerous consequence slots and can take 7 stress. There's also another problem.

GUIDESTONE

Conditions

Chipped ☐☐☐

Cracked ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

PROBLEM: THE NECROMECH

Lurking in the asteroid is the Necromech Rakaar Kran, Avatar of Kamanch and one of the mostly-dead-but-not-quite shepherds of the Fury. It was he who placed the Guidestone here, he who whispered to it as it brought the psychic echoes of a thousand generations of Templar warriors here, and it is he who is going to personally decapitate anyone foolish enough to interfere with this triumph.

The Necromech attacks as soon as the Bulldogs try to interfere with the Guidestone, or if they try to contact anyone (like the Armada Works), or when he gets tired of watching. With the advantage of surprise, and with his ability to draw power from the Guidestone, he may be too tough for the crew to defeat in a fair fight, but who said they had to fight fair?

Possible options:

- **LEAD HIM AWAY FROM THE GUIDESTONE:** Once the Bulldogs work out that the Necromech can draw power from the artifact, some of them could lead him away from the Guidestone, giving the others a chance to blow it up.
- **DISLODGE THE ROCK:** The asteroid is precariously balanced on the edge of the gravity funnel. That is a great hiding place, but one solid nudge—say, from a sturdy Class D freighter, or a precisely placed explosive—could knock it out of position and send it tumbling into the furnace.
- **TURN ON THE FURNACE:** Those big fusion thermal lance generators? They can be turned. Right now, they're set up for optimum efficiency, but a Bulldog could use Engineering to turn one of them into a giant flamethrower and roast the asteroid from a distance.
- **EAT ARTILLERY:** The Necromech is very tough. Mass drivers and ordnance are tougher. If the Bulldogs have their ship nearby and lure the Necromech to the surface of the asteroid, they can pummel it with their ship.
- **RUN AWAY:** Intelligence gathering is the better part of valor, and between the video transmitted by Sparky, and the data gathered by the Bulldogs themselves, they know a lot more about the inner working of the Fury than they did before. Fleeing is a perfectly good option at this point.



RAKAAR KRAN

SPECIES: Robot

REFRESH: 5

Aspects

"SUBMIT, OR BE CRUSHED"; UNDEAD CYBERPRIEST; "THIS IS THE HOUR OF MY TRIUMPH"; BIG AND UGLY; MASTER OF THE FURY; VASTLY ARROGANT

Skills

FANTASTIC (+6): Physique

SUPERB (+5): Resolve, Provoke, Psychic

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Fight, Science

GOOD (+3): Survival, Athletics, Empathy

FAIR (+2): Stealth, Command, Systems

AVERAGE (+1): Engineering, Larceny, Rapport

Stunts & Species Abilities

IMMORTAL: will not age (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

DON'T BREATHE: function in any atmosphere (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

ARMY OF ONE: spend a fate point to ignore enemy teamwork bonuses for a conflict (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

BRAWLER: gain +2 to defend with Fight when outnumbered (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

AURA OF MENACE: gain +2 to Provoke to create advantages when wordlessly radiating menace (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

IRON WILL: gain an extra stress box on Angry and Rerouting conditions (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Overheating

□□□

Angry

□□□

Rerouting

□□□□

Broken

□□□□

Consequences

□ Mild:

□ Moderate:

□ Severe:

Gear

STEEL CLAWS: Heavy Weapon, □ **REND FLESH.**

HEAVY AUTOCANNON: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), □ **MASSIVE BLAST.**

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC BARRIER: Medium Shield.

Stress □□□

ARMORED CARAPACE: Heavy Armor, □ **DURABLY BUILT.**

□ Mild:

□ Moderate:

□ Severe:

KILL THAT GUIDESTONE!

Ideally, the first time the Bulldogs encounter a Guidestone, they don't get to examine it for long. It's better to tease them and get them to go out in search of another stone. So, if this is their first encounter with a stone, ensure that it gets blown up, melted, or otherwise destroyed, or have Rakaar Kran blow it up out of spite when the Bulldogs defeat him.

FATE OF THE NECROMECH

If Rakaar Kran doesn't get chucked into the asteroid furnace or blasted with a hail of fire from the Bulldogs' ship, then he can show up later on in the campaign, either at the climax of *The Tomb World* (page 224) or as one of the *Hunters* (page 194).

PROBLEM: THE FALL OF ARMADA

Meanwhile, there's a struggle going on for control of the Armada Works. The Fury want another bloodless coup, like their conquest of Teraci and dozens of similar worlds along the border. The psychic field has the system in its grip now. If all goes according to plan, then soon enough minds will crack under the pressure, and enough people will join the Fury to ensure a smooth takeover. It's so close they can almost see it: key figures on the Armada Works PgC board of directors suddenly realize the rightness of the Fury cause, there's a swell of support for a change in direction, and no one dares voice any dissent with voices like Zelshus silenced. The troops from the Fury fleet swoop in, securing the Armada Works, and the whole affair is carried out with perfect military discipline.

- **IF THE GUIDESTONE STAYS INTACT:** Then it all goes according to plan. The Bulldogs pick up a radio message announcing that the Armada Works stands with the Fury. The Bulldogs (being persona non grata in Fury space) had best run for it. The Fury acquires the Frontier Zone's biggest source of advanced weapons and goes from "a weird fringe movement on the edge of civilized space" to "a very heavily armed potential threat on GCP's doorstep".
- **IF THE GUIDESTONE GETS BLOWN UP:** Then things get very messy, very quickly. The destruction of the Guidestone means the psychic field gets disrupted. That means that most of the people who would otherwise sympathize with the Fury suddenly realize that they were thinking strangely. A sizeable minority, though, suffer a sudden psychotic break when the psychic field fails. Violence breaks out on the Armada Works stations, and the Fury fleet decides to try to take advantage of the confusion and launches an invasion. (If the crew killed Rakaar Kran, then the Fury are really pissed at them for blowing up their cyberprophet).

The heart of the Armada Works defenses is the Defense Command station; it's effectively a flying fortress, decked in missile launchers and shield generators and all sorts of exotic weapons. It has enough firepower to gut a warship with a single barrage. With the Defense Command station operational, the Armada Works cluster is safe.

However, the Defense Command station is very, very close to the Foundry, the Foundry is controlled by BigRock, and most of BigRock serves the Fury. If battle breaks out, then the BigRock operators try to turn the Foundry so the gravity funnel faces Defense Command. The Defense Command station is tough, but not so tough that it can survive

being dragged through the furnaces of the Foundry. If the Bulldogs haven't yet dealt with the BigRock staff, then they have to do so before the battle turns in the Fury's favor.

COMPLICATION: THE *MONAD*

If the crew successful woke the AI on board the *Monad*, then it may take advantage of the battle to launch an escape attempt. The *Monad* could repay any favors owed to the Bulldogs by, say, blowing up a few Fury warships on its way out of the system.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Having glimpsed that there's some dark intelligence behind the Fury, the crew are asked to head to InfoCity to obtain more information about what's really going on. Run *The Hole in InfoCity*, page 128.

SCENIC ROUTE: With the Fury's attempt to seize this world thwarted, they'll take their frustration out on the Bulldogs. Time to run and hide! Drop in some of *The Hunters*, page 186, to make things interesting.

THE HOLE IN INFOCITY

InfoCity's the biggest database in the galaxy. All information goes through here. When you come across a mystery, the best thing to do is follow the data and see what InfoCity can tell you about your situation.

EXPRESS ROUTE: After running into the Necromech and the Guidestone on Armada, the crew know that something weird and ancient is connected to the Fury. They saw a glowing pillar with runes, some sort of weird psychic energy—oh, yeah, and a giant cyborg war-priest monster thing. That's got to be worth an encyclopedia galactica entry, right? Navigatrix Thelise can suggest a visit to InfoCity if the crew don't come up with the idea themselves.

SCENIC ROUTE: Everyone goes to InfoCity sooner or later, so you can run this setup whenever they do.

ARRIVAL IN INFOCITY

InfoCity is only a short hop from Arsubar, although traffic in GCP is so heavy that you could travel a dozen light-years elsewhere in the time it takes to get from one planet to another here. The space station looks like a glittering cathedral of learning; vast spires and cloisters support the forest of sensor dishes and hyperspatial datalinks that connect the infinitely complex computers to the rest of the Galaxy. They know everything here.

The ship docks at the visitors' section at the base of InfoCity. Glowing yellow lines demarcate the zones that outsiders can enter. Only the robed acolytes may walk the labyrinths of data storage. All requests for information must go through an acolyte or one of the few public terminals.

The InfoCity computer system is astoundingly complicated. It takes years of constant study to even understand the outline of how it functions, and it takes slightly longer than the average Arsubaran lifetime to really come to grips with it. The Acolytes, then, are all slightly off-putting in some way. They're a bunch of extremely old men and women in dark robes, all with cybernetic upgrades or the telltale plastic sheen of artificially slowed aging. They might also just be very, very old, clinging to life with the obsessiveness of a bibliophile in the ultimate library.

What the crew doesn't know—but is about to find out—is that the Saldrellans are one step ahead of them. The Saldrellans need to erase all trace of their tampering with the Fury, so they dispatched one of their agents to insert a computer virus into InfoCity to corrupt the records relating to the old Templar religion. If the virus had time to work, then it would alter the record undetectably, leaving no trace that anything had ever changed. The crew is about to stumble across the Saldrellan plans and get themselves in a heap of trouble.

PROBLEM: SEARCHING THE DATA

Accessing the InfoCity archives requires a Science test at Great (+4) difficulty. If the roll fails, then the crew have no choice but to ask a monk for help. Barely passing the roll gets them the information that the greatest expert on this topic is a Suka noble named the Sage of the Stars. (If you're following a scenic route, and the crew have already visited the Sage of the Stars, point them to another part of the campaign; maybe Hoops Overtly's video is on file here, or the database could send the crew off to Triano (page 198).)

For each shift after that, the Bulldog gets to ask a question relating to the data archives. If they ask anything that would cause problems (like "where did the last ship containing

the theocrats end up?”), then the archive can just reply “that information is not available”. They can learn about the old Templar religion, the overthrow of the theocrats, theories about Templar psychic powers, the truth of the Necromech’s being a thousand-year-old preserved priest, and so on.

They also find that the data is disappearing right in front of them. Something eats away at InfoCity’s records, swallowing up the ancient archives relating to the Templar cult. Trying to fight it is useless; it moves too quickly. (A Bulldogs with Good (+3) Science, Engineering, or Systems, or who has an aspect about computers or interstellar espionage, can tell that this is a computer virus, and that very, very few groups in the galaxy have the resources and know-how to make a computer virus that can get through InfoCity’s defenses. A Pangalactic Corporation, a major government... maybe a really, really huge crime syndicate, but few others.

PROBLEM: ASK A MONK A QUESTION

Instead of grappling with the computer system themselves, the crew can ask a monk. Their assigned acolyte is Brother Cyprian, and he falls squarely into the subset of monks designated “clinging to life through sheer willpower”. He speaks in angry whispers (every moment spent dealing with outsiders is a moment not spent in contemplation of the glorious data). “What do you want?” he hisses.

After the crew outlines their request, Cyprian stalks over to a terminal and connects to the InfoCity mainframe. His aged hands seem shaky and infirm, but it’s as though he’s anticipated every twitch and quiver and integrated them into his search pattern. He delves deep into the archives, flitting past hundreds of years of history, delving into the restricted files...

... And then something goes wrong. The crew sees Cyprian frown, mutter to himself angrily, and then clutch his chest and slump across the console. He just died of a heart attack, brought on by the shock of the Saldrallan virus. No one else has noticed yet.

Checking the screen in front of him gets all the information described in *Searching the Data*, above. The screen goes blank a few moments later, as the virus eats away the last traces.

PROBLEM: THE BLUE-HAIRED MONK

While some of the crew fiddle with computer consoles or occupy the last few minutes of Brother Cyprian’s life with inane questions, call for Survival rolls against Fair (+2) difficulty from the unoccupied crew members. The Bulldogs catch a glimpse of an InfoCity monk walking away from the public area, on the far side of the sacred yellow line. As he turns to walk down a corridor, the Bulldog who got the best Survival roll sees his face, and the blue hair beneath his cowl.

There are millions of blue-haired Arsubarans. There are probably hundreds of blue-haired Arsubaran monks on InfoCity. But how many blue-haired Arsubaran InfoCity monks are that young? And how many have a tanned face, instead of the pasty-pale worm-like complexions sported by those who spend years in the dimly lit vaults of the library?

If the crew has played through *Clearing Hoops* (see page 90), they know this guy has to be the Arsubaran who framed Hoops.

The result of the best roll determines how much of a lead the blue-haired spy has.

- ♦ **FAILED:** The spy gets away clean. Even if the crew chases after him, there is no way to find him. Around the corner is a vast multi-level library, filled with hundreds of monks in identical robes. He’s gone.
- ♦ **TIE:** The spy has the aspects **BIG LEAD** and **OUT OF SIGHT**, and gets a free tag on these.

- ♦ **SUCCESS:** He's just **OUT OF SIGHT**.
- ♦ **SUCCESS WITH STYLE:** The crew can keep him in sight if they move right now.

There are quite a few complications between the crew and the Arsubaran.

The other monks detect either the virus attack or the death of Brother Cyprian just after the crew spots the spy (see *Acolytes Attack*, page 132). If the crew sprints across the yellow line in pursuit, the monks assume they are responsible for the attack on InfoCity.

- ♦ Beyond the visitors' section denoted by the yellow line, InfoCity is a maze of libraries, access corridors, archives, and vaults. Only the monks—or someone who sleep-learned a perfect map of the complex—can get around here. It's a **MAZE OF STORAGE SHELVING** with lots of obstacles like shelves of recordings to topple, railings to vault over, sudden chasms that are open to space at the far end (for cooling the computer cores, of course).
- ♦ In addition to his aspects, the Arsubaran spy has three other advantages. First, he's got a pocket full of robot caltrops. Second, he's got a ship waiting for him—a souped-up one-man Darter with a sensor jammer. It's docked at a maintenance airlock nearby. Third... well, you'll see in a moment.

Run the chase as normal (see page 172 of *Bulldogs!*, adjust the chase rules for a foot chase instead of a starship one). The chase may involve Athletics versus Athletics, but could devolve into Stealth versus Survival ("He's hiding over there!"), Fight versus Fight ("We swashbuckle our way across the shelves, crossing swords as we jump from one section to another."), or even Pilot versus Pilot if he gets to his little zippy ship...

The most likely outcome of the chase is that the Bulldogs fail to catch the spy, and he gets away in his ship. The real question is whether or not the crew escapes, or if they are captured by the monks.

In the unlikely event that they do catch the Arsubaran, then his third advantage is that he's suicide-rigged. If captured, then he smiles, flicks his blue hair out of his eyes, and says "peace at any cost." He then slumps to the ground. Liquid runs out of his ears and nose as key sectors in his brain are flash-heated by microscopic kill switches. He's very, very, very dead.

Running the Arsubaran's fingerprints/retina scans/DNA/pilot's license through the InfoCity computers turns up dozens of alternate identities. This guy was a diplomat on GCP... a trader on Stakes... a government inspector on DoI... a travelling weapons salesman on Ryjyl... hell, he was apparently a card-carrying member of both the Ursemite Equality Movement and the Kill the Fuzzies Sporting Murder Club. He was everyone and no-one.

BIG LEAD

INVOKE: the bad guy is so far ahead he gets cocky. A Bulldog who takes a monumentally stupid risk can catch up with him, "Stairs? Stairs are for losers. I jump."

COMPEL: he gets away, "It's no use. He's gone."

OUT OF SIGHT

INVOKE: to take the opposition by surprise, "I was in the air ducts all along!"

COMPEL: to force the crew to split up, "Damn. He could be anywhere. Let's split up to cover all the exits."

DRESSED AS A MONK

INVOKE: to justify your violent impulses, "He could be any of these guys. Best thing to do is start punching."

COMPEL: to take the crew by surprise, "The monk standing behind you suddenly shoots you. You go down."

THE BLUE-HAIRED ARSUBARAN

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 5

Aspects

NATURAL ADAPTABILITY; THAT SNEAKY BLUE-HAIRED BASTARD; SALDRALLAN SPECIAL AGENT; PEACE AT ANY COST

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Stealth

GREAT (+4): Contacts, Science

GOOD (+3): Athletics, Empathy, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Physique, Systems, Larceny

AVERAGE (+1): Survival, Fight, Haggle, Pilot, Provoke

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

COLD READ: +2 to discover with Empathy when you first meet someone (page 137 of *Bulldogs!*).

TALK THE TALK: use Contacts instead of Rapport to create advantages with your first impression (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*)

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

AUTOMATIC FLECHETTE PISTOL: Light Weapon, Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Specialized (+1 to Shoot against unarmored organics once per conflict), ☐ SCARY AS HELL.

ROBOT CALTROP: See sidebar on next page.

MONKISH ROBES: **DRESSED AS A MONK**

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐☐

BALLISTIC CLOTH: Light Armor, ☐ HARD TO DETECT.

☐ Mild:

ROBOT CALTROP

Very handy little gadgets if you're a spy on the run. These caltrops can move themselves and automatically position themselves to block pursuers. Instead of spikes, the caltrops have sticky pads and built-in electromagnets. If one caltrop gloms onto you, it uses its electromagnet to drag you towards the other caltrops, who stick themselves in place using their own sticky pads. Fortunately, the caltrops' internal batteries only last a few minutes.

In game terms, robot caltrops are deployed as an obstacle. If someone tries and fails to get past the block using Athletics, then they gain the aspect STUCK. The caltrops have a 'battery' of 3 fate points to compel the STUCK aspect before they run out of juice.

PROBLEM: ACOLYTE ATTACK

InfoCity is a library. Silence is the rule here. Even the alarms are quiet and discreet. Just because something utterly unthinkable has happened, like a mysterious force erasing data from the sacred core, doesn't mean InfoCity needs a lot of flashing lights and blaring sirens. A little red light above the console is enough to summon a horde of monks.

The monks assume that the Bulldogs crew is responsible for the damage to the computer systems and attempt to take them into custody (there are several younger, burlier, more heavily-armed monks for this express purpose). If the Bulldogs go peacefully, then the whole matter can be sorted out, although it will take several days to prove that they are not responsible for the mess. (Rapport or other interpersonal skills can be rolled against Fair (+2) difficulty to try to reduce the time required; the crew can also call on Navigatrix Thelise for help. TransGalaxy won't offer any assistance.)

Should the crew fight back against the monks, they get themselves into a lot more trouble, especially if they severely injure or kill any of them. At the very least, the crew will be banned from InfoCity for life; they may also be fined or ordered to pay reparations to the monks (which, on InfoCity, normally means getting sent to some distant system on a suicidally dangerous research mission).



MONKS

Aspects

JUDGE US BY OUR ROBES, DO YOU?; SILENT BUT CAPABLE

Skills

GOOD (+3): Fight

FAIR (+2): Physique

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Science

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

CEREMONIAL STUNSTICKS: Light Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Boost Effect (apply **STUNNED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **NON-LETHAL**.

PROBLEM: THE COMPUTER VIRUS

Analysis of the computer virus (the crew can do it with a Great (+4) Systems test, or wait for the monks to complete their examination) shows that it was inserted into the InfoCity networks only a few minutes before the Bulldogs arrived. The virus seems to have targeted only information relating to Templar mysticism, but it is so subtle that the monks cannot tell what other changes it made. More worryingly, getting rid of the virus is extremely difficult. As soon as it was inserted, it not only spread throughout the InfoCity mainframe but also copied itself out into the galactic networks. The monks fear that if they try to restore the damaged data from backups (InfoCity keeps backups in multiple ways), the virus would reactivate and attack again.

Queries that might trigger the virus are therefore banned until the monks are sure they can purge the contagion... and that means that InfoCity is useless to the crew for quite some time.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: To find answers about what they discovered on Armada, the Bulldogs need to speak to the Sage of the Stars. That means dealing with the *Slowlight Express* (page 134).

SCENIC ROUTE: InfoCity's a dead end; the crew have to find another way to uncover the information they need. *The Sage of the Stars* (page 144) is the obvious route, but maybe Hoops Overtly can help (page 89) or this could be a good time to introduce Mr. S (page 6).

SLOWLIGHT EXPRESS

For a thousand years, war raged across the galaxy. The clash of the two great stellar empires destroyed whole solar systems and unleashed nightmarish doomsday weapons that corroded reality and blew gaping wounds in time and space. All life in the galaxy might have perished if that war had continued for much longer. Little wonder, then, that the various species of the galaxy were eager to put the memory of those frightful centuries behind them. The Thousand-Year War is an event consigned to the history books and the sealed databases, and many aspects of the conflict were deliberately forgotten or erased. But nothing is truly lost or completely forgotten.

The Suka (see page 250) were once a slave species of the Templari. They suffered horribly under the Devalkamanchan yoke and wished to remember their suffering. Rather than sharing that knowledge among their whole species—and one of the tragedies of a fully telepathic species is that it is hard to hide painful memories from others—they select certain powerful sages to be repositories of dangerous or horrible thoughts. One of the exalted Suka, the Sage of the Stars, is a scholar and expert on Templari mysticism and psychic research. She dwells in a monastery on the edge of Suka space. This monastery, called the House of Shrouded Mirrors, stands on a hostile planet called Vipiris, a world of acid storms and howling winds. A virtually impenetrable force shield protects it. Only authorized visitors are given the keycodes to lower the force shield and enter the House.

Authorized visitors—and certain deliveries.

TransGalaxy have a standing contract to deliver supplies—incense, robes, silver masks, industrial quantities of mirror polish—to the House of Shrouded Mirrors. All the crew need to do is pick up that cargo (and the keycodes that go with it), fly to Vipiris, and ask for an audience with the Sage.

EXPRESS ROUTE: If you're flying the Express Route, then the crew learned about the Sage of the Stars just before the digital monks of InfoCity kicked them out. The Sage knows secrets of the Fury that have been lost for a thousand years.

SCENIC ROUTE: If the crew are trying to uncover the secrets of the Fury, then the Sage is the person to see (as much as you can 'see' a being that's 95% transcended to a higher plane). They might also learn about the Sage if they capture any of the Saldrallan agents, as the Sage is on their hit list.

Alternatively, this can be just another delivery job complicated by the war.

IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE & DEATH!

If the Bulldogs suggest that they just fly up to the House of Shrouded Mirrors, knock on the forcefield, and ask to see the Sage of the Stars, then they're welcome to try, but rumors claim that the Sage very rarely sees visitors. Sneaking in may be the crew's best chance for getting an audience.

PROBLEM: HEY, THAT'S OUR CARGO!

When the crew gets to Job Tower, they discover that the consignment for the House of Shrouded Mirrors is already gone. (Here, have a fate point in recompense as we compel GCP's **BUSIEST SYSTEM IN THE GALAXY** aspect.) Another Class D crew picked it up a few hours ago. The clerk behind the desk is the same cranky Hacragorkan that the crew may have encountered on an earlier assignment (see page 70). They can use Rapport to persuade him to tell them who the other crew was (the difficulty depends on how they treated the clerk last time) or use Larceny or Systems to 'borrow' or obtain a copy of the delivery docket.

The other ship is the *Slowlight Express*, under Captain R'Kad. She's scheduled to make a drop-off at Depot, then head onto Suka space and the House of Shrouded Mirrors. Captain R'Kad took the code to lower the force field, so the crew needs to catch up to her if they are to have any chance of getting an audience with the Sage.

PROBLEM: FURY FORCES

Depending on the progress of the war, these guys might be a Fury scout or commerce raider, the leading edge of an invasion fleet, or a patrol through established Fury territory. Either way, there's a pair of small Fury ships on an intercept course for the Bulldogs.

If the crew is already a known enemy of the Fury, jump straight to the bit where the Fury interceptors streak out of space going *neeeeeeeowhoosh* and their guns go *pewpew-pewpew* with the deeper *whthud whthud* of their secondary mass drivers when they get in close.

If the Bulldogs aren't yet on shooting terms with the Fury, then the Fury captain, a Dolom named **Huniar Moloç**, demands to inspect their cargo and crew for 'immoral contraband' or 'illegal weapons.' It's clear that she's spoiling for a reason to detain the Bulldogs and slow them down. There's also something weird about her bearing: she never moves her third arm, unlike other Dolomé the crew have encountered. (She's under the influence of the Fury, which means that she's got the psychic template of some long-dead Templar warrior overlaid on her mind, and Templari have a paltry total of two arms compared to the elegant triad of the Dolomé).

If the Bulldogs submit to an inspection, then the Fury troops (mostly Dolomé and Arsubarans) board and check out the ship. The Fury's bound together with intolerance and hate, so find something for them to hate. Maybe they object to Urseminites or free robots; maybe they take exception to the crew heading towards Suka space. Maybe they just despise Bulldogs. Got a ship that's painted blue? Then blue is the color of a *criminal deviant* and only a *treacherous, despicable thief* would paint a ship that immoral and loathsome shade. Push every button you can.

HUNIAR MOLOÇ

SPECIES: Dolom

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

LARGE & IN CHARGE; CONFUSING TEMPLAR MEMORIES; RIGHTEOUS FURY; IS THAT AN EMOTIONAL BUTTON FOR YOU? WELL, LET ME HAMMER IT WITH MY DOLOM STRENGTH

Skills

GREAT (+4): Science, Physique, Command

GOOD (+3): Empathy, Engineering, Fight

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Provoke, Stealth

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Systems, Contacts

Stunts & Species Abilities

THICK SKINNED: gain an extra mild consequence and an extra Angry box (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

THIRD ARM: once per session, take two actions in the same round (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

GREAT STRENGTH: +1 to all Physique rolls when applying brute strength (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

HEAVY MOMENTUM: +2 to overcome physical obstacles with Physique if you've got a running start (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

HAND-EYE COORDINATION: +2 to create advantages with Engineering when doing complicated or delicate tasks (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

SCIENTIFIC EXPERT: if you succeed with style on a discover action with Science in the field of zero-gravity physics, spend a fate point to create an aspect with two free invocations (page 145 of *Bulldogs!*).

NOW YOU'VE MADE ME MAD: once per scene, spend a fate point to add the shifts taken in an attack against you into to your action against the person who inflicted the stress (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

POWERFUL SCATTERBLASTER: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), ☐ **LET'S MAKE CHUNKY SALSA.**

ENERGY SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

SYNTHETIC PLATE ARMOR: Medium Armor, Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **FULL BODY PROTECTION.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

FURY CUTTER

SIZE: Small

MANEUVERABILITY: Mediocre (0)

ENGINES: Combi-Fury Engines (Light)

Aspects

STEALTH PROWLER

Weapons

MASS DRIVER: Light Weapon, ☐ **BIG ROCKS COMING FAST.**

Armor

DYED METALLIC PLATES: Light Armor, ☐ **SHOW YOUR FURY PRIDE.**

☐ Mild:

Crew

PILOT: Good (+3)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Average (+1)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Crippled ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

FURY CUTTER CREW MEMBER

Aspects

INTOLERANT

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

BLAST RIFLES: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **DANGEROUSLY EFFICIENT DESIGN.**

PROBLEM: CATCHING THE *SLOWLIGHT EXPRESS*

The crew can either try to intercept the *Slowlight Express* en route to Depot, or they can just head straight to Depot and meet the other ship while it makes its delivery. The former option means some fancy piloting and overloading the engines to catch up; the latter is safer, but means waiting around on Depot, and it's easy to get into trouble there.

CATCHING UP

Run this like a normal chase. The *Slowlight Express* has a Fair (+2) Pilot, but it's got **AN AFTERNOON'S HEAD START** (or **A DAY'S HEAD START**, if the Fury inspection delayed the Bulldogs). Once they are within radio range, they can try hailing Captain R'Kad's ship.

WAITING AT DEPOT

The *Slowlight Express* is scheduled to make a rendezvous with a megafreighter, the *Mammoth V*, on the fringes of the Depot system. The best place to wait, therefore, is at Thor's Bar and Grill. The big risk there is a ship full of Ryjyllian mercenaries, en route to the rumored conflict with the Fury. They've been cooped up on their ship for weeks, and now they're spoiling for a bar fight. All they need is a spark, like a Bulldog getting served first in the diner.

The commander of the Ryjyllians is Arawn, an infamous mercenary said to be worshipped as a god of death by some primitive cultures. Certainly, he dresses the part; black and white armor with lots of bones and skulls, weird amulets, and a voice that sounds like tombstones grinding against each other. He even wears this get-up when ordering dinner in Thor's...

RYJYLLIAN MERCENARY

Aspects

**SPOILING FOR A FIGHT; COMPETENT
AND DANGEROUS**

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Fight

Conditions

Winded	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
Angry	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

Gear

CLAWS AND FANGS: Light Weapon,

☐ **RIP 'EM UP.**

BLAST RIFLES: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **STURDY AND RELIABLE.**

MERCENARY ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), ☐ **ARAWN'S SKULL PLATOON.**

☐ **Mild:**

☐ **Moderate:**



ARAWN

SPECIES: Ryjyllian

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

I'M A GOD OF DEATH; MAD AND RUTHLESS; INFAMOUS MERCENARY

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Shoot

GREAT (+4): Command, Fight

GOOD (+3): Physique, Survival, Athletics

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Provoke, Contacts, Haggle

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth, Empathy, Larceny, Pilot

Stunts & Species Abilities

ACUTE HEARING: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when listening (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

CLAWS AND FANGS: natural light weapons (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

LOW-LIGHT VISION: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when attempting to see in the dark (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

RYJYLLIAN COMBAT FOCUS: once per session, spend a fate point to gain two additional stress boxes and gain a shift on any attack roll intended to deal stress until the end of the current combat (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

STILL STANDING: ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the duration of the current scene (it can't be invoked against you), but step up the consequence at the end of the scene (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

INSPIRATIONAL: advantages created with Command can be invoked for +3 (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

CLAWS AND FANGS: Light Weapon, ☐ **FANGS OUT.**

MILITARY SHOTGUN: Medium Weapon, Powerful (once per conflict do +1 shift of stress on a successful hit), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), ☐ **THIS IS MY BACKUP.**

HEAVY BLAST RIFLE: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **LONG RANGE KILLER.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

MERCENARY ARMOR: Medium Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session), ☐ **FESTOONED WITH BONES.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

PROBLEM: PERSUADING R'KAD

Captain R'Kad of the *Slowlight Express* is a Templar from an aristocratic family. She was assured of a place in the Nova Legion, but she chose to see the galaxy instead and signed on with a mercenary troupe. Now, she's tired of war and works for TransGalaxy. She still has a veneer of Templar arrogance, but under it she's tired and just wants to provide for her crew.

She admits that there was a mix-up back at Job Tower. The *Slowlight Express* should not have picked up the ticket (and, more importantly, the unlock code to the force shield) to the House of Shrouded Mirrors. These mix-ups happen; she sent a newly recruited crewman, a young Arsubaran named Mike Matin, down to the clerk and maybe he messed up, but now that she has the ticket she is inclined to keep it. As a Templar, Suka space has a certain... emotional resonance for her. (If the crew is not familiar with the history of the Suka and the Templari, now's a great time to fill them in.) In any event, the delivery is worth a few thousand credits. Why should she hand it over?

The crew can persuade her with Rapport (at Great (+4) difficulty), or just agree to hand over any bonus from the delivery to her, or take some other approach to convincing her to hand over the cargo and the force shield key. R'Kad is too old and tired to want a fight, so pulling a gun on her and using Provoke will also work, although it does mean angering one of the oldest captains in TransGalaxy.

PROBLEM: THE SALDRALLAN SPY

One new deckhand, **Mike Matin**, is actually a Saldralan agent, just like the Blue-Haired Arsubaran (page 131). One last bit of clean-up needed to hide the Saldralan involvement in the Fury incident is to eliminate the Sage of the Stars. He is safe behind the forceshield in the House of Shrouded Mirrors.

Mike took the keycode to the force shield, copied it, and broadcast it to the Barracado Pirates. The Pirates think this is a scheme to loot the fabulous wealth of the monastery. In fact, the wealth is of no interest to the Saldralan spies; they just want the Sage among the collateral casualties.

Mike can complicate the situation in several ways. His involvement in this situation depends on how much the Saldralans know about the crew, and how circumspect they are. If they mention the Fury, or InfoCity, or start shouting about how they're trying to save the galaxy from a psychic toxin, then Mike will do his utmost to screw things up for them. If they keep quiet about their true intentions, then he'll either just spy on them, or use them as his patsies (see Being Helpful, below).

SPYING ON THE CREW: Hi there! I'm friendly deckhand Mike Matin. I'm so friendly that I'm going to roll my Rapport (Superb (+5)) against your Survival or Resolve, whichever's higher. If I win, I'm so chatty and easy-going that you tell me something you shouldn't. It doesn't have to be anything big, you just let down your guard a little bit. Hey, if necessary I can give you a fate point and bring out my **BOTTLE OF OL' JANX SPIRIT** for a +2 bonus. Don't worry, I won't do anything with that information; it's not like I'm a spy or anything.

SABOTAGE: Matin can sneak on-board the Bulldog's ship and sabotage it. Possible options:

- Plant a computer virus in their systems, similar to the aggressive one used by the Saldralans on InfoCity (page 128) that eats any data connected to the Fury or the Saldralan Special Adjustment Bureau.
- Cut a feed line so fuel leaks into space, forcing the crew to stop, repair, and refuel in the middle of nowhere.

MIKE MATIN, MAN OF MYSTERY

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

INTERSTELLAR MAN OF MYSTERY; SALDRALLAN TRAINED SPY; CHEERY SMILE, CONCEALED WEAPON

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Rapport, Resolve

GREAT (+4): Engineering, Stealth

GOOD (+3): Larceny, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Contacts, Systems

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Physique

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHADOWED STRIKE: use Stealth for an attack instead of Fight or Shoot if you strike from hiding (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

QUICK EXIT: once per session, use a momentary distraction to overcome with Stealth and disappear from the scene (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*)

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

FOLD-OUT BLASTER: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful x2 (+1 stress on a successful hit twice per conflict), Concealable (+1 to Stealth to hide this item), ☐ **COMPACT AND POWERFUL.**

QUANTUM VACUUM DETONATORS: Heavy Weapon, Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Concealable (+1 to Stealth to hide this item), Boost Effect (apply **ENGINE DISABLED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style).

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action)

Stress ☐☐

BALLISTIC CLOTH: Light Armor, ☐ Hard to Detect.

☐ Mild:

- Scramble the ship's communications system making it harder to sneak by Fury patrols.
- A good old bomb—he's carrying quantum vacuum detonators that not only go boom but also fritz up space-time around them. If planted on a ship's engine, that ship's not going anywhere faster-than-light for a while.

BEING HELPFUL: The Barracado Pirates (or some other bad guys) are coming to loot the House of Shrouded Mirrors. Now, if Mike can give the keycode to the Bulldogs, putting them at the scene of the attack, so much the better. He apologizes profusely for the mix-up and hands over the key and the delivery docket. He claims that it was his fault that the Slowlight Express took a cargo intended for the crew, and he'll sort out the problem with Captain R'Kad.

STIRRING UP A MUTINY: If the Bulldogs try to take the job from Captain R'Kad without offering recompense, then Mike can try rallying the crew of the *Slowlight Express* against them, triggering a brawl. To do so, he needs a Rapport result of +5 (possibly less if the Bulldogs were especially overbearing or demanding). The Bulldogs crew can try to talk down the mutineers, but if they fail, a brawl breaks out.

Mike can use the brawl as a distraction while he commits sabotage, as described above.

PROBLEM: R'KAD'S MONSTER

Centuries ago, one of Captain R'Kad's noble Templar ancestors, R'Mhus, hunted the fabled **Starbeast**, a monster that lurks in the darkness between the stars, a living creature millions of years old. It looks a little like a crocodile, if crocodiles lived in space and were big enough to blot out the sun. Oh, and had raised fin-plates on its back that somehow warp gravity and let it swim faster than light. And had two heads.

The ancestor pledged to slay the Starbeast and offer up its twin hearts as a double sacrifice to the war-gods Deval and Kamach.

The Starbeast had other ideas. Bits of the wreckage of that Templar warship are still stuck between the monster's teeth. R'Mhus did manage to wound the creature, though, and ever since it's had a grudge against her descendants. The Starbeast tracks its prey using psychic receptors in its secondary head.

R'kad hasn't seen the Starbeast in many years, not since it attacked and devoured a mercenary convoy she was part of. She still carries the guilt of all those mercs, gobbled up by the monster.

Now the Starbeast's back.

The beast is huge and probably much too tough for the Bulldogs to take out. They could, however, use its presence to convince R'kad to hand over the key or encounter it as another obstacle to dodge past. The Starbeast steers clear of Sukar space, all those psychic emissions muddy the waters and make it hard to hunt.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Once the crew have the key, they can head onto Viperis and the Sage of the Stars.

SCENIC ROUTE: Captain R'Kad might be a useful source of information or plot hooks, pointing the crew wherever they need to go next.

STARBEAST

SIZE: Huge

MANEUVERABILITY: Awful (-3)

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

GIANT SPACE CROCODILE; PSYCHIC HUNTER; JAWS OF DOOM; OLDER THAN THE STARS; SECONDARY HEAD; OLD WOUND

Skills

GREAT (+4): Fight

GOOD (+3): Athletics

FAIR (+2): Physique, Resolve

Conditions

Crippled ☐☐☐

Disabled ☐☐

Damaged ☐☐

Impaired ☐☐

Weapons

CRUSHING JAWS: Colossal Weapon, ☐ **TREATS HULL PLATING LIKE PAPER.**

THRASHING GRAVITY: Heavy Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **LOCALIZED GRAVITATIONAL DISTORTION.**

THICK METEOR-POCKED SCALES: Heavy Armor, ☐ **THICK WITH 1000 YEARS OF DEBRIS.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



STRANGE BEHAVIOR... FOR A GIANT SPACE CROCODILE

Observant Bulldogs may notice that the Starbeast appears confused if there are any Fury nearby: it can't tell what they are, as the Templar psychic field blurs its perceptions. It may randomly attack Fury ships out of frustration. If the crew hasn't worked out that there's a psychic component to the Fury, the Starbeast could clue them in. Alternatively, enterprising Bulldogs might try luring the monster deeper into Fury space or hiding from it inside the psychic cloud.

SAGE OF THE STARS

The psychic Suka share their memories; knowledge flows between members of their strange species like other species breathe the same air. They unconsciously share fragments of thought and memory, instinctively assimilating this free-floating knowledge into their own minds and then sharing it again. To a Suka, self is an illusion: they are waveforms, temporary shapes in the ocean of mind.

But some knowledge is dangerous. Some memories should not be shared, should never be remembered except in dire need. These memories are held by the Suka sages, elders who volunteer to think the unthinkable thoughts and recall those things that everyone else willingly forgot long ago. In the great ocean of mind, they're isolated tide pools.

The Sage of the Stars remembers the Templar occupation of the Sukar Sphere. The Sage remembers the atrocities wreaked upon the Suka by the Devalkamachan Theocracy. If you want to know the secrets of that dark time, the Sage is the disembodied brain to ask.

EXPRESS ROUTE: The crew found out about the Sage at InfoCity.

SCENIC ROUTE: The Sage might know something the crew need to know, like the location of the Temple-Ship, or the secrets of the Fury, or how to free someone from Fury control. Alternatively, the crew might come here looking for the Saldrallan spies, or just visit here on a regular delivery mission.

Take a look at the *Slowlight Express* (page 134) setup, which works best as a lead-in to this adventure.

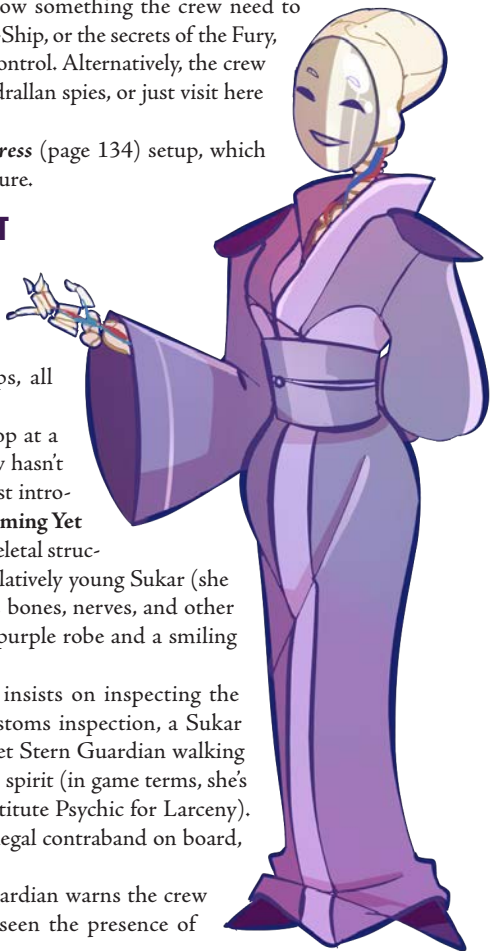
PROBLEM: THE CHECKPOINT

With the upheaval caused by the Fury, Sukar territory is seen as a safe haven, so lots of independent traders have gravitated there lately. The crew passes several other ships, all heading towards the same region.

The Suka oblige all visitors to stop at a checkpoint station. There, if the crew hasn't met a Sukar before, they get their first introduction in the floating form of **Welcoming Yet Stern Guardian**. As she still has a skeletal structure, the crew can tell that she is a relatively young Sukar (she has no skin or muscles, but still has bones, nerves, and other internal organs). She wears a lurid purple robe and a smiling silver mask.

Welcoming Yet Stern Guardian insists on inspecting the Bulldogs' ship. Unlike a normal customs inspection, a Sukar inspection consists of Welcoming Yet Stern Guardian walking around the ship communing with its spirit (in game terms, she's got a special stunt that lets her substitute Psychic for Larceny). Assuming the crew hasn't got any illegal contraband on board, this isn't a problem.

Finally, Welcoming Yet Stern Guardian warns the crew that Sukar precognitives have foreseen the presence of



danger in this sector of space. The future is uncertain, but travellers should be on their guard. When she notices that the crew is en route to the House of Shrouded Mirrors, though, she visibly relaxes (assuming a psychic skeleton in a robe can be seen to relax); the monastery is extremely secure.

Enjoy your visit to Sukar Space! Please, think good thoughts!

THE SUKAR SPHERE

The Sukar Sphere consists of about thirty star systems inhabited by the Suka and their allies. Individual worlds can elect their own governments, but foreign and trade policy is determined by the Sukar consensus. Sukar facilitators are everywhere in the sphere, smoothing over disagreements and serving as telepathic arbitrators in disputes. It's safe, friendly, a little bit dull, and a little bit sinister. Troublemakers are psychically pushed to leave, although truly dangerous criminals are imprisoned within their own minds.

As Sukar telepathy weeds out a lot of double-dealing and deception, the Sphere plays a major part in interstellar commerce, financial trading, and contract law. G'n'va is where you go to make and lose a fortune in a single day; the Sphere is all about safe, steady investments.

TELEPATHIC STATE

INVOKE: to get a Sukar Arbiter to scan someone, "So, this is a safe job? Mind repeating that while there's a telepath in the room."

COMPEL: they're in your head, "I only thought about shooting him, your honor."

DULL IS SAFE. SAFE IS GOOD

INVOKE: to find sanctuary, "They won't follow us in here. There aren't any good bars."

COMPEL: to force the crew to look elsewhere, "There's no work for Class D ships in this sector. It's all sewn up already."

SUKAR BANK ACCOUNT

INVOKE: to have a secret stash of cash, "I did some work for the Saldrallans, back in the day. Don't ask any questions, but I've got some money put aside."

COMPEL: the bad guys have no stuff to take, "What do you mean, the pirate king put all his money in a bank account, and we can't steal it?"

PROBLEM: THE CLOUDS OF VIPERIS

From orbit, Viperis looks like a witch's cauldron, a green ball of anger and acid. The howling winds and sulphur-storms can strip the paint off a hull in minutes and do a good job of corroding through starship armor too, given time. The only safe place on the planet is the House of Shrouded Mirrors, safe behind its force field. (You may ask the perfectly

reasonable question, why would anyone build a monastery on this hellhole? The Suka claim that the contrast between the raging storms outside and the tranquil monastery inside is somehow illuminating. When asked what, exactly, it illuminates, most of them just smile serenely or answer “the ineffable nature of the consensus,” which translates as “blame the planning committee.”)

Ships visiting the House take the shortest possible route between orbit and the safe zone, to minimize exposure. Park your ship directly above the monastery, send the unlock code, then fly straight down. The crew should have obtained the code in the *Slowlight Express* if you're on the express route through the campaign. If the crew don't have the unlock code, then they can get in by:

- Lurking until another ship (like the *Slowlight Express*) arrives, and then tailgating it with a Great (+4) Pilot roll.
- Begging for an audience with Contacts or Rapport, or calling in a suitable favor.
- Bluffing their way in with a Fantastic (+6) or better Larceny.
- Hacking the system, which requires Fantastic (+6) Systems.

The monastery itself sits in the middle of a circle of beautiful gardens. It is a roughly pyramidal seven-level structure of grey metal. Coruscating spikes of psychic energy dance through it, and the whole building spins slowly, each level rotating at a slightly different speed.

At the front is a magnificent staircase carved of living rock. Every step is engraved with mantras and symbols to focus the mind and calm the spirit. Pilgrims to the House of Shrouded Mirrors must ascend this staircase, and it is said that the man who enters the monastery at the top is not the same man who stepped on the first step at the bottom. The staircase leads to the fabulous doors of the monastery, carved of psy-jade and inlaid with precious metals. The entrance to the House of Shrouded Mirrors is a wonder of the galaxy.

It's also not the way the crew get in. Deliveries go 'round the back, to the service entrance, which is an ordinary-looking grimy little loading dock that could be anywhere on a million worlds.

PLACE OF PSYCHIC POWER

INVOKE: to boost your psychic powers, “Here, I really can kill you with my mind.”

COMPEL: everyone's a little bit telepathic here, and thoughts can jump from mind to mind, “I love you!” “Who thought that?”

WEALTHY MONASTERY

INVOKE: to take cover behind something expensive, “This priceless space mahogany table! It's mostly bulletproof.”

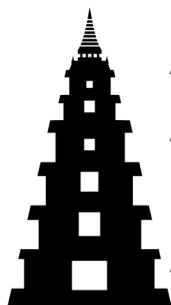
COMPEL: fingers get itchy, “That's a really nice jewelled chalice. Did I mention Boss Fallon's going to break my legs if I don't pay my gambling debts?”

PROBLEM: LANDING

When the crew sends the unlock code, they have a brief window to fly down to the forcefield before the shield slams shut again. After all, while there's a gap in the field, the monastery gets a bath in sulphuric acid. The gap opens directly above the monastery, and the roof is treated to resist the acid. Any rain gets discreetly channeled away from the gardens. Getting in, therefore, requires a Good (+3) Pilot check. If the roll fails, the crew can come around for another pass, but each failed roll inflicts one stress on the ship.

Once the ship is through the field, the pilot needs to pull up sharply, or they'll crash into the monastery roof (which is not treated to resist spaceships crashing into it). This requires an Average (+1) Pilot roll. Failing with anything better than Awful (-3) means that the ship just scraps the roof, inflicting one more Stress on the ship. (On the bright side, the ship now has a new hood ornament in the form of an ugly gargoyle.) Fail with an Awful (-3) or Abysmal (-4) roll? The ship is now stuck in the monastery roof and suffers at least four or six stress, respectively. Crew inside are likely to be injured as well. Surly the Suka signals the ship to dock at the rear of the floating monastery.

MONASTERY TIERS



Tier 7: Sage's sanctum

Tier 6: Temple

Tier 5: Acolyte quarters

Tier 4: Student quarters, great hall

Tier 3: Classrooms, archives

Tier 2: Force field generator, computer core, administration, dining hall

Tier 1: Entrance hall, hangar, stores, maintenance and supplies, kitchens

PROBLEM: SURLY THE SUKAR

The Suka are a species of enlightened beings, possessed of such tremendous mental powers that they evolve beyond the need for physical bodies as they age. Surly's taking advantage of this trait by smoking the hell out of his lungs before he transcends physical form. He looks like the other Suka that the crew may have encountered, apart from the psychic beer belly and the cigar poking out of his mask. Gamblers also notice the deck of playing cards spilling out of the pocket of his robe.

Surly is not happy with the Bulldogs. He was told that the delivery ship was named the *Slowlight Express*, not whatever the crew's ship is called. Mismatches like that cause all sorts of problem up at Forcefield Control. Visitors to the monastery have to have the right access codes. Who's responsible for this screw-up?

The crew needs to keep Surly happy; partly because an angry Surly means that the other Suka in the monastery will be less willing to help them (+1 difficulty to all Rapport rolls), but also because he broadcasts his irritation to everyone nearby, so being around an angry Surly is like having acrid cigar smoke blown straight into your brain. A Good (+3) Rapport roll calms him down, as does the suggestion of a poker game. Surly's telepathic, and Surly cheats (it requires a Great (+4) Larceny roll to beat him).

PROBLEM: SHROUDED MIRRORS

Inside, the monastery is richly furnished. Everything is either made of precious materials, or encrusted with precious materials. The Suka send their most promising young psychics to monasteries like this for training and give gifts to the monastery in payment. And the House of Shrouded Mirrors has been around for a very long time.

As the name suggests, there are many mirrors in this house, and yes, they are all shrouded. Some are just little hand-mirrors or miniscule fragments of broken glass. Others are huge chambers with mirrored walls. All are covered in black cloths. The monastery is a place of power, and those gifted with psychic abilities can glimpse images of the past or future in these mirrors. Therefore, they are covered, to prevent the tapestry of fate from unravelling with too many loose threads and cross-stitches.

At least, that's what the Suka say, and it's probably nonsense. Psychic powers aren't mystical or supernatural; they're just a particularly weird quirk of the brain.

If a Bulldog takes a peek behind a mirror, they may spend a fate point to have a vision of the past or future. Future visions should be tailored to the Bulldog's aspects, or to upcoming events in the campaign. For example, if a crew member has an aspect like **GOING TO KILL THAT DAMN BOSS FALLON**, then the mirror-vision might show them bloodied and wounded, wrestling with an equally badly-hurt Fallon. Past visions might include glimpses of the Saldrellans excavating the Templar ship or of major events in another Bulldog's backstory that haven't yet been explored in the game (secrets are especially good for this: "Why did I just see you growing up in a mansion on Apollonia? You said your family were scrap dealers!?").

Only one vision per Bulldog, and if you've got more than three or four crew members, feel free to limit the number of visions further.

HANDLING VISIONS

Visions of the future can be tricky things in roleplaying games. In *Bulldogs!*, the easiest thing to do is treat the vision as a special kind of aspect. It can be invoked to help a Bulldog accomplish a goal ("I know I live to fight Boss Fallon, so I'll invoke my vision for a +2 bonus to my Physique roll.") or compelled to draw a crew member to their destiny ("I know Boss Fallon's going to ambush me... but I've got to go.").

If the vision comes to pass, then the Bulldog gets to refresh their fate points.

PROBLEM: PRANKSTER PSYCHICS

Many young and gifted Suka come to train here at the House of Shrouded Mirrors. These juveniles look almost Arsubaran, as they still have a full complement of material organs. All these young Suka are relatively powerful psychics, and they love playing games and tricks on visitors. Such tricks include:

- Telekinetically pick-pocketing.
- Telekinetic pokes, pinches, and slaps.
- Reading embarrassing surface thoughts.
- Projecting illusions or strong emotions into the minds of visitors.
- Pretending to give precognitive visions of doom or other bizarre fates.

The crew can resist these tricks with suitable skills (Larceny to stop the pickpockets, Physique to ignore pokes, Resolve or Psychic to block telepathy, and so on). Overreacting (say, by drawing a weapon) turns the monks against the visitors. Playing along wins the kids' friendship.

PROBLEM: GETTING AN AUDIENCE

The Sage of the Stars' right-hand man... actually, that's inaccurate on two levels. Firstly, she's a she, and second, the Sage of the Stars hasn't had physical hands in decades. The Sage of the Stars' chief assistant is **Rising Fire Chant**, and she doggedly protects her master's privacy. As one of the most respected Sukar leaders, the Sage must spent most

of his time in meditation or in telepathic council with his fellows and cannot be bothered by every visitor and tourist.

The crew has to give Rising Fire Chant a good reason to let them in to see the Sage. Remember, she's telepathic, so anyone who wants to lie needs to roll Empathy against her Psychic skill. Complete honesty, though, is not the best policy; if the crew starts babbling about how the Sage is the only known expert in the Frontier Zone on obscure Templar theocracy, and that makes him utterly vital to stopping the Fury, Rising Fire Chant assumes the Bulldogs are eccentric troublemakers.

The crew needs to prove their sincerity or competence to convince her to let them in. One of the Bulldogs could deliberately lower her mental defenses and allow Rising Fire Chant complete access to all her memories, or succeed with style on a Command roll to impress the importance of the mission on the Sukar. Alternatively, there are lots of ways to distract or fool Rising Fire Chant, like arguing about the delivery docket or complaining about those meddling children. While she's occupied, other crew members can sneak into the inner sanctum.

RISING FIRE CHANT

SPECIES: Sukar

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

FLOATING POKER FACE; BUREAUCRAT STONEWALLING; NO PATIENCE FOR BULLDOGS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Science

GOOD (+3): Psychic, Resolve

FAIR (+2): Command, Survival, Empathy

AVERAGE (+1): Rapport, Provoke, Haggle, Systems

Stunts & Species Abilities

PSYCHIC EMPATHY: suffer stress equal to half the value of any consequence another individual suffers as a direct result of your actions (page 258).

PSYCHIC TOOLBOX: you can perform telepathy, telekinesis, precognition, and any other psychic power you can think of (page 258).

HOVER: leave no tracks, trigger no pressure-sensitive effects, and can access a zone directly above without jumping (page 258).

FAST EVOLUTION: treat all consequences as one category lower when healing. Heal a mild consequence as a supplemental action. When you heal a severe consequence, gain a new ability related to becoming a being of pure thought (page 258).

SCIENTIFIC EXPERT: if you succeed with style on a discover action with Science in the field of psychic power, spend a fate point to create an aspect with two free invocations (page 145 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*)

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

EXIT TRAJECTORY: THE SAGE OF THE STARS

The topmost level of the monastery is the private sanctum of the Sage of the Stars. Visitors climb a series of floating crystal steps to ascend to this chamber, with its walls of polished jade inlaid with iridium and its seven strangely-shaped mirrors that each reflect subtly different versions of the universe. The Sage hovers above an ovoid plinth. The only organic matter left in him is his brain, which floats behind his mirror-smooth silver mask and flowing purple robe. He communicates with the crew telepathically and asks them to explain what they want from him.

EXPRESS ROUTE: This is one of the two big cards-on-the-table moments of the campaign (the other comes when the crew meets Mr. S). The Sage of the Stars sensed the spread of the psychic field, and while he did not connect the phenomenon of the Fury to the old Templar theocracy... he can sense the resonance. Yes, the Fury's power comes from the psychic field, from the blood of Deval and Kamachan. At this point, he can fill the crew in on the history of the Templar species, including the Theocrats' mastery of the species' collective psychic abilities, and how they were overthrown after the end of the Thousand-Year War.

He can identify the Necromech as a Templar theocrat, and the Guidestone as a psychic artifact. Hmm. Interesting. There was another supplicant a few years ago, a Saldrallan, who also asked about the theocrats and their powers...

The billion-credit question, of course, is 'How do you stop the Fury?', and he does not have an answer to that... yet. It is an interesting question, and one he must meditate on. Give him time.

Time is something the crew no longer has. Run *Barracado Attack!* (see page 152). The initial explosion mortally wounds the Sage; he can telepathically gasp one last clue into the minds of the crew before dying.

Barracado Attack! leads into *Prison of the Mind* (see page 161), by the way, so it's worth skimming the setup to that section too.

SCENIC ROUTE: The Sage's fate depends on why the crew are here. If it's a simple inquiry, you don't need to kill the Sage and blow up the monastery; they can get their answer and go on their way. (Of course, you can blow things up if you want). If it's a campaign-defining secret, though, you definitely want to follow it up with a bang. Bring in some bad guys: either the Barracado in *Barracado Attack!*, or Fury stormtroopers, or maybe even the Starbeast (see page 143).

SUKAR BRAIN DUMP

For added fun, the dying Sage dumps his memories into the nearest consciousness: the Bulldog with the highest Resolve skill. That Bulldog gains the aspect **BRAIN BURSTING WITH ANCIENT LORE**.

INVOKE: to recall obscure fragments of lore, "Those runes are familiar to me... it says... danger, landmines... uh-oh."

COMPEL: all those alien thoughts squeezed into your brain; it's not pleasant, "Why are you pressing that button?" "I don't know. It's not me in control of that hand!"



FINN
AKER
D'LEARY
APSE SYSTEM

GEAR

QUADRANT BOUN

BARRACADO ATTACK

The Barracado Pirates are notorious outlaws and vandals. From their secret fortress somewhere in dark space, their raiding parties warp forth to attack shipping and lightly-defended targets across the galaxy. They could show up anywhere at any time.

Now is the time. This is the place. And the Bulldogs are in for a fight.

EXPRESS ROUTE: Stories about the wealth of the House of Shrouded Mirrors spread across the galaxy, from Sukar space to the lawless reaches of the Barracado Sector. The infamous pirates of that region have long dreamed of raiding the rich worlds of the Suka and looting the fabulous riches of the monastery, but such an operation was always deemed too risky. Until now.

Thanks to the Saldrallan Special Adjustment Bureau agent Mike Marin (see page 141), the Barracado have the unlock codes for the force shield. These codes are almost impossible to copy, unless you have the cutting-tech resources of the Union of Saldralla. Even a copied code is only useful if you use it before the monks change the forcefield lock, which they do after a visitor leaves.

All that means that the crew is right in the only available window for the Barracado attack.

The pirate fleet transmits the unlock code. If any of the crew members are down on the lower tiers of the temple, then they get to hear a grumpy Surly complaining that there is something wrong with the force shield, before the shield opens and the bombers swoop down. If they are all up on the upper levels with the Sage of the Stars, then the first warning they get is when the bombs start exploding.

SCENIC ROUTE: If the Bulldogs are somewhere other than the House of Shrouded Mirrors, you'll need to reskin this encounter slightly by changing the description. Other possible places in the campaign that the pirates might hit:

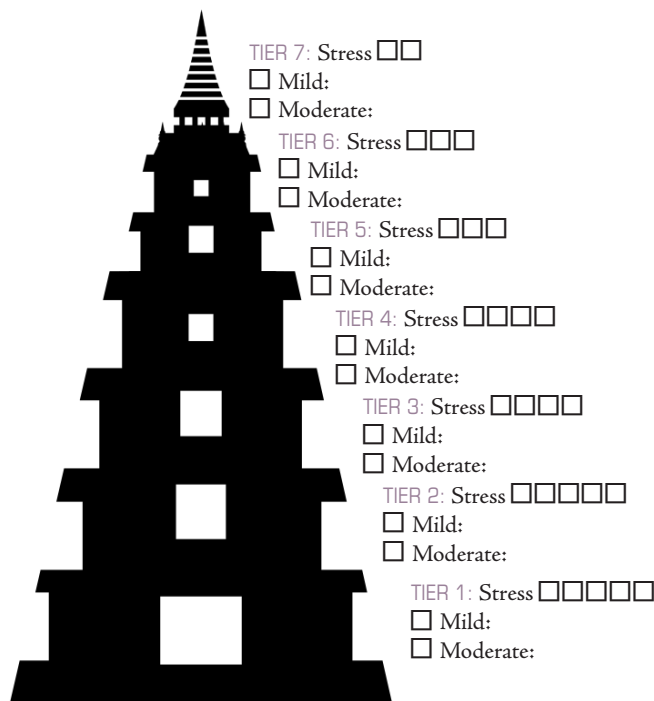
- **THE STAKE OUT CASINO ON DEPOT:** **STACKS OF CONTAINERS, TOPPLING AND CRASHING**, lights going out and the casino getting **PLUNGED INTO DARKNESS**.
- **THE ARMADA WORKS:** **CHAIN REACTIONS** of explosions causing **SHOCK AND AWE**; it's got to be a **SURPRISE ATTACK**.

PROBLEM: BOMBING RUN

The Barracado don't care about the temple's inhabitants, just its treasure. Therefore, they begin their attack by smashing open the temple with a bombing run. The monastery quakes and shatters as seismic charges explode on its roof. Debris cascades down on the crew, followed by gouts and sprays of acidic rain as it falls through the gap in the shield. A huge statue topples over and crushes the Sage of the Stars. For a moment, it looks as though he transcended his physical form in the moment of death, leaving nothing but empty robes, but then the crew finds the gooey remains of his brain.

More bombs explode above. It's clear that the temple is under attack.

Bombing runs occur every few minutes. Roll at your whim to keep the tension high. Each time the temple gets bombed, it takes 1+2dF stress, +1 from the acid rain (see below). Each area of the temple (starting with Tier 7) can take a mild consequence (like **ON FIRE**) and a moderate consequence (**SMASHED AND RUINED**, for example) before being destroyed. When an area is destroyed by consequences, move onto the area below.



SMASHED AND RUINED

INVOKE: to move quickly through the temple, "There's a hole in the floor. This way!"

COMPEL: to drop more Barracado looters on the Bulldogs at the worst possible moment, "Pirates! They're dropping down from the level above!"

ON FIRE

INVOKE: as a weapon against the Barracado, "I kick him into the fire!"

COMPEL: to block passage, "We can't go this way! It's on fire!"

If a bomb hits the temple for 3 or more stress, then all Bulldogs in the monastery need to make Physique rolls to avoid taking 2 stress. The difficulty of this roll depends on where they are in the temple:

- TIER 1-2: Average (+1)
- TIER 3-4: Fair (+2)
- TIER 5-6: Good (+3)
- TIER 7: Great (+4)

PROBLEM: ACID RAIN

As long as the force shield stays partially open, the storms of Viperis can pour down through the gap, flooding the damaged temple with streams of sulphuric acid. Anyone outside the temple takes 2 stress per round of exposure. Those inside the temple have things a little easier: there's the occasional acidic waterfall cascading from the floors above, but the crew can dodge around most of these. Acid pools and waterfalls can be environmental hazards in fights.

The bigger problem is that the acid eats away at the monastery's structure. While the force shield is open and the monastery is damaged, the acid adds one to any stress caused by the bombing.

The crew can reduce this stress by reactivating the force shield. All they need to do is get down to the bottom level of the monastery (Tier 2) and get the shield working again with a Good (+3) Engineering roll.

PROBLEM: BARRACADO LOOTERS

Teams of Barracado pirates wearing acid-resistant encounter suits and armed with guns fitted with psychic scramblers swarm through the monastery. These pirates are more interested in looting relics and treasure than in attacking the crew or the Suka; after all, anyone in the monastery will be killed when the place collapses, and the acid storms destroy all the evidence. However, if the crew get in their way or fight back, or if the pirates want some sport, there may be a firefight amid the collapsing, burning, dissolving, crazily-spinning wreckage of this once-glorious monastery.

The Suka monks fight back too. They are not especially effective fighters, especially as the Barracado came prepared to tackle a planet full of psychics, but they do their best to protect the young trainees and civilians from the pirates.

Greedy crew members may join in the looting of the monastery if they wish.

There are two looters per Bulldog, plus or minus the whim of the GM.

BARRACADO PIRATES

Aspects

HERE TO LOOT; CALLOUS DISREGARD FOR SENTIENT LIFE

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Fight

Conditions

Winded	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Angry	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐

Gear

MOTLEY ASSORTMENT OF BLAST WEAPONS: Medium Weapon, ☐ DEADLY BEAMS.

HODGEPODGE OF BLADES: Light Weapon, ☐ I WILL CUT YOU!

LADEN DOWN WITH LOOT

INVOKE: to buy something later, "Don't ask questions. It's solid gold."

COMPEL: it's hard to move carrying all that loot, "Drop the idol and give me your hand! The money's not worth falling into a pit of acid!"

PROBLEM: EVACUATING CIVILIANS

You don't build a monastery on an acid-wracked planet without considering the possibility that the force shield will fail (especially if you're a precognitive species; there's a reason the Suka dominate the galactic insurance market!) Deep below the monastery is a catacomb of shelters, protected by blast doors. All the Suka know that if a disaster strikes, the safest place to be is down in the basement.

Between the pirates, the explosions, and the collapsing monastery, the crew may be the only ones able to bring the Suka to safety. Suka refugees have only one condition,

Angry ☐☐, but the crew can choose to take the stress of an attack to protect any attached followers.

Problems to be overcome on the way down to the shelters (beyond the litany of fires, acid streams, and rampaging bands of space pirates):

- A trio of pirates have captured a young Sukar girl, and they demand that she tell them where the monks keep their treasure. The girl is terrified and screams for help telepathically.
- A group of Sukar acolytes want to fight back against the pirates, but it's obvious to the crew that the acolytes don't stand a chance. They have to convince the Suka to run.
- One young Sukar has hidden in a chandelier in the great hall. A band of pirates know he is somewhere in the room, but they can't see him. From their vantage point on a nearby balcony, the crew spots the Sukar, but how can they rescue him without the pirates spotting them?
- One of the access hatches to the catacombs is stuck. It can be forced open with a Superb (+5) Physique roll or enough firepower.

PROBLEM: ASSASSINS

Most of the Barracado are just here for the loot. Four of them, though, were briefed by Mike Martin and his Saldrallan masters to ensure that the Bulldogs are among the dead. These four pirates hunt the Bulldogs through the wreckage of the monastery and show up just as the crew reach their ship (or just before they can take refuge in the catacombs).

- The leader of the assassination squad is **Captain Rake**, an infamous veteran of the Barracado pirates. She is a slight, grey-haired woman, and could pass for a school-teacher if it weren't for the battle armor, the scars, the eyepatch, and all the firepower. As it is, she could pass for a Hacragorkan elementary school teacher on "bring your biggest gun to work" day.
- Her daughter, **Blaze**, is her most trusted subordinate. Blaze also possesses considerable psychic powers, and while she is not as powerful as a Sukar master, she is much more experienced at using her powers to hurt people.
- The third member of the team is a Ryjyllian bounty hunter, **K'pesh**. He is a Barracado by accident; a ship he was travelling on was ambushed by the pirates. Given a choice between signing up under the black flag and being shot, he chose the former option. He considers the pirates to be uncouth and sloppy, and dislikes wasteful carnage and bloody murder.
- That means he really dislikes the fourth member of the squad, a deranged killer robot nicknamed **Splatters**. The name says it all: designed originally as a prototype surgeon, the robot malfunctioned and now uses its vast database of medical knowledge to hurt people in exciting new ways.

CAPTAIN RAKE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

**HOIST THE BLACK FLAG AND START SLITTING THROATS;
MORE GUNS!; MY CREW'S MY FAMILY**

Skills

GREAT (+4): Command

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Resolve

FAIR (+2): Fight, Pilot, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Larceny,
Stealth, Survival

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social
with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: gain +2 to
Command when calling someone to action based
on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of
Bulldogs!).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use
two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a
consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

AURA OF MENACE: gain +2 to Provoke to create advan-
tages when wordlessly radiating menace (page 142 of
Bulldogs!).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

SPIKED AXE: Light Weapon, ☐ **NICE, RELIABLE SPACE AXE.**

SCATTERBLASTER: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot
through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once
per conflict), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), ☐ **CLEAR THE ROOM.**

GRENADE LAUNCHER: Medium Weapon, Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation
must defend against a Good (+3) attack), ☐ **HIGH-EXPLOSIVE AMMO.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

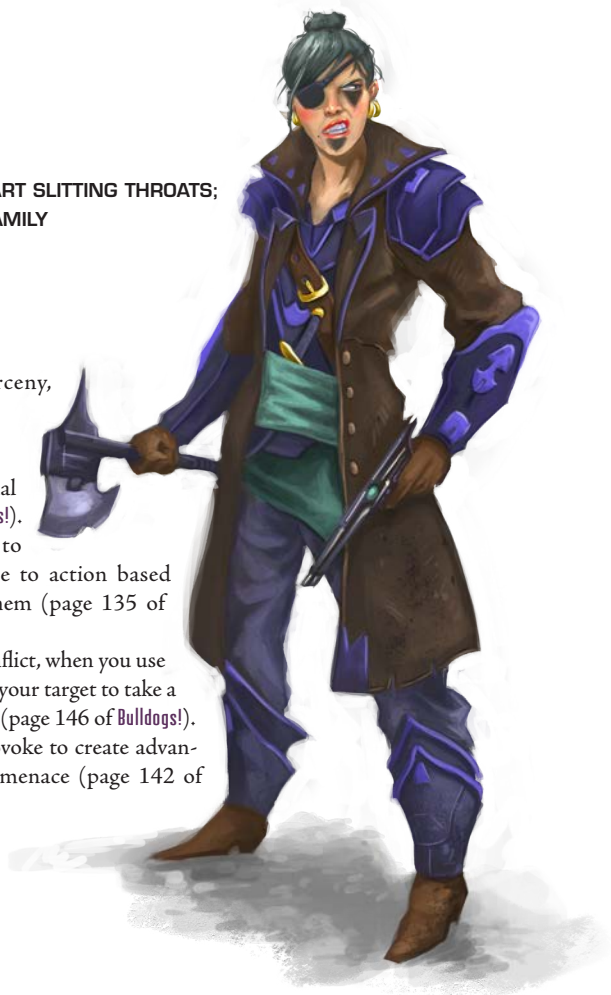
Stress ☐☐☐

BATTLE ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit
with a laser weapon), ☐ **GOT ME THROUGH A FEW SCRAPS.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



BLAZE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

KILL YOU WITH MY BRAIN; UNRESOLVED MOTHER ISSUES; BRAIN-BOOSTING CYBER-IMPLANTS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Psychic

GOOD (+3): Stealth, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Systems, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth, Larceny, Athletics, Fight

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

MIND KNIFE: use Psychic skill for a direct mental attack (page 254).

TELEPATHIC SENSITIVITY: read surface thoughts and project your own thoughts directly into the mind of others (page 254).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Conditions

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER PISTOL: Light Weapon, Specialized (+1 to Shoot against targets with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **ELEGANT LOOKING.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

COMMANDO SUIT: Medium Armor, Camouflage (+1 to overcome with Stealth when hiding), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ **OPTIMIZED FOR INFILTRATION.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

K'PESH

SPECIES: Ryjyllian

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

ONE SHOT IS ALL I NEED; COOL CAT UNDER FIRE; RELUCTANT PIRATE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Survival

GOOD (+3): Stealth, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Fight, Physique, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Pilot, Provoke, Resolve, Rapport

Stunts & Species Abilities

ACUTE HEARING: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when listening (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

CLAWS AND FANGS: natural light weapons (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

LOW-LIGHT VISION: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when attempting to see in the dark (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHADOWED STRIKE: use Stealth for an attack instead of Fight or Shoot if you strike from hiding (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

STAY ON TARGET: +2 to create an advantage with Shoot when taking slow and careful aim (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Conditions

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

BLAST SNIPER RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Accurate x2 (gain +2 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), ☐ PINPOINT ACCURACY.

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

COMMANDO SUIT: Medium Armor, Camouflage (+1 to overcome with Stealth when hiding), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ RYJYLLIAN MERCENARY GEAR.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

SPLATTERS

SPECIES: Robot

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF ALIEN ANATOMY; WHIRRING BLADES AND BONE-SAWS; MMMM... BLOOD!

Skills

GREAT (+4): Fight

GOOD (+3): Science, Physique

FAIR (+2): Survival, Engineering, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Stealth, Systems, Athletics

Stunts & Species Abilities

REPROGRAMMABLE: skill tree can be rearranged with a Good (+3) Engineering roll (page 36 of *Bulldogs!*).

NEVER SLEEP: always alert, and any task taking longer than a day or two can be done in a shorter time (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

DON'T BREATHE: function in any atmosphere (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

MACHINE RESISTANCE: immune to extreme heat and cold, vacuum, disease, and poison (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

IMMORTAL: will not age (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC VULNERABILITY: EM attacks as a weapon one tier higher (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

NO NATURAL HEALING: consequences and conditions must be repaired to be cleared (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

WE DON'T SERVE YOUR KIND: roll a fate die when entering a new community to determine level of anti-robot prejudice (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

CRIPPLING BLOW: once per opponent per conflict, spend a fate point to make an opponent take a consequence on a successful hit (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

STRIKE TO THE HEART: spend a fate point to add 3 shifts to a successful attack with Fight when using a melee weapon (page 140 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Overheating ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Rerouting ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Conditions

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

SCAPELS AND SAWS: Light Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **SURGICAL GEAR TURNED TO DEADLY PURPOSE.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

PROBLEM: ESCAPE

Once the crew gets to their freighter, all they need to do is fly out of the monastery, dodge the swarms of Barracado fighters, and head into orbit. This is a hit-and-run operation for the Barracado; they won't pursue the Bulldogs for long. They need to get out before the Sukar fleet arrives.

The first Sukar warships arrive soon after the attack begins (there is a naval base in the same system as Viperis). The Barracado flee with their ill-gotten loot, and the Sukar marines secure the planet and the wreckage of the monastery.

The Sage is dead. For the Suka, this is a grievous wound; one of their most respected scholars has perished. For the crew, it's even worse. Now, they have no one to help them defeat the Fury.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: The Bulldogs escape... at least, they think they do. Run *Prison of the Mind* (see page 161).

SCENIC ROUTE: You can still follow up with *Prison of the Mind*, if you wish. Alternatively, the Bulldogs can continue onto wherever they were going before they were rudely interrupted by pirates.

If you need to give the players a clue, then they can interrogate a defeated Barracado and learn they were set up by a Saldrallan agent like Keeler Gull (see page 131) or Mike Matin (see page 141).



PRISON OF THE MIND

EXPRESS ROUTE: You cannot always trust your own perceptions, especially when psychics are involved. At this point in the adventure, there's a temporary divergence between what the Bulldogs believe is happening, and what is actually happening.

As far as the crew is concerned, they escaped Viperis in the nick of time, flew past the Sukar ships that came to rescue the survivors, and are now zooming through deep space (probably back to Galactic Central Point). Everyone's on the ship, and nothing weird is going on.

In reality, the Suka intercepted the Bulldogs soon after they broke orbit of Viperis. The crew was captured, interrogated, and—thanks to a Saldrallan bribe paid to the right Sukar telepath—deemed guilty of collusion with the pirates. After all, the Bulldogs were the ones who leaked the force shield codes to the Barracado, were they not? No doubt any reports of conflict between the Bulldogs and the pirates simply indicate that there is no honor among thieves, and the two groups of criminals turned on each other in a greedy dispute over the loot. TransGalaxy may have protested, the crew may have argued, Navigatrix Thelise may have made an impassioned speech in their defence, but to no avail. The Bulldogs were sentenced to imprisonment within the bizarre confines of the Sukar legal system.

This, of course, suited the Saldrallans perfectly, as it eliminates two potential threats to the all-important secret of their involvement in the Fury. Not only is the Sage of the Stars dead, but the Bulldogs take the blame. It's the Hoops Overtly case write large, only this time the Saldrallans can also take the opportunity to push the Suka towards war with the Templari. It's a win/win/win situation, if you're a cold-blooded snake. Everyone else gets screwed over.

The Suka then wiped the crew's memories and placed them in a psychic illusion. The crew believes they are on their ship, but in reality, they're lying in life-support tubes in a Sukar penitentiary.

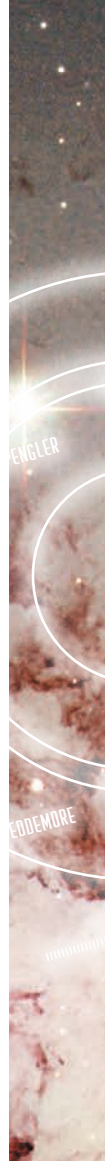
And they're going to be punished.

SCENIC ROUTE: The setup is that the Bulldogs think they're flying free, but they're actually stuck in a psychic illusion that they've got to break out of. Before you decide when and where to use this setup, let's talk a little first about why it exists. In the express route, it serves four narrative purposes:

1. It introduces Mr. S, the rogue Saldrallan spy, and does so in a way that encourages the crew to trust him.
2. It cuts the Bulldogs off from TransGalaxy, so they can't pass the buck on what they've discovered. When Mr. S tells them where the Fury comes from, they can't pass the buck to a higher authority. They're the ones who have to decide what to do, not TransGalaxy or anyone else.
3. It lets you skip several months ahead, increasing the reach of the Fury and letting you threaten any worlds you want, without having to play through the whole war.
4. It shows off the spooky psychic weirdness of Sukar culture.

When you're forging your own path through the **Heart of the Fury**, some of those criteria might not apply.

- You can introduce Mr. S elsewhere. It's not necessary that the Bulldogs trust him from the start, although it does help keep him from being beaten up by overly eager crew members. A spy on the run can show up anywhere.



- The necessity of cutting the Bulldogs off from TransGalaxy depends on your crew. Are they independent-minded renegades who only work for TransGalaxy because they have to? Have they shown that they'll take huge risks to do the right thing? If so, you don't need to get them kicked out. If they're more cautious, then you'll need to isolate them. Maybe the Fury capture a whole swathe of space between the crew and GCP, and then block communications so the crew can't call home. Or you can just have the crew framed for some other crime instead of the Barracado attack used on the express route (heck, why frame them? If you need a Bulldog to commit a crime, just wait five minutes...)
- The time-skip's there because we wanted to cover a whole galactic war in a single long-ish adventure. If you're bravely taking the scenic route, then you're probably interleaving your own setups into ours anyway, so you don't need to skip as much time.
- The psychic stuff is easy to re flavor as high-tech virtual reality/surgical brain adjustment/weird shared drug-induced hallucinations, so it doesn't need to involve the Suka.

Right. Now that all *that's* out of the way, the setup for this section is that the Bulldogs just escaped a troublesome situation a bit too easily. You can hold it in reserve until the crew gets really lucky with a dice roll or commit some really egregious breach of galactic war.

PROBLEM: LIFE IN A SIMULATION

The simulated environment is drawn from the Bulldogs' own memories. It mostly looks and feels just like reality; their Class D Freighter still smells of sweaty socks and engine oil, the coffee in the galley is still undrinkable swill, and everything behaves as you'd expect it to behave. Punch a wall, and it hurts. Drink coffee, and it burns your throat. Drop something, and it falls to the floor (assuming the artificial gravity isn't broken again). The simulation feels real.

In game terms, this means that the crew continues to use all their regular skills, stunts, and so on, with one key exception: psychic powers do not work in the simulation. Anyone trying to use Psychic to read another person's mind feels nothing except a numbing, empty sensation.

Bulldogs can suffer injuries and consequences in the simulation, and can even be 'killed'; see *Life after Death* (page 164) for details.

PROBLEM: BAD DREAMS

Bulldogs with Resolve or Psychic skills subconsciously resist the psychic illusion. They suffer from strange, confused dreams of what really happened. They might dream of encountering the Sukar relief force, for example, or remember being interrogated by a Sukar. Over the course of this section, these dreams can bleed into the Bulldog's "waking" perceptions, leading to hallucinations. All this is highly disturbing and gives the crew member the temporary aspect **BROKEN SLEEP**.

The simulation is designed to torment the prisoners. If any of the Bulldogs have aspects that can be exploited, then exploit them. A Bulldog with a **FEAR OF FIRE** gets trapped in a burning cabin when the engines blow; a crew member who thinks of herself as the **STRONGEST GIRL IN THE GALAXY** discovers symptoms of a degenerative muscular disease that will soon leave her paralyzed. A Bulldog who has a vendetta against the Fury might detect Fury ships on the long-range scanners and hear Fury jackboots marching across the hull.

While all the crew members can see these 'personal demons,' they always attack the one most vulnerable to them. Clever players may realize that this is a clue that all this is not real; others may simply take it as proof that the universe hates them.

Mix these bad dreams into the rest of the problems outlined in this chapter. The dreams are there to provide a hint to canny players that something very strange is going on.

PROBLEM: ENGINE FAILURE

The ship's engines shut down abruptly, leaving the crew drifting in deep space. Examining the engines reveals that they were clearly deliberately sabotaged; someone fried key components in such a way to disable the ship's communications and propulsion systems while leaving life support intact. No matter how the Bulldogs try to repair the sabotaged systems, it doesn't work. They keep finding more damaged circuits. The only possible conclusion is that someone on board is the saboteur. Use this to sow paranoia or to seed doubt about what the crew sees.

If the ship comes equipped with shuttles or other smaller craft, these too have been expertly sabotaged.

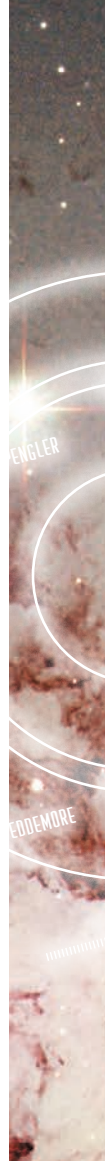
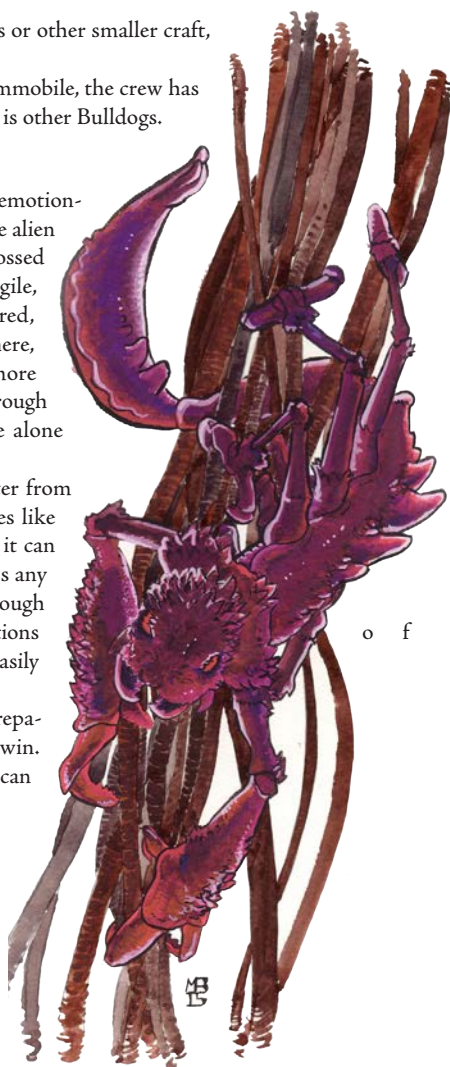
With the ship left utterly helpless and immobile, the crew has nothing to do but sit around and talk. Hell is other Bulldogs.

PROBLEM: THE BEAST

Once you tire of tormenting the Bulldogs emotionally, get physical. The 'beast' is an impossible alien horror; imagine a two-meter long locust crossed with a lizard. Extremely fast, extremely agile, and it exhales a poisonous gas. When injured, its blood boils in the oxygen-rich atmosphere, cauterizing the wound and producing more noxious vapor. The beast hunts the crew through their ship, attacking them when they are alone and vulnerable.

While the beast may look like a monster from a sci-fi horror movie, it behaves and moves like a nightmarish serial killer. It's not real, so it can be in any shadowed corner, or slither across any ceiling. There's no way to keep it at bay, although the crew will doubtless try blocking off sections the ship or barricading themselves in one easily defensible area.

Ultimately, despite all of the Bulldogs' preparations and defenses, the beast is going to win. It's a part of the simulation, which means it can bend and warp 'reality' as it needs.



THE BEAST

SPECIES: Unknown

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

ALIEN MONSTER; IT'S IN THE AIR DUCTS!; PERFECT SERIAL KILLER; TOXIC BIOLOGY

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Fight

GREAT (+4): Athletics, Stealth

GOOD (+3): Survival, Physique, Shoot

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Provoke

Stunts & Species Abilities

NATURAL WEAPON: medium weapon with the aspect **DEADLY CLAWS AND FANGS** (page 56 of *Bulldogs!*).

CLING: climb any normal surface without an Athletics roll, +4 in extreme situations or when opposed (see page 53 of *Bulldogs!*).

LOW LIGHT VISION: ignore aspects related to darkness except in circumstances with a complete absence of light (page 56 of *Bulldogs!*).

SPECIAL ATTACK: toxic gas breath, a medium weapon, take +1 to Fight against unarmored organics once per conflict. Once per conflict, place an immediate consequence of **POISONED** on an opponent with a successful hit (page 57 of *Bulldogs!*).

SPECIAL ATTACK: toxic gas blood, inflict an immediate consequence of **POISONED** on anyone in the same zone as you when you are injured. This can only be applied once per opponent (page 57 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

PROBLEM: LIFE AFTER DEATH

When any of the crew die in the simulation, they wake up in another layer of the simulation, each one more surreal and nightmarish than the one before. For example, say the just-killed crew member completely trusts his Dolomé buddy. They've stuck together through everything, the Dolom is the one utterly reliable, utterly trustworthy person in the universe. In the second layer of the simulation, that Dolom might betray the victim's trust in some horribly hurtful way.

If more crew members die, then they also wake up in the next level of the simulation, possibly replacing the simulated versions of themselves, and if a Bulldog dies in one level, they wake up in the next.

The best way to handle this sort of surreal reality-jumping experience, complete with multiple versions of crew members, is to enlist some of the players for help. Pick one of the Bulldogs (possibly someone who's been in the background a bit too much lately, or just the first one to get eaten by the beast) and designate her as the hero of the episode. Follow that Bulldog's experiences and have the other players play nightmare versions of their own crew members on the other levels of the simulation.

- **LEVEL 1:** Relatively realistic. The crew are themselves, more or less, and other than the unfixable engine failure and the slavering bug-eyed monster, this hallucination is identical to the real world.
- **LEVEL 2:** Twisted, dark mirror. The other crew are duplicitous, evil versions of themselves, with all their worst traits and darkest desires brought to the surface. The monster comes back on this level, stronger than ever, even if killed on level 1. (Increase the beast's skills by one rung on the ladder on this level).
- **LEVEL 3:** Surreal nightmare. The ship's in hell, or the cultural equivalent. Dozens of monsters, blood oozing through cracks in the hull, a sea of boiling sulphur outside, and strange voices chanting in dead languages on every communications channel. The other crew are psychopathic killers who want to hunt down and murder everyone else.
- **LEVEL 4:** The 'maintenance level' of the simulation, a glimpse into the crew's own subconscious. It looks superficially like the ship, but it's crammed with incongruous or impossible things. The cargo hold overflows with bad memories and regrets; the crew's favorite childhood toys are in the weapons locker, and the communications channel buzzes with the crew's own inner monologue. It's absolutely maddening, but the experience only lasts for a few minutes before the Bulldog snaps 'back' to level one (and everyone else gets to play their usual crew again).

Moving from level to level erases any stress suffered by the Bulldog. Consequences, though, linger. They get reduced by one step (so, a mild consequence vanishes when you move from one level to another, while a moderate becomes a mild and a severe drops to moderate) and may get rewritten (that severe **AGH, IT RIPPED MY ARM OFF** becomes a moderate **STRANGELY PARALYZED ARM** after a transition).

PROBLEM: ESCAPE (PART 1)

Escaping from a Suka prison is, as everyone knows, impossible. It is a prison of the mind, depriving the inmates of even their own bodies. You can't escape from your own brain.

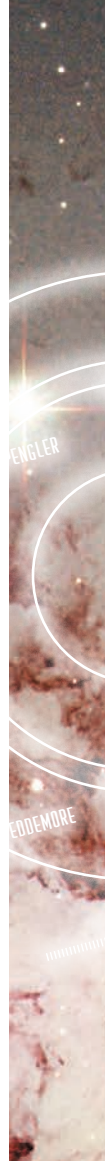
The only way out is to have a friend on the outside.

The Saldrallan who calls himself Mr. S needs the crew's help. If one sneaky Saldrallan agent can get a group of innocent Bulldogs sent to prison for crimes they didn't commit, then another sneaky Saldrallan can get them out.

Mr. S has contacts all over the galaxy, and one of them is a Tetsuashan hacker named **Smooz**. The Suka may be masters of the psychic arts, but they buy their electronics and life support systems off the shelf, and Smooz knows every back door into commercially available computer systems. Smooz hacks into the life support system attached to one of the crew members. Prisoners in life support get fitted with headphones, so the Suka can induce a trance state using infrasonics. It's easy for Smooz to patch Mr. S into the audio system, allowing Mr. S to talk in the chosen Bulldog's ear. It's a one-way communication; the Bulldog can't talk back.

Mr. S doesn't have a lot of time, so he prioritizes the following information:

- None of this is real. The crew is in a Suka prison-hallucination.
- He can help them escape, but they'll need to trust him.
- The hallucination has multiple levels. The bottom level accesses the subconscious. If the simulation can be short-circuited there, then it will crash and everyone can escape.
- To short-circuit the simulation, all the crew needs to do is blow up the ship.



- S will start dropping the crew through the simulation levels soon, by meddling with their life-support systems. He will attempt to bring all the crew members along simultaneously.

Soon afterward, Mr. S has Smooz sabotage the life support systems. In the simulation, this manifests as chest pains followed by 'death' and waking up on the next level. To exit the simulation, all the crew needs to do is get to the lowest level and find a way to blow up the ship. Easy, right?

There are a few complications, just to make things extra dangerous.

First, Smooz has to program the life support system to inflict enough trauma to trigger the simulation's 'death' effect. In game terms, this means that dropping from one level to another in this fashion inflicts stress on the Bulldog equal to the level they're going to. So, move from Level 3 to Level 4, and that's 4 stress.

Second, explain to the crew that there is a chance that they may get left behind during a transition. At each jump (1 to 2, 2 to 3, and 3 to 4), everyone is going to roll Resolve and keep their result a secret. If you roll less than a certain threshold (equal to the level you're going to: so, Fair (+2) for level 2, Good (+3) for level 3, and Great (+4) for level 4), then you don't make the transition. If a Bulldog fails, then on the next level he plays the hallucinatory version of himself (manipulative sociopath on level 2, insane killer on level 3, and pretty much whatever surreal interpretation he wishes on level 4). If everyone fails, then there's no transition; Mr. S will try again in a few minutes.

On the final level, the crew can blow up the ship in whatever cathartic way they wish.

PROBLEM: ESCAPE (PART 2)

The destruction of the ship kicks the Bulldogs out of the simulation. They all wake up—naked and dripping with blue goo—in individual tanks. Monitoring leads and other medical gadgets twine around their bodies. The tanks open automatically, and the crew can see they are in a large chamber containing several dozen similar tanks and a small number of extremely surprised Sukar technicians.

The technicians are armed, but only with basic stun guns, and any Bulldog with a worthwhile Fight skill ranking can shine here. If the crew lingers here too long, then the prison guards show up too.

Mr. S contacts the crew over the headset, and tells them to get outside as quickly as they can. A moment later, the crew hears the distinctive whine of their own ship's engines as the freighter plummets down from orbit. The prison shakes as the freighter's guns blast away at the prison's outer wall, knocking a hole in it. (If the Bulldogs' freighter is unarmed, then there's an even more distinctive crash-thump-boom-distant-sound-of-your-no-claims-bonus-vanishing as Mr. S smashes the ship's prow through the wall.

Racing outside, the crew can pile back on board their ship. Their gear and possessions are all neatly stacked in the cargo hold, wrapped in plastic and tagged with 'EVIDENCE' stickers courtesy of the Sukar authorities.

SUKAR TECHNICIANS

Aspects

"HEY, YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!"

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Systems

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Gear

STUNNERS: Light Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **STUNNED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **PRETTY MUCH YOUR BASIC STUN GUN.**

TELEKINETIC SHOTGUNS: Light Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Boost Effect (apply **PRONE** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **BRING OUT THE BIG GUN!**

PROBLEM: HOT PURSUIT

Mr. S and Smooz hand the ship over to the crew as soon as they climb on board. There is little time for introductions and pleasantries, though, as a trio of Suka fighters are closing on the freighter. These small craft are piloted by three Suka: one flies, one mans the guns, and the third links all three crew into a telepathic gestalt, making them extremely effective in combat. The Suka distaste for violence means that the craft carry non-lethal directed-EMP weapons.

The Suka ships do not pursue the crew once they get into hyperspace. However, they circulate descriptions of the Bulldogs and their ship to all the governments in the Frontier Zone. Players can invoke the Zone's **PATCHWORK OF JURISDICTIONS** aspect to stay a few steps ahead of the law, but a lot of worlds would like to curry favor with the Suka by handing over a ship of fugitives. The crew gets to deal with the ramifications of their arrest warrant on page 183.



SMOOZ

SPECIES: Tetsuashan

Aspects

SPACE IS HOME; FEARLESS, A TENTACLE IN EVERY COMPUTER SYSTEM; SLICKLY COMPETENT; OWES S A FAVOR

Skills

GREAT (+4): Systems

GOOD (+3): Engineering, Science

FAIR (+2): Larceny, Pilot, Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Command, Rapport, Survival, Empathy

STUNTS & SPECIES ABILITIES

SLIME TRAIL: climb any normal surface without a roll, gain +4 to Athletics for climbing if a roll is required (page 47 of *Bulldogs!*).

SQUISH: fit through small or narrow openings with no Athletics roll (page 47 of *Bulldogs!*).

REGENERATIVE POWERS: recover physical conditions as if they were one level lower. Once per conflict, clear a mild physical consequence as a full-round action (page 47 of *Bulldogs!*).

POISONED BY SALT: take 1 stress every round in contact with salt, weapons coated with salt count as one tier higher (page 47 of *Bulldogs!*).

REDUCED SPEED: must roll Athletics for all move actions, even if staying in the same zone. May not move more than two zones in a single round (page 47 of *Bulldogs!*).

BLACK HAT: +2 to overcome or attack with Systems when attempting to destabilize or knock out an enemy system (page 148 of *Bulldogs!*).

DECRYPTING: +2 to overcome obstacles with Systems when attempting to crack communications (page 148 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HACKING DECK: +2 Systems to break into computer networks.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Mr. S has a mission for the Bulldogs, but first they may need to tackle *The Fall of Ardrú*. After that, run *Going Underground*.

SCENIC ROUTE: Mr. S can point the Bulldogs at some other mission, or just let them to deal with *Going Underground*.

THE FALL OF ARDRU

EXPRESS ROUTE: Once the freighter is safely in hyperspace, it's time for some answers. Checking the galactic news feeds, the crew discover that nearly five standard months have passed since the Barracado attack. According to the news reports, the pirates had 'collaborators' who helped them get past the Viperis defense field.

The Barracado attack is old news, though; three months ago, an alliance of Fury-aligned worlds attacked a dozen systems along the border with the Devalkamanchan Republic. If the Fury gained control of the Armada Works, then their forces won the initial battles, and they have pushed deeper into Republic space. If the Bulldogs stopped the Fury at Armada, then the Fury's early gains were quickly reversed; but then the Templari went too far and pushed into the Frontier Zone as part of a counter-attack. That trespassing triggered all sorts of mutual-defense treaties, dragging more systems into the conflict. So, either way, the war triggered by the Fury is getting worse.

The main news report of the day refers to an upcoming summit between several influential Frontier Zone governments and representatives of the Fury. The summit was called by the Arsubaran leaders (they only have jurisdiction over Arsubar and its direct colonies, but that still makes them major players on the galactic stage) in the hopes of negotiating a cease fire.

The summit is being held in the Ardrú system, an Arsubaran colony that is only a short hop away from GCP. For the duration of the summit, Ardrú will be closed to both traffic and non-essential communication.

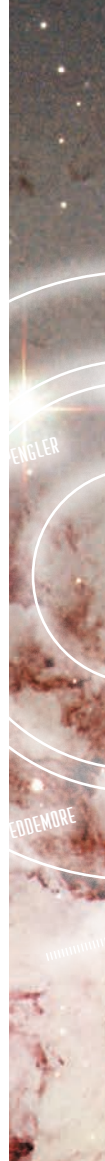
Checking the ship's records, the crew discovers they have several urgent messages from Navigatrix Thelise. The first few ask if they have made contact with the Sage of the Stars and learned anything about the mysterious object or the Fury, but the last message—sent just before communications to the Ardrú system closed—says that the Fury delegation to the conference came in a ship with an oddly large cargo hold, and there could be another one of those stones in there. Does the crew know what it is yet?

S wants the crew to ignore the summit. He just broke them out of a Sukar prison and claims that he knows how to prove their innocence. But they will have to help him in exchange. The summit is half-way across the galaxy, the system is closed to visitors, and anyway, the crew are wanted criminals. They need to disappear.

The crew now has a choice: do they heed Mr. S' advice and vanish into the shadows, or do they make a last-ditch race across the galaxy to warn the conference?

SCENIC ROUTE: Only run this sequence after the Bulldogs have encountered the Guidestone in *Forging the Fury* (see page 116). Or if you're not using *Prison of the Mind* (see page 161) to skip ahead, then you'll need to build up to the Fury/Templar war and the ensuing galactic clustersquarg, or else change the impetus for the peace conference to something else.

Instead of Navigatrix Thelise sending several messages to the Bulldogs, she can just send a single transmission, either warning them that something strange is going on or just describing the Fury cargo ship. Alternatively, the Bulldogs can learn about the Fury plot and the Guidestone through some other channel (Hoops Overtly, Mr. S, or maybe they run into the Fury ship at Thor's Bar and Grill when the Fury stop off for a burger before continuing with their psychic regime change mission).



TOURIST'S GUIDE TO ARDRU

If Arsubar is the capital of the Frontier Zone, and Appolonia is where all the rich Arsubarans live, then Ardru is a nice suburb that really would like to rename itself as East Appolonia or Appolonia Beta or something. It's a perfectly nice, if bland, planet. Lots of government staff, retired professionals, ex-military—wealthy but not staggeringly rich, mostly. It's known as one of the most stable and quiet Arsubaran colonies, which is why the Alliance of Federated Frontier States holds a lot of negotiations and conclaves here.

WE DON'T WANT TROUBLE HERE

INVOKE: to stop someone drawing a gun, "Not here. You want a fight, let's do it somewhere private."

COMPEL: to bring the local police into a scene, "The cops again? Do they have nothing better to do than hassle us Bulldogs?"

BORING PLANET ANYWAY

INVOKE: bringing up Ardru makes most people's eyes glaze over, "You don't need to check their papers. Ardrunians. Yawn."

COMPEL: to make Bulldogs stir-crazy, "I can't take this place anymore. Let's go start a bar fight or something."

PROBLEM: THE FALL OF ARDRU

If the crew follows S' advice, then the Fury Guidestone at Ardru activates, extending the Fury's psychic reach into the heart of the galaxy. The psychic energies seize on the long-simmering fear of the militant, aggressive Templar republic, fanning the flames of hatred until some of the Arsubaran delegates come to think that maybe this war is a great opportunity. Ever since the Treaty of Arsubar, the Templari have been like a frozen wave of doom hanging over the Frontier Zone. If the various border systems can inflict real damage on the Templari, then maybe the threat to the free systems can be removed or at least reduced. The best defense is a good offense, after all.

This takeover is much more subtle than either of the subversions the crew saw on Teraci or Armada.

The conference ends with more systems joining the war, and the Fury picking up several new influential recruits. One of these recruits is Navigatrix Thelise, whose anger at the Barracado and the Suka for incarcerating the Bulldogs proves to be a weak point in her character that the Fury can exploit. Once Thelise converts to the Fury, she informs them of everything she knows, including the fact that the Bulldogs were in search of information about the artifact encountered at Armada. The Fury dispatches a hunting party to locate and destroy the Bulldogs, a party led by Thelise! See *Problem: Furious Pursuit* on page 194 for more details.

PROBLEM: SAVING ARDRU

To prevent the Fury from affecting the negotiations with their psychic field, the Bulldogs need to get into the Ardru system and either convince the authorities there to remove the Guidestone, or else destroy it themselves. Getting to Ardru isn't a problem; there's a high-speed spacelane from Sukar space straight to Depot, and from Depot they can blaze through the Black Gates. Ardru's just on the other side of the Portico hyperspace corridor.

The Ardrú system is off limits to non-essential traffic. A squadron of warships from Arsubar guards all approaches the planet. If the crew is going to get past those ships, they'll need a plan.

PROBLEM: CAPTAIN VORDA

Captain Vorda of the Arsubaran warship *Troublemaker* has had a day full of crazies. Providing security—even to a high-profile conference like this—should be an easy assignment for a ship and crew of this caliber. The *Troublemaker* has enough shields and firepower to go toe-to-toe with any ship in the Frontier Zone, and Vorda would give his ship even odds against even a Templar dreadnought. She's got enough firepower to sear a moon.

It takes all of Captain Vorda's considerable willpower not to deploy that firepower against the crazies. There are the protesters who insist that the *Fury* is a danger to the whole galaxy, or a force for justice and order, the third-string journalists and muckrakers who don't have the credentials to come in on the press shuttle, the clueless locals who managed to ignore all the announcements about the planetary lockdown. There's a whole stream of small ships, all of whom seem willing to argue with the *Troublemaker* about whether or not the lockdown applies to them.

Hint: it does. And that aforementioned moon-searing firepower should cut any arguments short, but still the crazies keep coming.

From Captain Vorda's perspective, the Bulldogs are crazies. There's a lump of rock on a cargo freighter somewhere on Ardrú that will mind control everyone using a psychic field? Sure there is, pal. Take a number and orbit over there until the nice men in white coats in the white ship come for you. To convince the captain that the crew actually knows what they are talking about, they need to succeed at a Fantastic (+6) Rapport or Command test. Otherwise, they get turned away at the edge of the system.

PROBLEM: POLICE DRAGNET

If the crew try for the heroic 'let's go rescue the peace conference' option, then you need a suitably dramatic conclusion should they *fail* to accomplish their goals. Zooming half-way across the galaxy only to fail a Rapport roll would be an anticlimactic conclusion. If the crew can't get into the conference, then the arrest warrant from Sukar space catches up with them, and they've got to escape a police dragnet on their way back to rendezvous with Mr. S.

The Bulldogs' ship is spotted at the edge of the Ardrú system, and a squadron of police cutters shows up to arrest them. (The crew are charged with multiple murders, including the death of the Sage of the Stars, as well as conspiring with the Barracado pirates, and all that makes them high-priority targets for the Arsubaran cops.)

POLICE CUTTER

SIZE: Large

MANEUVERABILITY: Poor (-1)

ENGINES: Interceptor Engines (Medium)

Aspects

CLOSE FOR BOARDING!; THE LONG LASERS OF THE LAW

Weapons

LASER BANKS: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ **OPEN FIRE!**

EMP SCRAMBLER: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Boost Effect (apply **DRIVES DISABLED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **BRING THEM IN ALIVE.**

Armor

REFLECTIVE STEEL PLATING: Light Armor, ☐ **BEST DEFENSE AGAINST ENERGY WEAPONS.**

☐ Mild:

Crew

PILOT: Fair (+2)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Average (+1)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Shields	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Crippled	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Disabled	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Damaged	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐

PROBLEM: SNEAKING IN

In terms of technology, this barricade makes the one around the Teraci system (see page 23) look like a chicken-wire fence. The Arsubaran ships have cutting-edge sensor systems. There are only a few warships here; Ardru is deep enough in Arsubaran space to make an invasion unthinkable, but you don't need more than a few warships and their fighter squadrons to throw an almost unbreakable blockade around a world.

The crew can find a **GAP IN THE FENCE** with a Great (+4) Survival or Larceny roll, or try spoofing the sensor grid with a Superb (+5) Systems roll. If Smooz is still around, they can help with that.

They can then fly through it by spending a fate point and making a Pilot test at Great (+4) difficulty to thread their ship through the tiny gap in the sensor grid. If the crew fails to sneak past, then they have to deal with a squadron of four heavily armed Interceptors. Alternatively, given the urgency of the situation, the crew can eschew stealth and just try racing for the planet's surface. Going for a hard burn like this means that the Bulldogs are automatically detected, which means they now have eight interceptors on them instead of four, but they do start with the Aspect **INSANITY SPEED AHEAD.**

ARSUBARAN INTERCEPTOR

SIZE: Medium

MANEUVERABILITY: Poor (-1)

ENGINES: Pursuit Engines (Medium)

Aspects

I'VE GOT A WINGMAN; ATTACK PATTERN OMEGA; AGILE, FAST, TOUGH—PICK TWO OF THREE

Weapons

ENERGY BLASTERS: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ I'VE GOT LOCK-ON.

Armor

BASIC HULL: Light Armor, ☐ BUILT TO TAKE A BEATING.

☐ Mild:

Crew

PILOT: Fair (+2)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Mediocre (+0)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Shields	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Crippled	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Disabled	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐

PROBLEM: CONVOY!

Ardrü is right on the route from Depot. The barricade is designed to stop a few trouble-makers and spies, not stand up to, say, a few dozen freighters all trying to rush it at the same time. If the crew can recruit lots of other Bulldogs to help them run the blockade at Ardrü, they can make it to the planet surface. The best place to recruit a convoy of TransGalaxy freighters is at Thor's Bar and Grill. Calling in favors, making inspiring speeches, lying about a reward; any approach to recruiting a convoy can work, if the crew have built up the reputation and network of allies to pull it off. At minimum, they need to make a Fantastic (+6) roll using Contacts or Rapport to assemble the convoy, then hold it together with Command as they barge past the *Troublemaker* and her sister ships.

PROBLEM: CRASHING THE CONFERENCE

If the Bulldogs try the diplomatic route of barging into the extremely sensitive diplomatic conference, then they meet with the chief mediator, the famed Phelmsoid **Barosha**, and the Fury representative, an Arsubaran named **Carden Farnost**. Navigatrix Thelise is also present.

- An Average (+1) Empathy or Science roll notes that Navigatrix Thelise looks ill. As she is one of the most influential opponents of the Fury, the psychic field focuses on her, manifesting as headaches and auditory hallucinations, mostly ancient Templari chanting in her ears. (This foreshadows the possibility that Thelise might fall to the angry side and join the Fury if she stays on Ardrü, and the Guidestone isn't destroyed).

- Carden Fornost protests throughout the meeting. The Fury has no need to influence anyone; the corruption and disunity of the galaxy are plain for everyone to see. What the crew claims is psychic influence is in fact a sense of honor and justice that they plainly do not understand. As for the cargo brought by the Fury delegation, it was examined by Arsubaran security and deemed to be harmless.
- Anyone with the Empathy skill can tell that Fornost completely and utterly believes what he is saying. He has no idea that he is under the psychic influence of the Fury, or that the Fury has any psychic component at all.
- Fornost's protests are, in game terms, a block against any attempts to convince Barosha, increasing the difficulty of the Rapport roll by +3. If the crew can remove Fornost from the meeting or otherwise negate his influence, then the difficulty to convince Barosha drops to Good (+3).
- Barosha tries to keep everyone calm. They say that they will listen to the Bulldogs' concerns, but only on the condition that the Bulldogs make no more trouble and leave peacefully once the matter is resolved. They ask the crew to present what proof they have that the Fury representatives are trying to manipulate the delegates psychically.
- A Fantastic (+6) Rapport roll, coupled with a coherent explanation of the Fury's plan, can convince Barosha that the crew are onto something.

BAROSHA'S CONVINCED: The mediator is still skeptical, but they agree that the Fury cargo ship should be investigated. A security team of six minions accompanies the crew to the cargo ship on Barosha's orders. The crew is told to destroy the Guidestone and then vanish; this has to be a deniable mission.

SECURITY TEAM

Aspects

WE CAN DO THIS THE EASY WAY OR THE HARD WAY

Skills

GOOD (+3): Shoot

FAIR (+2): Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Fight

Conditions

Winded	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Angry	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
Stunned	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐

Gear

HEAVY BLAST RIFLES: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **DON'T MAKE ME USE THIS.**

SECURITY SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

COMBAT ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ **PROFESSIONALLY MAINTAINED.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

BAROSHA'S NOT CONVINCED: The mediator asks the crew to wait while they consider the evidence, and the Bulldogs are left to cool their heels in a side chamber. Thelise warns the crew that Barosha tends to make decisions quickly; they're stalling until security shows up. She tells the crew that the best thing to do is run for it. She'll cause enough of a distraction to let them get to their ship. The crew has failed to win official sanction for any attack on the Guidestone. They can choose to flee immediately (in which case, the Fury successfully influences the conference delegates, and events unfold much as they would if the crew had never embarked on this quixotic mission to Ardrü).

THE TREATY OF ARSUBAR

The Treaty of Arsubar ended the Thousand-Year War and established the Frontier Zone as a buffer between the two belligerents. Notably, it defines the borders of the Union of the Saldra and the Devalkamanchan Republic. Neither empire is permitted to advance beyond those lines without an agreement from the other and the AFFS. This means that the Union and the Republic control roughly equal volumes of space, and a lot of horse trading and dealing goes on whenever one or other wants to expand into a new system.

The treaty also forbids either the Union or the Republic sending military forces into the Frontier Zone for the purposes of conquest. If that clause is broken by one of them, then the Frontier Zone is permitted to ask the other for aid. The treaty does not discuss what happens if a Frontier Zone government tries to invade one of the empires. Back when the treaty was signed, no one thought that would ever happen. The psychic unity engendered by the Fury throws a lot of political theory out the airlock (it's really easy to build an alliance if you mind-control people).

So, the current crisis brings up some very interesting questions with respect to the treaty, like:

- If the Devalkamanchans counter-attack into the Frontier Zone, does that count as a breach of the 'no invasions clause'?
- Is the Alliance of Federated Frontier States responsible for the actions of the Fury worlds?
- Can the Frontier Zone call for Saldra assistance, even if they started the war?
- When the war's over, what happens to the borders?

PROBLEM: BLOWING UP THE GUIDESTONE

The Fury diplomats arrived on Ardrü in a curious vessel, the recently renamed *Herald*. Most diplomats zoom around the galaxy on either chartered personal transports or high-speed couriers, but the Fury came on a converted military transport. They've painted it with their distinctive black color scheme and tried to soften the hard lines of the armored hull, but it is still a ship that one would expect to see delivering a squad of assault troopers

on a landing beachhead instead of dropping off a few diplomats to a conference. The ship does have a large cargo hold, large enough for a Guidestone.

Right now, the *Herald's* parked at a secure landing hangar on the edge of the Ardrú starport.

The commanding officer of the *Herald* is **Quench**, formerly an officer in the Arsubaran navy before joining the Fury. He's on the verge of becoming a Scion and has recently started dressing like a Templar warrior. The Guidestone affects his mind too; he may not know what it is for, but he will die to protect it.

The ship's pilot is another Arsubaran, **Dala Thasis**, an ex-smuggler who was released when the Fury conquered the world where she was imprisoned.

GROUND ASSAULT

The *Herald* is guarded by a small team, but the real protection comes in the form of a combat robot. Specifically, a top-of-the-line Autonomous Mobile Offensive Laser-Armed Robot, or AMORAL. Right now, the AMORAL unit is hidden inside a concealed bay built into the ship's undercarriage (it's easy to smuggle a passenger if that passenger doesn't need to eat or breathe), but it will deploy if it detects any threats to the Guidestone.

The ship is armed with anti-ship artillery weapons, which really aren't supposed to be used when you're landed and in a hangar. Therefore, as soon as the first few guards get taken out, the pilot of the ship decides that discretion is the better part of valour, and takes off. Once the ship is out of the hangar and in the air, it can circle around and attack targets on the ground. It takes several rounds for the ship to launch, so agile Bulldogs can hop on board even as the *Herald* slides out of the hangar.

HANGAR GUARDS

Aspects

PROTECT THE SHIP!

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Fight, Stealth

Conditions

Winded ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Angry ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Gear

SONIC SHOTGUN: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Boost Effect (apply **PRONE** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **GOOD FOR CLOSE COMBAT.**

SYNTHETIC PLATE: Medium Armor, ☐ **ARCHAIC DESIGN.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

AMORAL

SPECIES: Robot

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

SLAVE TO PROGRAMMING:
MY OTHER ARM IS ALSO
A GUN; MULTI-PHASIC
SCANNER

Skills

GREAT (+4): Shoot

GOOD (+3): Athletics, Physique

FAIR (+2): Survival, Fight, Stealth

AVERAGE (+1): Provoke, Resolve, Science, Systems

Stunts & Species Abilities

REPROGRAMMABLE: skill tree can be rearranged with a Good (+3) Engineering roll (page 36 of *Bulldogs!*).

NEVER SLEEP: always alert, and any task taking longer than a day or two can be done in a shorter time (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

DON'T BREATHE: function in any atmosphere (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

MACHINE RESISTANCE: immune to extreme heat and cold, vacuum, disease, and poison (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

IMMORTAL: will not age (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC VULNERABILITY: EM attacks as a weapon one tier higher (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

NO NATURAL HEALING: consequences and conditions must be repaired to be cleared (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

WE DON'T SERVE YOUR KIND: roll a fate die when entering a new community to determine level of anti-robot prejudice (page 37 of *Bulldogs!*).

EXTRA LIMBS: once per conflict take two actions in a single round (page 38 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

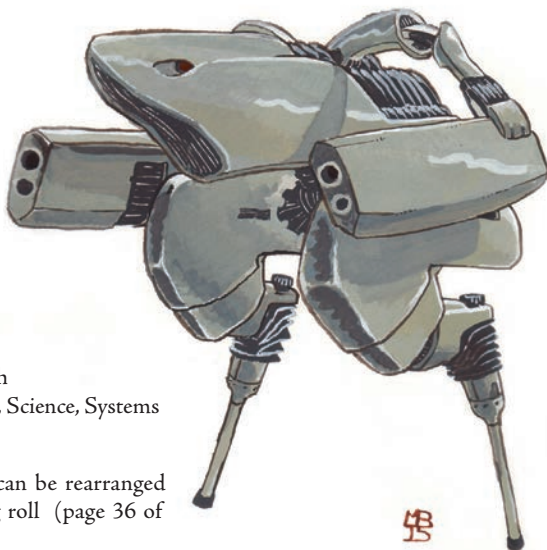
Overheating	☐ ☐ ☐
Angry	☐ ☐
Rerouting	☐ ☐
Broken	☐ ☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:
☐ Moderate:
☐ Severe:

Gear

TWIN AUTOLASERS: Heavy Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ **STORM OF LASER FIRE.**





QUENCH

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

NATURAL ADAPTABILITY; MARTIAL DISCIPLINE; MY SHIP IS MY CASTLE; TOUGH AS NAILS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Command, Fight

GOOD (+3): Resolve, Shoot, Engineering

FAIR (+2): Athletics, Systems, Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Contacts, Larceny, Stealth, Empathy

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIPOSTE: on a success with style when defending with Fight, instead of a boost you can inflict a 2-shift hit on your attacker instead (page 140 of *Bulldogs!*).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: gain +2 to Command when calling someone to action based on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

SONIC SHOTGUN: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Scattershot (+1 stress if target is in the same zone), Boost Effect (apply **PRONE** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **GOOD FOR CLOSE COMBAT.**

VIBROSWORD: Light Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **AN ELEGANT WEAPON.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield

Stress: ☐☐☐

SPACE SUIT: Light Armor, Hardened (reduce shifts against you by one once per session),

Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **COMBAT REINFORCED EVA.**

☐ Mild:

DALA THESIS

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

THE STARS CALL; NOT GETTING CAUGHT AGAIN; FLIES LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL

Skills

GREAT (+4): Pilot

GOOD (+3): Survival, Systems

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Larceny, Rapport

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics, Empathy, Haggle, Engineering

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

ONE HAND ON THE STICK: gain +2 to Pilot when defending against fire from another ship (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

HARD TARGET: gain +2 when using Pilot to defend (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER PISTOL: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), ☐ **EASILY CONCEALABLE.**

PERSONAL SHIELD: Light Shield.

Stress ☐☐

LIGHTWEIGHT SPACE SUIT: Light Armor, Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **SAVED MY LIFE MORE THAN ONCE.**

☐ Mild:

ZONES

Outside the *Herald*

- **OUTSIDE THE HANGAR:** Plenty of **OPEN SPACE**, not much cover. Four Fury guards patrol out here.
- **HANGAR DOORS:** Currently closed. They can be opened from the inside by pressing a button, blown open with an Explosive weapon, or dragged open with a Great (+4) Physique test. If the *Herald* has to fly through them, she takes 1 Stress doing so.
- **HANGAR FLOOR:** Two more guards, more empty space.
- **FUEL TANKS:** They can explode if hit with enough firepower. The ensuing explosion is enough to destroy the Guidestone, the hangar, the rear half of the *Herald*, and anyone unlucky enough to be standing nearby.
- **GANTRY:** Barrier 2 to climb up here via the ladders. The control for the doors is up here, and people here have a **HEIGHT ADVANTAGE** for shooting at guards below or jumping onto a departing ship.
- **LOADING BAY:** Notably, there are two cargo waldos here (they're powered suits like wearable forklifts, used for loading cargo).
- **CARGO RAMP:** Up to the main hold of the ship. The Guidestone is too big to fit down the ramp (they had to cut a hole in the hull, install the stone, and then seal it up again.)
- **UNDER THE SHIP:** It's **SHADOWY** down here.

Inside the *Herald*

- **CARGO HOLD:** One very large Guidestone, covered in a thin metal frame.
- **ACCESS STAIRS:** Barrier 1, leading up to the main corridor.
- **MAIN CORRIDOR:** Runs the length of the ship. Anyone in the aft section of the bridge has a nice line of fire down this corridor.
- **BRIDGE, AFT SECTION:** Non-essential navigation and sensors stations. If the ship's under attack, then Captain Quench stations himself here.
- **BRIDGE, COCKPIT:** Get to here, and you can hijack the ship or stop it taking off.

BOMBING RUN

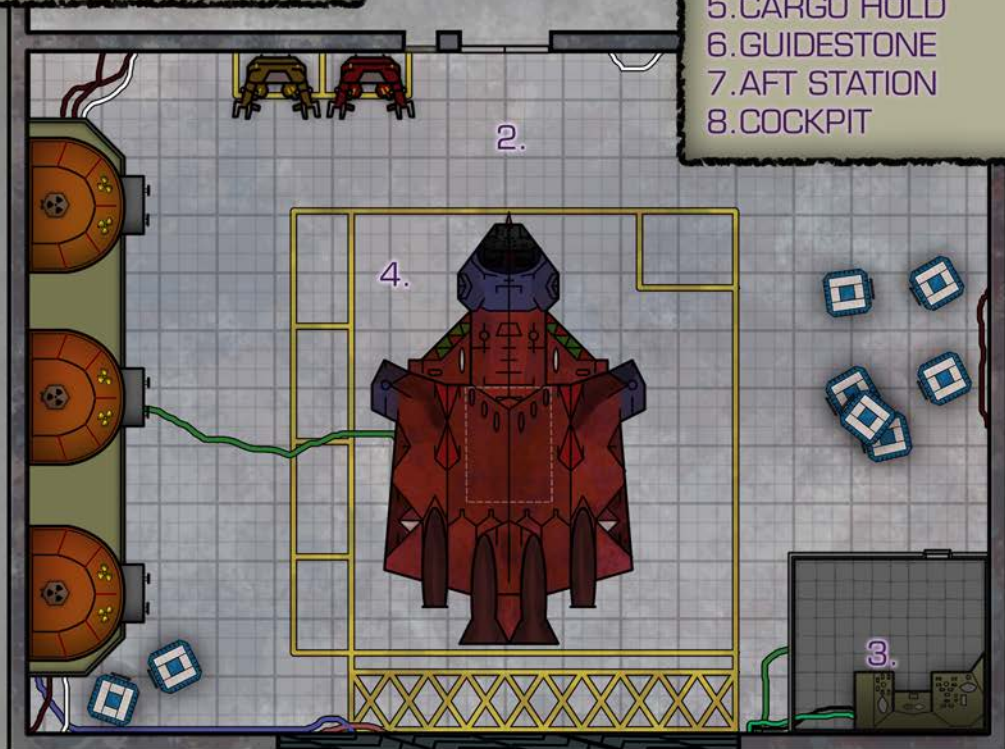
The other approach to destroying the Guidestone is to nuke the site from orbit. In this scenario, the *Herald* takes off two rounds after the attack begins and tries to escape. The AMORAL robot can still come into play; it can pop out of its hiding place and leap onto the Bulldogs' ship in mid-flight.

The other major complication here is that the attack is unsanctioned (even if the crew convinced Barosha of the danger, he authorized a covert attack, not a bombing run), so interceptors scramble from the ships in orbit to put an end to the carnage. As the *Herald* happily fires back at both the Bulldogs and the interceptors, the result is a high-speed three-way dogfight above Ardru City.

SPACE HANGAR

HANGAR

1. OUTER CORRIDOR
2. MAIN HANGAR
3. CONTROL PANEL
4. LOADING BAY
5. CARGO HOLD
6. GUIDESTONE
7. AFT STATION
8. COCKPIT



HERALD
LOWER FLOOR



HERALD
UPPER FLOOR



FATE OF THE GUIDESTONE

If the crew blows up the Guidestone, then all is—quite literally—right with the world. The psychic field recoils from Ardrú, so the Fury cannot influence the delegates. Some of the Fury members even wake up from their troubling delusions and wonder why they've dragged their homeworlds into a war with the Devalkamanchan Republic.

Capturing the Guidestone is a lot trickier. The crew needs to get it off-planet (and out of the system) as quickly as they can. Capturing it is *possible*, but difficult and dangerous. Even if they capture the *Herald*, the ship needs to be able to fly out of the system. The crew has the opportunity to get their hands on another Guidestone in the final adventure.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: Yay, they've saved Ardrú! They're still wanted criminals, though, after the events in the Sukar Sphere, and there really isn't time to argue for their innocence. Move onto *Going Underground*.

SCENIC ROUTE: If the Bulldogs cause a lot of property damage on Ardrú, then you can run *Prison of the Mind* or *Going Underground* next. If they haven't already, then the discovery of the Guidestone might prompt a visit to InfoCity (*The Hole in InfoCity*) or *The Sage of the Stars*.

GOING UNDERGROUND

As far as the authorities are concerned, the Bulldogs conspired with the Barracado pirates to attack the monastery on Viperis, then broke out of a Sukar prison (and then attacked a diplomatic mission on Ardrü, if the crew took that option). The Frontier Zone may be a patchwork of jurisdictions, but most of those independent states and worlds have extradition treaties and cooperate if a crime is big enough, or if they want to curry favor with another polity, and almost everyone wants the Suka to owe them a favor. So, the crew is on the run, and that means going underground.

EXPRESS ROUTE: The crew is wanted for the death of the Sage of the Stars.

SCENIC ROUTE: You'll need to wait until the Bulldogs to commit a crime.

...

Ok, that should be long enough for most groups.

On the off-chance that your crew are the most moral, upstanding, heroic, law-abiding, ass-kickin' space truckers that the galaxy has ever seen, then you may wish to have the Saldrellans frame them, or else just wait a bit longer.

Alternatively, you can have the Fury reach Galactic Central Point and have the Arsubarans there turn on the Bulldogs. After all, lots of people already consider Bulldogs to be the scum of the galaxy, and the Fury exploits prejudices and latent hatreds as it worms its way into vulnerable minds. The crew might be perfectly law-abiding, but still end up counted as criminals.

PROBLEM: TRANSGALAXY OWNS US

People don't sign up for a Class D crew for the hell of it; either you have nowhere else to go, or you're indentured to TransGalaxy. For that matter, the Bulldogs' ship is technically property of TransGalaxy too. That means that TransGalaxy knows a lot of uncomfortable facts about the Bulldogs. Where they came from, who they're related to, what they're running from, not to mention technical details about the ship like its transponder codes and specifications.

Now, TransGalaxy is a wholly reputable company, so they're going to cooperate with any official investigation or hunt for the crew, up to a point. If TransGalaxy likes the crew and believes that they're innocent, then the corporation can throw its considerable legal weight behind their defense and stall any investigation. If the Bulldogs don't have any friends in the company, then TransGalaxy can make life on the run much more difficult.

So, do the Bulldogs still have allies in the company? If they don't, then they either need to make some friends quickly, or else prepare for the consequences.

- If the authorities get hold of TransGalaxy's records, then the crew gets the aspect **IN THE SYSTEM**.
- Furthermore, the GM gets a free compel on any suitable aspects possessed by the crew. Did TransGalaxy give you a place to hide from the Tetsuashan crime lord who wants you dead? Uh-oh, it looks like someone just told ol' Blodge where to find you! Were you indentured to TransGalaxy before going rogue? Then the corporation may demand compensation from your family, or indenture your kid sister in lieu of you!

IN THE SYSTEM

INVOKE: maybe you can use similar people as decoys, “Ok, they’re looking for a freighter crew of low-lives, smugglers, and eccentrics. Let’s go to Thor’s – everyone there qualifies!”

COMPEL: the police can track you more easily, “They’ve got the DNA of my slime trail on file; this false moustache is useless to me now!”

PROBLEM: OLD GRUDGES

As soon as word gets out that the Bulldogs no longer have the protection of TransGalaxy, some old enemies may decide that this is the right time to settle scores. If any of the crew have suitable aspects, then add some old foes to the list of Hunters (see *The Hunters*, page 186). Unlike the bounty hunters, Saldrellan assassins, and Fury Scions, these bad guys have a personal vendetta against the crew members.

Optionally, you can combine different types of Hunters. Maybe the old enemies are after a bounty on the crew’s heads or are hired by the Saldrellans to track them down. You can even have two groups of bad guys show up at the same time for double the carnage.

PROBLEM: FALSE IDENTITIES

Paranoid Bulldogs may wish to obtain cover identities, forged passports, false moustaches, and dark trenchcoats, or those hooded cloaks that may as well have “I am a mysterious stranger, ask me how” emblazoned across them. This is resolved by using Larceny as a defend against any attempts to identify them. The Bulldogs can set up temporary aspects (like **IN DISGUISE** or **FORGED PAPERS**) to help with this defend.

Whenever the crew’s cover identities are checked, roll a discover action for the customs official or police officer against the defend. If the roll beats the defend, then the official has spotted a hole in their cover. If the defend wins, but doesn’t succeed with style, then the official becomes suspicious and may dig deeper into the Bulldogs’ backstories. Unless the crew defuses the situation with Rapport and roleplaying, the ensuing investigation can break down their defend over time.

PROBLEM: REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE, AND FUEL

As outlined on page 169 of *Bulldogs!*, ships need maintenance, fuel, fuzzy cockpit dice, and other supplies. Normally, TransGalaxy picks up the tab for such expenses, but now the crew are on their own. Also, the various Hunters know that the crew need to stop for fuel and repairs, so every gas station and depot from Hacragorka to Ryjyl is being watched.

The crew need to pick one of the following bad choices:

- **SCREW IT, LET’S JUST KEEP FLYING:** By scavenging parts, recycling spent fuel, and giving up all the little luxuries that make a Class D freighter something other than ghastly, the crew can avoid maintenance. They’ll pick up a few negative aspects after each trip, of course: things like **OUT OF FOOD**, **UNWASHED**, **FILTHY SPACERS**, **BURNT-OUT WARNING LIGHTS** or **RUNNING LOW ON AMMO**, all the way up to **SOMETHING FELL OFF** or **DEAD IN THE VACUUM**.
- **RESUPPLY AS NORMAL:** The crew risk visiting their regular supply stations. They’ll need to have cover identities (if they don’t, they get jumped by Hunters) and to pay their own bills (how’s that Resources skill looking?) without TransGalaxy backing.
- **TURN TO CRIMINAL CONTACTS:** There are places that are, shall we say, off the grid. There, the crew can get fuel and supplies at cut-rate prices without having to use cover identities. The downside is that unless the crew have established links with organized crime (say, through Mr. Krudge on Teraci, or through aspects), then they have to make Contacts rolls to find the supplies they need.

The difficulty of the Contacts roll is equal to the usual cost of the maintenance needed, and then the cost on the credits track is two steps lower than that. (So, if you'd normally need to check off 4 boxes on the credits track, you can turn to the black market with a Great (+4) Contacts roll, and then only have to check off two boxes).

If the Contacts roll fails, then the crew may:

- Fail to find a reliable source and have to pick another option.
- Be betrayed by their criminal contacts: either a Hunter shows up, or the crew get jumped by hijackers.
- Get cheated, which places a negative aspect on their ship like **LOW-GRADE FUEL** or **CHEAP PARTS** or **MALFUNCTIONING WEAPONS**.

PROBLEM: CRIMINAL CONTACTS

To keep flying, the Bulldogs may need to make some extra cash on the side, and they can't do that legitimately while on the run. However, there are some folk who need a ship full of heavily armed ass-kickers who don't ask questions. Through criminal contacts (obtained through past experience, aspect invocation or Contacts rolls), the Bulldogs can scare up work like:

- Shipping illegal weapons into the war zone
- Transporting individuals wealthy enough to pay for armed bodyguards and interstellar extraction from war-torn worlds to safer planets
- Salvaging ordnance and other expensive components from wrecked battleships before other scavengers show up
- Raiding supply ships with rich cargoes of weapons and spare parts.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: To clear their names, the crew need to expose the Saldrallan treachery in *Spies like Us*. You can raise the stakes as they do so by bringing in *The Hunters*.

SCENIC ROUTE: To clear their names, the crew... well, need to undo whatever got them into this jam in the first place. You can segue into *Spies like Us* through some other means, like having Mr. S hire the Bulldogs to track down the Arsubaran spies.

THE HUNTERS

Lots and lots of people want the crew dead. They've never been so popular. All sorts of exotic people want to find them, meet them, and then shoot them.

Interperse encounters with these hunters between other Setups. For example, the Bulldogs might run into Saldrallan assassins while trying to find the Blue-Haired Arsubaran or get attacked by bounty hunters while refuelling at some obscure backwater port. Don't use all the Hunters: pick the ones that'll give your crew the most trouble.

EXPRESS ROUTE: Drop one or two of these encounters into the crew's path once they escape the Sukar prison.

SCENIC ROUTE: Bad guys are the spice of life, or life-endangering situations, anyway. Whenever you want to add peril, give the players a fate point each, announce you're invoking **ON THE RUN** or some other troublesome aspect, and drop a load of trouble on them.

PROBLEM: SALDRALLAN ASSASSINS

The Department of Special Maintenance prefers subtle adjustments. A word whispered in the right ear, a discretely severed brake cable, a poisoning that looks like natural causes. Under ideal circumstances, they prefer to set traps in advance and wait for their targets to fall in.

Mobile targets like a bunch of Bulldogs are tricky. The assassins will have to improvise. Still, Special Maintenance sent three of its best operatives to deal with the problem. If the crew survives an assassination attempt and captures their would-be murderer, they can interrogate them and start on the trail to the Saldrallan base (see *Spies like Us*, page 198).

EGRIN WALL

You've probably met **Egrin Wall** before. He's got one of those faces, not forgettable per se, but just lacking in distinct features. You'd know him if you met him again, but it's hard to describe him to a third party. He's part of the furniture in a hundred spaceports across the galaxy, and he's known as a fixer and a dealer in various vague things.

Wall serves Special Maintenance as a spy and agent handler. He's smuggled more than a few wounded Saldrallan spies back across the border.

His plan to eliminate the crew is a simple one. He has the criminal contacts needed to track down the Bulldogs, so he finds them and offers them a job. He hires them to bring a cargo from one obscure planet (Helmeria) to another, equally obscure little moon called Dsap's Place. He then contacts the Barracado Pirates and informs them exactly where the crew will be. If the Bulldogs survive that ambush and return to Egrin, then he'll send them on another suicide mission, or else have one of the other Saldrallan agents like Jinx or Hress waiting for them.

EGRIN WALL

SPECIES: Arsubaran

Refresh: 3

Aspects

GO ALONG TO GET ALONG; JUST THIS GUY; CORNER BOOTH IN A SPACEPORT BAR; SPACE IS A DANGEROUS PLACE

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Contacts

GREAT (+4): Athletics, Haggle

GOOD (+3): Rapport, Empathy, Survival

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Shoot, Command, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth, Larceny, Systems, Science

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

TALK THE TALK: use Contacts instead of Rapport to create advantages with your first impression (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

INSIDER: +2 with Contacts to overcome obstacles when relying on contacts to negotiate bureaucracy (page 136 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER HOLDOUT: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Concealable (+1 to Stealth to hide this item), ☐ **SMALL BUT DEADLY.**

CONCEALED BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open), ☐ **HARD TO DETECT.**

Stress ☐☐☐☐

JINX WHISKERS

Jinx by name, Jinx by nature. An awful lot of the ships that Jinx travels on suffer catastrophic malfunctions just after she leaves. Sometimes, they have disastrous malfunctions while she's on board, and Jinx has to throw herself out an airlock and wait for pickup. (She has a small one-person spacecraft, the *Skimmer*, that has a built-in AI and can pilot itself to rescue her after another successful sabotage mission). If you see Jinx's cheery smile and pretty green face, you'd better check your life insurance.

Jinx tries to eliminate the crew by weaselling her way on-board their ship. She might pose as a passenger, or a refugee who they rescue as part of some other mission, or as a stowaway. Once on board, she waits until the ship is in deep space, then slips down to the engine room, removes some key components, then heads to an airlock. She trusts the *Skimmer* enough to risk jumping into deep space in the hopes that it'll show up to rescue her.

Jinx's sabotage targets the ship's power generators. To repair the sabotage, the crew need to beat her Engineering roll by at least two shifts (or else have hidden spare parts on board). Even if the crew can't fix the sabotage, they could shunt the last of their power to the guns and use them to threaten Jinx when the *Skimmer* shows up. She's not a fanatic and would be willing to make a deal if it'll save her life.



JINX WHISKERS

SPECIES: Ken Reeg

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

"THERE'S ALWAYS A LOOPHOLE"; INFECTIOUS SMILE; BYPASS THE THINGY, REROUTE THE WHATSIT, AND PULL THE RED WIRE; JINX BY NAME, JINX BY NATURE

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Engineering

GREAT (+4): Larceny, Rapport

GOOD (+3): Stealth, Systems, Empathy

FAIR (+2): Pilot, Shoot, Survival, Fight

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve, Athletics, Provoke, Haggle

Stunts & Species Abilities

NEVER SLEEP: complete tasks longer than a day in half the time (page 34 of *Bulldogs!*).

DEALMAKER: gain +2 to discover with Contacts when seeking business partners or suppliers (page 34 of *Bulldogs!*).

REROUTE THE SYSTEMS: when your ship suffers a consequence, make an Engineering check to deny the free invoke and rewrite the consequence (page 138 of *Bulldogs!*).

GREASE MONKEY: +2 to discover with Engineering when examining vehicles (page 138 of *Bulldogs!*).

HIDDEN WEAKNESS: once per session, when you discover a weakness in security protocols with Larceny, spend a fate point to instantly create an aspect with two free invokes (page 140 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LOCK SPOOFING KIT: +2 Larceny to pick locks.

EMP GRENADE: Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Boost Effect (apply **NO ELECTRONICS FOR YOU!** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style).

MICROEXPLOSIVE: Heavy Weapon, Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Concealable (+1 to Stealth to hide this item), Boost Effect (apply **KEY SYSTEMS DESTROYED** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **SABOTEUR'S BEST FRIEND.**

VIBRO-SHURIKEN: Light Weapon, Concealable (+1 to Stealth to hide this item), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), ☐ **DUCK!**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐

SPACESUIT: Light Armor, Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), ☐ **FORM-FITTING.**

☐ Mild:

HRESS

Saldrallans make excellent snipers. Templari may have the discipline, Ryjyllians may have the killer instinct, but Saldrallans have *patience*. Hress' tactics are simple. Find the Bulldogs. Get into position with a stealth field. Aim. Wait. Wait. Wait. *Squeeze*.

Obviously, it's no fun to have a situation where a crew member gets killed without any warning. Therefore, give the crew a chance to react, either with a Survival roll to spot the sunlight glinting off Hress' scope, or a Psychic roll for a sixth sense, or invoking an aspect like **CAT-LIKE REFLEXES** or **TRUST NO ONE**.

Once he's taken his first shot, Hress moves to a new vantage point and stalks the crew through whatever killing zone he's chosen.

HRESS

SPECIES: Saldrallan

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

EXOTHERMIC; ELEVATED POSITION; NO MERCY; COLD EVEN FOR A SALDRALLAN

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Stealth

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Survival

GOOD (+3): Larceny, Rapport

FAIR (+2): Resolve, Physique, Athletics, Fight

AVERAGE (+1): Contacts, Haggle, Provoke, Science

Stunts & Species Abilities

HEAT SENSE: ignore perception penalties that don't target heat sense directly (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

POISON BITE: once per conflict, put consequence on an opponent with a successful Fight roll in addition to normal damage (page 43 of *Bulldogs!*).

LIKE THE WIND: use Stealth instead of Athletics to overcome obstacles when moving under cover (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

QUICK EXIT: once per session, use a momentary distraction to overcome with Stealth and disappear from the scene (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHADOWED STRIKE: use Stealth for an attack instead of Fight or Shoot if you strike from hiding (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

STAY ON TARGET: +2 to create an advantage with Shoot when taking slow and careful aim (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER SNIPER RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), ☐ **AIM. WAIT. SQUEEZE.**

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Light Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐☐



PROBLEM: BOUNTY HUNTERS

The Suka put a bounty on the heads of the escaped prisoners, and that's drawn the attention of two of the galaxy's most notorious bounty hunters: Grog and Mawrl, the guns for hire. One's Hacragorkan, one's Ryjyllian, they're heavily armed, extremely violent, and married to each other. It's not the most stable of marital partnerships, and the two snipe at each other verbally even as they snipe at their targets with armor-piercing bullets and heavy blast fire.

IN SPACE

The pair fly a battered Class-D that they've converted into a 'pocket destroyer'. Basically, they stuck the biggest guns they could find into the cargo bay of a freighter, knocked a hole in the hull for the barrels, and flew off in this patchwork monster. Their ship, the *Bad News*, is fast, heavily armed, and about as reliable as a spaceship made of nitro-glycerine.

Their standard approach is to stalk their prey until the target is nearly out of fuel and can't escape into hyperspace. So, as the crew fly down towards a refuelling station, the big ugly *Bad News* swoops in and demands they surrender or have bigger, uglier holes blown in their hull.

Both Grog and Mawrl are passable pilots, but if things look bad, they'll deliberately ram their ship into the Bulldogs' freighter and try to board.

DIRTIDE

The best way to use the two bounty hunters is to throw them on top of another encounter. Maybe the crew run into them on Triano or even XM554...

THE BAD NEWS

SIZE: Large

MANEUVERABILITY: Mediocre (+0)

ENGINES: Supercharged Sublight Drive (Medium Engine)

UPGRADES: Agility

Aspects

PATCHWORK MONSTER, ABSURDLY OVER-GUNNED

Weapons

REPEATING ENERGY BLASTERS: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone),

☐ **CONTINUOUS FIRE.**

OVERSIZED ORDNANCE: Heavy Weapon, Indirect Fire (once per session fire at a zone that is normally out of range), ☐ **ENOUGH POWER TO BLOW A BATTLESHIP.**

Armor

REINFORCED HULL WITH PLATING: Medium Armor, ☐ **UGLY BOLTED-ON PLATING.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

Conditions

Shield ☐☐☐

Crippled ☐☐

Disabled ☐☐

Damaged ☐☐

GROG

SPECIES: Hacragorkan

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

MIX IT UP!; "MAWRL HANDLES THE THINKING - I DO THE FIGHTING"; **NICE SPACESHIP, SHAME IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO IT;** **VETERAN BOUNTY HUNTER**

Skills

GREAT (+4): Fight, Physique

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Athletics, Provoke

FAIR (+2): Stealth, Systems, Resolve

AVERAGE (+1): Survival, Larceny, Contacts, Pilot

Stunts & Species Abilities

QUICK HEALER: once per conflict clear a mild consequence as the action for the round, also recover physical consequences as if they were one step lower outside of combat (page 31 of *Bulldogs!*).

DANGEROUS BEARING: +2 when attacking with Provoke to intimidate and opponent with the threat of force (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

PUGNACIOUS: +2 to create advantages with Provoke when trying to start a fight (page 32 of *Bulldogs!*).

SCARY: defend with Provoke instead of Resolve when someone attempts to create an advantage using intimidation (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

ARMY OF ONE: spend a fate point to ignore enemy teamwork bonuses for a conflict (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

HEAVY BLAST RIFLE: Heavy Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **STAY DOWN!**

PROTON FIST: Medium Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MY FIST.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

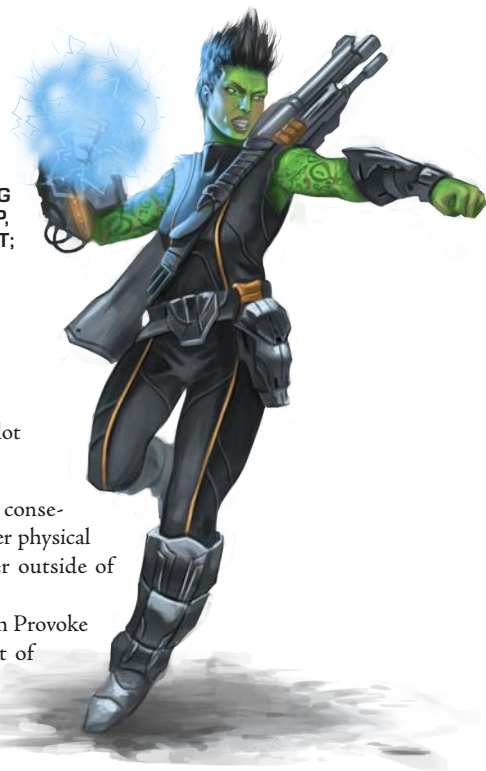
Stress ☐☐☐

BATTLE ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), ☐ **BEEN THROUGH SOME SCRAPES.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



MAWRL

SPECIES: Ryjyllian

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

CAT-LIKE EVERYTHING;
GROG, YOU IDIOT!; CANNY
OPERATOR; DEAD OR ALIVE,
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME

Skills

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Pilot

GOOD (+3): Stealth, Engineering, Survival

FAIR (+2): Physique, Resolve, Contacts

AVERAGE (+1): Rapport, Empathy,

Haggle, Provoke

Stunts & Species Abilities

ACUTE HEARING: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when listening (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

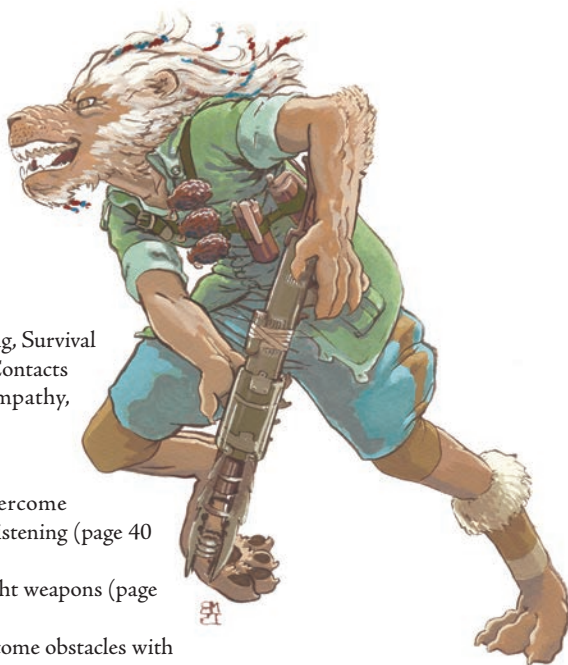
CLAWS AND FANGS: natural light weapons (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

LOW-LIGHT VISION: +2 to overcome obstacles with Survival when attempting to see in the dark (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

RYJYLLIAN COMBAT FOCUS: once per session, spend a fate point to gain two additional stress boxes and gain a shift on any attack roll intended to deal stress until the end of the current combat (page 40 of *Bulldogs!*).

STICK TO THEIR SIX: gain +2 to Pilot rolls when chasing someone (page 142 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*)



Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

FRAGMENTATION GRENADES: Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack).

BALLISTIC SNIPER RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with armor), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty,) ☐ ARMOR-PIERCING ROUNDS.

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐

COMMANDO SUIT: Medium Armor, Camouflage (+1 to overcome with Stealth when hiding), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks),

☐ BLENDS IN.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

PROBLEM: FURIOUS PURSUIT

In addition to the bounty hunters and Saldrallan assassins, the Fury may dispatch troops to locate the Bulldogs if they thwarted either of the attacks on Armada or Ardru. If the crew rescued Navigatrix Thelise from Ardru, then the Fury team is led by a Templar. However, if the crew *didn't* save Thelise, then she's the one leading the hunt for them.

After all, in her eyes, they deserve a chance for redemption.

THE FURY HUNTERS

The Fury hunting party consists of a dozen minions, mostly Arsubaran, on board a high-speed cutter from the Armada Works. They'll scour the spacelanes for the Bulldogs, sticking close to the borders of Fury space. They may not pick the crew up until *The Tomb World* (page 209).

FURY HUNTERS

Aspects

RIGHTEOUS FURY; WE WILL NOT SURRENDER

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Resolve

Conditions

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Winded ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Angry ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Gear

BLAST RIFLES: Light Weapon, ☐ GETS THE JOB DONE.

COMBAT SCREENS: (Medium Shield)

Stress ☐☐☐

SYNTHETIC MESH: Light Armor, ☐ ARCHAIC DESIGN.

☐Mild:

FURY CUTTER

SIZE: Small

MANEUVERABILITY: Mediocre (+0)

ENGINES: Retrofitted Fury Drive (Light Engine)

Aspects

STEALTH PROWLER

Weapons

MASS DRIVER: Light Weapon, ☐ **BIG CHUNK OF DEBRIS.**

LASER GRID: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ **MAXIMIZED SPREAD.**

Armor

DYED METALLIC PLATES: Light Armor, ☐ **PURPLE PROTECTS BETTER.**

☐ Mild:

Crew

PILOT: Good (+3)

ENGINEER: Average (+1)

SYSTEMS TECH: Average (+1)

GUNNER: Fair (+2)

Conditions

Crippled ☐☐

ASAL LAR'K

Asal Lar'k is one of the few Templari in the Fury. More accurately, he's one of the few Templari who *can* be part of the Fury. He's a member of an obscure Templar underground sect that preserves the teachings and philosophies of the old Theocracy (especially the teachings about how the rest of Templar society turned away from the true path and must be punished). The secret theocrats intend to use the Fury as a weapon against their former brethren. The crew are a danger to that plan, and so they must be eliminated for the greater glory of Deval and Kamanch.

And if the crew killed the Necromech back on Armada, then they're responsible for murdering one of the two leaders of his particular brand of religion. Killing his cybernetic undead space-pope makes it personal.

Lar'k has studied everything the Fury knows about the Bulldogs. If they have a preferred set of combat tactics, then he will have countermeasures. For example, if the crew normally hide behind lots of cover and shoot, then he brings smoke grenades and melee weapons to make sure the fighting is up close and personal. If the Bulldog's Hacragorkan heavy always charges into the middle of the fight, then Lar'k might counter with an energy bola to trip the charging warrior, then have some of his minions run in to stun the Hacragorkan while he's down.



ASAL LAR'K

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

SUPERIOR SPECIES; THE THEOCRACY WILL RETURN AND PUNISH THE UNFAITHFUL; I'VE PLANNED FOR THIS CONTINGENCY; I'LL TAKE YOU ALL ON

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Resolve

GREAT (+4): Fight, Shoot

GOOD (+3): Science, Physique, Command

FAIR (+2): Rapport, Stealth, Provoke, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Survival, Systems, Empathy, Contacts

Stunts & Species Abilities

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*)

IRON WILL: gain an extra stress box on Angry and Stunned conditions (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

RIPOSTE: on a success with style when defending with Fight, instead of a boost you can inflict a 2-shift hit on your attacker instead (page 140 of *Bulldogs!*).

TWO-FISTED SHOOTER: once per conflict, when you use two guns and successfully hit, force your target to take a consequence instead of mark stress (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

LAST LEG: once per conflict, spend a fate point to remain standing when you would normally be taken out (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

DISRUPTOR PISTOLS: Light Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Specialized (+1 stress on a successful hit against unarmored organic targets), ☐ **MESSY CELLULAR DISRUPTION.**

NEUTRON SCRAMBLER: Heavy Weapon, Specialized (+1 stress on a successful hit against organic tissue), Boost Effect (apply **GRIEVOUS WOUND** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **SHIT, HE'S GOT A NEUTRON SCRAMBLER!**

BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

AUGMENTED POWER ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), ☐ **POWER-ASSISTED MOTION.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

NAVIGATRIX THELISE

Thelise as a member of the Fury is an eerie mirror of her previous self. She's mostly the same as she was, except she now sees that the Fury can be a force for good. She argues that the psychic field is morally neutral. It's just a catalyst for change and action, and those changes and actions can be good or bad. The war against the Templari, for example, could kill billions. But if the whole galaxy joins with the Fury against the Templari, then billions more would be liberated from the yoke of the Devalkamanchan Republic. Join her, she argues, and the crew can build a better galaxy.

NAVIGATRIX THELISE

SPECIES: Arsubaran

REFRESH: 4

Aspects

INTERSTELLAR DIPLOMAT; CONVERTS ARE THE WORST ZEALOTS; KNOWS THE BULLDOGS; CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Skills

GREAT (+4): Rapport

GOOD (+3): Command, Contacts

FAIR (+2): Science, Empathy, Stealth

AVERAGE (+1): Systems, Pilot, Survival, Resolve

Stunts & Species Abilities

THERE'S A FAMILIAR FACE: +1 social with Arsubarans (page 27 of *Bulldogs!*).

STARFARER: +2 to Rapport to discover the correct etiquette for any culture or situation (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: +2 to Command when calling someone to action based on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*)

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

ASSASSINATION SHIELD: Light Shield, Special (+1 stress versus surprise attacks).

Stress ☐☐☐

BALLISTIC CLOTH ROBES: Light Armor, ☐ TACTFULLY DURABLE.

☐ Mild:

SPIES LIKE US

This whole mess started when the Saldrellans tried to meddle with the Templar psyche, and they've been the shadowy manipulators behind events ever since. Mr. S wants the crew's help in locating the Saldrellan Special Adjustment Bureau base. He knows that his old employers have at least one base somewhere in the Frontier Zone. In fact, he set up such a base as part of the initial attempt to manipulate the Templari. That base was abandoned and destroyed after the botched mission, but he's sure that Special Adjustment had another similar base from which they monitor the war. If the crew can find and secure that base, then they can find proof that they were framed for the murder, and Mr. S will finally have enough leverage over his former masters to force them to call off their assassins.

EXPRESS ROUTE: The Saldrellans framed Hoops Overtly back on Depot; they framed the Bulldogs for the assassination of the Sage of the Stars, and they tried to kill Mr. S. Now, the crew's only chance of clearing their names and stopping the Fury is to find that Saldrellan spy network. So, the crew needs to find a super-secret spy base while being hunted. No one said it would be easy.

SCENIC ROUTE: Run this setup anytime after the crew encounter Mr. S. Alternatively, if they've worked out that the Saldrellans are to blame, then they might go looking for the Saldrellan base on their own initiative, and you can work Mr. S in that way.

PROBLEM: FINDING THE BLUE-HAIRED ARSUBARAN

If the Blue-Haired Arsubaran is still alive (i.e. the Bulldogs didn't shoot them on InfoCity), then Mr. S identifies the spy as Keeler Gull. S trained the Arsubaran himself: Gull is a roving fixer and troubleshooter for the Special Adjustment division. He has dozens of cover identities and contacts across the Frontier Zone. Capturing him will be tricky, especially as he's wired with a suicide switch. The best approach, Mr. S tells them, is to use a specially tuned stunstick. Tune the stunstick to the right frequency, and it can fry the suicide chips.

S. knows that Gull often works with a Dolom technician named **Horus**, who's based on a Dolom colony world called Triano. Horus is an expert mechanic and gadgeteer, and one of the few people that Gull trusts. The crew's best chance of finding Gull is to go through Horus. (Creative Bulldogs may come up with some other cunning plan; run with it if they do!)

HORUS QULOM

The Dolom's workshop sits on the edge of a gravity platform. The gravity outside his back door is eight times higher than at the front door. Inside, the triangular workshop is crammed with high-tech gadgets and the intestines of industrial machinery. Most of Horus' clients need custom-designed equipment for obscure problems, like a robot capable of operating inside a fusion reactor or a sensor that picks up a particular combination of trace gases, but he also makes weapons and surveillance devices for Gull.

- If threatened, Horus can manipulate the gravity in his shop, switching it off or slamming the contra-gravity system into reverse, boosting local conditions to a bone-crushing 15 g's. He's also got two security robots; should some dangerous thugs come crashing through his door, he deploys the robots and escapes out the back. Anyone who tries following him has to deal with an angry Dolom with a proton rifle.

- Like most of his species, Horus is loyal to a fault. He doesn't know—and doesn't want to know—everything that Gull is involved in, but he'll stick by his friend no matter what. Convincing him to give up Gull by threatening or bribing him is almost impossible (he'll invoke his **FAST FRIEND** aspect to resist). The best approaches are to turn the tables on Gull by framing him, or else to explain that finding Gull may be the only way the crew can stop the Fury.
- If the crew bluffs their way in, or sneak in, they can find a box of robot caltrops, addressed to a 'K. Gull', care of a hotel on Depot. The crew can use that address to find Gull.
- If the crew captures Horus, they can use him to force Gull into the open. Mr. S warns that the Saldrellans—with their emotionless analysis of cost and benefit—dislike it when one of their agents tries to rescue a friend, and that the Saldrellans will send an assassination team along with Gull to ensure that his emotional issues do not affect the overall mission.



HORUS QULOM

SPECIES: Dolom

REFRESH: 2

Aspects

BIG AND BLUE; TECHNICALLY INCLINED; BUILT THIS PLACE WITH MY OWN THREE HANDS; POCKETS FULL OF GADGETS

Skills

GREAT (+4): Engineering

GOOD (+3): Systems, Fight, Physique

FAIR (+2): , Rapport, Shoot, Science, Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Haggle, Resolve, Contacts, Larceny, Pilot

Stunts & Species Abilities

THICK SKINNED: gain an extra mild consequence and an extra Angry box (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

THIRD ARM: once per session, take two actions in the same round (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

GREAT STRENGTH: +1 to all Physique roll when applying brute strength (page 29 of *Bulldogs!*).

HEAVY MOMENTUM: +2 to overcome physical obstacles with Physique if you've got a running start (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

HAND-EYE COORDINATION: +2 to create advantages with Engineering when doing complicated or delicate tasks (page 30 of *Bulldogs!*).

JURY-RIGGER: +2 to creat advantages or overcome obstacles with Engineering when you lack the proper tools or parts (page 138 of *Bulldogs!*).

BRAWLER: gain +2 to defend with Fight when outnumbered (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

PROTON RIFLE: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Specialized (+2 stress on a successful hit against armor once per session), ☐ **KNOCKS HOLES THROUGH BARRIERS.**

COMBAT SCREEN: Medium Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐☐

WORK HARNESS: Light Armor, Powered (+1 to overcome with Physique when using brute strength), ☐ **CUSTOM BUILT.**

☐ Mild:

HORUS' ROBOTS

Aspects

ALL WE KNOW IS (DEALING) PAIN; HORUS IS OUR MASTER

Skills

GOOD (+3): Shoot

FAIR (+2): Physique

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics

Conditions

Overheating ☐ ☐

Angry ☐ ☐

Rerouting ☐ ☐

Gear

BLAST PISTOLS: Light Weapon, ☐ BUILT-IN WEAPONS.

ARMORED PLATING: Medium Armor, ☐ BUILT TO LAST.

☐ Mild

☐ Moderate

TOURIST'S GUIDE TO TRIANO

Triano is an incredibly dense planet, thanks to its huge deposits of valuable metals. The gravity at the surface is eight times normal, so intense that even Dolomé find it unpleasant. Artificial anti-grav generators make life in the cities and mining towns bearable; all the miners are either Dolomé wearing protective harnesses or robots.

The main city is called Rocksfall. The gravity generator that shields Rocksfall from the planet's drag is one of the biggest such installations in the galaxy and maintaining an artificial contra-gravity field that big is tricky, even for the expert engineers from the Academy of Engineering. The gravity field fluctuates regularly. The locals are used to and can even predict this 'weather'; visitors to Rocksfall are often taken by surprise when the gravity suddenly triples or vanishes for a few moments.

Outside the city, Triano boasts a truly unique form of native life, the mag-lizards. These 'creatures' are vortices of geo-magnetic energy that 'move' between ferrous rocks. They look like webs of lightning that crackle and jump around iron-heavy rocks. In effect, the mag-lizard possesses one group of rocks, then another nearby outcrop, slithering across the surface of the planet in search of electricity to eat. The rocks themselves do not move, except when a mag-lizard shoves a rock using its own magnetic force. The Dolomé see the creatures as mostly harmless, except when a mag-lizard decides to try sucking the electricity from a mining laser or other power supply. Conventional weapons are useless against mag-lizards, so the standard tactic is to ground them or to drive them away with guns that spray metal filings. Stories about mag-lizards learning to interface with computer systems or possess spaceships are clearly nonsense.

HIGH GRAVITY WORLD... USUALLY

INVOKE: When people go down, they go down hard. "Enjoy the fall!"

COMPEL: Dragging heavy gear around is tough. "Ok, I'll leave the inferno launcher behind."

MINING TOWN

INVOKE: Easy to find bars, gamblers, marks, and cash. "I've never played three-hand poker before... go easy on me."

COMPEL: You're on the frontier here. Creature comforts are few and far between. "We don't have a doctor. We've got a doc-bot. It might be able to patch you up. Maybe."

REALM OF THE MAG-LIZARDS!

INVOKE: Mag-lizards play havoc with your enemy's gear. "No laser batteries, Hans?"

COMPEL: Your gear is equally tasty to them. "What do you mean, my screen's out of juice?"

TRAPPING THE ARSUBARAN

Keeler Gull lives from hotel room to hotel room, starport to starport. Once, long ago, he believed that the Saldrellan Union was the best hope for peace in the galaxy. These days, he's cynical and tired enough to play the Game for its own sake. He looks young, except on the rare occasions when he allows himself to relax and drop his mask, and then you can see all the lines and scars.

With the Bulldogs dealt with and the war progressing nicely, Gull's current assignment is to watch GCP and the other influential systems in the Frontier Zone and report on any movements that might herald another peace conference. It's a low-stress assignment for him, so his guard is down, but that doesn't mean that capturing him is easy.

As the crew has already seen, Gull has a number of tricks that he relies on.

- **YOU AND HIM FIGHT:** Wherever possible, Gull avoids direct combat in favor of siccing someone else on his enemies. If the crew attacks him, Gull runs and looks for backup. He might call in the local authorities, lead the crew into a Saldrellan ambush, or just shout "Hey, did you hear what that guy said about your mothers?" to a gang of Hacragorkans.
- **CHAOS & TRICKERY:** He's got lots of ways to sow chaos and disrupt the situation. On InfoCity, he used his robot caltrops and the computer virus. On Depot, he might use his laser to light a fire, a deadly threat in the cramped environment of the container city. Look for ways to start lots of trouble, then disappear.
- **KICK THEM WHILE THEY'RE DOWN:** Gull's very good at exploiting weaknesses and protecting himself. Have a look at the Bulldogs' aspects. Is there anything there he can use against them? For example, if a crew member has a younger brother as an aspect, then maybe Gull found the brother and got him a job on Depot where the spy can keep an eye on him. The Bulldog's following Gull through a maze of corridors and is about to grab the spy, when suddenly the brother appears and greets Gull like an old friend...

INTERROGATING GULL

Keeler Gull is trained to resist interrogation (hence his high Resolve), but a psychic could pry secrets out of his mind. The crew may also be able to convince him to help if they convince him that the Saldrellans will dispose of him now that he has shown that his loyalty to his friend Horus is greater than his utility to Special Maintenance. If they do convince him to cooperate, then he reveals that the Saldrellan base is on Vashar.



PROBLEM: ALTERNATIVE TARGETS

If the crew is unable to track down Gull (or if he's already dead), then there are several other potential routes of investigation:

- **THE SUKAR JUDGE:** The Saldrellans bribed the Sukar judges to convict the Bulldogs, and it just so happens that one of those judges, Wise-and-Sagely-Nodding makes regular trips to a relaxation spa on Apollonia, the *Mountain Dawn Refuge*. The spa is in a turning pod attached to the station, and part of the therapy offered there involves seeing the dawn sixteen times a day. The pod moves around the surface of Apollonia, chasing the dawn. If the crew can break in there and interrogate Wise-and-Sagely-Nodding, they can force the Sukar to confess. He accidentally picked up the location of the Saldrellan base from the mind of the Saldrellan agent who bribed him, and he's been trying to forget it ever since.
- **THE ASSASSINS:** It's a time-honored tradition in situations like this to interrogate one's assassin after they fail to kill you. Custom dictates that you slam them up against a wall (usually, next to the door they just burst through) and snarl "who sent you?" When they profess that you'll never make them talk, you reply with a swift punch, and they double over and gasp out the name of their employer. Got it? Of course, the trick is getting past the bit where they try to kill you.
- **THE INFOCITY VIRUS:** A talented computer programmer (either Smooz or a Bulldog with Great (+4) or better Systems) can analyze the computer virus from InfoCity. It's military-grade stuff and was probably developed in the murky depths of the Saldrellan Union's military-industrial complex. However, one section of the virus was hastily patched, probably to adjust the information it targeted, and the analyst can tell that those changes were made by a programmer from the planet Vashar. Some of the variable names and comments are in the Vashar language.
- **THE SALDRELLAN CULTURAL ATTACHÉ:** If all else fails, then Mr. S can identify one of the Saldrellan diplomats stationed at Galactic Central Point as an officer in Special Adjustment. If the crew can break back into GCP and kidnap the diplomat, Hssesek hatched for the Huush clan, then they can force him to reveal the location of the base.

PROBLEM: TRACKING THE SPIES

The subtle option is to identify a suitable target—like Keeler Gull—and follow them (or plant a tracking bug on them) until they lead the Bulldogs to the Saldrellan base. Shadowing a target involves a contest of Stealth against the target's Survival; doing the same in space involves Pilot versus Systems.

Throw some complications at the crew when they try. For example:

ON THE GROUND

- The target has an Urseminite bodyguard (a Good (+3) minor NPC who's got a **TWITCHY TRIGGER FINGER** and a temper).
- The target's also being followed by local police and uses all sorts of fancy spy tradecraft to avoid pursuit (ducking in and out of public transport, taking unusual routes, climbing over rooftops, disguises).
- The target's got a stealth field generator and can use it to hide.
- The Bulldog runs into someone from their past while they're stalking the target.

- The tracking device falls off at the worst possible moment.

IN SPACE

- The target passes through a system where Fury and Templar ships are battling. The crew has to dodge stray missiles and fighter patrols.
- The target takes a long, lonely route that goes through a deserted sector of space. It's going to be really obvious that the crew is following if the target detects them. How do they reduce the risk?
- All those bad aspects the crew picked up for shoddy maintenance? Time to turn the screws on them!

The trail leads the crew to the waterworld of Vashar.

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO VASHAR

The old joke about Vashar is that it's got hot and cold frozen water. Vashar is a waterworld with an unusually low night-time temperature. It gets cold enough at night over more than half the planet to freeze the surface layer of the oceans, which then melt and crack again the next day. So, the surface is, well, windswept and interesting. Howling planet-girding hurricanes, winds strong enough to send icebergs skipping across the ocean like pebbles, thousands of kilometers of cracking, groaning, exploding ice...

Most people on Vashar live under the ice, in free-floating underwater cities. These underwater colonies consist of thousands of huge pods, connected by flexible corridor-cables. The arrangement of the pods can be reconfigured as needed, to adjust to water currents or just to improve the view. The cities can even propel themselves by modulating the buoyancy of each pod, allowing the whole place to 'swim'.

Vashar's population is primarily Hacragorkan. The world was originally settled by Dolomé, long ago, but there are only a few Dolomé left (mostly old money types). The planet's primary exports are aluminium and kelp concentrate.

Special tubes extend from the sunken cities to the surface so ships can fly down the tube and land in large docking pods.

CLIMATE CHANGE ON FAST-FORWARD

INVOKE: you use the chaotic conditions to your advantage, "Just as the ship's about to crash into the iceberg, it cracks in two and we fly down the chasm, and I pull up just before it hits bottom."

COMPEL: the weather makes things difficult, "Wind speed is more than three hundred kilometers and rising. Tell me again how you're going to get there."



HACRAGORKAN CULTURE

INVOKE: Hacragorkans aren't fussy, "No one will mind if I bring my rocket launcher, right?"

COMPEL: be ready to fight, "Apparently, we can only hire this girl's submarine if we beat her in a wrestling match first."

NEEDS A THIRD ARM TO CARRY HIS WALLET

INVOKE: a rich Dolom offers you a job, "He needs us to pick up some stuff from Apollonia and deliver it here. Nothing too exotic: sextuple-breasted suits and tricufflinks, that sort of thing."

COMPEL: certain items cost a lot here, "The docking fee is how much!?"

PROBLEM: STORMING THE BASE

The Saldrallan base sits at the edge of one of a swimming city called Ulocca. Unlike bigger cities, Ulocca doesn't have a docking port; the Bulldogs have to land their ship at a larger metropolis like Borea, then take a submarine to Ulocca.

Smaller pods containing radio dishes and listening devices trail along behind the base like the fronds of some electronic anemone. The base connects to a notoriously violent Hacragorkan pod called Danktown; the Saldrallans have an arrangement with the gang bosses of Danktown to conceal their operations.

Navigating through Danktown requires either Stealth, Survival, or Provoke. A Good (+3) roll gets the PCs through without any trouble; a Great (+4) roll gives them advance warning about the base's Hacragorkan guards. Failing the roll means the gangs try to intimidate the crew into leaving Danktown.

The base itself is surprisingly small; it's really just a listening post for monitoring the war. A single access corridor connects the base's pod to Danktown. A squad of well-equipped Hacragorkan bruisers guard the far end of the corridor.

HACRAGORKAN BRUISERS

Aspects

FINALLY, SOMETHING TO KILL

Skills

FAIR (+2): Fight

AVERAGE (+1): Shoot

Conditions

Winded ☐ ☐

Angry ☐ ☐

Gear

HEAVY BALLISTIC PISTOLS: Heavy Weapon, ☐ **EAR-SPLITTING BOOM.**

CHAINAXES: Heavy Weapon, ☐ **MESSY BUT EFFECTIVE.**

COMBAT ARMOR: Medium Armor, ☐ **GETS THE JOB DONE.**

☐ **Mild:**

☐ **Moderate:**

Alternatively, if the crew can get hold of a submarine or diving equipment, they can dodge the guards and go through the water until they find an external airlock.

Inside, the pod is eerily deserted. All the computer infrastructure is still in place, tracking fleet movements and sifting through news reports from the front lines, but there are no

Saldrallans here. The pod was clearly set up for a Saldrallan staff—the lack of chairs is testament to that—but it's much, much too quiet.

PROBLEM: COILS OF THE UNION

Waiting for the crew in the main computer room is a Saldrallan, who introduces himself as **Sheth**. He has a nasty-looking laser pistol in one hand, and some sort of strange high-tech gadget in the other, but he doesn't seem threatening. Sheth explains that by finding this base and getting past its defenses, the crew have proved themselves to be clever, resourceful, and adaptable. The Union of Saldralla is practical above all else; it would be a shame to waste such potential assets. He offers the crew a deal: he will arrange for the charges against them to be dropped, if they agree to sign on as agents of Special Adjustment.

As for the war, Sheth argues the following:

- The current state of affairs in the galaxy is not sustainable. The Templari are too dangerous.
- The Saldrallans attempted to drain the Templari's aggression, resulting in the creation of the Fury.
- Plan B: turn the Fury against the Templari. Prolong the war as long as possible, resulting in the destruction of the Fury and draining the Devalkamanchan Republic's resources to the point of collapse.
- Without the counterbalancing effect of the Templari, the Alliance of Federated Frontier States will be unable to escape the socio-economic gravity well of the Union. The whole galaxy will be united in peaceful co-existence.
- This plan will take several generations to unfold, and the war will regrettably cost the lives of billions. These deaths, however, must be weighed against the potential happiness and productivity of the uncounted trillions who will be born in a united galaxy.
- The renegade, Khass—also known as Mr. S—was the architect of the initial scheme to drain Templar aggression, but he lost his nerve. He is no longer of use to the Union. Will the crew repeat his mistakes, or will they join in the great work of building a better galaxy?

The choice is up to the crew. Most Bulldogs will reject Sheth's offer and shout something about self-determination and freedom and the hypocrisy of grand schemes that involve billions of deaths. Others will just start shooting.

(On the off-chance that the crew accepts his offer, then he orders them to secure the traitor, Mr. S. He then tells them that Special Adjustment recently located a second Templar theocrat vessel, and that the initial survey teams sent to examine it vanished. He wants them to go and take a look. This leads into *Tomb Ship*, but instead of trying to stop the Fury, the crew's mission becomes stopping anyone else from stopping the Fury.)

If the crew refuses, then determine initiative. Sheth's first action, if possible, is to use the gadget in his hand; it's a short-range teleporter that beams him into Danktown. He activated the base's self-destruct sequence as soon as the Bulldogs arrived. The base is compromised now, but it can still serve a purpose by drowning the Bulldogs. If Sheth's unable to escape, then he is resigned to dying heroically for Special Adjustment. See Self Destruct, below.

PROBLEM: ACCESSING THE DATA FILES

Any interstellar spy network has all sorts of exotic encryption systems, but the Bulldogs have a snake on the inside and a master hacker (or, if for some reason they've lost Mr. S or

Smooz, then you can introduce an unfortunate Saldrallan tech support technician who's **EASILY INTIMIDATED** to provide the same services).

Call for a Systems check when the crew hacks into the computer system. The difficulty of this roll is Great (+4). Any result, though, gets several key pieces of information: the roll is not to determine whether or not the crew finds out what they need to know, it's to work out what extra secrets they uncover or which security systems they trip.

THE GUARANTEED PAYOFF

- **A CREDIT TRANSFER:** It can be traced with a Science roll to a bank account owned by the Sukar judge, Wise-and-Sagely-Nodding. That's the evidence the crew needs to get their case re-examined and the arrest warrant removed.
- **A DETAILED OVERVIEW OF THE ONGOING CONFLICT:** Depending on the previous actions of the crew, the Fury's strength and alliances may have taken the Templari by surprise, or the Fury may be splintered and divided as the Templari push back. Either way the war is spreading, and the Saldrallan projections estimate that it will grow to encompass nearly a quarter of the galaxy within three years.
- **INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEMPLAR THEOCRATS:** The Saldrallans sent a scout mission to the world of XM554, where Mr. S's team found the theocrat tomb ship and released the Fury. The world seems to be uninhabited. The Saldrallans intended to use it to reinforce the Fury by opening another 'valve' if needed, releasing more psychic energy from the Templair reservoirs. However, their scout team was scheduled to report back two days ago, and there's been no word from them. This leads onto the Tomb Ship on page 220.

EXTRA INFORMATION

Learn one piece per shift on that Systems roll.

- If the crew hasn't met them yet, give them information on the Saldrallan assassins.
- Access to a Saldrallan black-ops bank account in the Sukar Sphere. The spies clear most of it out by the time the PCs get to it, but it's still a **SUKAR BANK ACCOUNT** resource aspect.
- Background information on one of the crew that can trigger another adventure. For example, if a Bulldog's goal is to search for his missing mother, maybe there's a clue in the Saldrallan archives.
- If the Gamemaster wants to throw in any plot hooks related to Saldralla, now's the time.
- Schematics of the base. Very useful when the self-destruct goes off...

Alternatively, the crew can choose to access the information faster, reducing the time needed from a few minutes to a minute with a single shift spend, or a few moments with two shifts spent.

DOWNSIDES AND DANGERS

Add one per shift below Great (+4).

- It takes longer than planned. Normally, it would only take a few minutes to search the archives, but due to the increased security tripped by the hacker, it

takes longer, from 15 minutes, to half an hour, to an hour or longer with each shift deficit.

- A Saldrallan virus infects the Bulldog's personal computer and uploads itself to the Bulldog's ship as soon as the computer is within range of that. This **MALIGNANT COMPUTER VIRUS** is programmed to disable the crew's ship at the worst possible moment.
- The security system sends a warning to Saldrallan intelligence. The Saldrallans now have a grudge against the crew.
- The Hacragorkans in Danktown are alerted. Even if the crew escapes the self-destruct system, then they've got to deal with a bunch of angry Hacragorkans whose meal ticket just sank.

PROBLEM: SELF DESTRUCT

Fortunately, the Dolom engineers who designed these pods built them to last. The Saldrallan self-destruct system is not powerful enough to crack the pod wall, but it blows open one of the buoyancy tanks, allowing sea water to flood in. The whole pod starts sinking, and it's kept from plunging into the depths only by the flexible corridor that connects it to Danktown.

It does plunge a bit, though; the whole pod falls downwards and hangs from the rest of the city instead of floating on the same plane. That means that everything inside the pod twists by ninety degrees, and everyone and everything inside falls towards the far wall. To escape, the crew needs to climb out of the pod before the connecting cable breaks, and it plummets to the crushing, icy darkness below.

- Climbing up through the pod requires an Athletics test at Good (+3) difficulty. Failure means the Bulldog gets into trouble: perhaps he's trapped by debris, or slips and falls down a corridor, or can't find a way to climb up, or maybe the pod starts flooding and the water pressure means he can't open a door.
- The pod has ballast tanks that still function, but the explosion damaged the control systems. If the crew can get to the control mechanism, then an Engineering test could right the pod's orientation, or the crew could hit the 'emergency surface' button and send the pod shooting up.
- The pod keeps flooding. Use the stress track below to keep track of it. Every few rounds, roll an Average (+1) attack on the stress track. If the track fills up, the pod disconnects and plummets. The current level of the track determines the difficulty for any rolls needed to swim through the rising waters, from Mediocre (no stress on the track) to Superb (fifth stress box filled in).
□□□□□
- If the crew exits through the umbilical into Danktown, they may need to deal with more Hacragorkans.
- If, on the other hand, the pod gets disconnected from the rest of Ulocca and the crew ends up surfacing, then they've got to make their way across the ice floes before the sun rises and the whole place melts.

EXIT TRAJECTORY

EXPRESS ROUTE: With that data in hand, onto *The Tomb World*!

SCENIC ROUTE: At this point in the campaign, even the scenic route's moving pretty quickly towards a finale. The next stop, barring any complications you throw in the way of the Bulldogs, is also *The Tomb World*.



THE TOMB WORLD

Centuries ago, the Templari overthrew the theocrats and forced them to flee. The theocrats fled Templar space in a flotilla led by a great temple-ship and vanished into the war-scarred chaos of what would become the Frontier Zone. The temple-ship became separated from its escorts, and crashed here. The crew all perished, all except the high priest. This world is a tomb world, a graveyard with neither markers nor mourners.

Welcome to a world marked on the charts as XM554. Buried on this world is the dead theocrat ship. The last time one of these ships was disturbed, it spilled out the Fury.

What's going to happen this time?

ALL ROUTES, ALL ROUTES: From this point in the adventure on, Express and Scenic merge. It's all the same from here to Templar space.

THE OTHER VISITORS

You know, for a world that's been abandoned and empty for centuries, XM554 has seen a lot of traffic lately. The crew is late to the party. Currently on the planet are:

- The native population of marginally sentient tree crabs.
- A small (in fact, a suspiciously small) number of Fury agents, left to guard the crashed ship.
- The Saldrallan expedition. Most of the expedition was captured by the Gej Mal before the Bulldogs arrive.
- Three Templar warriors from the elite order of the Gej Mal. They came here believing that this world was somehow connected to the Fury and ran into the Saldrallans before locating the crashed ship.

PROBLEM: GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

There's the small matter of a cataclysmic interstellar war between the Bulldogs and their destination. The Tomb World is on the far side of the Fury's zone of influence, so unless the crew wants to take a very, very long detour, they'll have to sneak through Fury space. The Fury isn't a monolithic government. It's still the same **PATCHWORK OF JURISDICTIONS** that makes up the rest of the Frontier Zone, only united by a common cause and belief structure that works spookily well, thanks to that Templar-discipline-inducing psychic field. As long as the Bulldogs don't run into any Scions or other senior members of the Fury who recognize them, they should be fine.

DODGING THE AUTHORITIES

Depending on how the crew chooses to cross Fury space, they face different challenges:

- **FALSE IDENTITIES:** If the crew are discovered, and they haven't already encountered the Fury Hunters, then drop those attackers on them now. If they have already defeated the Hunters, then the customs official recognizes the crew, but waves them through with nothing but a warning to get their papers in order next time.
- **STICKING TO UNINHABITED SYSTEMS:** In peaceful space, this might work. However, when there's a war going on, those inhabited systems may be crawling with spies, observation posts, smugglers, and Templar warfleets preparing for a counter-attack. The crew run into the Templar warship *Spear of Kamanch*. The captain, T'la, demands that the Bulldogs stand to and prepare to be boarded, so she can establish that they are not Fury spies or smugglers. If the crew are

found to have any Saldrellans on board, then the Templari assume that the Bulldogs are Saldrellan spies and start shooting. To get past, the crew needs to avoid detection by the ship or hide any Saldrellans before the boarding party arrives.

THE BATTLE OF ALJEBRYJN

When historians in centuries to come write the history of the Fury War (assuming, of course, that the war ever ends), they will remember the Battle of Aljebryjn as one of the bloodiest and most vicious engagements in the early years of the conflict.

“Aljebryjn was a Ryjyllian world, and became one of the most fervent adherents to the cause of the Fury. For centuries, Aljebryjnians mercenaries defended neighboring worlds from Templar incursions, and now the Fury inspired them to take the fight to the hated Devalkamanchan Republic. A Fury warfleet mustered at Aljebryjn before setting course for Templar space.

Meanwhile, a detachment from Templari’s Fourth Punitive Fleet, under the command of Vice-Admiral V’dam, was en route to relieve the forward base at Hyg’s Star when her advance scouts detected the Aljebryn fleet. Rather than risk being cut off, she ordered her ships to prepare for battle against the numerically superior warfleet...”

- Key Battles of the Fury Crusade, by Usa Klem, Arsubar Free Press

The Bulldogs’ route takes them right through the battle zone, which means weaving and dodging and fighting off swarms of fighters from either side. In game terms, track the crew’s movement through the battlefield using a stress track.

Battlefield ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

In each round of space combat, the pilot should roll on the stress track. Once the stress track is exhausted, the ship flies clear of the battle zone and can hop back into hyperspace. The crew also needs to deal with dangers, like:

- A trio of Fury interceptors tries to shoot down the freighter, assuming it is a support ship for the Templar fleet. If the crew start swerving and dodging to avoid enemy fire, they’ll lose their chance to move forward this round. The crew gets one shot with their ship’s weapons to take out the interceptors before they have to start dodging.
- A Fury capital ship charges its main guns. If the crew continues on their present course, there’s a chance their ship will be clipped by the blast (it requires a Great (+4) Pilot result to dodge if it fires). If they change course, they’re delayed.
- The Templari order the crew to change course and dock with one of the Templar rearguard ships, which can shelter a little civilian ship like the freighter from the battle. Does the crew accept the offer of safety, at the risk of being captured and interrogated after the battle?
- The Bulldogs’ current course brings them within range of a Templar cruiser’s short-range weapons. Do they keep going (and risk multiple shots from her mass drivers) or try skimming the cruiser’s hull (that requires some fancy flying, but means they’re inside the minimum range of the guns)?
- The crew detects a damaged Templar ship at the edge of the battle. She’s crippled and drifting but still has life signs on board. If she keeps drifting on her

current course, she'll come within range of a Fury warship. The Bulldogs could slow down and use grapples to pull the Templar ship to safety, but that would delay them further.

SWARMS OF FIGHTERS

INVOKE: the sky's so full, it's hard to miss, "Just keep your tentacle on the trigger!"

COMPEL: add more bad guys to a conflict, "Oh look, more interceptors."

APOCALYPTIC EXCHANGE OF FIRE

INVOKE: use this to distract a foe, "The interceptor lines up a shot... and then the battleship fires, and it's like a directed supernova. It's too bright to see, and the radiation futzes your sensors."

COMPEL: force a change in course, "Going in there is suicide!"

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO XM554

Come for the bleak, desolate emptiness. Stay because you're out of fuel and can't leave.

The Tomb World is far from inhabited space. It lies on the far side of a region called the Boneyard Sector, named for the scorched ruins left behind by the Templari, who seared worlds from orbit rather than leave their resources to the enemy. XM554 wasn't blasted—it was never colonized and has no native intelligent life—but mass genocide in several neighboring star systems tends to bring down the value of a planet.

Grim grey forests cover most of XM554's surface. The light of the sun never wholly penetrates the mists and the forest canopy, so XM554 is a world of shadows and furtive movements in the undergrowth. The most dangerous inhabitants are a species of spider-like tree crabs.

Scanning from orbit, the crew detects the energy signature of a small craft, probably a survey ship roughly the same size as their ship. A Good (+3) Systems or Science roll also picks up something near the small craft: it looks like a much larger vessel that was buried and has now been partially excavated. A close examination of the sensor scan reveals the signs of some ancient cataclysm; the big ship crashed here centuries ago and was slowly engulfed by the forest.

SPOOKY FORESTS

INVOKE: it's easy to hide, "I sneak through the fog and drop down on him before he can draw his laser."

COMPEL: the dark, the mist, it's all freaking you out, "This place gives me the creeps. My scales are crawling."

THINGS IN THE TREES

INVOKE: it helps with survival, "Something startled those birds. Let's check over there."

COMPEL: the crabs are hungry, "Agh! Something's dragging me into the... urk!"

PROBLEM: THE SALDRALLAN EXPEDITION

The smaller ship landed in one of the few clearings in the forest, so unless the crew wants to spend the time blasting their own clearing with laser fire, they have to land next to the other ship. The Saldrellan ship appears mostly undamaged, although one of the access panels near the engine looks like it was torn open, and the hull beneath is stained with dried coolant from damaged pipes.

Only a single member of the crew is left, a terrified and paranoid Arsubaran archaeologist called **Glin Lox**. He's been hiding out on this ship for days, ever since the rest of the crew vanished. As the Bulldogs approach, he takes several panicked pot-shots at them. With his low Guns skill, though, the crew should be able to disarm him easily.

GLIN'S STORY

- He's an archaeologist from Arsubar, studying pre-Republic Templar culture.
- A man named Keeler Gull offered him a job. Glin had no idea that it would involve travelling to the ass-end of space with a bunch of creepy Saldrellan spies, but it paid well.
- The wildlife on the planet is bizarre. The crabs in this forest... they're smarter. More disciplined. They're... like the Templari. Only crabs. Crab Templari! He's seen crabs you wouldn't believe – purple ones! Making crude weapons and carving Templari glyphs into the trees!
- They arrived on this dead planet and started looking for a crashed pre-Republic ship. It took them weeks to find it.
- They found the crashed ship and started investigating it. It's a big ship, not a warship, but definitely dating to the end of the Thousand-Year War. Maybe a troop transport or some sort of command vessel.
- Someone else had been there recently. Maybe survivors from that first Saldrellan expedition. Maybe the crabs. He doesn't know. The Saldrellans sent him back to the survey ship to start translating some Templar holy books they recovered.
- He fled back to the survey ship, but the crabs got to the engine. He doesn't know how to fix it and can't take off. The crabs also sabotaged the communications system. They're smart crabs.
- He's not sure how long all that took. Time is strange on this planet. He blames the crabs.
- They're all going to die, just like that first expedition.

THE SALDRALLAN SHIP

The ship reminds the crew of the wreck they encountered all the way back in *The Teraci Job* (see page 21), the same determined anonymity. The Saldrellans leave few traces. Examining the computer systems and equipment on board suggests that the Saldrellans

had only just begun their examination of the archaeological site before they were interrupted.

Examining the engines with, well, Engineering reveals that the ship was expertly sabotaged, and unless the crabs have laser torches and an in-depth knowledge of starship design, it wasn't them. The ship can be repaired, but the crew will have to take components from their own ship to do so.

THE TRANSLATED TEXT

The Saldrallans recovered a partially damaged book from the outer chambers of the crashed ship. Glin has translated parts of it, and a Good (+3) Science roll can finish the job. Once you skip past all the portentous talk and commandments to keep this book a secret known only to the initiated priests of the Theocracy, the book appears to be instructions on how to use the Guidestones. Most of it the crew already know: the Guidestones affect the psychic field and can attract it to one system or another. The one really interesting note is that the priests were absolutely forbidden from bringing Guidestones close to the main temple back on the Templar homeworld. The first commandment of the Templari is, effectively, *never surrender and never retreat – the stones must never return to the world that birthed them*.

Glin tells the crew that there may be other relics and records on board the crashed ship.

THE CAPTURED SALDRALLANS

The other Saldrallans from the expedition are either dead or got captured by the Templari. Either way, they're stuck in holes in the forest and aren't especially happy about their situation. If the crew scouts around the forest, they might (with a Great (+4) Survival roll) track down the Gej Mal camp and run into Akar Lof't.

PROBLEM: FOREST BEASTS

The Tree Crabs are the apex predator of the forest. They scuttle through the treetops, stalking the pig-like herbivores that forage amid the roots. This delicate balance endured for thousands of years, until the theocrat ship fell out of the sky and ploughed into the ground.

Things changed in the forest after that. The ship leaked. The Tree Crabs were part of the Fury for centuries before the Saldrallans loosed the psychic field on the rest of the galaxy. They are still unintelligent animals, but they're unintelligent animals flavored with Templar martial discipline. Imagine a pack of arboreal wolves that instinctively follow the tactics of trained commandos and possess supernatural willpower. Now imagine them hunting you through their forest. The crabs are big and strong enough to threaten the Bulldogs (and by 'threaten,' think 'mangle, eviscerate, rip limb from limb, crack the skulls of, and sip on the goo that flows forth').

Getting from the Saldrallan ship to the crashed tomb ship means going through a section of the forest inhabited by the Tree Crabs.

TREE CRABS

Aspects

TEMPLAR TACTICS; SNEAKY
AS A TREE CRAB; CRUSHING
CLAWS

Skills

GOOD (+3): Fight

FAIR (+2): Physique

AVERAGE (+1): Stealth

Conditions

Winded ☐

Angry ☐

Stunned ☐

Gear

CLAWS: Medium Weapon,

☐ PICK THE MEAT FROM THE BONES.

ARMORED CARAPACE: Medium Armor, ☐ WEIRD

TEMPLAR MARKINGS.

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:



TREE CRAB TACTICS

- The Tree Crabs pick on stragglers. Ideally, one crab makes a noise, some Bulldogs go to investigate, and the crabs grab the crew members who stay behind. If the crew doesn't obligingly split up, the crabs stalk them until there are enough of them to swarm their prey.
- If the crew uses firearms, then the crabs scatter and hide in the treetops, hoping that a victim will come close enough to one of the trees for a crab to drop from above.
- Crabs can hide in the treetops or in the piles of fallen leaves on the forest floor. They lurk there until someone comes close enough to grab.

THE TREE CRAB COLONY

Closer to the crashed ship, the crew passes by the remains of a Tree Crab colony. The creatures make nests in the treetops of woven branches held together with gooey spittle (and, since the ship crashed here, they've added the making of crude icons of the Templar warrior-gods, Deval and Kamanch, to their artistic repertoire).

The colony has been destroyed. Hundreds of smashed and blasted Tree Crab carcasses lie scattered around, along with the burnt remains of their nests. Someone thoroughly annihilated this colony using advanced weapons. (The Gej Mal, who the crew meet on page 215, wiped out the colony, as they consider the Tree Crabs to be an affront to the dignity of the Templari).

PROBLEM: THE GEJ MAL

Ship for ship, warrior for warrior, there is no more powerful fighting force in the galaxy than the Nova Legions of the Devalkamanchan Republic, and of all those millions of warriors, there are none finer than the seven champions of the Gej Mal. These seven are the elite of the elite. When one of them falls in battle, a thousand more Templari perish in the trials and duels that determine who shall be honored with membership in the order. In peacetime, well, who knows? The Devalkamanchan Republic is never at peace. But in wartime, the Gej Mal are the hidden blade, the precision weapon. They go where fleets and armies cannot, carving out the very heart of the enemy. During the Thousand-Year war, four Grand Saldrallas fell to the Gej Mal.

In this most recent conflict, the Gej Mal have found the Fury to be a troublesome foe. The Fury has no discernable leaders and slaughtering Scions by the hundred has hardly slowed the Fury's expansion. Still, the Gej Mal's bloody swathe did turn up a few interesting clues, which led them here. They captured the other members of the Saldrallan expedition, they wiped out the Tree Crabs, and now they're going to take out the Fury on the crashed ship.

Three Gej Mal landed on the Tomb World; one remains back at the Gej Mal's hidden camp, interrogating the prisoners, while the other two follow the Bulldogs.

JAKAL HARN

Ja'kal Harn is the Gej Mal's stealth expert. Outfitted with her stealth-field suit and perception bafflers, she's the invisible assassin who can waltz in and out of the most secure fortress. She welcomed the war with the Fury; it is only through conflict and victory that the Templari are truly alive!

BAL'N VAR'DN

Bal'n Var'dn's speciality is close combat. His armor has a kinetic energy shunt module that optimizes his every action. If he stabs you with his sword, then the blow has exactly enough force—but no more—to inflict a lethal wound, and any excess energy gets moved to his next attack. Bal'n worries that the Templari are so eager for this fight that they do not understand their enemy, and the discovery of this lost Templar ship on the fringes of Fury space confirms his fears.

AKAR LOFT

The third is the team's psychic, **Akar Lof't**. He is one of the most powerful psychics in the galaxy. Part of his training involved the study of ancient Templar techniques, so he guessed at the origins of the Fury as soon as he saw the temple-ship. So far, he has yet to decide on a course of action, and he's kept his guess hidden from his companions.

JA'KAL HARN

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

GEJ MAL ASSASSIN; NEVER SAW ME COMING; FIRE TEMPERS THE BLADE; TO THE PURPLE BE TRUE

Skills

FANTASTIC (+6): Stealth

SUPERB (+5): Larceny, Athletics

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Resolve

GOOD (+3): Survival, Rapport, Fight

FAIR (+2): Pilot, Systems, Physique

AVERAGE (+1): Provoke, Command, Empathy, Science

Stunts & Species Abilities

LIKE THE WIND: use Stealth instead of Athletics to overcome obstacles when moving under cover (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHADOWED STRIKE: use Stealth for an attack instead of Fight or Shoot if you strike from hiding (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

QUICK EXIT: once per session, use a momentary distraction to overcome with Stealth and disappear from the scene (page 147 of *Bulldogs!*).

ACROBAT: +2 to create an advantage with Athletics while hanging from or balancing on something (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

LASER SNIPER RIFLE: Heavy Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with shields), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), ☐ FINISH THEM.

MICROPULSE GUN: Light Weapon, Boost Effect (apply **BREACHED SHIELDS** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ BRING 'EM IN ALIVE.

INFILTRATOR'S SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Stealth Field (mark two shield stress for a +2 Stealth bonus on one action).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

COMMANDO ARMOR: Legendary Armor, Camouflage (+1 to overcome with Stealth when hiding), Enviro-Suit (+1 to overcome with Survival against environmental attacks), Hardened x4 (four times per session, reduce the shifts of a successful hit by one),

☐ TOUGH AS HULL PLATING, ☐ PRACTICALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE.

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

☐ Extreme:

BAL'N VAR'DN

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

MARTIAL DISCIPLINE; GEJ MAL WARRIOR; HONED TO BE A LIVING WEAPON; FAR-SIGHTED

Skills

FANTASTIC (+6): Fight

SUPERB (+5): Physique, Athletics

GREAT (+4): Contacts, Resolve

GOOD (+3): Shoot, Rapport

FAIR (+2): Survival, Systems, Provoke

AVERAGE (+1): Command, Science, Stealth

Stunts & Species Abilities

ARMY OF ONE: spend a fate point to ignore enemy teamwork bonuses for a conflict (page 139 of *Bulldogs!*).

LAST LEG: once per conflict, spend a fate point to remain standing when you would normally be taken out (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

CHARGED VIBROSWORD: Heavy Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict), ☐ **THREE TIMES DEADLY.**

BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

POWER ARMOR: Legendary Armor, Powered (+1 to overcome with Physique when using brute strength), Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), Hardened x4 (four times per session, reduce the shifts of a successful hit by one),

☐ **TOUGH AS HULL PLATING**, ☐ **PRACTICALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

☐ Extreme:

AKAR LOF'T

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

SUPERIOR SPECIES; ANCIENT TEMPLAR TECHNIQUES; GEJ MAL PSYCHIC; SECRETIVE MASTER OF THE PSYCHIC ARTS

Skills

FANTASTIC (+6): Psychic

SUPERB (+5): Resolve, Empathy

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Science

GOOD (+3): Survival, Command

FAIR (+2): Fight, Systems, Athletics

AVERAGE (+1): Rapport, Provoke, Stealth

Stunts & Species Abilities

FLASH FORWARD: use Psychic to create advantages or discover by receiving visions of the future (page 254)

CLOUD THE MIND: create illusions directly in a target's mind using the Psychic skill (page 254).

MIND KNIFE: you may directly attack a person's mind with your Psychic skill (page 254).

COLD READ: +2 to discover with Empathy when you first meet someone (page 137 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

PSYCHIC BLASTER: Light Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Specialized (uses Psychic instead of Shoot), ☐ **POWERED BY MY MIND.**

BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

POWER ARMOR: Legendary Armor, Psychic Gain (+1 to overcome with Psychic when using mental force), Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), Hardened x4 (four times per session, reduce the shifts of a successful hit by one), ☐ **TOUGH AS HULL PLATING**, ☐ **PRACTICALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

☐ Extreme:

The Gej Mal use the crew as stalking horses, letting them go through the ruined ship and deal with all the traps, while Ja'kal follows them invisibly and eavesdrops on their conversations. Bal'n also follows the crew, but at a **DISCRETE DISTANCE** (he can invoke that aspect if he needs help with his Stealth rolls).

GEJ MAL GOALS

In rough order of execution.

- Determine whether or not the Bulldogs are Saldraallan agents. If they are working for the enemy, or if they seem belligerent and unreliable, then capture them. Otherwise, continue to observe.
- Find out what they know about this crashed ship. The Gej Mal know that this must be the long-lost temple ship of the defeated theocrats, but what are the Bulldogs doing here? What is the Fury's interest in the ship? (As an aside, the Gej Mal are really big on the whole Templar superiority schtick. They're the super-arrogant elite of a species of arrogant elitists. It's unthinkable to them that the essence of Templar superiority could ever be embodied in lesser beings. The Fury, therefore, cannot have any true connection to the Templari.)
 - Eliminate the Fury agents on board crashed ship.
 - Investigate the crashed ship for potential weapons or clues. When they learn that the Guidestones can potentially be used as a weapon by bringing one to Templar, that opens up the next goal:
 - Use the Bulldogs' freighter to carry a Guidestone offworld. The Saldraallan survey ship does not have the cargo space to carry a Guidestone, and they cannot wait for their own ship to return. The Templari would prefer if the crew cooperated in this endeavor and are even willing to hire them in their capacity as delivery drivers to bring the Guidestone to Templar. If the Bulldogs refuse, then the Gej Mal have ways to elicit cooperation. Pain and threats, for example.

THE TEMPLAR CAMP

The Templari were dropped off on the Tomb World by a stealth strike ship that will return for them when it can slip through Fury lines again, and that means they may be waiting several weeks for pick-up. They captured the rest of the Saldraallan expedition, leaving only the archaeologist Glin Lox. The Saldraallans all had suicide switches, but the Templari were able to keep one alive by stuffing the unfortunate Saldraallan into an emergency suspended-animation booth. Now, the third member of the Gej Mal team, the psychic Akar Lof't, is busy sifting through the Saldraallan's memories using his telepathic powers.



From the Saldraan's mind, Akar learned that the Guidestones can affect the psychic field animating the Fury, and that a stone can be used to move the field. The other two Gej Mal then went to the temple-ship to investigate the possibilities of taking a stone, which is when they likely run into the crew.

PROBLEM: THE TOMB SHIP

As the crew draws closer to the tomb ship, the forest becomes more treacherous. The ground underfoot was rippled and twisted by the impact of the ship's crash landing; trees grow from the mangled ground at unlikely angles. The descent into the crater requires careful balance to avoid falling. Jagged shards of hull metal poke out of the undergrowth. The crew also feel a psychic pressure growing in their heads. The field of the Fury is especially strong here.

STRUCTURE OF THE TOMB SHIP

The tomb ship is a gigantic starship; she's the size of a star liner, and must have had a crew of thousands before she crashed here. Now, she is lifeless and buried beneath thousands of tons of dirt and vegetation, like a titanic corpse buried in an earthen barrow.

The tomb ship was once a mobile temple and accompanied Templar ships on campaign (maintaining the psychic power of the theocracy even when they were far from the Templar homeworld). The ship is divided into five sections.

- ♦ **COMMAND:** The ship's bridge and computer systems. Severely damaged and mostly choked with debris.
- ♦ **BATTLE:** Weapons and shields. This section was completely destroyed in the crash.
- ♦ **TEMPLE:** The heart of the ship. The Temple section survived mostly intact, as it was protected by its own internal forcefields. It consists of a huge chamber containing thirty-two Guidestones arranged in a geometric pattern around the well (see *The Well*, on page 225).
- ♦ **CREW:** The crew section partially survived. The same explosion that gutted the engines also tore through part of the crew section, killing many who survived the initial crash.
- ♦ **ENGINEERING:** The engines at the rear were protected by the rest of the ship when she smashed into the ground, so they survived relatively intact, for about thirty minutes. The impact damaged a coolant pump, one of the reactors overheated, and the resulting explosion not only ruined the engines, it also irradiated the few crew members who survived the crash.

Both Saldraan expeditions initially entered via the engineering section.

Later, the Fury partially excavated the roof of the temple section. There's now a concealed shaft going from the top of the mound covering the ship to the roof of the temple. A few minutes' work with a powerful cutting torch – or one big explosion – could open up the shaft fully, creating a large opening in the temple. Big enough to, say, winch a Guidestone into the cargo hold of a waiting freighter.

EXPLORING THE TOMB SHIP

'Tomb' is the operative word here. This place lay undisturbed for centuries, and only a few people (like the Saldraan expedition) came here before the Bulldogs arrived. Parts of the ship have not been entered in hundreds of years. You can tell this by the dust... and the stench.

- Anyone with Engineering or Science (or who knows anything about the Templari) can identify this as a Templar ship of ancient design. A Good (+3) Science roll correctly identifies it as the lost temple-ship.
- There are hundreds of bodies here, although most are little more than skeletons. All are the remains of Templari. The bodies were carefully wrapped in burial cloths and interred in rooms on board the ship. Someone buried the dead in accordance with Templar rites.
- With Science, a crew member can carry out a quick autopsy of some of the bodies. First, they're definitely dead and not space zombies or anything like that. Second, some died of injuries sustained in the crash, but others have no obvious injuries.
- The wreckage is radioactive. The crew are in no immediate danger, but spending more than a few hours here without protection would be a very bad idea.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

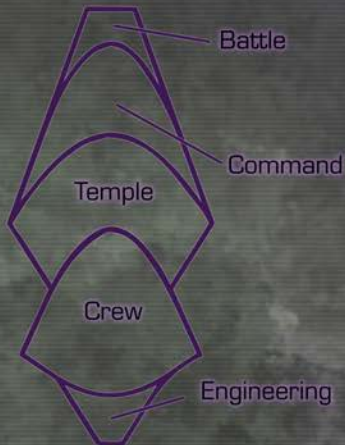
- **TEMPLAR ARCHIVES:** The one thing you can rely on monks to do is keep detailed records. Here, the crew finds a rather one-sided account of the Thousand-Year War, the revolt against the theocrats, the escape from Templar space, and the crash on XM554. The later sections of the records describe how the theocrats began to die of radiation poisoning, and how they 'prepared the Avatar of Kamanch' for his 'long vigil.' One day, they promise, the 'Avatar of Deval' will be reunited with her sibling, and the Templari will be reunited with the 'fiery soul,' a clear reference to the Fury.
- **THE MEDICAL BAY:** In their last few months of life, the crew of the tomb ship embarked on an audacious and desperate project of cybernetic research. They created the Necromech using spare parts salvaged from the ship and the remains of the Avatar of Kamanch. In the medical bay, the crew finds schematics and notes describing the Necromech, and they realize that it is the same creature they faced at Armada.
- **THE CARGO BAY:** Torn open in the crash landing. This bay once contained several guidestones, most of which were destroyed in the crash. The remains of these shattered stones lie scattered around the wreckage of the bay. Some of the stones survived the impact, but were removed by Fury agents later on. The crew encountered these stones at Armada and Ardrú. Investigating the cargo bay reveals signs that someone was here *after* the initial excavation of the ship but before the second Saldrallan expedition arrived.
- **THE TEMPLE:** In the center of the ship, the crew finds the temple. Two huge statues of the war-gods Deval and Kamanch stand guard over a strange object that resembles a well. Psychic energy boils and cascades through the room. When one of the Bulldogs approaches the well, run *The Well* on page 225.

PROBLEM: AUTOMATED DEFENSES

The monks set up various automated defenses and traps to stop Tree Crabs and other unwanted visitors from disturbing the tomb. The Fury agents disabled some of these traps, but others are still waiting in the darkness to eliminate unwary Bulldogs. Each trap consists of two or more parts: if the initial attack fails to kill the intruder, it should drive them into the jaws of the second trap.



SHIP LAYOUT



THE CARGO BAY

TEMPLAR ARCHIVES

THE TEMPLE

THE MEDICAL BAY

THE TOMB SHIP

FIND/REMOVE TRAPS: Larceny's the skill to use to find traps. Lacking that, Bulldogs can use Survival to spot traps and Larceny or Engineering or a pointy stick to disarm them. Traps include:

- ♦ **A GUN ON A PEDESTAL IN THE MIDDLE OF A ROOM.** As soon as anyone enters the room, the gun starts firing wildly. The gun has no targeting system, so it aims at random (treat as a Mediocre (+0) Shoot attack, but it is a heavy weapon). However, the Templari strung almost invisible strands of monofilament razor-wire through the room, so anyone who dodges the gun's attacks may run headlong into the razor-wire. Bulldogs dodging the gunfire with Athletics must make a Survival roll against Fair (+2) difficulty; if they fail, they run into razor-wire and take stress equal to the result of their Athletics roll. For example, a Superb (+5) roll means the crew member flings herself acrobatically across the room, suffering five stress in the process.
- ♦ **A SIMPLE PIT TRAP.** The monks cut through the supports on a floor hatch, so anyone who steps on the hatch falls into a narrow access shaft. The fall does not significantly injure anything except the victim's dignity, but it's hard to climb out of the shaft without help (the monks removed the access ladder). Climbing out requires a Great (+4) Athletics test. With help from above, this difficulty is reduced to Average (+1). At the bottom of the shaft is a pressure plate connected to a grenade concealed at the top of the shaft. This grenade activates thirty seconds after someone falls into the pit. So, the victim falls in, his friends stop to help... and boom, the ceiling above them explodes, inflicting five stress to everyone in the zone.
- ♦ **A GOLD STATUETTE OF A TEMPLAR PRIESTESS.** Immediately visible: the gemstones and other treasures that adorn the statuette. Not immediately visible: the tiny needles that spring out when the statuette is disturbed. Anyone struck by these needles gets the temporary aspect **PARALYZED**. The statuette's plinth contains a canister of coolant gas, which is poisonous. The Templari placed the statue on top of the canister's outlet valve, so if the statue is moved, the gas starts to leak out. Victims must inhale the gas for several seconds in order to accumulate a dangerous dose. Therefore, the paralyzed victim and anyone helping him must bear a difficulty of Good (+3) on a Physique test to avoid taking the moderate consequence **POISONED**.

The crew finds signs that some of the traps were previously triggered, or even come across the remains of some unfortunate Fury agent who wandered down the wrong corridor.

PROBLEM: TREASURES OF THE TEMPLARI

Not so much a problem as an opportunity: the theocrats loaded their ship with as much cash and treasure as they could grab when they fled Templar space. Artistic works and sacred relics of stupendous value lie crammed into sealed vaults on board the tomb ship. Looting this treasure is worth a juicy Credits box or three, assuming the crew can find a buyer and don't mind annoying the Templari, who rarely appreciate having their sacred relics sold on the black market.

The real treasure, though, comes in the form of books and computer records. Searching through these archives with Science, the crew discovers the following:

- ♦ The heart of the old Theocracy's psychic power base was the psychic reservoir, the De'lakh Ca'hal.

- During the Thousand-Year War, this ship travelled with the Templar war-fleets. It is effectively a mobile source for the psychic field; the temple on board this ship echoes the temple back on Templar, and the psychic energy of the Devalkamanchans flows through it.
- The Guidestones were used by the Templari to strengthen the field on worlds where the priests needed more power. If, for example, the hated Saldrallans had a strong presence in a particular system, the temple-ship could dispatch a Guidestone. The Guidestone would strengthen the field, and that would give the priests enough psychic mojo to either augment the Templar warriors or blast the Saldrallans directly.
- The crew finds several references to rules about bringing the temple-ship back to Templar. There are extensive protocols and restrictions, especially with regards to the Guidestones. No Guidestone is allowed within sight of the De'lakh Ca'hal, in much the same way you don't bring a flamethrower to an oil refinery.

All this information was clearly known only to the priests of the Theocracy; there are all sorts of exhortations and prayers to keep these secrets out of the hands of commoners and the uninitiated.

PROBLEM: FURY ZEALOTS

The Necromech stationed a small number of trusted acolytes here to protect the ship and its precious cargo of Guidestones. These zealots are mostly Arsubaran, with a few representatives from other species. They all have the fanatic loyalty and psychic-osmotic Templar knowledge of Scions, but lack useful skills, so the Necromech considers them disposable (or considered them disposable, if the Bulldogs killed the Necromech back on Armada).

These Fury zealots are mostly in the temple at the heart of the ship, although a few patrol the safe corridors. The traps left by the long-dead Templari are just as lethal to their accidental acolytes as they are to unwanted intruders, so the Fury don't go far from the areas they have already cleared.

The leader of the zealots is an Arsubaran, **Alek Corona**. She's a **FORMER TEMPLAR SLAVE** from a conquered Arsubaran world in the Republic, and she hates her former tormentors with a white-hot passion. Easy prey for the Fury, which wormed its way into her mind and brought her here.

The Fury Zealots enough to put up a bit of resistance, but not enough to stop anyone from capturing the Temple.

FURY ZEALOTS

Aspects

BURNING WITH RESOLVE; LEFT ON GUARD DUTY

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot, Survival

AVERAGE (+1): Athletics

Conditions

Winded	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Angry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stunned	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Gear

REPEATING BLAST RIFLES: Medium Weapon, Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ STANDARD ISSUE.

FURY ARMOR: Light Armor, ☐ ANTIQUE DESIGN.

☐ Mild:

PROBLEM: THE WELL

The well looks empty.

It's not.

The whole temple is a giant psychic resonator, and that well's the outlet valve. The Fury spilled out of it when the Saldrallans started meddling with it. The well's connected to the psychic reservoir back on the Templar homeworld. In the hands (or, more accurately, brains) of those who know how to wield it, it's a staggeringly powerful weapon. Fortunately for the galaxy, the only people who could fully access the power of the Templari soul died centuries ago (or turned themselves into cybernetic monsters and went mad).

The first person to meddle with the well—or, if none of them poke the ancient psychic artifact with a stick, the first one to come close to it—triggers a blast of psychic images that affect everyone in the room. Call for a Resolve roll against Good (+3) difficulty; if a Bulldog fails, they're **STUNNED**. The barrage of psychic images contains a medley of different concepts and thoughts. You can describe these images to the crew, or play through them as mini-scenes.

- The war-gods Deval and Kamanch—two divine siblings, purple giants who tower over the lesser beings around them—battle the other gods. The gods fight in a mountainous wilderness. They hurl hillsides and lightning bolts at each other; they roar like hurricanes and shatter the earth with the blows of their massive divine weapons. After an eternity, the final god stumbles, and Kamanch smashes the victim's head with a rock. The blood of fallen gods flows into the caves beneath the mountains like a gory purple waterfall.

AS A MINI-SCENE: The crew are prehistoric Templari in the dawn of their civilization. The twin war-gods are literal giants, hundreds of feet tall. The crew need to dodge around the battling giants as they smash through the landscape.

- Hundreds of years later, the Templari are at a roughly medieval level of technology. It's the same landscape where the twins fought, but a great fortress now stands where the gods died. A network of strangely carved tunnels and stones

runs out from the fortress. The priests have built a huge psychic collector to channel the latent gifts of the Templari species.

AS A MINI-SCENE: The crew find themselves helping to dig that tunnel network. It seems that the caves under the mountains are inhabited by feral wolf-lizards with purple crests and psychically-augmented powers of stealth. The crew's task is to clear them out without getting eaten.

- The height of the Templar Empire, during the Thousand-Year War. The crew are on board the temple-ship in the time of its glory. Hovering in the air above them is a map of the galaxy, and more than half the stars glow with a baleful purple light. Two high priests dressed in ceremonial robes stand before the hologram, hands raised in benediction. Psychic energy pours out from the well, cascades around them, and is then channelled to the other Templar ships in the fleet.

AS A MINI-SCENE: There's a Saldrallan assassin on board the temple-ship, using a stealth field to hide. The crew have to stop the assassin from reaching one of the priests.

- The fall of the Theocrats. Civil war on Templar. A popular insurgency, its numbers dwelled by a host of bitter, psychically burnt-out veterans returning from the front, rises up against the Theocracy. The crew sees those same two priests—much older now, with frightened eyes and withered faces—standing atop the battlements of some huge fortress. Below, the few remaining temple guardians fight desperately against the encroaching rebels. Above, the temple-ship hangs impossibly in the air, hovering like an angry god. The two priests part company; one ascends via grav-lift to the temple-ship overhead, while the other vanishes into the labyrinth of tunnels under the fortress. Two priests. And one stayed behind on Templar.

AS A MINI-SCENE: The crew are temple guardians. They've got to protect the priest as she flees into the tunnels (the same resonator network the crew 'remembers' building thousands of years before).

- The final vision is a glimpse of the whole Fury. The crew sees the psychic field spreading out like a stain on the stars, infecting the minds of others. If there are any notable converts to the Fury (like, say, Thelise) the crew have a momentary telepathic flash of the convert's current thoughts. They also perceive that the psychic field pouring out from the well and spreading out in a rough sphere from XM554, but the Guidestones pull it this way and that, dragging it towards inhabited space along the Templar border, or towards key systems like Armada or Ardru or GCP. They can also sense a connection between the well and the resonator back on Templar. The power of the Fury is still dependent on that reservoir. The Fury feels more like, well, a leak than a flood. With only a little resistance, a little push, the psychic field might flow backwards.

PROBLEM: THE SHORT CIRCUIT

The final sequence of this adventure revolves around bringing a Guidestone back to Templar, which will drag the psychic field back to where it belongs and result in the eventual collapse of the Fury. By now, the players should have enough information to work out this solution themselves. If they don't hit on this solution, you could:

- Have one of the Gej Mal suggest the plan, only to be shot down by the other Templari. The crew must then escape the Gej Mal and put the plan into operation.

- When one of the crew members is conducting repairs (either on their own ship or the Saldrallan scout ship), they find that some minor subsystem has short-circuited. Some idiot connected a cable that runs from the power supply back into the power supply, burning it out. Say... that gives the Bulldog an idea!
- If one of the Bulldogs asks if there is any way to use the well to disrupt the Fury, a crew member with a high Science or Psychic can suggest this solution.

THE TWIST

The whole ship is a trap, but it's not aimed at the Bulldogs. It's aimed at the whole Templar species.

All the evidence on the ship points to the idea that bringing a Guidestone back to Templar would disrupt the psychic field, and that's true. If a Guidestone is placed in the De'lakh Ca'hal, it'll short-circuit the Fury. The whole psychic leak will burn out in an instant, and all that psychic power will be sealed away once again. The Fury-as-a-political-movement will stagger on for a few months, but as the psychic glue that bound it together dissolves, it too will fall apart.

However... if the Guidestone is brought very, very close to the De'lakh Ca'hal, but *not* put in contact with it, then it'll form a locus of immense psychic power. All the psychic energy will be collected in one place. The ancient theocrats forbade anyone from attempting this. When dealing with energies of this magnitude, the slightest error could sear the minds of every living thing on Templar.

And if someone were able to control the full power of the psychic field, they would become as divine and all-powerful as Deval or Kamanch themselves.

ULTIMATE DELIVERY JOB

Let's take stock before we plunge into the Heart of the Fury. Some combination of the following should apply to our heroes at this point.

THEY'VE GOT A GUIDESTONE ON BOARD

- They may intend to use the Guidestone to short-circuit the Fury.
- They may suspect that that's a really bad idea, but the Templari or the Saldrallans are forcing them to carry out the plan.

THEY'RE HEADING TO TEMPLAR

- If they've got the Gej Mal on board, then they only need to worry about the Fury intercepting them.
- If they don't, then they've got to dodge both the Fury and the Nova Legion.

THEY'RE IN CONTROL OF THEIR OWN SHIP...

- or they've got some heavily armed unpleasant people on board who are forcing them to obey orders.

THEY'RE HEADING FOR TROUBLE.

Ok, the last one's always true.

WAIT A SECOND...!

While we've tried to take as many possibilities into account as, well, possible, your players may have done something astoundingly brilliant (for certain values of "brilliant"), and right now they're all heading for Galactic Central Point dressed as an Urseminite circus, or they've managed to repair the temple-ship and plan on flying it into battle or something.

If they've gone off in some unlikely direction, then run with it. You can either come back to the Guidestone plotline later on (maybe the Bulldogs' current plan fails and they have to race desperately to Templar before the whole galaxy falls to the Fury) or come up with your own grand finale that fits your campaign better than anything we could come up with.

PROBLEM: GET THESE [PROFANITY] [NOUNS] OFF MY SHIP

Got unwanted passengers on board? Clients whose preferred method of payment is most likely killing you in the morning? If the Bulldogs are prisoners on their own ship, then the hasty flight to Templar is the ideal time to renegotiate the situation.

TEMPLARI

The Gej Mal are the toughest warriors in the galaxy, but there are only three of them on board (and if you've only got two or three Bulldogs, you might consider having some of the Gej Mal remain behind on the Tomb World or leaving at some other port of call to even the odds a little.) One of the trio stays on the ship's bridge at all times; the other two



stay in the cargo hold, resting or keeping an eye on the Guidestone. One of the two in the cargo hold patrols the ship every few hours.

Akar Lof't uses his psychic powers to check the Bulldogs' minds if he suspects duplicity, so a simple tactic like "hey, come and check out the weird thing in the airlock" won't work. The crew could try the following:

- **TURNING THE TEMPLARI AGAINST EACH OTHER.** The Gej Mal are blood brothers, but they're sitting right on top of a psychic field, and that makes them irritable and arrogant, even for Templari.
- **TIMING THEIR ATTACK.** If they wait until Lof't is distracted or asleep, they have a much better chance of succeeding.
- **GETTING INTO TROUBLE.** The Gej Mal are warriors, and warriors want to fight. If the crew get too close to, say, a Fury warship, then the Gej Mal will be at the forefront of any boarding action. The crew could conceivably dock with a Fury ship, let the Gej Mal charge heroically into battle with a host of foes, then undock and fly off. The Gej Mal are the sort of monstrously talented warriors who'll end up winning against the odds, capturing the Fury ship, and then flying off in pursuit of the Bulldogs, but at least they'll have a head start

SALDRALLANS

Dealing with the Saldrellans is easier. The Saldrellans are at their best when conniving and manipulating, not in physical confrontations. The crew can defeat them with a modicum of planning.

- **HOW MANY SALDRALLANS ARE STILL ALIVE?** If there are several Saldrellan agents, they can keep a close eye on the Bulldogs, but if there are only two or three Saldrellans, they'll have to split up to control key areas like the bridge and the cargo bay.
- **THE SALDRALLANS ARE JUSTIFIABLY FEARFUL** about being discovered by the Templari and will have to hide during any customs inspections or fuel stops. The crew can act freely while the Saldrellans hide in the smuggling compartment.
- **SALDRALLANS ARE VULNERABLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.** Just turning down the thermostat can make them sluggish and confused.

PROBLEM: FURY INTERCEPTORS

The plot to bring a Guidestone to Templar was conceived by the Necromech's secretive cabal, not by the Fury as a whole. That means that the vast majority of the Fury don't know about it, but are still instinctively drawn to the stone. The psychic field makes members of the Fury feel powerful, and the Stone's a swirling locus of power. So, the crew needs to dodge Fury patrols as they cross into Templar space. These patrols mostly consist of small ships; a cruel GM can throw in a gunship or a destroyer if the Bulldogs deserve it. If the Fury are currently doing well in the war, then the crew may avoid *Papers. I Don't Say Please* in favor of added heat from the Fury.

PROBLEM: PAPERS. I DON'T SAY PLEASE

At the best of times, getting into Templar space is tricky. When there's a war going on, it's almost impossible.

The Gej Mal can pull rank and let the crew fly through the checkpoints. Otherwise, the crew needs to either falsify papers (with Larceny), come up with a plausible excuse for why they don't have papers, or else try to sneak past with a Pilot check. Due to the ongoing

hostilities, the Templar border posts are in a state of high alert, and they've got swarms of high-speed, heavily armed interceptors that can swat Class D freighters out of the sky.

Oh, if the Bulldogs' ship is armed, they are in breach of Devalkamanchan law. Armed freighters are obliged to stop and have their weapons fitted with disabling circuits. These circuits will be removed when the ship leaves Devalkamanchan space. Visitors must pay for the privilege of having their ship disarmed (check off a box on the credits track); overriding a disabler circuit requires a Superb (+5) Engineering check. If the check fails, the disabler explodes, wrecking the weapon it's attached to.

Even in the middle of a war, TransGalaxy keeps on truckin'. If the crew used the evidence from the Saldrallan base to clear their names, they could detour to the nearest TransGalaxy depot and pick up a cargo bound for Templar.

PROBLEM: FURIOUS DREAMS

Travelling with a Guidestone on board is just asking for trouble. Any crew members who have not already tapped into the psychic field start to feel pressure in their minds. They may suffer from strange dreams or low-level hallucinations. More importantly, if the crew needs a boost to a roll or an extra fate point, repeatedly remind them of the option to tap into the Fury. Whenever the Bulldogs are in trouble, give them an easy way out through the psychic field.

If a crew member has already tapped into the Fury, then the Guidestone is even more dangerous. The closer the crew gets to Templar, the stronger the field locus around the stone. That means one free compel of the Bulldog's Fury aspect, and as many normal compels as desired by a cruel GM who wishes to properly model the psychic stress caused by ten thousand generations' worth of vestigial Templar memories and emotions pouring through their full-to-bursting head.

PROBLEM: THE TEMPLAR SYSTEM

The Templar System sees almost as much traffic as Galactic Central Point. Unlike the Union of the Saldralla, where each district is self-governing, virtually all authority in the Devalkamanchan Republic is centralized here. That means that thousands of starships pass through this system every day, conducting the business of ruling over a third of the galaxy. Templar is also a key naval base, so there are thousands more warships and troop carriers. Everything moves with martial discipline: every Templar knows their place and slots perfectly into the overall design, like cogs in a perfectly engineered machine.

Troublesome outsiders who don't know where to go get crushed by the cogs.

EMPIRE PRESERVED IN ASPIC

INVOKE: call on ancient modes of honor, "I challenge you to a duel! By the traditions and laws of Deval, you must accept!"

COMPEL: bureaucratic systems haven't changed here in centuries, "What do you mean, I need this document to be co-signed by an officer of the Ninth Legion? The whole Ninth Legion was destroyed in an uprising two hundred years ago and never rebuilt!"

CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC

INVOKE: there's a lot of wealth and power here, "So, I was out drinking last night with three planetary governors and this girl who commands enough firepower to wipe out a few planets."

COMPEL: if you're from the provinces, you're no one. If you're non-Templar, you're less than no one, "That's a very... provincial suggestion."

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO TEMPLAR

Are you Templar? Answer yes or no.

YES.

Welcome to the homeworld! You walk in the footsteps of legends here. Templar is the heart of our glorious republic, the birthplace of heroes and peerless warriors. There are many wonders to see here—the Senate, the Arena of Gej, the Nova Academy, the twin fortresses—as well as certain relics and reminders of the distant past. Other regions are regrettably off limits to visitors. Pay them no attention.

As you visit the great palaces and fortresses, the monuments to past wars and fallen generals, remember—always remember—that the Templar you see now is only the merest shadow of the Templar that is to come! Ever onwards, friend, until every star in the heavens kneels before the might of the Devalkamanchan Republic!

NO.

Do you have valid entry papers? Answer yes or no.

YES.

Hmm. I suppose these are in order. You know the rules: non-Templari are not allowed on the surface during the day. Stick to the slav- ah, the service corridors, that run under the streets, and keep out of sight at all times. If you trespass near any of the sacred sites, you will be shot. You are permitted to be on our world, but you are not welcome here, do you understand?

NO.

See that door over there, with the heavily armed guards? Go through there and wait.

THE PURPLE BULWARK

INVOKE: this planet's a fortress, "I think we can get those weapons upgrades you've been hankering after."

COMPEL: security's tight here, "FREEZE OR YOU WILL BE SHOT. ACTUALLY, OUR GUNS SHOOT FREEZE RAYS. YOU'RE FROZEN EITHER WAY!"

WE'RE WITH THE GEJ MAL

If the crew is still travelling with the Gej Mal, then they're told to fly straight to a naval space station orbiting Templar. The station is the headquarters for the First Nova Legion. The freighter flies past gigantic warships and troops transports carrying tens of thousands of elite warriors. The Templari are clearly getting ready for a big push.

Inside, Templar marines escort the Gej Mal and the Bulldogs into the command center. There, the Gej Mal meet with **Admiral Hark**, the commander of the First. Hark ignores the Bulldogs; on his bridge, non-Templari will speak when spoken to. The Gej Mal quickly brief him on their discoveries on the Tomb World, and the possibility of using the Guidestone as a weapon. Hark agrees with the plan. The Bulldogs are completely side-lined and treated as though they are nothing more than a delivery system. The only reason they are still here is that it's faster to keep them alive instead of shooting them and transferring the Guidestone to a military transport.

While the Gej Mal and Hark discuss the Guidestone, the crew can get a glimpse of the big tactical map. The Fury's initial advantages—surprise, a diverse array of weapons, and (possibly) the resources of Armada Works—are now mostly exhausted, and the tide is turning against them. The Devalkamanchan forces mustered along the border are in position to drive across into Fury space. It's going to be bloody.

Hark assigns escort ships to the Bulldogs' freighter. They are to drop straight down, head into the badlands, and deliver the Guidestone. This simple assignment should be within the capacity even of lesser species.

JUST SOME ORDINARY DELIVERY GUYS

Without the Gej Mal, the crew has to be more circumspect. Land on Templar, put up with casual racism and segregation, and then locate the old theocracy stronghold in the badlands with a Good (+3) Science roll.

PROBLEM: BADLANDS

During the revolt against the Theocracy, the most bitter and destructive fighting took place in the region surrounding the psychic reservoir. For the first time in centuries, Templari spilled Templar blood.

Actually, that's putting it much too poetically. Templari blew other Templari to little wet pieces with artillery, orbital bombardment, and proton cannons. The sacred mountains of the Theocrats were left unscathed—even the rebels were unwilling to destroy the holiest sanctums of their species—but the surrounding lands got smashed into a burning, radioactive broken landscape of shattered hills and craters. When the theocrats fled, the victorious rebels left the badlands as they were, as a memorial to the mistakes of the past.

The badlands are off limits to most Templari and to all offworlders. The only people who go there these days are historians, researchers, and other academics, with the occasional rebellious runaway. A security cordon of watchtowers and anti-aircraft guns surrounds the badlands.

To get there, the Bulldogs have to fly their freighter right through that cordon.

If the crew is accompanied by the Gej Mal, they can breeze past this internal cordon. Manning these watchtowers is really just a ceremonial position, so the troops there can easily be intimidated by the mention of Gej Mal business.

If they don't have Gej Mal authorization, the crew needs to dodge anti-aircraft fire and escape pursuit by small atmospheric fighters. These fighters continue to follow the Bulldogs even after the freighter escapes them; they'll show up again in the final scene.

SETUP: WHERE GODS DIE

Finally, the destination is in sight: the twin peaks of the Warrior Gods. Beneath those cracked and hoary peaks lies the De'lakh Ca'hal, the great psychic reservoir of the Templari species, watered with the blood of a hundred gods according to legend. Hundreds of miles of hidden tunnels run beneath the mountains. At the center of the tunnel network, nestled between the two mountains, is the theocrat stronghold itself, now little more than a ruin. From the air, the crew can see the psychic collector. It looks like an altar carved by giants, eroded by several hundred years of frost and wind. As they approach with the Guidestone, the collector begins to spark and crackle with power. A receptacle atop the altar precisely matches the dimensions of the Guidestone. All the crew needs to do is winch the Guidestone down out of their cargo bay and slot it into place.

PROBLEM: INCOMING FIRE

Just before the crew puts the Guidestone into place, there's a blast of fire from one of the tunnel entrances. A surface-to-air missile shoots out and slams into the freighter's underbelly, knocking it off course and severing the cable used to carry the Guidestone. The missile is a Heavy Weapon, and the pilot must also make a Great (+4) Pilot test to avoid crashing. Extra shifts on the Pilot test allow the pilot to get the Guidestone a little closer to the receptacle before the winch cable breaks (see *Moving the Guidestone*, page 241).

NO WINCH?

Incoming Fire assumes that the crew flies above the altar and lowers the Guidestone from a winch. If they take another approach—like landing nearby and dragging the stone up with a vehicle—then the theocrats can just shoot the vehicle instead, which has much the same effect.

PROBLEM: PSYCHIC RESONANCE

The interaction of the Guidestone and the collector creates a psychic feedback loop. Crackling bursts of psychic energy leap between the stones. The air quivers with untold power, and storm clouds gather overhead. All the Bulldogs feel a growing pressure in their skulls; unless they're Templari, in which case it hits them like a hammer.

This is a Superb (+5) Psychic attack. Templari get hit for three stress and get the **STUNNED** condition to boot.

Now, here's where it gets really nasty. The initial blast from the feedback loop just hits the Templari in the vicinity of the psychic collector. As long as the Guidestone is in close proximity to the collector, it's going to keep blasting them, and its area of effect is going to grow and grow. By the time the psychic reservoir's exhausted, the resonance will encompass the whole planet.

The theocrats have taken precautions to shield themselves, so they've got protection against psychic attacks. The resonance will kill them too, if left unchecked, but they're fanatics. They are willing to die for their revenge against the rebels who overthrew the theocracy, all those years ago. The psychic resonance keeps growing as long as the Guidestone is in place.

WE HAD BACKUP A SECOND AGO...

Any Templari that were accompanying the Bulldogs—like the Gej Mal—are stunned by the psychic resonance. Any Minions are automatically knocked out. Important NPCs are temporarily stunned but might recover enough to fire a shot at a critical moment to save a crew member's bacon.

THE TEMPLAR INTERCEPTORS

If the crew had interceptor fighters pursuing them through the badlands, then the psychic resonance knocks them out of the sky, and they crash near the Bulldogs. The pilots end up dead or unconscious, but the interceptor's weapons and communications systems still work. Over the radio, the crew hears the Templari military command demanding to know what's going on, and hears signs of the increasing chaos as the psychic resonance grows.

TEMPLAR PLAYER CHARACTERS

They get hit by the psychic resonance too. A kind GM might let them spend fate points to temporarily fight off the psychic damage.

PROBLEM: THE LAST THEOCRATS

These fanatics are the descendants of the theocrats who fled into hiding on Templar centuries ago. Like their brethren who escaped on the temple-ship, their ancestors believed that the Templar species would soon come to its collective senses and return to the ways of the theocracy. When it became clear that the republic wasn't going to collapse on its own, the theocrats became an underground terrorist movement. A series of purges and priest-hunts around 400 years ago wiped out most of the theocrats. As far as most Templari are concerned, the theocrats are long since consigned to the history books.

When the Fury was released, the theocrats on Templar sensed the disruption in the psychic field. They hoped to take control of the Fury and use it as a weapon against the Devalkamanchan Republic and entertained wild dreams of wielding the Fury as a weapon to overthrow the republic and re-establish the theocracy. As the war went on, however, it became clear that the Fury would never be powerful enough to break the Republic forces.

So, the theocrats chose to burn the world.

D'KAN, AVATAR OF DEVAL

The high priestess of this fugitive cult, D'Kan secretly wanted the Fury to fail. She's spent her whole life hiding from the Templar forces. Her hate for them festered in the darkness. She doesn't want a new theocracy, or a schism in the Templari species. She wants to punish the Devalkamanchan Republic. While the Fury was in the ascendant, she could not convince her followers that using the De'lakh Ca'hal was a valid option. Now, as the cult's brief window of hope closes, they have given in to her apocalyptic vision of despair.

GAV'ARD

In another universe, Gav'ard might have been a warrior of the Gej Mal. He looks like an idealized archetype of a Templar warrior: tall, muscular, agile, and possessed of an insurmountable will to conquer. However, he was born to a family that were still loyal to the old ways, who kept the faith of the theocracy in secret. Therefore, he never joined the Nova Legion or any of the other republican institutions, but instead trained in hidden theocratic camps for a war that never came.

TAMAK

Tamak is a former officer in the Nova Legion. She led the infamous assault on Harbaja five years ago, when a provincial capital world tried to break away from the Republic. Tamak and her troops successfully reconquered Harbaja, but she sustained near-lethal wounds in battle. During the long cybernetic reconstruction, she had a vision of Deval herself, which led to her pledging her loyalty (and her superlative combat skills) to the theocracy.

ACOLYTES

Fugitive cults can't be choosers. The theocracy may have a few elite warriors, but most of its members are confused converts or the inbred descendants of families who have been among the faithful for hundreds of generations.

THE FURY HUNTERS

Optionally, if they haven't shown up yet or if a previous encounter was inconclusive, then you can bring in the Fury Hunters (see page 194), either to replace Tamak and Gav'ard or in addition to them.

THE NECROMECH

If the Bulldogs didn't destroy Rakaar Kran, the cybernetic we-can't-call-him-undead-because-this-is-a-sci-fi-game-but-yeah-pretty-much-a-space-lich Avatar of Kamanch, you can bring him back too for this finale. Clever crew members could probably taunt the two would-be Avatars into squabbling; if there's one thing twin siblings do, even twin war-gods, it's fight among themselves. Both Rakaar Kran and D'kan assume that they're the one who'll channel the full psychic power of the De'lahk Ca'hal, and the other will be their loyal acolyte. That's really the sort of organizational issue they should have discussed in advance.

ACOLYTES

Aspects

OUR FAITH DRIVES US

Skills

FAIR (+2): Shoot

AVERAGE (+1): Provoke

Conditions

Winded	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□
Angry	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□	□□

Gear

BLAST PISTOLS: Light Weapon, ☐ BLAST 'EM!

D'KAN, AVATAR OF DEVAL

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 5

Aspects

"SUBMIT OR BE CRUSHED"; AVATAR OF DEVAL; MAD PROPHET; THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS; OBSESSED WITH VENGEANCE

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Resolve, Command

GREAT (+4): Psychic, Provoke

GOOD (+3): Contacts, Science, Survival

FAIR (+2): Athletics, Shoot, Empathy

AVERAGE (+1): Physique, Stealth, Fight, Rapport

Stunts & Species Abilities

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME: spend a fate point to use Resolve to defend against physical attacks (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*)

EMPATHIC CONNECTION: use Psychic to detect or provoke emotions in a target (page 254).

CHAIN OF COMMAND: gain +2 to Command when calling someone to action based on pre-existing authority over them (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

LAST LEG: once per conflict, spend a fate point to remain standing when you would normally be taken out (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

GYROJET PISTOL: Light Weapon, Powerful (+1 stress on a successful hit once per conflict),

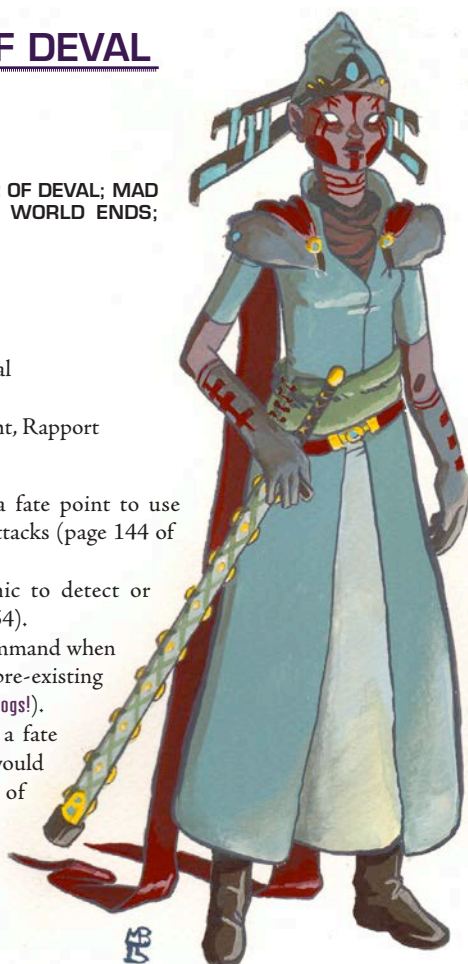
☐ ROCKET BULLETS.

BATTLE SCREEN: Heavy Shield, Overload (once per session, mark all shield stress and create a situation aspect with a free invoke **DAZED** on anyone within three zones with their eyes open).

Stress ☐☐☐☐

CEREMONIAL ROBES: Light Armor, ☐ MORE DECORATIVE THAN FUNCTIONAL.

☐ Mild:



GAV'ARD

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

ARROGANT; BUILT LIKE A BLAST-PROOF BUNKER; ZEALOT OF THE TEMPLE; TRAINED BODYGUARD

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Physique

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Survival

GOOD (+3): Fight, Athletics, Resolve

FAIR (+2): Stealth, Provoke, Command

AVERAGE (+1): Contacts, Empathy, Larceny, Rapport, Systems

Stunts & Species Abilities

NOW YOU'VE MADE ME MAD: once per scene, spend a fate point to add the shifts taken in an attack against you into to your action against the person who inflicted the stress (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

FEEL THE BURN: take one additional mild physical consequence (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

STAY ON TARGET: +2 to create an advantage with Shoot when taking slow and careful aim (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

LAST LEG: once per conflict, spend a fate point to remain standing when you would normally be taken out (page 141 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

SAM LAUNCHER: Heavy Weapon, Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Specialized (+1 to Shoot against vessels once per conflict), Boost Effect (apply **KNOCKED OUT OF THE SKY** when you successfully attack a target, also once per session get two boosts instead of one on success with style), ☐ **BRING 'EM DOWN.**

PROTON CANNON: Heavy Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus opponents with armor), Accurate (gain +1 creating advantages with Shoot through aim from 2 zones or more distance), Long Range (hit targets up to four zones away without penalty), Autofire (once per session attack two targets in the same zone), ☐ **THE BIGGEST GUN YOU'VE EVER SEEN.**

BATTLE SHIELD: Heavy Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐☐

POWER ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), Powered (+1 to overcome with Physique when using brute strength), ☐ **ANCIENT WARRIOR'S TRAPPINGS.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

TAMAK

SPECIES: Templar

REFRESH: 3

Aspects

MARTIAL DISCIPLINE; CYBORG; NOVA LEGION VETERAN; DEVAL GUIDES MY HANDS!

Skills

SUPERB (+5): Athletics

GREAT (+4): Shoot, Resolve

GOOD (+3): Fight, Stealth, Survival

FAIR (+2): Physique, Rapport, Command, Pilot

AVERAGE (+1): Contacts, Empathy, Provoke, Science

Stunts & Species Abilities

FAST RUNNER: once per conflict move an additional zone for free (page 135 of *Bulldogs!*).

QUICK ON THE DRAW: once per conflict, take a Shoot action at any point in the exchange if you haven't already taken an action (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*).

SHOT ON THE RUN: use Shoot as a defense skill against attacks from outside your zone (page 146 of *Bulldogs!*)

STILL STANDING: ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the duration of the current scene (it can't be invoked against you), but step up the consequence at the end of the scene (page 144 of *Bulldogs!*).

Conditions

Winded ☐☐☐

Angry ☐☐☐

Stunned ☐☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

Gear

DISRUPTOR PISTOL: Light Weapon, Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 Shoot versus unarmored organic targets), ☐ **INNOCUOUS BUT DEADLY.**

ENERGY GRENADES: ☐☐ Medium Weapon, Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack).

EMP GRENADE: ☐ Medium Weapon, Explosive (everyone in the zone of detonation must defend against a Good (+3) attack), Specialized (once per conflict gain +1 to Shoot against non-organics), ☐ **SAY GOODBYE TO ELECTRONICS!**

BATTLE SHIELD: Heavy Shield.

Stress ☐☐☐☐

POWER ARMOR: Heavy Armor, Ray-Coating (once per session, reduce shifts by 2 when hit with a laser weapon), Powered (+1 to overcome with Physique when using brute strength), ☐ **TEMPLAR MARINE ISSUE.**

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:



PROBLEM: BLAST OUR WAY OUT

The ruins of the temple are a rat's nest of hidden tunnels, fallen statues, tumbled masonry, and other hiding places, and the theocrats know it better than anyone.

The minions split into three groups. One team sticks with the high priestess and escorts her towards the Guidestone. Group two attaches to Gav'ard, keeps to the high ground, and shoots anyone who tries to get to the Guidestone. The third group follows Tamak into the ruins and goes hunting the Bulldogs.

As soon as Gav'ard shoots the Bulldogs' ship with his missile, D'Kan heads for the Guidestone, using the pile of fallen stones as her way in.

ZONES

- ♦ **THE BULLDOGS' SHIP (MULTIPLE ZONES):** If the ship landed badly, it may be lying on its side or buried in debris. On the other hand, a really good Pilot roll means the ship may have landed safely or even stayed in the air, allowing the crew to turn their ship's weapons on the bad guys.
- ♦ **BROKEN GROUND (MULTIPLE ZONES):** Outside the temple is a rocky mountain slope. Lots of precarious boulders and treacherous crevasses.
- ♦ **HIGH RIDGE:** Gav'ard and his minions start here; the ridge gives them a **FIELD OF FIRE** over the whole temple complex.
- ♦ **SHATTERED TEMPLE WALLS:** Climbing over these is a Good (+3) obstacle.
- ♦ **RAMP OF FALLEN STONES:** This pile of rubble is an Average (+1) obstacle, but it's the easiest way into the temple from the side.
- ♦ **THE TUNNELS (MULTIPLE ZONES):** Lots of ways in and out of the tunnels under the temple. The tunnels are normally lightless, but the presence of the Guidestone means they're churning with glowing streams of psychic energy, making them a viable if psychedelic way of sneaking around.
- ♦ **TEMPLE DOOR:** The only way in that doesn't involve climbing or flying.
- ♦ **TEMPLE ATRIUM:** A wide open space, broken only by the occasional shattered pillar or statue. The Guidestone landed somewhere in this space.
- ♦ **DE'LAKH CA'HAL:** The psychic collector, the key element of the whole reservoir.
- ♦ **INTACT TEMPLE WALLS:** An explosion doing at least 6 stress can bring one of these down.

RUINS OF THE TEMPLE

INVOKE: For cover or concealment. "This sacred relic looks like it'll stop a bullet. I hide behind it."

COMPEL: The theocrat's home turf. "You shall not defile this place, by the gods!"

HIDDEN TUNNEL NETWORK

INVOKE: For a quick exit. "Down there!"

COMPEL: The bad guys flank you. "Where'd he come from?"

EYE OF THE PSYCHIC STORM

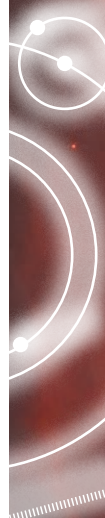
INVOKE: To boost any psychic attacks, or for a distraction. "I wait until he's got the souls of a million dead Templari clawing at his skull, and then I shoot him. That's gotta be worth a +2."

COMPEL: For random chaos. "The roof's caving in!"

THE DELAKH CA'HAL



1. HIGH RIDGE
2. TUNNEL ENTRANCE
3. MAIN CHAMBER
4. GUIDESTONE
5. RUBBLE RAMP
6. ATRIUM
7. ROCKY SLOPE
8. LANDING SITE



PROBLEM: THE GUIDESTONE

All the accumulated psychic power now whirls around the Guidestone. The stone was designed by the ancient theocrats to shape and expand the psychic field, not concentrate it in one place. Right now, the stone is the most dangerous thing in the galaxy, if you're a Templar.

THE AVATAR AND THE GUIDESTONE

D'Kan believes that she can control and harness the full power of the psychic field. She may be right; if she makes it to the Guidestone and stands atop it, it will massively augment her psychic powers. In game terms, the Guidestone gives her an infinite supply of fate points and increases her Psychic skill by two ranks. Coupled with invocation of the **EYE OF THE PSYCHIC STORM** scene aspect, she can throw Legendary psychic effects around without sweating and can blow off the top of the ladder with a +12 effect if she rolls well. That's the sort of psychic power that lets you levitate spaceships, blast your enemies with lightning, or wipe someone's mind.

There's a downside to channelling that much power: she takes stress whenever she rolls equal to the number of **+**s rolled. So, if she rolls **■■■■+**, she takes one stress. **++++** means four stress. She can always spend a fate point for a reroll if she needs to do so.

If she can channel the power, then D'Kan's wishlist might include:

- Incinerating any pesky Gej Mal or Bulldogs that she sees.
- Forcibly mass-converting millions of Templari into loyal followers of the Theocracy.
- Knocking the Bulldog's freighter out of the sky.
- Reanimating the corpses of any of her fallen followers, turning them into telekinetic puppet zombies.
- Declaring herself to be a living goddess and having the power to back that up.

MOVE IT

The result of the Pilot roll made after the initial missile attack determines how many shifts are needed to push the Guidestone into place with a Physique roll. Pushing the Guidestone requires a Superb (+5) Physique test.

PILOT SHIFTS	PHYSIQUE SHIFTS
0	5
1-2	4
3-4	3
5+	2

Alternatively, the crew can move the Guidestone with their ship or another vehicle, assuming they don't get blown up by another missile from Gav'ard.

BLOW IT UP

Ouch. Blowing up the Guidestone means there's no way to stop the Fury, but at least it stops the Templari from getting devastated. To blow up the Guidestone, the crew needs to fill out its stress track. It 'defends' with a rating of Great (+4).

GUIDESTONE

Conditions

Chipped ☐☐☐

Cracked ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

The stone's a vehicle-scale item, so personal-scale attacks require a Heavy Weapon to be effective. On the bright side, ship-scale weapons (Colossal and above) blaze away with an extra shift on a successful attack.

If the stone's destroyed, then the accumulated psychic energy burns itself off in a spectacular but mostly harmless pyrotechnic explosion.

Alternatively, the crew could try attacking the De'lakh Ca'hal itself. That's also got a 'defense' rating of Great (+4), but it's got a bigger stress track. Blowing up the collector destroys the entire psychic reservoir. It doesn't just stop the Fury, it means that the Templar species no longer has an ancient psychic vampire sapping them. What sort of effects will that have on the Devalkamanchans in the future?

DE'LA KH CA'HAL

Conditions

Chipped ☐☐☐

Marred ☐☐☐

Cracked ☐☐

Damaged ☐☐

Broken ☐☐

Consequences

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Mild:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Moderate:

☐ Severe:

CONTROL IT

Awesome. First, ensure that you're the only person in contact with the Guidestone (and D'Kan may have something to say about that!) Second, make a Superb (+5) Psychic test to tap into the accumulated power. If you pass that, then you've got the power of the psychic field running through you. Bulldogs trying this gambit have the same advantages and drawbacks as D'kan, +2 to their Psychic skill, fate points on tap, and the possibility of being burnt up from the inside by the psychic field.

Theoretically, a Bulldog who controls the Guidestone could do things like:

- Imprint their own personality onto the psychic field, so those infected by the Fury act less like Templari and more like... Bulldogs.
- Channel the species-memories of Deval or Kamanch and become—at least temporarily—a living god to the Templari.
- Telepathically contact the leaders of the Devalkamanchan Republic and demand a ceasefire.



THE GUIDESTONE IN PLACE

If the Guidestone is brought into direct contact with the De'lakh Ca'hal, it closes the 'leak' in the psychic reservoir. The psychic field gets sucked back in and bottled up once again, the temple-ship gets cut off, and the Fury... stops. Across hundreds of worlds, those infected by the Fury feel their minds become clear. The passion and the anger and the drive that animated them melts away.

On some worlds, this is a blessing. The intolerance and paranoia whipped up by the Fury fades away. On other planets, the sudden loss of the Fury may be dangerous, especially if that world's starships have invaded the Devalkamanchan Republic.

The psychic field may be gone, but the changes wrought by the Fury remain. A whole section of the galaxy has a big psychic headache to deal with.

PROBLEM: WHAT NOW?

Where are the Bulldogs at this point? And what's the state of the galaxy? An awful lot hinges on how the crew handled the Guidestone, and how long Templar was buffeted by psychic resonance.

Questions that need answers:

- ♦ **THE WAR:** Is the war still going on? If the psychic field's gone, then the Fury side is in trouble. If the theocrats' plan for revenge worked, then the Devalkamanchan Republic is damaged and might be amenable to a ceasefire. If only one side was damaged, the opposition will want to press their advantage, and if there's a ceasefire, where do they draw the line? The crew may leave that to the diplomats, or they could force a return to the Treaty of Arsubar if they've got friends in (or leverage over) the Republic senate.
- ♦ **THE SALDRALLANS:** Only the crew knows the full extent of the Union of Saldra's involvement in the Fury crisis. The Saldra scheme to weaken their rivals plunged the galaxy into war, but does the crew dare reveal the truth? Could exposing the Saldra scheme trigger another conflict? And just what was in that Saldra archive that Mr. S wanted?
- ♦ **THE BULLDOGS:** Where does the crew stand? More to the point, how many interstellar governments owe them favors, and how many want them dead? (Or both!) They may have cleared their names in Sukar space, but did they save Templar or let it burn? Do they expose the Saldra scheme or help clean it up? What about Navigatrix Thelise? She was the Bulldogs' patron and ally for months, up until Ardr. Did they rescue her or did she turn to the Fury?

Most important of all: who's paying for all this? The ship took a hell of a pounding at the end there...

PHELMSOIDS

The nomadic Phelmoids lost their homeworld long ago. Most historians assume it was destroyed during the Thousand-Year War, or that some other disaster made the planet incapable of supporting life. The Phelmoids attach no importance to their own distant history and consider themselves citizens of the universe. They can be found throughout the Frontier Zone and in the Union of Saldralla (Phelmoids and Saldrallans tend to get on very well with one another; it's a little disconcerting for any warm-blooded people, though, with all the waving tentacles and tails and the coded messages).

Phelmoids are intelligent, amphibious jellyfish. Each Phelmoid has one central brain that controls their body, but this is a relatively simple organ. Their real intelligence is in their tentacles, each of which has its own brain. The Phelmoid is effectively a collective intelligence, or more accurately, a creature run by committee. The tentacles all usually agree on what to do and coordinate through a combination of nerve impulses and gestures, but sometimes they argue, producing spasming indecision.

While Phelmoids are naturally aquatic, they can move around on land by crawling or by inflating a gas bladder organ with helium. This bladder, located at the top of the Phelmoid's body, is used to store water for jet propulsion while swimming, but can instead be used as a floating gasbag to support the Phelmoid. The creatures are physically weak but surprisingly resilient, and can quickly regenerate from otherwise lethal wounds. Their multi-tasking abilities are famed across the galaxy, and many Phelmoids find employment as traders, sensor technicians, or fry cooks.

PHELMSOID NAMES

Phelmoids are genderless. Phelmoids traditionally refer to themselves in the plural ("We are pleased to meet you, and our name is Giroo."), but some have adopted a singular identity to make it easier to relate to non-plural species.

NAMES: Bablo, Baloo, Giroo, Hobue, Falchoo, Mobue, Moglo, Nableu, Troblo, Truloo.

TYPICAL PHELMSOID ASPECTS

THE RIGHT TENTACLE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT THE LEFT ONE'S DOING

INVOKE: when you're being sneaky, "We pick his pocket while strangling him."

COMPEL: you've got a lot of tentacles with their own minds, and they can get you into trouble, "We seem to have pressed the self destruct. We wonder why we did that."

REDUNDANT ORGANS

INVOKE: to shrug off damage, "It's ok. We were only shot in one brain. We have many more."

COMPEL: your unlikely biology can cause problems, "We do not metabolize alcohol well. In fact, we become explosive."

THINKING BY COMMITTEE

INVOKE: many brains make light work, "We have calculated the optimum firing solution."

COMPEL: indecision is a common problem, "Answer cloudy; ask again later."

SQUISHY SKELETON

INVOKE: you can squeeze through tiny spaces, "We will go through the door. We do not care that it is closed."

COMPEL: you're physically weak, "It's only a fair arm wrestling contest if we can go six-to-one."



MASTER MULTI-TASKER

INVOKE: you can perform several tasks at once, “I can fix dinner while I fly the ship, no problem.”

COMPEL: you tend to take on too many jobs at once, “Wait, what was this screw from?”

CITIZEN OF THE UNIVERSE

INVOKE: you’ve been everywhere, “I came to this planet many years ago. I wonder if that parts shop is still open.”

COMPEL: you’ve got no home, “Time to move on.”

PHELMSOID SPECIES ABILITIES (TOTAL -2)

AMPHIBIOUS [-1]

Phelmsoids are at home in water. They can move just as easily in water as they can out of it and can move at normal speed in liquids without an Athletics check.

BREATHE UNUSUAL ATMOSPHERE [0]

Phelmsoids can breathe water as well as air.

CONTORTION [-2]

Phelmsoids can squish into tiny spaces. They can fit through small or narrow openings easily without needing to make an Athletics check.

EXTRA LIMBS [-1]

Lots of extra tentacles means Phelmsoids can take two actions in a single round of a conflict, once per session.

PHYSICALLY FRAIL [+2]

Due to the lack of strength in their tentacles, Phelmsoids can have a maximum of Fair (+2) in Fight.

REGENERATION [-1]

Given time, Phelmsoids can regenerate almost any wound. Even extreme consequences will heal given enough time—usually a couple of years, but sometimes as fast as a few months. Even lost limbs or organs will regrow.

RULE BY COMMITTEE [+1]

Phelmsoids are often indecisive. The GM can compel this indecision once per session. If they do so, the player must roll 4dF. If the roll comes up with more ■ than ☐, then the character acts in a way contrary to the player’s desires. For example, instead of bravely trying to pull the freighter out of a steep dive, the Phelmsoid finds itself running to the escape pod instead...

HOVER (OPTIONAL) [-1]

If a Phelmsoid inflates its gasbag with helium, it gains the Hover and Reduced Speed traits. Phelmsoids don’t leave tracks, and don’t trigger any sensors that require weight to activate while hovering. They can also easily access a zone directly above them, an action that would be off-limits to a ground-based being without a jump.

REDUCED SPEED (OPTIONAL) [+1]

Phelmsoids do not get to move one zone for free per round of physical conflict. Instead, they must spend their action and roll Athletics to move any number of zones. They can move no more than two zones in a single round, even on an Athletics roll that succeeds with style.



TERRIZANS

Terriza is a lush jungle world, where a combination of low gravity and lots of oxygen resulted in the evolution of huge plants and animals. With their filmy wings, four arms, multi-faceted eyes, lethal stingers, and blood-sucking proboscises, the intelligent natives of Terriza look like they crawled out of the nightmares of someone with a severe phobia of insects. Despite their alarming appearance and certain... distressing personal habits (they evolved from carrion eaters), Terrizans are quite friendly and outgoing. Their outlook on life could be described as 'optimistically fatalistic.' "If we all die here, we'll make a really nice banquet for someone else," is a common Terrizan proverb.

Terrizans have no concept of family ties. They lay eggs in great numbers and have no attachment to their young, nor do the young have any idea who their parents are. To a Terrizan, friendship is much more important, and immediate friendship is the most important thing of all. Terrizans are very quick to befriend and trust others but are also very quick to forget. A Terrizan is your best friend while he's with you, but if you don't see him for a few days, he'll find another swarm to fly with. They have the emotional maturity of friendly puppies. This quirk makes Terrizans a favored target for confidence tricksters.

Terrizans rarely travel, as they find the gravity of most planets and spaceships too high for comfort. The few Terrizans who leave their home wear supportive exoskeletons when on high-gravity worlds to protect themselves. They make excellent pilots and can be fearsome warriors, especially when they can use their wings and stingers to full effect.

TERRIZAN NAMES

Terrizans have no gender or family names. Their names consist of two parts: a personal name and a 'tag' that describes their current status, occupation or mood. These tags change every few months, or in response to a personal crisis or major decision.

NAMES: Hrzzek, Irrrit, Izzzirt, Krzzrik, Rhyllek, Srrzzik, Ssslek, Yrrlk, Zzzzzrek, Zzzthik.

TAGS: In a Purple Hat, Pilot of the Black Watch, The Very Angry, Wants a Drink.

TYPICAL TERRIZAN ASPECTS

CRAWLED OUT OF YOUR NIGHTMARES

INVOKE: you're good at intimidating or disgusting people, "Are you going to eat that? No? Mind if I throw up some gastric juices on it? What do you mean, it was your grandmother; it's just dead meat!"

COMPEL: you can accidentally scare people who aren't familiar with your species, "Come back, primitive aliens! I want to be your friend!"

INSECT WAYS

INVOKE: your alien biology can come in handy, "You're falling to your death. I'm gliding down gently."

COMPEL: your alien biology can be a pain, "These medical drugs don't work on bugs. All we've got is insecticide."

FLIGHTY FRIENDSHIP

INVOKE: everyone's your best friend, and you're really warm-hearted for a six-foot-tall mosquito-wasp-thing, "Have another drink, buddy, and tell me about your planet."

COMPEL: you're not discerning when it comes to friendship, "Oh, man, last night was a blast. I met these really fun guys, and they came back to the ship with me. And then they stole it. Don't worry, though, they're my friends. They'll bring it back."

HAND-HAND-EYE COORDINATION

INVOKE: to perform acts of incredible agility, "Dodge sixteen missiles when the starboard thruster is offline? Easy!"

COMPEL: items made for humanoids don't fit you, "Why does this spacesuit only have two arms?"

LOW GRAVITY BEING

INVOKE: your thin delicate limbs can come in handy, "Let me just reach in there."

COMPEL: you get fatigued on regular-gravity worlds, "Ugh, I feel like I've been walking for ages. Let's take a break."

OPTIMISTICALLY FATALIST

INVOKE: you are willing to take big risks, "That heavy cannon has us covered, but I'll make a break for the door controls. Why not?"

COMPEL: sometimes you give up too easily, "We're all going to die one way or another."

TERRIZAN SPECIES ABILITIES (TOTAL 0 TO -1)

LOW-GRAVITY SPECIES [+2]

Terriza is a low-gravity planet, and Terrizans need a supportive exoskeleton to function. A Terrizan deprived of an exoskeleton in normal or heavier gravity suffers a -2 penalty to all physical rolls and increases any stress suffered by 1.

GLIDER [-1]

Terrizans cannot fly in standard gravity, but they can glide. A Terrizan must take off from a spot that is some height above the ground, but with a proper launching point may glide for long distances. While gliding, a Terrizan may move one additional zone for free during each round of a conflict, but cannot move upward, and will stop gliding once they reach the ground.

FOUR ARMS [-1]

Once per session, a Terrizan can take two actions in a single round of a conflict.

EAT ANYTHING [0]

Terrizans can eat and digest pretty much anything organic. They like food that's softened up a bit, but they can chew through even the hardest organic substances given a bit of time.

STINGER (OPTIONAL) [-1]

Terrizans have a poisonous stinger in their abdomens. This stinger delivers a lethal toxin to its victim, but the loss of the stinger quickly kills the Terrizan too. A relatively simple surgical operation removes the stinger without any ill effects, so most Terrizans have their stingers removed early in life. A few keep the stinger as a weapon.

The stinger is a medium natural weapon and inflicts the aspect **POISONED** on a successful hit. However, using the stinger gives the Terrizan the moderate consequence **USED STINGER**. Unless the Terrizan gets medical treatment within a few hours, loss of the stinger means death.



SUKA

The Suka (singular Sukar) are one of the few species in the galaxy who are universally psychic. A newborn Sukar has psychic talents that would be the envy of a trained adept, and the Sukar elders are astoundingly powerful. The Sukar domains were once part of the Templar empire. The psychics were conquered by the Templari thousands of years ago and were horribly mistreated during their enslavement. Certain Templar generals were obsessed with turning the Suka into psionic weapons, and conducted century-long tests and genetic manipulation experiments in attempts to forcibly breed psionic warriors. These experiments enhanced the Suka's natural talents but were unable to overcome their natural psychic empathy.

The Treaty of Arsubar freed the Suka from the Templar yoke, and today they have a sizable cluster of worlds. They are one of the more stable polities in the Alliance of Federated Frontier States, although they have little interest in events beyond their borders.

Physically, Suka start off humanoid, but as they age, more and more of their physiological functions are taken over by psychic powers. By the age of twenty, they have no skin, just a psionic sheath over their muscles. By thirty, telekinesis takes over for physical muscle, and the unused tissue withers away. The skeleton becomes redundant by the age of forty-five; the Sukar becomes a cloud of organs suspended in a glowing psionic shell. Elder Suka are nothing more than a brain, and some especially powerful individuals transcend physical form entirely and become beings of pure thought.

Suka wrap themselves in voluminous robes and wear golden or silver masks when dealing with outsiders who might be alarmed at being greeted by a free-floating jumble of loosely connected organs and veins. They are generally described as being "detached", "inscrutable" or "transcendent" by outsiders, which translate as "we have no idea what they're thinking".

SUKAR NAMES

As Suka communicate telepathically amongst themselves, they have no need of names. Instead, they use telepathic self-images that don't translate well into ordinary language ("Hi, I'm Intoxicating Vertiginous Memory of Standing on a Cliff, Wistfully Recalling Childhood"). They often use nicknames, usually Arsubaran, when dealing with other species. ("But you can call me Phil").

TYPICAL SUKAR ASPECTS

ENLIGHTENED ONENESS

INVOKE: you have astounding self-control, "You cannot scare me. I am beyond your petty threats of violence."

COMPEL: you forget the limitations of others, "Ah yes. Oxygen. You still breathe. How quickly one forgets."

PACIFIST

INVOKE: you put people at their ease, "Calm down. We wish to talk."

COMPEL: you're no good in a fight, "Which end of the gun is morally abhorrent?"

TRADE EMPIRE

INVOKE: your people have contacts everywhere, "I know her. She works for us."

COMPEL: wealth makes you a target, "Let the Sukar get the tab!"

FLOATING POKER FACE

INVOKE: no-one can read your emotions, "Trust me, you don't want to mess with us."



COMPEL: you can come across as cold and unemotional, “You’re worse than any robot!”

GRADUALLY DISAPPEARING

INVOKE: you put people off-guard with your unsettling appearance, “I... um... is that your liver?”

COMPEL: your appearance is terrifying to many beings, “No, I can’t talk, I need to go throw up.”

PSYCHIC PRODIGY

INVOKE: your psychic abilities are completely natural to you, “I’ve been levitating things since I was three.”

COMPEL: you forget that most species don’t share your talents, “Oh, sorry. I didn’t say that out loud, I forgot you can’t read minds.”

SUKAR SPECIES ABILITIES (TOTAL -4 TO -5)

PSYCHIC [0]

All Suka are psychic. A Suka must have a Psychic skill of at least Fair (+2).

PSYCHIC EMPATHY [+3]

A Suka’s intense psychic sensitivity can cause one harm if they injure or kill another sentient being. If someone takes a consequence as a direct result of one of the Suka’s actions, then they immediately take stress equal to half the size of the consequence. Dying counts as a Extreme (-8) consequence. So, if someone takes a Severe (-6) consequence, the Suka suffers 3 stress immediately.

HOVER [-1]

Suka don’t walk, they float. They don’t leave tracks, and don’t trigger any sensors that require weight to activate while hovering. They can also easily access a zone directly above them, an action that would be off-limits to a ground-based being without a jump.

FAST EVOLUTION [-3]

Suka heal faster than normal. Treat all consequences as if they were one category lower for the purposes of healing, and a Suka can heal a mild consequence as a supplemental action. Furthermore, when a Suka heals a severe consequence, they can choose to gain a new ability relating to their lack of physical form, representing their continued progress towards a being of pure thought. (“Your attack destroyed my circulatory system. Turns out I didn’t need a heart anymore, anyway.”)

PSYCHIC TOOLBOX [-3]

Suka have the full range of psychic abilities: telepathy, telekinesis, precognition, empathy, mental attack, illusions, and all the rest. If it’s plausible for psychic powers to accomplish it, a Suka can attempt it.

PSYCHIC SHIELD (OPTIONAL) [-1]

As a standard action, a Suka can erect psionic protection around their mind that lasts for the rest of the scene. Roll Resolve to determine the stress value of this protection, which only protects against psychic damage (including any stress suffered from Psychic Empathy). This psychic defense acts in the same way as a shield.



PSYCHIC

Some species or individuals possess mental powers beyond the norm. It boils down to the ability to influence minds, either your own or others, through means most beings don't have access to. Characters with a high Psychic skill are mentalists, telepaths, or other mental savants.

The Psychic skill is a special exception to the regular skill rules. If you don't have the Psychic skill you can't ever roll it, not even at Mediocre (+0) ability like most skills allow you to. In order to add this skill to your character sheet, you must either have a species ability or a stunt that indicates that your character has psychic powers. You must also purchase stunts that clarify and specify their specific mental abilities with the GM before play and you can't exceed these limits using the Psychic skill. See the list of stunts for the Psychic skill that allow emotion projection, telepathy, telekinesis, clairvoyance, illusion projection, or precognition. Custom stunts may be created for other mental powers that the GM deems plausible. If the Psychic skill is gained through your species, the powers will be defined within the species ability and will be uniform across the entire species.



OVERCOME (PSYCHIC)

Psychic is used outside of conflicts when you attempt to use a paranormal mental power to conquer an obstacle beyond normal physical means. The more powerful the effect or the more outlandish the psychic ability in question, the higher the difficulty. Surface thoughts and emotions are easy to read. Hidden thoughts or plumbing the depths of another character's psyche are much more difficult. Also, mental powers decrease with range. The farther away a target is, the more difficult it is to use mental powers.



CREATE AN ADVANTAGE (PSYCHIC)

Within a situation, a psychic often receives flashes of insight from her ability which can be used to create advantages. Telepathy is especially useful when you learn of an opponent's intent seconds before he acts, or see a few seconds into the future to create an aspect like **KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO DO THAT**.



DISCOVER (PSYCHIC)

A precognitive ability can give glimpses into the future, or clairvoyance can make visible things that can't be seen by conventional means. Telepathy and emotion detection can also give insights into someone's personality or motivations.



ATTACK (PSYCHIC)

Some psychics can mount a direct psychic blitz on a target. This is just a matter of projecting strongly enough to cause actual mental harm to the other person. Many psychics aren't powerful enough to do this, but it's a very effective attack against an area where most beings have hardly any defenses. Psychic attacks target the mind and therefore are resisted with Resolve.



DEFEND (PSYCHIC)

When defending against Psychic attacks, you can use Psychic as a defense skill to set up mental defenses. The Psychic skill can also be used to defend against social attacks such as Rapport, Hagggle, or Provoke if you have telepathic or emotion detection powers.

PSYCHIC STUNTS

CLOUD THE MIND

You can create illusions by directly influencing a person's mind. The easiest trick is to conceal objects or people, keeping the person from noticing something that's right in front of them. With greater skill, you can also create the illusion of objects or people that are not truly there. If you are extraordinarily powerful, you can even affect more than one person at a time.

EMPATHIC CONNECTION

You can use your Psychic powers to detect or evoke emotions in a target. This gives you a big advantage in social situations, allowing you to read the mood of a person and nudge it in the correct direction. With more power and ability, you can even influence large crowds of people. If a target is aware of your ability, they can use Resolve to defend.

FLASH FORWARD

You often receive brief visions of the near future, almost unbidden. You may use Psychic to discover future events. As with all premonitions, things may not turn out exactly as you expect, and your own actions may change future occurrences. You have some control over what you see, and can try to predict events at specific times and places.

FORTRESS OF THE MIND

You're particularly good at defending your mind from psychic attack. Gain two boxes to absorb stress when someone is attacking you with psychic powers. This stunt may be taken by someone who does not possess the Psychic skill.

MIND KNIFE

You have the ability to use your psychic powers in a direct assault on someone's mind. You may use the Psychic skill to attack. If you do not possess this stunt, you do not have the ability to use Psychic as an attack action.

MY MIND TO YOUR MIND

You must have telepathic abilities tied to your Psychic skill to take this stunt. You may probe more deeply than surface thoughts with this stunt, allowing discover or create advantage actions based on information deep within the target's mind. This is an invasive and unpleasant action, and you must be very close to the target, touching them or within a few feet, and it requires your full concentration. The target can defend against this with Resolve.

TELEKINETIC FORCE

You can move objects with your mind. With this stunt, you may use your Psychic skill in the same way Physique can be used. You can move items within a few feet of yourself easily, but the difficulty increases with distance and mass.

TELEPATHIC SENSITIVITY

You can read the surface thoughts of other people, and even project your own thoughts into the minds of others. This can be used for mind-to-mind communication. Your ability to read thoughts allows you to use Psychic in social situations to discover or create advantages, and can even stand in for Rapport or Provoke when you use the knowledge gained from your mind reading. If a target is aware of your ability, they can use Resolve to defend.

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