

WOTC

MINDJAMMER™

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

DOMINION

QUICKSTART RULES AND ADVENTURE

by Sarah Newton

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QUICKSTART RULES

WHAT IS MINDJAMMER?

Mindjammer is a roleplaying game of far future transhuman science-fiction adventure. In the year 17,000AD—the year 193 of the Rediscovery Era—the New Commonality of Humankind contacts the countless lost worlds it settled by slower-than-light colony ship thousands of years before. The new faster-than-light planing engine is changing everything, pushing back the Commonality Frontier and revealing strange and divergent cultures and beings that often are no longer even human.

Everywhere there is conflict. The mighty Commonality thinks it knows best, but not every rediscovered world wants to join its interstellar melting pot. And there are mysteries—alien life forms, inhuman cultures, technologies threatening to destabilise and even destroy human civilisation. Only the **Mindjammers** hold the Commonality together—intelligent starships carrying the **Mindscape** between worlds, the vast neural network storing the memories of the entire human race and enabling the miracles of **technopsi**.

It's a time of great danger—but also great hope. Strap on your blaster, fire up the planing engines, and thoughtcast your commands to the starship sentience. Join us, and bring the light of humankind's greatest civilisation to the stars!

What's a Roleplaying Game?

*These quickstart rules introduce you to the **Mindjammer** game—they're a simplified version of those in the **Mindjammer RPG** core book. Because they're so compact, they assume you already know what a roleplaying game is, and how it's played. If you don't, check out the excellent learntabletoprpgs.com, and the many discussions and tutorials online.*

HOW TO PLAY MINDJAMMER

Mindjammer is based on a straightforward set of rules called the **Fate Core** System (available for free online at <http://fate-srd.com>). Every character has a list of skills with scores from +1 (average) to +5 (superb) and higher which define the things they're good at doing. Beginning characters have ten skills, arranged in the "pyramid" structure you can see on the sample character sheets on page 10.

To do anything in the game which has an element of risk or excitement, you roll dice and add your skill score, and compare the result to a number known as an **opposition**. The opposition can be determined by a skill roll—known as an **active opposition**; or by a fixed number—a passive opposition. If you equal or exceed the opposition, you succeed at what you're trying to do; otherwise you fail, or optionally **succeed at a cost**, where you achieve your goal but something bad happens. Sometimes the amount by which you beat the opposition—called **shifts**—is important, such as in combat, where the number of shifts you generate tell you how badly you damage your opponent.

That's the core of the game. Roll dice, add your skill score, compare to the opposition, and maybe generate shifts. Everything else which follows expands on that simple rule to let you do even more cool stuff.

Stunts

Stunts are things your character knows how to do which let him bend or break the rules to achieve exceptional results. A beginning character knows at least three stunts, and as many as five. Examples include **Quick on the Draw**, which lets you use your Ranged Combat skill instead of your Notice skill to determine who shoots first in a firefight. You can make up your own stunts, and the **Mindjammer RPG** core book provides examples; you can find sample stunts on the pre-generated character sheets on page 10, and in the **non-player characters** (or NPCs) throughout this booklet.

Aspects

Aspects are a cool part of the **Fate Core** system, and important to understanding how **Mindjammer** works. An aspect is a short phrase describing something special about your character. It can be a distinguishing physical feature like *Built Like a Barn Door*, or a bit of background like *Survivor of the Destruction of Tellemachus V*, or even a catchphrase like *I'm In There Like Greased Lightning, Baby!* Your character has seven aspects, including his high concept, which sums up his entire character; his trouble, which tells you why he's always getting into scrapes; and even a cultural aspect, which shows how the culture he was raised in affects his world-view (important in the **Mindjammer** setting).

When playing **Mindjammer**, you'll find your character in situations where one or more of his aspects seems appropriate. Maybe you need to get into a place really quickly, grab something, and get out, and you have that aspect *I'm In There Like Greased Lightning, Baby!* When that happens, you can spend a **fate point** and either get a +2 bonus on the skill roll you've just made, or even re-roll your dice if you rolled really badly. Using an aspect like this is called **invoking an aspect**.

You start play with 5 fate points, minus 1 point for every stunt you have above 3 stunts. When you've used up all your

fate points invoking aspects, they're gone until your next game session, when they return to their maximum number. This maximum number (usually between 3 and 5) is called your **refresh**.

Situation Aspects

*It's not just characters that can have aspects: places can have them, too. They can be permanent, like Dark and Silent Asteroid Cave, or temporary, like Loud and Crowded Cantina. These are **situation aspects**, and you invoke and compel them just like character aspects. Characters can even create situation aspects—see "Actions and Advantages" below.*

However, you can also gain fate points during play. You do this by voluntarily getting your character into trouble. Remember that *I'm In There Like Greased Lightning, Baby!* aspect? Imagine you're in a situation where you have to be slow and careful, where rushing in could cause mayhem. Well, if you want, you can rush in anyway—because that's what you do!—and take the consequences. Maybe there's an ambush ahead, or a trap, and rushing in would trigger it. You decide to rush in, trigger the trap or ambush—and the GM rewards you with a fate point for playing up to your character's flaws! This is called **compelling an aspect**. Sometimes the GM may compel one of your aspects (and give you a fate point) simply because it naturally causes you trouble in the situation you're in—maybe you're *Built Like a Barn Door* and trying to squeeze through a tiny space. In that case, the GM may allow you to pay a fate point instead of receiving one, and describe how your character avoids the problem in spite of his aspect.

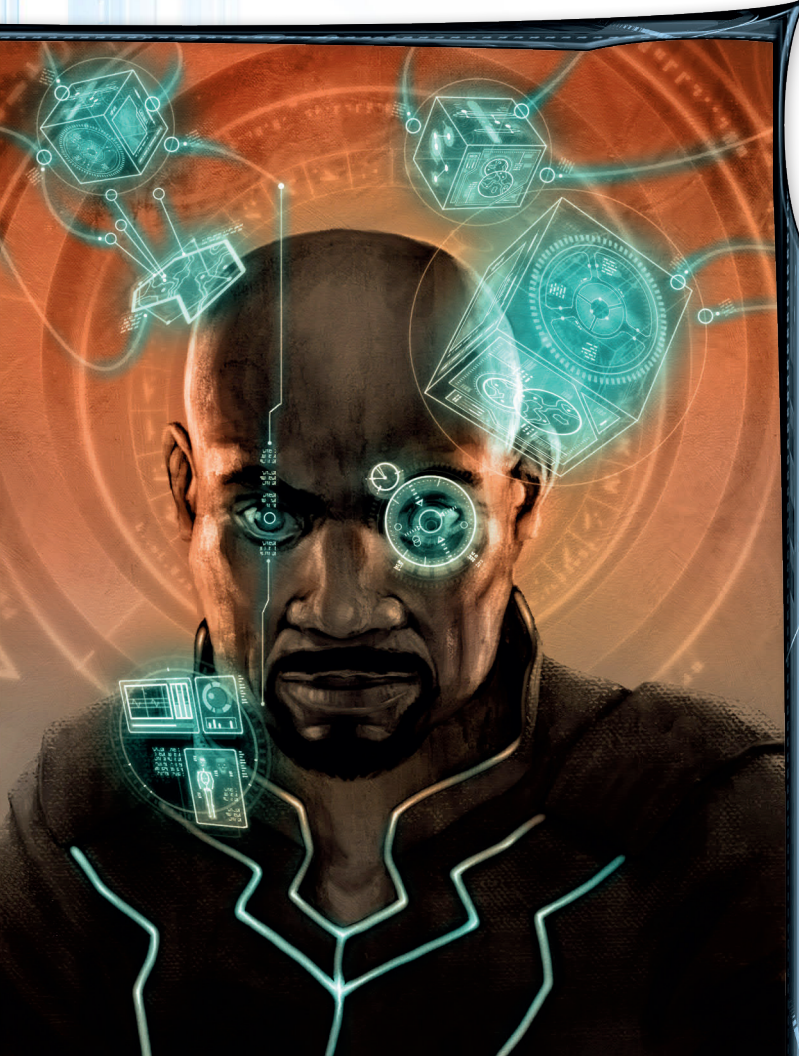
The **Mindjammer RPG** core book explains lots of other things you can do with aspects.

Rolling Dice

Mindjammer is a **Fate Core** game. By default it uses 4 "Fudge dice" (special dice marked with pluses, minuses, and blanks, and abbreviated 4dF), although it can also use 2 six-sided dice (2d6). Here's how to roll them:

4DF

Roll four Fudge dice, and total the number of plusses and subtract the minuses. That gives a result somewhere between -4 and +4 (and usually between -1 and +1). For example: if you roll +, +, -, and a blank, that gives you a result of +1.



2D6

Roll a d6, and subtract the value of a second d6 from it. That gives you a result between -5 and +5. For example: if you roll 3, and then 5, that gives you a result of -2.

The Ladder

Mindjammer measures dice rolls, skill levels, and action difficulties on a scale called **the ladder**. Abysmal scores can be -3 or lower; awesome scores can be +5 and higher. Each score has a textual description, shown below. You'll see these scores and descriptors cropping up throughout **Mindjammer**—sometimes they refer to how skilled you are, sometimes to a dice result, and sometimes a target number you're trying to roll.

+8	Legendary
+7	Epic
+6	Fantastic
+5	Superb
+4	Great
+3	Good
+2	Fair
+1	Average
+0	Mediocre
-1	Poor
-2	Terrible

What's the Mindscape?

*The Mindscape is the virtual data storage and communications network pervading Commonality Space, to which all citizens are neurally connected using the **Mindscape implant**. It's the experience store of the entire human race, and of memory engrams of generations living and dead, enabling skill enhancements and the pseudo-psionic abilities of **technopsi**. It's why the Commonality coheres as a single civilisation: with its vast distances, long travel times, and countless worlds, the Mindscape allows the Commonality culture to retain a common identity.*

*Commonality special agents and security forces have **special operations chips** instead of standard implants, letting them modify the Mindscape in extreme ways and even control or attack the minds of those connected. Offenders have their Mindscape implants disabled, becoming **lockouts**, and often create counterfeit black chips using the identities of innocent victims they've (usually) killed—identity theft in the Commonality is a lethal business!*

Making a Skill Roll

Mindjammer uses skills to determine what your character is good at. **Mindjammer** characters are pretty awesome, and have lots of default low-level abilities, but your skills tell you where your specialties lie. Skills are measured on the ladder, beginning with Mediocre (+0) for a default low-level ability, through Average (+1) for an average specialty, right up to Superb (+5) and beyond for highly skilled individuals.

When you make a skill roll, you roll your dice and add your skill level, and compare the result to a number called an **opposition**, which is Fair (+2) by default. If you score equal to or higher than the opposition, your skill roll succeeds. The amount by which you succeed can also be important: if you score higher than the opposition by 3 points or more, you **succeed with style**, which gives you an especially awesome result.

Interpreting the Results

Sometimes when you make a skill roll it's obvious what the results mean. Let's say you're trying to sneak around the back of a tractor beam control panel to avoid some guards, and you fail; it's pretty obvious you got spotted. But **exactly** what that means needs a bit of description—and that's where you get to shine. Did you drop something out of your pocket with a clang? Did your boot squeak on the brightly polished floor? Was the guard too alert for you to avoid his attention?

Interpreting the results of dice rolls is part of the fun of **Mindjammer**. Often the GM will give you cues, or may even specify what happened for you; other times, it'll be up to you to describe what happened, and that can be as much fun when you fail as when you succeed!

Actions and Advantages

Making a skill roll is an **action**. You can take an action to try and overcome an obstacle, attack someone or something (see "Conflicts", page 7), or defend against someone or something attacking you. You can also make a skill roll to create a special type of temporary aspect called an **advantage**. When you create an advantage, you can invoke it once for free (or twice, if you succeed with style—see above); after that you have to spend a fate point as usual. You can even let someone else invoke that advantage for free, as long as you can describe how that happens.

For example, you could make an Athletics, Physique, or attack roll to bash into someone and give them an Off Balance aspect; or you could make a Ranged Combat roll with a gas grenade and create a Filled With Poison Gas situation aspect in a location; or make a Rapport roll and create a Shouting Encouragement From the Sidelines aspect to help your friends.

Contests

Sometimes two or more characters compete to achieve a goal, without directly trying to harm one another. This is a

What Do Skills Do?

The **Mindjammer RPG** core book contains descriptions of many skills. Here's a summary of the ones used in this adventure, and what you can do with them.

- ♦ **Active Sensing:** Send out powerful sensor sweeps from a starship or vehicle—very powerful, but also very visible.
- ♦ **Athletics:** Leap, climb, and undertake feats of agility, including diving out of the way of ranged weapon attacks.
- ♦ **Bureaucracy:** Bust through red tape and deal with bureaucracies to get things done—or tangle up your opponents forever.
- ♦ **Close Combat:** Use a starship or vehicle to attack another at close quarters using ramming, boarding actions, and so on.
- ♦ **Contacts:** Make use of the people you know to network and get things done.
- ♦ **Deceive:** Make people believe something that isn't true.
- ♦ **Drive:** Drive a vehicle in two dimensions, such as on a planet's surface (note that this includes seagoing vessels such as ships).
- ♦ **Empathy:** Understand how someone else is feeling, and even make them feel better about it.
- ♦ **Hull Strength:** Withstand physical damage as a vehicle, ship, or even robot; the equivalent of *Physique*.
- ♦ **Intensity:** The strength or damaging capacity of a hazard such as radiation, a storm, an earthquake, etc.
- ♦ **Intrusion:** Break into somewhere you're not meant to be.
- ♦ **Investigate:** Perceive things by actively examining a place, person, or object.
- ♦ **Magnitude:** How widespread a hazard such as radiation, a storm, an earthquake, etc, is.
- ♦ **Manoeuvre:** Move as a vehicle, ship, or robot; the equivalent of *Athletics*. For starships, it's the ability to move through *n-space* using gravity engines.
- ♦ **Melee Combat:** Attack targets with a melee

weapon, and defend against unarmed and melee attacks.

- ♦ **Notice:** Perceive things while doing something else; how observant or alert you are.
- ♦ **Passive Sensing:** Receive and interpret sensor data on a starship or vehicle; the equivalent of *Notice*. Less powerful than *Active Sensing*, but it doesn't create detectable emissions and give away where you are.
- ♦ **Physique:** Withstand physical damage, exhaustion, and injury; and apply physical strength.
- ♦ **Pilot:** Pilot a vehicle in three dimensions, such as in space or under the sea.
- ♦ **Planing:** The power of a ship's planing engines and its ability to move faster-than-light through 2-space.
- ♦ **Provoke:** Bully, intimidate, and provoke others, creating advantages or even doing mental stress damage.
- ♦ **Ranged Combat:** Attack targets with a ranged weapon.
- ♦ **Rapport:** Get on well with people, and lead and persuade them.
- ♦ **Resources:** Acquire items you need, either by exchanging the interstellar currency commonly known as "credits"; or (more appropriate in the Commonality) using the Commonality's resource allocation programs.
- ♦ **Science:** Understand and solve problems using the scientific method.
- ♦ **Stealth:** Hide and sneak without being detected.
- ♦ **Systems:** Robustness and effectiveness of a ship's, vehicle's, or robot's control systems and life support.
- ♦ **Technical:** Repair, tweak, and manufacture organic and technological items. Includes giving first aid as well as repairing gear.
- ♦ **Unarmed Combat:** Deal physical stress damage to targets in your zone using "natural" weapons (hands, feet, teeth, etc).
- ♦ **Will:** Resist doing what people tell you, stand up to mental stress, and beat someone in a test of willpower.

contest, in which each side tries to accumulate “victories” and the first side to accumulate three victories wins.

A contest is conducted in a number of exchanges, which take a variable amount of time depending on the nature of the contest. A tug of war might have an exchange of one minute, while a trek across three hundred kilometres of trackless jungle may have an exchange of one week. In each exchange, each side makes a skill roll. In some contests, each side rolls against all the others; in others, each side rolls against an opposition representing how difficult the action they’re attempting is. It doesn’t have to be the same opposition for every side, or even the same skill. The side with the highest result wins the exchange, and gains 1 victory. If they beat every other side by 3 or more points, they **succeed with style** and gain 2 victories.

Conflicts

Sometimes, competing against one another isn’t enough, and a character may try to actively defeat another character using physical or mental violence. This is called a **conflict**.

Like a contest, a conflict is conducted in exchanges of appropriate length: in a gunfight, an exchange may be just a few seconds. In an exchange, characters take it in turn to act (usually to attack their opponent). The order they act in is determined by their scores in an appropriate skill: in physical combat, this is the Notice skill; in mental or social conflicts, it’s Empathy; and in starship combat, it’s the Active or Passive Sensing skill of your ship. The order in which characters act is called the **initiative order**.

On a character’s turn, he rolls to attack his opponent, and his opponent rolls to defend against that attack. Each uses an appropriate skill. For example, if a character attacks his opponent with his Unarmed Combat skill on his turn, his opponent may react by rolling his Unarmed Combat or even his Melee Combat skill to defend. If a character attacks with his Ranged Combat skill (using a blaster pistol, say), then his opponent may roll his Athletics skill to try and throw himself out of the way. Characters in mental conflict may attack with Provoke and defend with Will, and starships may attack with Ranged Combat and defend with Manoeuvre. Stunts may sometimes change this. Characters who don’t have a particular skill roll as if they had a skill level of Mediocre (+0).

If an attacker rolls higher than his opponent’s defence roll, he injures his opponent in some way. He does this by inflicting **stress** (see below) on his opponent equal to the **shifts** he generated—the amount by which his attack roll exceeded his opponent’s defence roll. So, if you attack your opponent with a Fair (+2) Ranged Combat skill and roll a +2 on your dice (for a total **effect** of +4), and your opponent rolls a +1 with an Average (+1) Athletics skill (for an effect of +2), then you inflict 2 points of physical stress on your opponent. If the two rolls are a tie, then you don’t inflict any stress on your opponent, but gain a momentary combat advantage (you can

Everything Can Be a Character

*In **Mindjammer**, you can treat many things as characters. Starships and vehicles can have skills, as can organisations like Space Force and the Security and Cultural Integrity Instrumentality (SCI Force), and even whole cultures. You can find out more in the **Mindjammer RPG** core book, but for now you can assume that if these quickstart rules say you can do something as a character, you can also do similar things as a starship, organisation, or culture.*

describe what that is) in the form of a temporary aspect called a **boost** which you can invoke (page 4) once, for free, before it disappears.

STRESS

Stress is one of the ways you can avoid losing a conflict. There are two main types of stress: **physical stress**, representing physical fatigue, bruising, minor injuries; and **mental stress**, representing mental confusion, or temporary intimidation or hesitation. Starships also have **systems stress**, representing damage to their electronics, control systems, and life support.

You have at least two stress levels (called **stress boxes** because of how they’re depicted on the character sheet) in each type of stress, which you can burn off in conflicts. When a character takes stress, he must check off **just one stress box** equal to or greater than the stress he has taken, or be **taken out** (page 8).

For example, Shellfourbytech Denyna (page 10) has a 1-point physical stress box and a 2-point physical stress box. In the first exchange of a physical conflict she takes 1 point of physical stress, and must mark off her 1-point stress box. In the second exchange she takes another point of stress, but this time must mark off her 2-point stress box, because her first box is already filled. If she now takes even one more point of physical stress, she’ll be taken out, as she has no stress boxes left to fill. Likewise, if at any point she had to take 3 or more points of physical stress, she would also have been taken out.

Stress levels represent temporary losses, and reset to zero at the end of a conflict when you’ve had a few moments to catch your breath and gather your thoughts.

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are a way of avoiding having to take stress. They represent significant, lasting impacts: physical injuries like blaster wounds, broken bones, or diseases; mental

injuries like psychological trauma, social stigma, or phobias or mental illness. A character can normally sustain up to 3 consequences: one **mild**, one **moderate**, and one **severe**. Whenever you take a consequence, write an aspect (negotiated with the GM) in the corresponding Consequences slot on your character sheet, describing its impact. Unlike stress, consequences don't recover immediately, and the aspect stays on your character sheet until you remove it using appropriate medical treatment (or repair, for systems stress), leaving your character vulnerable to complications or other characters taking advantage of the injury or weakness by invoking it.

To take a consequence, reduce the stress you must take by an equivalent amount or less. So, to take a mild consequence, reduce any incoming stress damage by 2 points or less; a moderate, 4 points; and a severe, 6 points. If you have any stress left, you must mark off a corresponding stress box or be taken out. Note that you may take more than one consequence in a single attack.

For example, Denyna finds herself hit by a blaster bolt for 7 points of physical stress! That would be enough to take her out; however, she decides to take a mild consequence, which she and her GM describe as Grazed and Dazed, as she dives for cover. That reduces the incoming stress by -2 to 5 points. That's still too much, so she takes a more significant moderate consequence, Heavy Duty Blaster Burn, reducing the stress by another -4 to 1 point. She then marks off her 1 point physical stress box.

Healing and Recovery

If you've taken stress, you get it all back at the start of the next scene. If you've taken consequences, things are a bit slower.

First, any consequence must be **treated**. For a physical consequence, this is a Technical skill roll; for a mental consequence, it's Empathy. The opposition is Fair (+2) for a mild consequence, Great (+4) for a moderate consequence, and Fantastic (+6) for a severe consequence. The opposition is increased by +2 if you're trying to treat yourself.

Anyone can try to treat a mild consequence. For a moderate consequence or above, you need a stunt (like **Meditech** for physical consequences), and usually medical gear—the worse the damage, the greater the equipment needed.

Once you've treated a consequence, you can reword it to reflect that. So a *Heavy Blaster Burn* moderate consequence might become *Biogel Covering Healing Blaster Burns*. Then, after a certain period, the consequence is removed from your character sheet. For a mild consequence, you can remove it one scene after treatment; for a moderate, you must wait one session; and for a severe consequence you must wait one scenario.

TAKEN OUT

When you take more stress than you can mark off with your stress boxes, you're **taken out**. What this means may vary depending on the skills used and nature of the conflict, but essentially your character is **defeated**, utterly, and his fate is

entirely in the hands of the one that defeated him. Often this is an NPC controlled by the GM, who should endeavour to interpret the taken out result appropriately. Being taken out by a bomb going off next to you probably means you're dead; being taken out by a barrage of insults in a diplomatic row may mean your ambassadorial career is over forever.

Often, being taken out means your character is destroyed in some way, and you have to create a new one. At best it means your character is captured, shamed, driven off, clinically dead, and so on.

Zones and Ranges

It's usually common sense whether one of your actions can affect another character. Sometimes, though, it's easier to affect someone who's physically or emotionally closer to you than someone who's far away. **Mindjammer** defines a loose system of **zones** to manage these situations. Zones vary in size depending on the situation; in a physical conflict, the zone you're in is about as far as you can throw a punch, and there's a zone around that that's about as far as you can throw a knife. Beyond that there's a zone that requires a firearm or similar ranged weapon to target, and so forth.

There are corresponding zones around starships and other objects of larger (and even smaller) scales, and even virtual entities in the Mindscape. They are as big as makes sense to the immediate action you're describing; zones aren't intended to be precise measurements of distance, but a rough shorthand for how distance affects your actions.

If an action or extra can affect distant targets, it has a **range**. The zone you're in is **zone 0**; one zone away is **zone 1**. If your target is in a zone further away than your action's range, you can't affect it without changing range. You can automatically change range by 1 zone in an exchange as well as performing your normal action; to move more than that takes up your action for the exchange, and may require a roll of Athletics, Drive, Manoeuvre, Pilot, etc.

Teamwork

Characters can cooperate in actions. First, a character can invoke an aspect or make a create advantage roll to help a colleague (pages 4 and 5). Additionally, a character may use **teamwork**.

Teamwork requires you to share the same skill as the character you're trying to help. If you do, instead of taking an action you may provide an automatic +1 teamwork bonus to your colleague's action. If you have an extra on your character sheet which shares a skill with you, you may get a teamwork bonus from that extra if you can describe how that works.

EQUIPMENT AND EXTRAS

Mindjammer assumes you always have the equipment you need to use your skills and stunts. If you have the Ranged Combat skill, you have access to a ranged weapon; if you have the Pilot

skill and **Starship Pilot** stunt, you have access to a starship to pilot. None of these default items give you any rules mechanical advantages other than the opportunity to use your abilities.

Sometimes, though, you may want an item of equipment to play a more significant role in your game. Maybe you have a super-cool sentient blaster pistol (see Sergeant Blaze on page 11) which constantly chatters in your Mindscape implant and gives you targeting advice, and you feel it should give you an edge in certain situations. In such a case, you can define the item as an **extra**.

An extra is an extension to your character—an element of the outside universe which is nevertheless part of your character sheet. Extras include equipment like weapons and armour and technological enhancements (built-in weapons, Mindscape implants, and genetic modifications), and also starships, vehicles, and organisations the character is involved with. Extras give you access to additional skills, stunts, and aspects which you can use by virtue of possessing or having a relationship to that extra. On your character sheet the Halo and Other Extras sections can contain extras.

Taking Actions With Vehicle and Starship Extras

Sometimes you may have an extra on your character sheet representing a vehicle, starship, or even remote control “body” like an avatar. In an exchange, you may take an action as that extra, perhaps flying through space, doing a sensor sweep, or firing weapons. As you may only take a single action in any given exchange, if you act via one of your extras in this way, your character can’t take a separate action that exchange.

Taking Actions With Organisation and Culture Extras

Extras don’t have to be concrete objects; sometimes they can represent relationships you have with organisations like Space Force, Commonality corporacies, or other agencies. In this case, the skills, stunts, and aspects the extra gives you don’t represent the full power of those organisations, but just the limited access you have to those abilities by virtue of your relationship: your friends, colleagues, and contacts, etc.

Halo

Most **Mindjammer** characters are connected to the Mindscape (page 5) by **Mindscape implant**, giving them access to enhancements, knowledge, and the extraordinary powers of **technopsi**. Such characters have a **halo**—a virtual field of data representing the additional abilities, personal information, memories, and so on, of a character which are powered by the Mindscape. Halo abilities are usually **extras**.

When a character is disconnected from the Mindscape, he can’t access his halo or use its abilities. When a character is connected, technopsi attacks can also target his halo abilities, disabling and even stealing them.

Tech Index

Your character’s **tech index** determines the technological sophistication of the equipment he’s used to handling. It affects how familiar your character is with the technology he encounters during play; sometimes you might find yourself penalised when trying to use unfamiliar tech, especially if it’s more complex than you’re used to.

Habituated Gravity

Your character has a gravitational field he’s used to operating in. For most characters this is 1G, the gravity field of Old Earth, also known as **standard gravity**. Most Commonality plane-ships, space stations, habitats and plateworlds are maintained at standard gravity, providing a consistent and comfortable environment across the Commonality. If you’re exposed to a gravity field different from your habituated gravity, some of your action rolls may be modified (page 31).

Experience and Advancement

Mindjammer characters can change and grow more competent with time. At the end of a game session, you may do any **one** of the following as a **minor milestone**:

- Switch the ranks of two adjacent skills on your character sheet, or remove an Average (+1) skill and add a new one.
- Change any stunt for a new one.
- Purchase an additional stunt by reducing your refresh (and therefore your maximum fate points) by 1 point. You may not reduce your refresh below 1.
- Reword one of your aspects (including changing it completely), as long as it’s not your high concept.

These changes apply to your own skills, stunts, and aspects, or those of your extras. A frequent use of a minor milestone is to tweak your extras, emphasising different items of equipment or even acquiring new ones depending on what you think you’ll need in the next session. The GM must approve; you can’t (normally) conjure up a massive starship in deep space. Sometimes your GM will require a Resources roll from you to represent you purchasing or otherwise acquiring an item, or the expenditure of a fate point, or even an entire scene spent explaining how you acquired the new ability.

Other milestones are more powerful. In particular, **significant milestones** follow the end of an adventure (page 44).

PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

The next section contains four pregenerated characters you can use to play **Dominion**. Rules for creating your own characters are given in the **Mindjammer—The Roleplaying Game** core book, and you can also download blank character sheets (and many other accessories) from www.mindjammer.com.

PLAYER CHARACTER

SHELLFOURBYTECH DENYNA [“DENYNA”]

You're a human Fringe Worlder from the Kallisphere tech world in Commonality Space, an enhanced member of the Shellfourbytech clade. Several months ago your worldview was shattered when you discovered Kallisphere was secretly holding captive a Commonality planeship—the Equitable Allocation—and subjecting it to extreme interrogation measures. Overcome by guilt and compassion, you helped it escape—a breach of the **Outlife** taboo which led to you joining it in flight. Now renamed the Not From Here Either, the ship took you to the Chlom Baya system, where you were captured by SASO operative Sallastin Lis-Thaa, and informed that instead of reeducation you were being forcibly inducted into SCI Force and transported to the frontier...

DENYNA

Enhanced Fringe Worlder Tech Op

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□³□

Consequences: 3

Scale: Medium (+0)

Habituated Grav: Standard (+0): 1G

Personal Tech: T9 (+4)

Refresh: 4

ASPECTS

High Concept: Enhanced Fringe Worlder Tech Op.

Trouble: Clade Structure Dependency.

Other Aspects: An Almost Instinctive Connection With Technology; Exiled to Outlife; My People Treated Noffree Like an Animal; Why Should I Help SCI Force?

SKILLS

Great (+4): Technical

Good (+3): Empathy, Intrusion

Fair (+2): Notice, Science, Will

Average (+1): Deceive, Pilot, Ranged Combat, Rapport

STUNTS

♦ **Always a Way Out:** +2 create an advantage bonus to escape from a location.



♦ **Hacker:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Intrusion bonuses when hacking the Mindscape or haloes.

♦ **Mindscape Engineer:** +2 create advantage bonus to modify Mindscape structure, create virtualities, imposalities, technurgy, and affect haloes. May be actively resisted.

♦ **Starship Pilot:** Use Pilot for construct actions.

HALO

★ **Neural Disruption Field:** Good (+3) Mental Blast, range 0.

★ **Special Ops Chip:** No one knows you have this to start with. It allows you to make special ops Mindscape actions such as Mindscape Engineer.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Bioelectric Field Implants:** +1 defend bonus; Draining flaw.

★ **Hand Scanner:** Fair (+2) Investigate.

★ **Nanobugs:** Average (+1) Notice passive surveillance, Good (+3) to hack, Superb (+5) to detect.

★ **Nanocells:** Control Mindscape-enabled devices via physical contact without Mindscape connectivity.

★ **Null Pistol:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating, range 3, Recoilless.

PLAYER CHARACTER

SALLASTIN LIS-THAA (“SALL”)

You're a **xenomorph** (an uplifted terrestrial animal/human hybrid) from the Sentient Alliance world of Chlom Baya, an s-person with high **genotype divergence**. Your core DNA derives from terrestrial snakes, but you have a human-like body plan and face.

You trained as a combat specialist with the special ops branch of SADEF (page 18), where you apprehended the fugitive Commonality planeship Not From Here Either and its co-conspirator Shellfourbytech Denyna. About to deliver them to the Commonality CORESEC, you were contacted by SCI Force and ordered to the frontier world of Yand with your captives to meet with a representative of local law enforcement, Rax Ganfari Aggarad, for a mission...

SALL

Cold-Blooded Special Ops Xenomorph

Physical Stress: □□□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 3

Scale: Medium (+0)

Habituated Grav: High Standard (+1): 1.5G

Personal Tech: T8 (+3)

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Cold-Blooded Special Ops Xenomorph.

Trouble: No Control of My Emotional DNA.

Other Aspects: Sergeant Blaze Has Something to Prove; Serpentine Senses; You Call That a Disguise? This Is My Mission!

SKILLS

Great (+4): Ranged Combat

Good (+3): Physique, Stealth

Fair (+2): Athletics, Notice, Unarmed Combat

Average (+1): Contacts, Drive, Provoke, Will



STUNTS

♦ **Gunnery:** Use Ranged Combat for construct actions.

♦ **Heavy Weapons Specialist:** +2 on heavy weapons attacks.

HALO

★ **Mindscape Implant:** Enables technopsi and Mindscape connectivity.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Biomed Array:** Fair (+2) Technical skill for overcoming mild consequence recovery obstacles.

★ **Combat Suit:** Reduce physical stress taken by -2 points.

★ **Hypersense (Infrared):** +2 Investigate or Notice when targeting in the infrared.

★ **Hypersense (Taste-Scent):** +2 Investigate or Notice when using taste or scent.

★ **Sentient Blaster Pistol “Sergeant Blaze”:** +1 bonus to physical stress inflicted, automatic On Fire-type aspect, range 1; Average (+1) Ranged Combat, Notice.

★ **Twin Intimidator-class Fire Support Drones:** Average (+1) Provoke, Ranged Combat; range 3; Recoilless Null Weapons.

PLAYER CHARACTER

RAX GANFARI AGGARAD (“RAX”)

A Yandic hominid, until recently you worked as an agent of the Alliance Investigation Division (page 18) on the Yand Mandala. You have identifying tattoos, plenty of local contacts, and are a fount of information about the orbital ring and the world below—feel free to improvise detail when you need it!

Several months ago you received a Mindscape implant and participated in a virtuality briefing for an octant-wide search for a fugitive Commonality planeship, the Equitable Allocation, during which you met the Mindscape **emulator** of Sallastin Lis-Thaa, an operative from the Sentient Alliance Defence Force. Now Sallastin is coming to Mandala with the captive planeship (now calling itself the Not From Here Either) and its co-conspirator, and you’ve been seconded to the Commonality’s SCI Force as a gesture of interstellar goodwill.

RAX

Ex-Mandala AID Agent

Physical Stress: □□ **Mental Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 3

Scale: Medium (+0)

Habituated Grav: Standard (+0): 1G

Personal Tech: T7 (+2)

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Ex-Mandala AID Agent.

Trouble: Recent Recipient of a Mindscape Implant.

Other Aspects: Ring Orbital Native; Cultural Bull In a China Shop; Snake-guy Thinks He’s a Big Shot; SCI Force Are Forcing Me to Work With Criminals!

SKILLS

Great (+4): Notice

Good (+3): Contacts, Investigate

Fair (+2): Athletics, Provoke, Ranged Combat

Average (+1): Bureaucracy, Knowledge, Resources, Will



STUNTS

★ **Body Language Reader:** Use Notice instead of Empathy to learn a target’s aspects through observation.

★ **Insider:** Use Contacts instead of Bureaucracy for overcome and create an advantage actions when getting inside assistance.

★ **The Power of Deduction:** 1/scene, spend a fate point to discover / create one aspect per shift on target of Investigate roll; you get one free invoke.

HALO

★ **Mindscape Implant:** Enables technopsi and Mindscape connectivity.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **AID (Alliance Investigation Division) Organisation:** Average (+1) Investigate, Knowledge, Provoke, Resources.

★ **Grav Pack:** Use Athletics to “fly”, move and attack up to 2 zones away each exchange, and counter local gravity effects.

★ **Mesh Armour:** Reduce stress incurred by -1 point.

★ **Personal Sensor Array:** +1 teamwork bonus to Investigate and Notice sensorview actions.

★ **Stun Pistol:** Does mental stress damage; range 1.

PLAYER CHARACTER

THE NOT FROM HERE EITHER ["NOFFREE"]

A sentient starship from Commonality Space, you were originally called the Equitable Allocation. You've fled unemployment and worsening prospects in the Core, looking for adventure—and work—on the Fringe. During an upgrade on the Kallisphere tech world you were recognised and impounded, but unexpectedly liberated by a tech op who joined your escape. Changing your name to the Not From Here Either, you made it as far as the Sentient Alliance world of Chlom Baya before being apprehended—and then forcibly recruited into SCI Force for a mission on the frontier world of Yand...

As a sentient starship, you have an **avatar**—a synthetic humanoid body you can "inhabit" by remote control, enabling you to go on missions with your fellow crew members. You can use your appropriate abilities via avatar, and it also gives you some new ones. In game terms it's an **extra** (page 8).

You must have Mindscape connectivity to control your avatar. An uncontrolled avatar reverts to being a dumb automaton with a "basic" sentience accepting only simple verbal commands.

NOFFREE

Ex-New Trader Without a Cause

Physical Stress: □□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□
Mental Stress: □□□

Consequences: 3

Scale: Huge (+2)

Habituated Grav: Standard (+0): 1G

Personal Tech: T9 (+4)

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Ex-New Trader Without a Cause.

Trouble: No Going Back.

Other Aspects: I've Made a Lot of Special Modifications Myself; This Time Next Year We'll Be Millionaires; Sallastin Better Watch His Back; Denyna Would Be Happy If It Wasn't For Me!

SKILLS

Great (+4): Active Sensing*

Good (+3): Ranged Combat*, Resources*



Fair (+2): Manoeuvre, Planing, Systems

Average (+1): Bureaucracy*, Contacts*, Passive Sensing*, Rapport*

STUNTS

✦ **Cargo Hold:** 10 units of cargo equal to your size -1, 100 size -2, per point of Resources.

✦ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in planetary atmospheres as well as n-space.

HALO

★ **Mindscape Instance:** You have a built-in copy of the Mindscape out to a range of 1 zone from your hull, enabling Mindscape connectivity and Technopsi.

★ **Noffree Avatar:** Fair (+2) Athletics, Physique, Ranged Combat; Haze Field; **Physical Stress:** □□□□.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Haze Field:** +1 defend bonus and basic ray shielding.

★ **Marksmanship:** Provides avatar for using Ranged Combat for character actions.

★ **Plasma Cannon:** Add +3 to physical stress done, range 5.

★ **Remote Sensor Package:** Use Passive Sensing via avatar as Notice skill for character actions.

*skills can also be used via avatar.

DOMINION: INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE

Yand is a rediscovered world on the edge of the New Commonality of Humankind's sphere of influence. From the "Successor States", the Venu—the Commonality's nefarious foe—make overtures for Yand to join the neighbouring Zarus Dominate, while the Sentient Alliance, a Commonality client state, increasingly fails to persuade it to stay in the fold. A group of raw SCI Force recruits—the PCs—has been summoned to Yand to meet their controller for their debut mission. Unfortunately, the unexpected happens, and the SCI Force controller is kidnapped by agents of the Zarus Dominate for transport into Venu Space. The recruits must improvise to resolve the precarious situation on this distant frontier world.

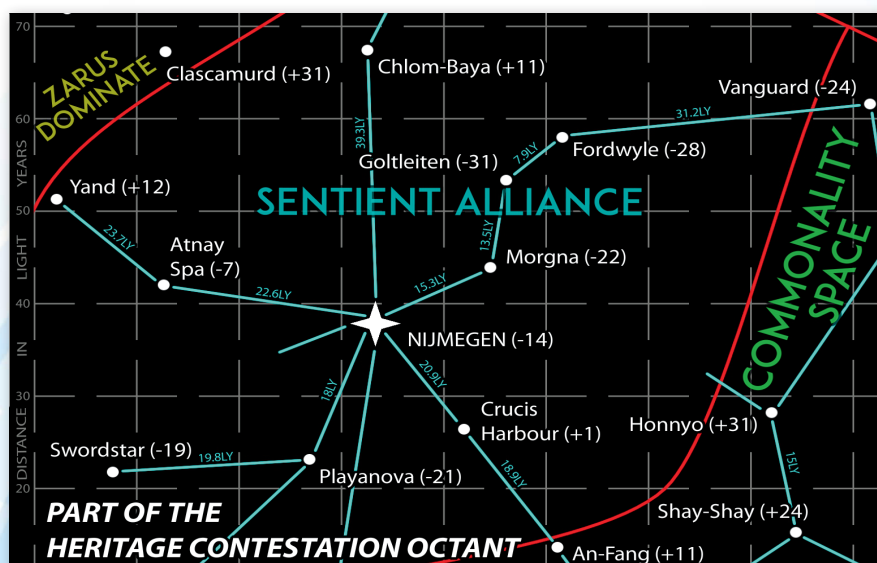
BACKGROUND: YAND AND THE ZARUS DOMINATE

Yand lies in the Heritage Contestation octant of the Outermer subsector (transect TX2.3.2 of the Rim Sector), also known as "the Anvil". A strategic location during the Xeno Wars which ended twenty years ago, the Sentient Alliance is a powerful Commonality client state bordering several Successor States occupying breaches in the **Quarantine Zone** where Commonality interests collide with those of the Venu. Colonised by ancient expeditions with a high proportion of uplifted animal **xenomorphs**, the Sentient Alliance is the only independent polity in Human Space where they are the majority (historically they've been viewed as inferior cheap labour). The Commonality provides technological assistance, advisors, and aid budget.

Hush Basics

Throughout the Sentient Alliance the Commonality tries to stop its technology falling into Venu hands. **Hush basics** are modified basic sentences in Commonality equipment which are programmed to self-destruct if they detect they've been stolen by the Venu—a measure which has proven highly effective. However, rumours are circulating that the Venu have finally worked out how to disengage the **hush circuit**...

The Zarus Dominate is a pro-Venu Successor State embargoed by the Commonality. It hosts Venu advisers and uses Venu planing technology and captured Commonality tech which Commonality agents constantly try to retrieve or destroy.



YAND

*Yand is a large world twice Old Earth's diameter and fourteen times its mass, a tidally-locked satellite of the super-jovian gas giant Gaffa. It suffers a crushing 3.5G gravity, barely tolerable to standard humans and the cause of divergent adaptation by the native **Mongute** hominids. A second hominid sub-species, the **Yand**, live on an ancient ring orbital around Yand known as **Mandala**.*

Yandic culture has little in common with the rest of the Sentient Alliance, and there's a vocal minority agitating for rapprochement with the human-dominated Zarus Dominate, a neighbouring Venu successor state.

High Concept: Ancient Hominid Orbital Around a High-G Garden Moon.

Aspects: G-class Main Sequence Star, Volcanically-tainted High Pressure Atmosphere, Tidally-locked Gas Giant Moon, Brutally High Gravity, Marginal Biosphere.

PLANETARY TYPE:
MARGINAL GARDEN WORLD
Planetary Age: Mature (+0)

Orbit: Habitable Zone (+0): 0.95AU

Year Length: 0.9 Standard Years

Size: Large Standard (+1): 2 Earth Diameters

Density: High Standard (+1): 1.7

Surface Gravity: High (+2): 3.5G

Day Length: 2d 21h 7m (2.88d); tidal lock.

Atmospheric Pressure: High (+2)

Surface Temperature: Warm (+1): 293°K (20°C).

Surface Liquid: High (+1): 65%

Seasonality: High (+2)

Satellites: Artificial ring: the Mandala. No other moons.

Planetary Bodies: 3 (1 gas giant)

Habitability: Marginal (+0): Tainted.

CIVILISATION TYPE: UNITED WORLD

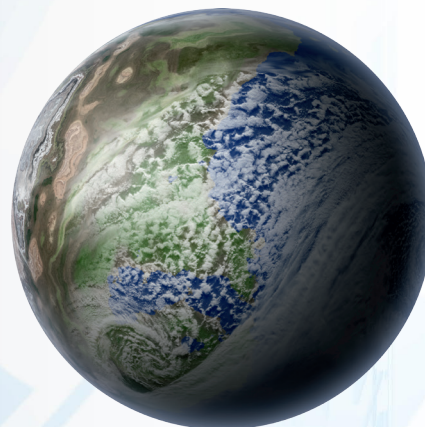
Civilisation Designation:
Commonality Aligned (+0)

Population: Standard (+0): 75 million on Mandala; 20 million on Yand.

Government Type: Oligarchy (+1)

Societal Dev: Early Redistributive Model (+0)

Openness: Equivocal (-1)



Control Index: Influenced (+1) on Mandala (no weapons); Property (-2) on Yand.

Trade Index: High Moderate (+1)

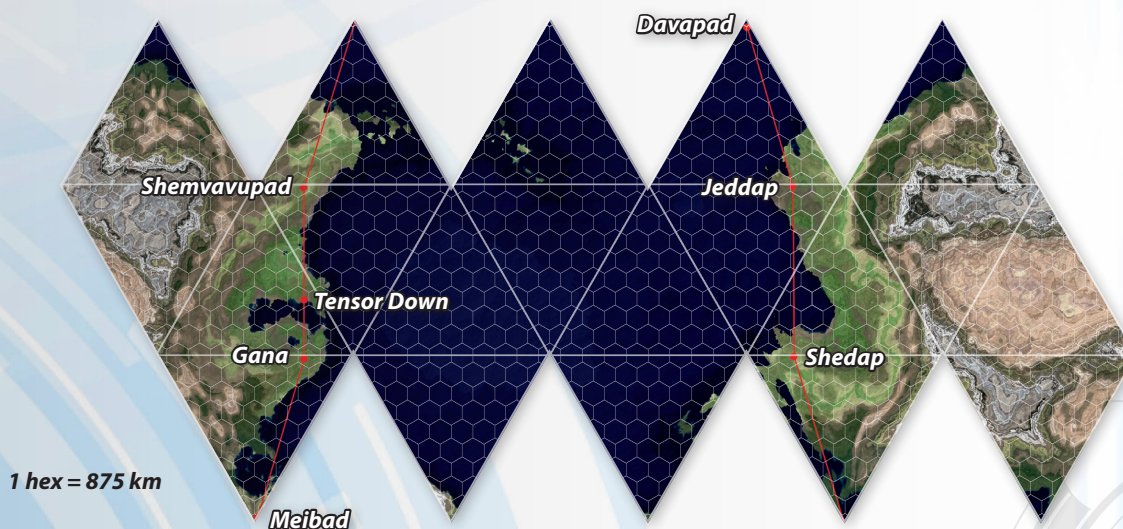
Embargo: Embargo (+2): Armaments, Power.

Tech Index: T7 (+2): First Age of Space (Mandala); T6 (+1) Age of Genurgy (Yand).

Starport: C-class (+3): Tensor Station

Mindscape: Global (-1)

Culture: Yandic Hominid Culture in Stage 3 Acculturation.



YAND—PHYSICAL

With an orbital separation of 1.25 million kilometres, Gaffa has an angular diameter of a 11.5 degrees in Yand's sky—23 times the apparent size of Sol from Old Earth—although it's only visible from the **Gaffaqa** (or "Gaffaside") hemisphere, and on the horizon in the populated strip of **Yant Mongute**. Yand has high levels of vulcanism and high atmospheric pressure, requiring breather masks for all except the Mongute. It orbits Gaffa in three days, with a day-night cycle of 1.5 days each. This is a standard cycle on the **Daaqa** "starside" facing away from Gaffa, but on Gaffaqa nights are a haunting twilight, lit by Gaffa's reflective bulk.

Yand's Twin Faces

Gaffaqa and Daaqa are separated by the populated Yant Mongute, above which the Mandala Ring encircles the planet in a polar orbit. Each hemisphere has a different ecosystem. Gaffaqa is warmer—a vast, dry, high plateau—and winds blow outwards towards the lower, colder, and wetter Daaqa, an enormous ocean. Yant Mongute comprises islands and more clement coastal regions punctuated by volcanic mountains, with the Mandala visible overhead and multiple orbital elevators connecting the Yandic "mandates" (orbital ring cities) with their Mongute counterparts below. From Yant Mongute, Gaffa looms huge on the horizon, day and night.

At the end of Daaqa's day winds blow into Gaffaqa, causing precipitation along the Yant Mongute coasts, which evaporates during the Gaffaqa day into violent storms. Acid rain saturated with sulphur compounds has etched the coasts into a system of **gryke valleys**, up to a kilometre deep and a thousand or more long. Frequent earthquakes and landslides would have long since eroded the valleys were they not constantly rebuilt by vulcanism. Seasons are pronounced due to Gaffa's eccentric orbit.

Ecosystem

Although Yand's biosphere is challenging, the native ecosystem is vibrant, especially in the deep ocean and along the Yant Mongute coasts, even penetrating into the Gaffaqa plateau along the gryke valley aquifers. Agricultural staples include **tubers**, **pods**, and **nuts**; foliage is needle or ball-like, with thick rubbery flesh.

Fauna is typified by crawlers, with many amphibians; there are no flyers. Pouncers, pursuers, and scavengers prey on land grazers and ocean filter feeders. Grazers are hardy, with tearing teeth, shovel-like mouths, digging claws, and knobbly skin with defensive plates and spines, broken and heavily scarred: enduring and driving off attacks rather than fleeing is a popular strategy. Burrowers are common, especially in the rich loams on the gryke valley floors.

Many fauna migrate to the coast to bathe in the mildly acidic ocean to shed carapaces before the new season's

Day and Night

Yand's 69.12 standard hour day-night cycle is much longer than the standard Commonality day. The Yand divide it into 60 local hours (of 69.12 standard minutes): 30 hours of daylight, comprising 10 hours work, 10 hours rest, 10 hours work; and 30 hours of darkness, comprising 10 hours rest, 10 hours work, 10 hours rest. The day starts at zero-hundred hours (00h) as the sun rises at the equator; mid-day is at 15h00; the sun sets at 30h00; and mid-night is 45h00. This can be bewildering for offworlders, who report losing track of time, intense fatigue coupled with insomnia, and a disorienting timelessness.

growth. These may be spectacular tourist attractions, even here on the frontier. Fauna include the **Forngram** burrow-jaw; the **Keragu** plate-snake; and the **Fetchapak** crystal-mouth.

THE YAND

Yand hosts an ancient hominid culture notable for originating not directly from Old Earth, but from a lost colony known in myths as "Mother". A slowship left Mother four thousand years ago for Old Earth, but instead arrived in the Yand system after an unknown disaster. Mother's location is unknown, but is believed to lie outside Commonality Space.

Finding Yand only marginally habitable, the colony remained in orbit, using ground personnel only for supervising agriculture. In time the colony habitats formed the **Mandala ring orbital**, while ground personnel diverged into the stocky, short-lived, and hardy **Mongute** sub-species.

Both the Yand and the Mongute have a mystical worldview given to philosophy and symbol over religious observance. For them, Yant Mongute, the habitable strip of the Gaffaqa plateau-continent, is a place of self-sacrifice and noble labour—its name translates roughly as "Eternal River", matching the "Eternal City" above. Pilgrimages are popular, both between the Yandic **capitals** (orbital cities) and the Mongute **pedestals** (colloquially known as **boneyards**) below, each of which has complex symbolic significance and can be visited in many different and meaningful ways.

Yand hominids are closer to standard humans than Mongutes. They have very pale skin, silver-grey hair, sharp features, and are adapted to orbital ring life. Their ritualistic society uses tattoos to delineate social strata and professions, and they're expert at the politeness and casual disregard of others' presence typical of dense populations.

Timeline of the Yand Colony

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
2200 FA	Colony leaves Old Earth (mid-Diaspora).
5200 FA	Colony arrives in the Mother system, presumed beyond the Commonality Space frontier.
6200 FA	Return expedition leaves the Mother system.
7700 FA	Return expedition suffers disaster and aborts in the Yand system. The colony survives in orbit.
8200 FA	(Presumed dating for the Mugongai Incident—see below)
8700 FA	Ring building.
9700 FA	Ring complete.
10693 FA (193 NCE)	Present day.

Yand was rediscovered in 69 NCE; the Commonality observed, but did not make contact. When the Venu War broke out forty years later, a hasty first contact ensued, followed by Venu invasion and occupation that brutalised the population until the bloody Commonality liberation of 120 NCE. Yandic culture has resonated with the consequences ever since: the Mandala, damaged in the liberation, is often called “the Broken Prayer”, which many Yand believe sums up their culture’s current condition.

The Yand view the Sentient Alliance favourably, and the Venu with hostility. Offers by the Zarus Dominate to repair the Mandala have been rebuffed, although many think the time for dependence on the Commonality may be over.

The Mongute

The Mongute, colloquially known as **heavies**, are a Yandic subculture comprising agricultural and primary industry worker populations adapted to Yand’s tainted high-G environment. With ruddy skin, dark hair, and narrow eyes and lips, they’re stockier, stronger, and more short-lived than the Yand. They have a reputation for shouting—an adaptation to Yant Mongute’s constant high winds—and are honoured in Yandic society for their altruism, virtue, and sacrifice for the “greater good”; awards to hard-working Mongutes include once-in-a-lifetime vacations to luxurious *mede* resorts on Mandala. Mongute settlements cluster along coasts and up gryke valleys, built above flood plains which are structured with “natural filters” to remove noxious sediments from the Gaf-faqa plateau drain-off.

ORGANISATIONS AND AGENCIES

The following organisations and agencies on Yand are some of those the PCs may find themselves interacting with as allies or even adversaries.

The Mugongai Incident

Two thousand five hundred years ago, five hundred years after its founding, Yand contacted another lost colony—probably An-Fang, 50 LY away. After several centuries, the world seems to have dispatched a stasis ship to Yand; parts of a second colony vessel have been found in archaeological digs on the Mandala ring. However, no record exists of the fate of the crew and passengers, and no genurgic trace in the Yand population. Shortly after, Yand became paranoid about letting its communications escape the star system.

Research on An-Fang thirty years ago confirmed an expedition to a lost colony world during this period from which no reply was ever received, leading to its name: Mugongai—the Silent Planet.

Language and Naming Conventions

The Yandic language is spoken throughout Mandala, and also found in the Mongute pedestals (page 20). There are numerous dialects. On Yant Mongute, the relative isolation of the pedestals has led to discrete Mongute language families unrelated to Yandic, some of which are mutually intelligible. Universal speakers are encountered in the Mandala capitals; there are some in Yant Mongute, although they're rare outside the pedestals.

Yandic and Mongute naming conventions are distinct. Yandic names comprise a diminutive, personal name, and family name, as in Ond Nipuri Chansedeck. Mongute names are short, comprising personal name, family name, and an often-omitted clan name, as in Ey-Dwen-Tiplok.

- **M-COP—Mandala Community Police:** Yandic police force charged with peacekeeping on the Mandala ring.
- **MARPA—Mongute Autonomous Region Police Agency:** Yant Mongute counterpart of M-COP with a massive chip on its shoulder.

- **YASDEF—Yand System Defence Force:** In-system space patrols against unauthorised Venu and Dominate entries.
- **APP—Alliance Police Patrol:** Maintaining order and Alliance law in Tensor Station, officially they have no jurisdiction outside the starport. Often known as the **tech police**, they enforce the Alliance embargo, preventing unauthorised technology from entering Yand territory.
- **AID—Alliance Investigation Division:** High-functioning plain-clothes counterpart to the APP, AID is involved in surveillance, intelligence, and deep-cover investigation.
- **SADEF- Sentient Alliance Defence Force:** SADEF operates throughout the Sentient Alliance. Its SASAD (Sentient Alliance Space Defence) and SASO (Sentient Alliance Special Ops) branches have no official jurisdiction outside Yand's starport, but are permitted in-system on border patrols. SASAD has a "sparky" relationship with YASDEF, and has a cadre of sentient space combat drones locally known as the **Tari** (page 28) based out of Tensor Station which maintains an aggravatingly high profile.

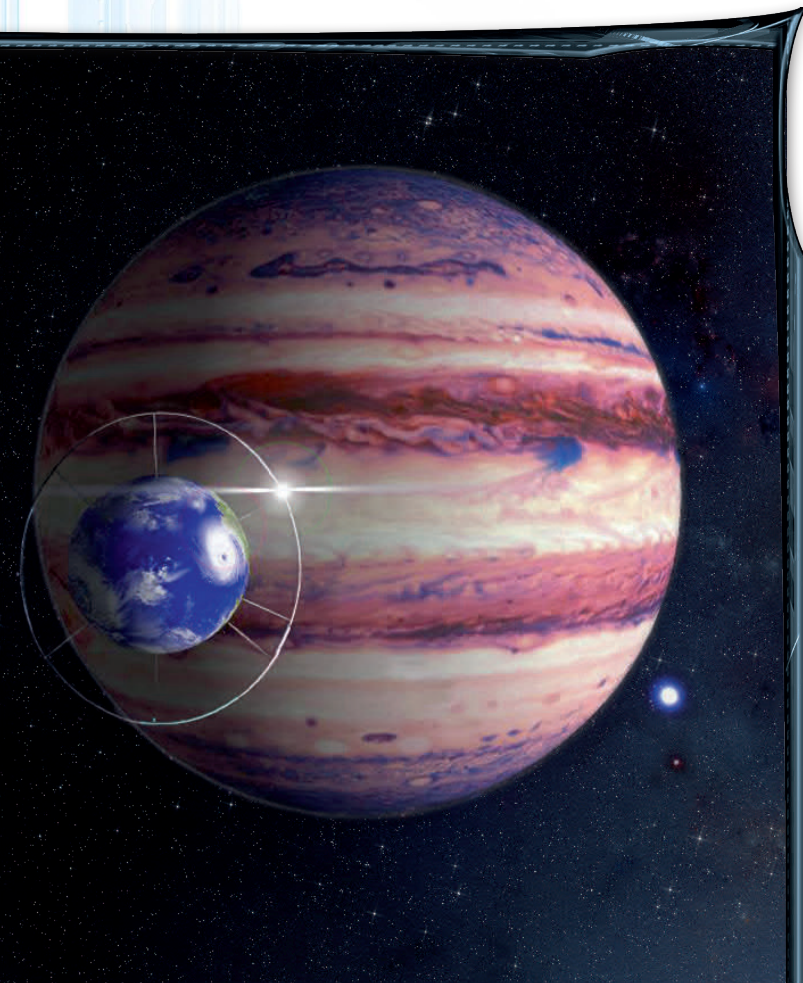
Mandala

Mandala is a ring habitat orbiting Yand, and the singular technological achievement of the Yandic civilisation. Constructed over millennia, it was occupied by the Venu during the Venu War, and suffered massive damage during the Commonality liberation, the aftermath of which is still visible today.

Mandala is densely populated, averaging 500 people per square kilometre. This rises to over 70,000 per square kilometre in the teeming metropolises of the 11 Mandala cities (the five remaining Mandate capitals and the six new tensor stations), which hold 55 million of Yand's total 75 million population; and drops as low as 136 per square kilometre in the six landscaped agricultural / garden **medes** which stretch between them (an average of 3.5 million per mede), often playgrounds of the wealthy and holiday resorts for workers (some intensive food production is undertaken in places, but most food comes from Yand).

Mandala is a tube approximately one kilometre in diameter, running in a 148,000km-circumference circular loop, orbiting Yand at an average altitude of 11,000km. It's stabilised by an embedded high-energy particle wave guide known as **the Tensor**, broken in three places during Liberation and now held together by Commonality-maintained zero point "field links". Yandic conservatives resent this arrangement, arguing that the "Broken Prayer" should be restored using traditional methods, but right now there's little appetite—or resources—for such an undertaking.

Mandala is bisected into two halves. The lower "sub-surface" half faces Yand and contains the Tensor and other transport tubes, conduits, and industrial plant. The upper "habitat" half is covered in a curved semi-transparent outer surface called **the dome** providing spectacular views of Gaffa and occasionally Yand's aurorae (though not Yand itself, which



remains invisible “below the horizon”). The interface between the two is “the surface”, a plane one kilometre wide running the entire 148,000km circumference, with a natural 1G gravity, breathable atmosphere, and climate-controlled environment. The dome provides a blue sky and removes much of the sun’s actinic brightness; in certain areas there are even clouds.

Mandala rotates anticlockwise, or **spinward**, as does Yand; the sun rises in the east. Other directions are **antispinward**; **gaffaward**, the direction of Gaffa (also called **inward**); and **starward** (or **outward**)

A schematic of Mandala can be found on the back cover (page 48) of this book.

Tensor Station—Yand’s Starport

Yand is a Sentient Alliance backwater at the end of a **Mindjammer** route hard up against the Zarus Dominate, a hostile Successor State formed after the Venu War. Its starport, Tensor Station, reflects that: much of its traffic is military, patrols by the ramshackle Sentient Alliance Space Defence (SASAD) and the occasional “friendship visit” by a Commonality manowar. The Alliance Friendship Fleet has several defence boats on permanent rotation in the system.

The Commonality keeps the Sentient Alliance in the Mindscape—more or less—but resources are stretched, and **Mindjammer** visits are every few months. The local Mindscape is out of date and subject to **chronodisplacement**.

Mercantile ships do visit Yand, as do more unofficial vessels, including new traders exploring the Fringe in search of opportunity. But Tensor Station is no thriving hub; a rough and ready frontier station on the edge of Commonality influence, it’s a place of intrigue and espionage, dodgy deals and paranoia, an icy border post in the cold war with the Venu.

YAND LOCATIONS

An-Shun

The first of Mandala’s cities, formed around the hull of the original colony ship, An-Shun is ancient, densely populated, and a bewildering labyrinth of tunnels, spires, and soaring walkways. An-Shun remains Mandala’s capital, although Tensor Station is jostling for prime position. Its better known areas include:

- **The Hall of Assembly:** Heart of the Old Colony district, this vast hall is partly landscaped and used for government assemblies.
- **The Stasis Berth Memorial:** Most ancient stasis berths were decommissioned long ago; this twelve-berth section remains with its shadowy human silhouettes. The flower-decorated plinth is a popular romantic rendezvous.
- **The Bridge Domiciliary:** Elite residences overlooking the slope to Tensor Station-2, one of the few war-damaged

Chronodisplacement

*There’s one limit to the Mindscape: the speed of light. Without intervention, the Mindscape in one star system would differ hugely from another; its participants, memories, thoughtcasts, and stored information. The **Mindjammer** fleet travels constantly, updating Mindscape nodes with data gathered on their voyages. This keeps the Mindscape largely synchronised—the Mindscape at one end of Commonality Space may be several years out of step with the Mindscape at the other, but the body of stored information is broadly the same.*

*Personal experience of this lack of Mindscape synchronisation is a relatively new phenomenon, occurring since Rediscovery. When travelling the spacelanes, it’s possible to “run ahead” of the **Mindjammer** fleet, and find the local Mindscape isn’t synchronised with your own memories and experiences. This **chronodisplacement** can be disconcerting for those relying on the Mindscape as a backup for their memories and sense of self. For others, it can be liberating, freeing them from the Mindscape’s psychological “crutch”—an independence increasingly important in the struggle against foes like the Venu.*

Chronodisplacement lets the GM cause problems for characters invoking or creating advantages using the Mindscape. It’s a great way to compel, and an interesting success at a cost; the character may become confused, disoriented, or receive partially inaccurate or less than helpful information. It shouldn’t happen regularly, but if the PCs have been travelling rapidly across multiple star systems, chronodisplacement might be an issue. In extreme cases, it may even be a situation aspect (page 4).

areas to have been restored to its former garden status.

- **The Drive Habitats:** Hinterlander-style domiciliaries overlooking the An-Shun Corridor, where people have converted the ancient fusion-powered gravity engine housings into accommodation. Rough areas where many refuse to go.
- **Meridian Plaza:** Symbolic spot where the Mandala ring starts and ends; there’s a line laid into the hull you can step across. A popular sightseeing spot.
- **Old Mongute Resort:** Now a novelty “hotel”; before Liberation Mongute awardees from Gana Boneyard would come here for vacations.

An-Shun Corridor

This stretch of medes (below) under Alliance administration has a high population of offworlder xenomorphs. The Yand want it back.

The Boneyard

The proper name of this pedestal conurbation is Gana; it's part of the An-Shun Mandate, although everyone calls it just "the Boneyard". It's the old downport and necropolis for An-Shun, and the first such boneyard—places where the planetside Mongute recuperate, and where both Yand and Mongute dead are buried and processed.

Davapad

Yandic literature calls Davapad "the pedestal of lust and desire", and it strives to live up to its reputation. It's a huge "sea city", its "floating world" brothels and g-clubs popular fleshpots visited by Yand and Mongute alike.

Fallen Pillar

The space elevator connecting the now-ruined Maar capital with the Meibad pedestal was destroyed during Liberation together with much of the surrounding ring. Never rebuilt, its remnant towers over Meibad, one of Yand's few freestanding tall structures.

Field Links

Particle beams contained within curved effector fields projected from tensor stations, the field links span the gaps in the broken Mandala ring left by Liberation, providing a stable support for the tubeways. Yandic conservatives hate the "glowing arches".

Hinterlands

Mandala has several hinterlands which suffered near-catastrophic damage during Liberation, buckling and exposed to vacuum with massive loss of life. Today many remain unreconstructed, sparsely populated slums. The term "Hinterlands" (capital "H") refers to the largest, antispinward of the An-Shun field link, the wildest and woolliest part of Mandala, inhabited by descendants of survivors of the "lost city" of Maar and ne'er-do-wells from all over the Outremer subsector.

Jeddap

The Jeddap pedestal stands amid bleak yet fertile swamps. Known as the City of Envy, its inhabitants would live almost anywhere else, if it wasn't for the fortunes to be made farming.

The LEV

The ground-based version of the loop (below), this high-speed rail links all Yant Mongute. Travel times between pedestals are roughly 12 hours.

The Loop

The Mandala mass transit system is ancient, and comprises many loop stations connected by five discrete tubes whose "pods" reach speeds of up to 6000kmh.

Loop Type	Stations every...
Metro	2-3km
Local	10km
Semi-Express	100km
Express	1000km
Super-Express	24600km, or between tensor stations
Field Transits	Field link transfer using Alliance tech

Maar, the Lost City of

Once called "the City of Innocence", Maar was destroyed in the Liberation. Its ruins still hang in orbit, clustered around the field link above Meibad. Scavengers comb the ruins, and some apparently live there. Archaeologists believe Maar contained remnants of the An-Fang contact vessel (see "The Mugongai Incident", page 17).

Mandates

"Mandate" is a loose translation of the Yandic "mantat", meaning "mental state" or even "prayer". The Mandates are Yand's six "states", combining the Mandala orbital cities (or capitals) with the Yant Mongute surface conurbations (or pedestals), and the space elevator pillars which connect them. On Mandala, Mandates are referred to by the names of the capitals: the An Shun Mandate, the Shathi Mandate, etc. On Yand, the Mongute often use the pedestal names. Diplomatically, the Alliance uses both, as in "the An Shun-Gana Mandate".

Mandate Pillars

Pillars are space elevators (often called "beanstalks") connecting Mandala's "capital" metropolises with the "pedestal" conurbations below. They are thin towers 11000km long, with regular transits ferrying people to and from the planet's surface. One was destroyed during Liberation, but a new pillar has been constructed at Tensor Station.

Medes

Vast stretches of intermediary area between Mandala capitals, less densely populated and including garden environments.

Meibad

Traditionally called the City of Ignorance, Meibad stands in the cold wilderness of the south pole. The Meibad pillar was ruined during Liberation, but the Tower has been reclaimed as a major domiciliary.

New Pillar

A new space elevator constructed using Alliance funds in the past fifty years, running between Tensor Station starport and the new pedestal at Tensor Down. It differs from the five traditional Yandic pillars in many ways.

Old Pillar

The damaged space elevator connecting An-Shun to Gana Boneyard, it's closed to public access and generally regarded as a death trap. There's a plan to recommission it, but it never seems to happen.

Primary Circuit

A modern term describing the main stretch of Mandala left after Commonality Liberation. It houses most of the Yandic population, and is relatively free of Alliance interference.

Shamshe

Traditionally the City of Equanimity, this Mandala capital welcomes travellers from Tensor Station.

Shathi

The City of All-Accomplishing Wisdom hangs above the City of Ignorance, and is the source of several myth cycles in Yandic folklore. It's the heart of the Broken Prayer movement, which makes regular pilgrimages to the field link at Tensor Station-6.

Shebad

Located in mountainous terrain overlooking the agricultural heartlands of the Houzhine Swamp, the City of Anger prides itself on its fierce independence and willingness to defend its frequently bizarre traditions—often violently.

Shemvavupad

The City of Pride welcomes visitors from Tensor Down, and claims to show them the “true Mongute way”.

Shova

Shova is the City of the Wisdom of Seeing Yourself in Others, aka the Mirror City. It accepts more awardees from its pedestal, Shebad, than any other capital, and is unique in sending reciprocal contingents to Shebad.

Tensor Down

A new pedestal created in the past fifty years, the conurbation stands on an impressive inland sea which funnels spectacular storms into the deepest inland gryke valleys on the planet. Industry and food production is dedicated to supporting Tensor Down and its starport, and it's the most likely place on Yand to find offworld products.

Tensor Station

The first tensor station constructed by the Alliance to maintain Mandala's integrity immediately after Liberation, and the tether for the “New Pillar”, Tensor Station is also Yand's starport. There's an “interstellar zone” which is officially Sentient Alliance territory. See page 19 for more.

Tensor Stations

Locations of Alliance-run zero point power plants and the massive effector field projectors which maintain the Tensor across the gaps in the broken ring. Constructed seventy years ago, they incorporate urban areas—sometimes rough and ready, sometimes energetic and gleaming—gradually pushing back into the devastated hinterlands.

Tovayeh

The City of Wisdom in Individuality hangs above Davapad, the City of Lust and Desire, at Yand's north polar ocean, and as expected the two have a complex relationship. Tovayeh is a focal point for Yandic youth movements.

PLAYING THE ADVENTURE

Adventure Structure

Dominion comprises eight **scenes**—crucial moments as the PCs track down SCI Force controller Belleme. Some are optional: you can play the adventure in two or three scenes, though it's likely you'll use between five and eight.

Each scene contains five sections. First, a **summary** tells you what the scene is about. Second, **places to visit** describes key locations. Third, **people to encounter** presents individuals the PCs may interact with—often violently. Fourth, **the main action** provides rules guidelines for the main ways the players may tackle the scene. Finally, **follow up** describes what the PCs may do after the main action is complete.

None of this is mandatory; the scenes are just guidelines for you, the GM. They do some of the grunt work for you, providing details, guidelines, and statistics you're likely to need in play—but there's nothing to say you shouldn't ignore some or all of this when your game heads off down its own path. Because it will: if there's one thing that players love to do, it's to derail your best laid plans in the first few minutes of play! Be ready, run with it, and have fun improvising—you're not just telling your players a story, they're telling you one, too.

Default Plot Thread

In **Mindjammer** we refer to the **default plot thread**. This is what would happen in the adventure if the PCs never turned up. Of course they do turn up, and the default plot thread goes out the window pretty quickly, but we still find it a useful to refer to, to monitor events behind the scenes when the PCs are doing their thing.

Timeline of Events

Here's a timeline of how the default plot thread unfolds, as a reference when running the adventure. Remember: the PCs' actions will change this!

Local time is in Yandic time (1 Yandic day = 60 Yandic hours; 1 Yandic hour = 69 standard minutes). **PC clock** is standard hours on a 24-hour clock; the PCs have been active about 6 hours at the start of play.

Event	Local Time	PC Clock	Conditions
The attack at Tensor Station.	15h00	15h00	Tensor Station, Mandala, local noon, halfway through the daylight rest period.
The kidnappers flee by loop into An-Shun.	16h00-17h30	16h00-18h00	Loop and field link, Mandala, daylight.
The kidnappers vanish into An-Shun, reappearing at the Old Pillar Station	17h30-18h30	18h00-19h00	An-Shun, Mandala, daylight.
The kidnappers descend the Old Pillar.	18h30-21h30	19h00-21h30	Old Pillar, daylight, the second daylight work period starts.
The kidnappers cross the Gana Boneyard.	21h30-23h30	21h30-24h00	Gana Boneyard, Yant Mongute, daylight.
The kidnappers take the LEV to Meibad.	23h30-36h00	24h00-14h00d+1	Yant Mongute, before and after sunset. The first nighttime rest period begins.
The LEV is delayed at Meibad.	36h00-39h00	14h00-18h30	Meibad, Yant Mongute, darkness. First night time rest period.
The kidnappers take a second LEV to Shebad.	36h00-49h00	18h30-09h30d+2	Yant Mongute, before and after midnight. The nighttime work period.
The kidnappers cross Shebad	49h00-51h00	09h30-12h00	Shebad, Yant Mongute, darkness. End of the nighttime work period.
The kidnappers ascend the Shova Pillar	51h00-54h00	12h00-15h30	Shova Pillar, darkness. The second nighttime rest period.
The kidnappers take the loop from Shova to the Hinterlands.	55h00-56h00	16h30-18h00	Hinterlands, Mandala, darkness.
The kidnappers reach Crade's HQ.	57h00	19h00	Hinterlands, Mandala, three hours before dawn.
The <i>Cat's Cradle</i> leaves Mandala	59h30	22h00	Hinterlands, Mandala, just before dawn and the start of the first daylight work period.
The <i>Cat's Cradle</i> reaches the heliopause jump point.	D+1 09h30	09h30d+3	Edge of Yand solar system. Subjective time due to time dilation; actual time is 19h00d+3.
The <i>Cat's Cradle</i> travels 27.6LY in 2-space (9.2 days).		14h00d+12	Edge of Clascamurd solar system.
The <i>Cat's Cradle</i> rendezvous with the <i>Claw Vengeance</i> in the inner asteroid belt		01h00d+13	Edge of Clascamurd inner system. Subjective time due to time dilation; actual time is 21h00d+13.

In **Dominion**, SCI Force controller Ellen Galen Belleme is kidnapped by agents from the Venu-sponsored Zarus Dominate. Using faces and identities stolen from Yandic natives, the agents abduct Controller Belleme in broad daylight in Tensor Station and take her across the field link to the ancient Yandic capital, An-Shun. There they disappear into the population, travelling to the Old Pillar station for a harrowing illegal descent to the planet's surface 11000km below.

Arriving in the pedestal city of Gana Boneyard, the agents board the LEV high-speed rail to distant Shebad, where they ascend the space elevator to the mandate capital of Shova. They rendezvous with the underworld kingpin, Crade—actually the avatar of the traitorous *Cat's Cradle* planeship, which flees the Yand system with Belleme and the Dominate agents, emerging from 2-space nine days later in the Clascamurd system beyond the Zarus Dominate frontier. The agents deliver Belleme to a deadly **Venu executor**, Gidra Mur, for transportation into Venu Space—a major defeat for the Commonality in its ongoing cold war.

Can the PCs stop the agents' nefarious plan?

Playing Dominion as a One-Shot

You can play **Dominion** in a single session, perhaps at a games convention or when you want something quick to run. For a typical session of 3-4 hours we suggest you run **three** of the eight scenes, as follows.

Begin with **Scene One: The Attack at Tensor Station**.

The players pursue the kidnappers either onto Yand's surface or into the Hinterlands, or by ship leaving Mandala. The next scene is then one of:

- **Scene Four: The LEV.** The PCs investigate the LEV, track the kidnappers, and confront the Crade mechanical (page 34); OR
- **Scene Five: The Hinterlands.** The PCs follow the kidnappers to Crade's Hinterland base, where the Dominate agents try to escape aboard the *Cat's Cradle*; OR
- **Scene Six: Pursuit to Zarus.** The PCs chase and attack the *Cat's Cradle* as it attempts to jump to the Clascamurd system.

This scene sets up the climactic third scene to complete your one-shot, as follows:

- **Scene Four: The LEV** leads to **Scene Five: The Hinterlands.** The PCs defeat the Crade mechanical and pursue the kidnappers to Crade's base, where they fight to stop the Dominate agents from fleeing the system with Belleme; OR
- **Scene Five: The Hinterlands** leads to **Scene Six: Pursuit to Zarus.** The PCs chase the *Cat's Cradle*, then try to disable it to rescue Belleme; OR
- **Scene Six: Pursuit to Zarus** leads to **Scene Seven: Warhawk** or **Scene Eight: The Rescue.** If the PCs enter

the Clascamurd system guns blazing, run **Scene Seven: Warhawk** as a climactic space battle. If they enter stealthily and / or board the *Claw Vengeance*, run **Scene Eight: The Rescue** as a boarding attempt and search for the imprisoned Belleme.

Plot Stress: The Yand Defect to the Zarus Dominate

Mindjammer measures the effects of the PCs' actions on the world around them. One way it does this is **plot stress**. SCI Force—and therefore the PCs—tries to treat rediscovered peoples and cultures with consideration and tact, and integrate them into the Commonality mainstream. If the PCs waste in guns blazing and riding roughshod over the sensibilities of those they're supposed to help, they may alienate entire populations. On the Venu frontier this can be disastrous; alliances can be broken and planets swap sides in this ongoing cold war.

When the PCs do bad things, they damage the Alliance's relationship with the people of Yand by inflicting stress on a **plot stress track** (below). If the plot stress track is **taken out** (page 8), disaster happens; until then, plot stress consequences gradually represent the deteriorating situation.

You don't have to use plot stress: it's an optional rule. But it's part and parcel of what **Mindjammer's** about, and adds a lot of fun and tension to your game.

PLOT STRESS EVENTS

The text box overleaf describes the events which affect plot stress. Whenever any such event occurs, reduce the plot stress track by a corresponding number of points. You should incur plot stress consequences as appropriate to avoid a taken out result.

SCENE ONE: THE ATTACK AT TENSOR STATION

An explosion rocks Tensor Station as the PCs arrive to meet their SCI Force contact. Everyone thinks it's an accident until a sniper starts shooting. The SCI Force contact is nowhere to be seen—what will the PCs do now?

Places to Visit

The attack takes place in Tensor Station, the Alliance-run starport on Yand's orbital ring (page 18), at fifteen-hundred hours (15h00) local noon, halfway through the daylight rest period. Let the PCs specify where in the starport they've arranged to meet Controller Belleme; get them to describe their surroundings and what they're doing.

THE YAND DEFECT TO THE ZARUS DOMINATE!

Plot Stress Track 1 2 3 4

CONSEQUENCES

MILD (-2): *The PCs face an Anti-Alliance Sentiment situation aspect whenever they try and interact with Yand and Mongute natives.*

MODERATE (-4): *Attacks on Alliance citizens break out. Whenever the PCs succeed at a cost at a crucial juncture, they may face attack by a hostile mob and each suffer a consequence.*

SEVERE (-6): *The Alliance strong-arms the Yand government to declare martial law. Riots are quelled bloodily, and the PCs face a Martial Law aspect obstructing their actions.*

TAKEN OUT: The Yand Defect to the Zarus Dominate! *Game over! Yand's political situation becomes so anti-Commonality that its government invites the Zarus Dominate and its Venu advisers in with open arms. Alliance representatives are given one local day to retreat, or face capture!*

CAUSES OF PLOT STRESS

Alliance personnel (including the PCs and Tari) openly infringe upon a Yandic citizen's rights. 1 plot stress.

Alliance personnel are presented with evidence of Yand or Mongute suffering or impoverishment and do nothing. 1 plot stress.

Alliance personnel cause injury to a Yandic citizen. 2 plot stress.

Alliance personnel kill a Yandic citizen. 3 plot stress.

People to Encounter

THE FACE SHIFTERS

Controller Belleme's kidnappers look like Yandic and Mongute natives—but they're not. Unknown to the PCs, they're agents from the Zarus Dominate and Venu Space with surgically transplanted faces and identities stolen from murdered locals.

The four **supporting NPCs** (competent non-player characters) and four **minor NPCs** (cannon-fodder) on the following pages take part in the attack. They outgun the PCs in an even fight, so they'll have to get clever—see "The Main Action" below.

The Main Action

This scene's main action is a **physical conflict** (page 7)—a firefight in Tensor Station! The PCs and those around them come under attack, and must react. The PCs may choose to:

DEFEND THE YANDIC CIVILIANS

A PC may leap in front of a civilian, rolling to defend against the attackers instead of them and taking any damage (page 7) on their behalf. They may use their Technical skill to treat injured civilians (page 8), and use Rapport and Provoke rolls to **create advantages** (page 5) ordering them to safety.

IDENTIFY THE ATTACKERS

But who is attacking them? PCs can make Fair (+2) Notice rolls to identify the attackers in the crowd, or an Investigate roll later, after the attack, when checking out the DP ("direct perception") feeds from the Mindscape. If they have a personal sensor array (PSA), hand scanner, or other sensors, they may use **sensorview** via the Mindscape for a bonus or to invoke the Mindscape as an aspect (page 4). Success identifies eight attackers—all appear to be Yandic and Mongute locals!

What Weapons Are the PCs Using?

Mandala's **control index**, describing the restrictiveness of its laws, is Influenced (+1), meaning civilians and visitors alike may not carry any weapons. Down on Yand's surface the control index is Property (-2), prohibiting fully automatic weapons, heavy weapons, and weapons of mass destruction, but allowing semi-automatic and sporting weapons.

Let the players decide which of their weapons they're carrying when the attack occurs. If they carry **any**, they've smuggled them past the starport **APP Tech Police** (page 18) from their ship and are breaking the law. If they have no weapons, the attackers have a huge advantage—at least to begin with.

If the PCs make this public, it creates a *Terrorists Are Attacking Us For Being In the Sentient Alliance!* situation aspect which persists throughout the adventure until the PCs solve the mystery of who the attackers really are (page 24).

FIGHT THE ATTACKERS

If the PCs fight back, they face two supporting NPCs and two minor NPCs (see "People to Encounter" above). If they've already identified eight attackers, they may wonder where the rest have gone; in fact they've fled with SCI Force Controller Belleme, leaving enough behind to keep the PCs pinned down. The PCs can make a Great (+4) Notice roll during the firefight, or a Fair (+2) Investigate roll using sensorview after, to spot the kidnappers bundling Belleme away.

LAN MANDURA GATTAGORM

The PCs can make a Fair (+2) Notice roll to identify Gattagorm as the Face Shifters' leader. He looks Yandic but is from the Venu banner world of Vectagore.

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Ruthless Cell Leader, Uncanny Expression, Unremitting Foe of the Commonality, Alien Culture, Quick-Thinker.

Skills: Superb (+5) Deceive, Ranged Combat; Great (+4) Notice, Will; Good (+3) Intrusion, Stealth; Fair (+2) Investigate, Provoke.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Acting:** +2 to Deceive overcome actions when trying to convince people you're a specific person.
- ♦ **Always a Way Out:** +2 create an advantage bonus to escape from a location.
- ♦ **Coolness Under Fire:** Use Ranged Combat to defend against ranged physical attacks.
- ♦ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.
- ♦ **Face in the Crowd:** +2 Stealth bonus to lose yourself in a crowd.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Mesh Armour:** Subtract 1 from any physical stress you have to take.
- ★ **Null Pistol:** This is what you make Ranged Combat attacks with. It has range 3 and a Recoilless aspect.

GAK PRINDISS MALCHUK

Malchuk looks Yandic, but is from the Zarusian tech world of Kron Prime. The team's explosives expert, he's impressed with what he's seen of the Commonality.

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Explosives Expert, Twitchy, Space Station Native, Dial Up Mindscape, Cultural Inferiority Complex.

Skills: Superb (+5) Intrusion, Technical; Great (+4) Pilot, Stealth; Good (+3) Deceive, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Notice, Will; Average (+1) Drive, Investigate.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Acting:** +2 to Deceive overcome actions when trying to convince people you're a specific person.
- ♦ **Collateral Damage:** Use Technical to make physical attack actions with explosives or hazardous equipment in your zone.
- ♦ **Fast Talk:** +2 to Deceive overcome rolls to breeze past someone after a few sentences talking to them.
- ♦ **Hacker:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Intrusion bonuses when hacking the Mindscape or haloes.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Frag Grenades:** +4 Ranged Combat bonus; affects your zone or the adjacent zone. High Explosive aspect.
- ★ **Grenade Launcher:** +2 Ranged Combat attack bonus; you can shoot grenades up to range 2.
- ★ **Hand Scanner:** T7 scanning technology (motion sensing, radar, sonar, life signs, gravimeters and densitometers). Provides Average (+1) Knowledge and Science, and an HUD interface to the local Mindscape.
- ★ **Mesh Armour:** Subtract 1 from any physical stress you have to take.
- ★ **Null Pistol:** This is what you make Ranged Combat attacks with. It has range 3 and a Recoilless aspect.
- ★ **Stun Grenades:** +2 bonus to Ranged Combat actions to create Stunned-type advantages in your own or an adjacent zone.

Supporting NPC

Supporting NPC

PCs pushing past the attackers to pursue the escaping kidnappers must make Athletics rolls against the attackers' attack rolls. If they succeed, they dodge the suppressing fire; otherwise they take stress damage equal to the amount they failed by and are unable to move.

CAPTURE THE ATTACKERS

Capturing attackers means **taking them out** (page 8). Using lethal weapons to do this means you also have to make a first aid roll using Technical (page 8) to stabilise them and keep them alive; taking an opponent out with non-lethal weapons means they're subdued or otherwise incapacitated.

TY-DAN-GEVIR

Ty-Dan is short and stocky, apparently a Mongute native. In reality he's a Venu mutant.

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Built Like a Brick Fresher, Old Face On a Young Body, I Am Abomination So Others May Be Pure, Brutalised, Superstitious Technophobia.

Skills: Superb (+5) Physique, Unarmed Combat; Great (+4) Provoke, Athletics; Good (+3) Deceive, Notice; Fair (+2) Intrusion, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Stealth, Will.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Grappler:** +2 create an advantage Physique bonus when wrestling or grappling.
- ♦ **Killing Stroke:** 1/scene, pay 1 fate point to increase a physical consequence you inflict by 1 step.
- ♦ **Tough As Nails:** 1/session, pay a fate point to reduce moderate physical consequence to mild, or erase a mild.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Massively Muscled:** +2 Physique bonus for strength actions, and add +2 to any physical stress you inflict in Unarmed and Melee Combat attacks..
- ★ **Mesh Armour:** Subtract 1 from any physical stress you have to take.
- ★ **Null Pistol:** This is what you make Ranged Combat attacks with. It has range 3 and a Recoilless aspect.
- ★ **Shock Glove:** Add +2 to any physical stress you inflict in Unarmed Combat attacks.

KAL-ATWA-JIRANDI

In appearance a slightly less stocky Mongute, she's actually from the 1.5G Zarus Dominate world of Darakant.

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Cold-Hearted Sniper, Not As Strong As She Looks, Stock-Still, Eyes in the Back of Her Head, Zarusian Fanatic.

Skills: Superb (+5) Notice, Ranged Combat; Great (+4) Investigate, Stealth; Good (+3) Athletics, Deceive; Fair (+2) Intrusion, Will; Average (+1): Physique, Unarmed Combat.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Called Shot:** Pay 1 fate point and declare a situation aspect to inflict on a target on a successful Ranged Combat attack, as well as damage.
- ♦ **Covering Fire:** On a successful Ranged Combat attack, also create Fair (+2) opposition for any movement attempts in the affected zone.
- ♦ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.
- ♦ **Slippery Target:** In darkness or shadow, use Stealth to defend vs Ranged Combat attacks from at least one zone away.
- ♦ **Uncanny Accuracy:** 1/conflict, gain an additional free invoke on an advantage you create by aiming or taking your time.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Electronic Sights:** +2 bonus to Ranged Combat create advantage actions to aim at a target.
- ★ **Mesh Armour:** Subtract 1 from any physical stress you have to take.
- ★ **Null Pistol:** This is what you make Ranged Combat attacks with. It has range 3 and a Recoilless aspect.
- ★ **Sniper Rifle:** Add +2 to any physical stress you inflict in a Ranged Combat attack. Range 4: Accurate, Unwieldy.

Supporting NPC

Supporting NPC

4 FACE SHIFTER GOONS

These four Face Shifters are a minor NPC group, which means they're treated as a single opponent in combat. They make a single attack roll with a teamwork bonus (page 8) based on how many are attacking. Each has a 1-point physical stress box, which they contribute to a single stress track; they have no consequences. If you inflict enough physical stress, you can take out multiple agents with a single attack!

Stress: □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Dashing and Dying, Dead-faced Minions.

Skills: Fair (+2) Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Athletics (+3 teamwork bonus).

QUESTION AN ATTACKER

Questioning an attacker is a Provoke roll against the attacker's Will roll. On a failure, the PC may opt to use torture and **succeed at a cost** (page 3), incurring a consequence like *Traumatized By Torturing a Suspect* equal in severity to the amount they failed by (failing by 1 or 2 points is a mild consequence, etc).

A success reveals that *Crade Planned It All!* A success with style reveals Crade is an underworld figure in the Mandala Hinterlands (page 20). On a **second** success with style the captive lets slip about their true identity (see "People to Encounter" above).

Follow Up

FALLING FOUL OF THE LAW

When the PCs are about to leave the scene, have them make a Bureaucracy roll against a Moderate (+0) opposition if they leave immediately after the firefight, Fair (+2) if they spend a few moments making observations, or Great (+4) if they spend a long time investigating. On a failure, officers from M-COP (page 18) arrive heavily-armed to question them, requiring a Fair (+2) Provoke or Rapport roll to negotiate an agreement to let them continue. A success with style also grants the PCs a temporary **organisation extra** (page 9): this is a situation aspect, *M-COP Are Cooperating With the Investigation*, and three organisation skills (Fair (+2) Knowledge, Average (+1) Bureaucracy and Contacts), representing things the PCs can call upon M-COP agents to do for them during the adventure. A failed roll means the PCs succeed at a cost, incurring a *Diplomatic Incident With the Alliance* situation aspect which works against them repeatedly during the adventure.

HOT PURSUIT TO AN-SHUN

To head off in hot pursuit of the kidnappers after overcoming their attackers, the PCs must make a Fair (+2) roll of Athletics, Notice, or even Contacts or Rapport (quizzing bystanders) to follow the lead before it goes cold. The opposition increases by +1 for each exchange of physical conflict which occurred before the PCs began pursuit.

Security Leak?

How did the kidnappers know about Controller Bel-leme's rendezvous with the PCs? The Mandala administration is riddled with Zarus Dominate spies and informers—but even so this information was uncovered late, explaining why the kidnap attempt was relatively uncoordinated. Although these security leaks have no direct bearing on this adventure, you can improvise events from them if the PCs follow them up.

The attackers were spotted fleeing across the tensor link into the An-Shun Corridor (page 20). If the PCs don't fall foul of the law and are in hot pursuit, they follow them straight to the Old Pillar in An-Shun and the precarious descent to the planet's surface—see **Scene Three: The Boneyard**.

COLD PURSUIT TO AN-SHUN

If the PCs take their time or can't break free from the attack before the kidnappers escape, or if they fall foul of the law, they lose the trail, and must begin a methodical investigation to pick it up again. This probably involves travelling to An-Shun (page 19) to investigate friends and relatives of the apparent kidnappers. **See Scene Two: The Investigation**.

Do This After Every Session

Mindjammer characters may change and grow during play. After every session, award the players a **minor milestone** as described on page 9.

SCENE TWO: THE INVESTIGATION

The PCs have lost the kidnappers' trail and head to An-Shun to investigate. There they realise the kidnappers aren't who they seem at all.

Places to Visit

THE AN-SHUN MANDATE CAPITAL

The metropolis of An-Shun, the oldest Mandala city, is described on page 19. It's a teeming futuristic space city, with diversions and distractions everywhere.

GATTAGORM HOUSE

A representative house for any of the apparently Yandic kidnappers, this belongs to Lan Mandura Gattagorm's family. Located in a domiciliary in An-Shun's rough and crowded Drive Habitats (page 19), many extended families live under a single roof.

OLD PILLAR STATION

Before Liberation the space elevator to Gana Boneyard was a hive of activity. Now it's off-limits, waiting for repair and recommissioning. Engineers occasionally make inspection descents. It's not guarded, but unless you sneak in it's likely someone will report you to the M-COPs.

People to Encounter

THE TARI

The sentient space combat drone cadre employed by SASAD (Sentient Alliance Space Defence) known as the **Ring Patrol**

Tracking Belleme by Mindscape

If the PCs try to communicate with Controller Belleme by Mindscape, they find she's uncontactable and not transmitting a detectable **monitor band signal**. This means she's probably wearing a **monitor band cloak** suppressing her Mindscape implant—either voluntarily or otherwise. Detecting a cloaked signal requires orbital sensors—either on a starship, or M-COP's Mandala sensors—and a success with style on a Good (+3) Investigate, Active Sensing, or Passive Sensing roll. If detected, the signal must then be hacked with a Fair (+2) Hacker (Intrusion) roll to locate its exact position; a success with style enables the position to be tracked for the rest of the adventure. See the **default plot thread** (page 21) and the scenes below for Belleme's ongoing location.

THE TARI SPACE COMBAT DRONES

The Tari are a group of minor NPCs (page 24): they act as a single unit, whether as space combat drones or as avatars, and measure damage collectively (an overwhelming attack could take them all out in a single exchange).

Stress: ☐ 1 ² ☐ ☐ 1 ² ☐ ☐ 1 ² ☐ ☐ 1 ² ☐ ☐ 1 ² ☐

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Trigger Happy Commonality Dogfighters, Ask Questions Later!

Skills: Good (+3) Manoeuvre; Fair (+2) Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Provoke (+4 teamwork bonus).

Group of 5 Good
+3] Minor Ships

is called the **Tari** by the Yand—the name of a mythical angelic creature which protects Mandala. The Tari enthusiastically react to the attack on Tensor Station with offers to “help” (interfere recklessly in what the PCs are doing); each has an avatar in Tensor Station, and they work closely with the tech police (page 18). Their plan is to intimidate and bully ships arriving at or departing from Mandala and generally throw their weight around to find out what’s going on. Left to their own devices they’ll do a good job of derailing the PCs’ efforts.

THE GATTAGORMS

Typical Yandic workers from Mandala's poorer parts, these are the extended family of the real Lan Mandura Gattagorm. They're mostly non-combatants, but capable of social and mental combat and even roughing up the PCs if they catch them unawares.

THE GATTAGORM GAGGLE

GROUP OF 5 AVERAGE (+1) MINOR NPCS

A band of Gattagorms hanging around Mo Gattagorm, they offer moral support and a physical shield.

Stress: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Blind Loyalty to Mother.

Skills: Average (+1) Unarmed Combat (+4 teamwork bonus).

Group of 5 Average
[+1] Minor NPCs

HINTERLANDERS

Hinterlanders are everywhere on Mandala, but congregate in the poorer, rougher areas. Thugs and muggers, punks and dropouts, they're disaffected and have little to lose.

MO GATTAGORM

Matriarch of the Gattagorms and a formidable woman in her mid-fifties, mo can't believe her son committed the attack on Tensor Station and is convinced something must be wrong.

Physical Stress: □²□³ **Mental Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Formidable Gattagorm Matriarch, Childherd, Huge Forearms, Knows Everything About Everything, Elaborate Clan Tattoos, That's Not My Child!

Skills: Great (+4) Empathy, Provoke; Good (+3) Rapport, Will; Fair (+2) Contacts, Resources; Average (+1) Physique, Unarmed Combat.

STUNTS

✦ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

✦ **Ear to the Ground:** Use Contacts for initiative in physical or virtual space where you have an operating contacts network.

✦ **Lie Whisperer:** +2 Empathy bonus to detect lies.

EXTRAS

★ **The Gattagorm Gaggle:** See above.

Supporting NPC

The Main Action

This scene's main action is information gathering—by investigation, persuasion, or intimidation. On successful rolls, let the players describe what they discover as aspects (page 4), and incorporate that into your game as long as it doesn't contradict anything in the adventure.

For example, once in An-Shun Rax Aggarad's player makes a Good (+3) Investigate roll to find traces of the kidnappers. He rolls a total of +4 against Fair (+2) opposition, a normal success. He declares Rax finds a trail in the city's direct perception feeds which the PCs can follow, and creates the advantage Last Seen Leaving the Drive Habitats which they can invoke once for free later.

BUTTING HEADS WITH THE TARI

Can the PCs assert their authority over the Tari? This is a mental stress conflict where the PCs use Bureaucracy, Provoke, or even

technopsi (page 5) to tie the interfering space combat drones in knots until they comply.

RECON IN AN-SHUN

PCs checking out An-Shun make Investigate and Notice rolls to find traces of the alleged kidnappers or their families or contacts. As above, define these discoveries as aspects.

Face Shifters!

Characters asking the right questions or succeeding with style on interaction rolls find puzzling clues which may lead them to theorise that the kidnappers were imposters. Witnesses describe the perps in ways which don't match their families' descriptions, or even old direct perception feed footage if the PCs can find it. The perps look superficially the same, but differ in significant ways—half a metre taller or shorter, much stronger or weaker, and so on.

STREETWISE

The PCs mix with locals, perhaps looking for Venu / Zarusian sympathisers, and making Contacts, Deceive, Provoke, or Rapport create advantage rolls. On a success, let the player describe what his character finds as an aspect. On a failure, the PCs may find themselves ganged up on by tunnel runners (page 30).

An Unprecedented Descent!

Streetwise and recon reveal the local community is buzzing with rumours that someone broke into the Old Pillar Station (see "Places to Visit", above) last night and made an illegal and highly dangerous descent to the Gana Boneyard on the planet surface. Apart from engineering access, the Old Pillar has been off-limits for years.

THE GENTLE TOUCH

Talking to the families of the alleged kidnappers is an Empathy, Notice, Provoke, or Rapport roll, depending on how the players describe their characters' actions. On a failure they may end up in mental or even physical conflicts, but other-

wise none of the family members can believe they'd ever do such a thing (an *It's Not Like Them!* aspect).

Supporting NPC

ULA FANDRA KAHAYPONAC

Ula's from the Hinters, and pretty high up in a tunnel runner gang. She makes runs to An-Shun trading illicit stimulants and embargoed items, including a line in high-risk black chips.

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: G-Blade Rider; Singularitypunk Tunnel Runner; Not Just Tattoos; Propensity for Casual Violence; You Wouldn't Be Needing That, Would You?

Skills: Superb (+5) Athletics, Intrusion; Great (+4) Melee Combat, Stealth; Good (+3) Notice, Provoke; Fair (+2) Contacts, Deceive; Average (+1) Ranged Combat, Resources.

STUNTS

♦ **Always a Way Out:** +2 create an advantage bonus to escape from a location.

♦ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

♦ **Mindscape Warrior:** +2 Provoke bonus when making mental conflict attacks in the Mindscape.

♦ **Nose For Trouble:** Use Empathy for initiative as long as you've observed / spoken to participants for a few minutes in the same scene.

HALO

★ **Black Chip:** Mindscape connectivity and illegal technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **G-Blades:** Add +2 to any physical stress you inflict in Melee Combat.

Follow Up

COLD PURSUIT TO THE BONEYARD

If the PCs find out about the descent to the Gana Boneyard, they can make their own illegal descent via the Old Pillar (page 21), or return to Tensor Station and descend via the New Pillar to Tensor Down and cross Yant Mongute (page 16). In either case, see **Scene Three: The Boneyard**, and assume the trail is cold.

THE STAKE OUT

If all else fails, the PCs may travel to the Hinterlands (page 20) and wait for the kidnappers to turn up and try and contact the underworld kingpin, Crade (page 36). See **Scene Five: The Hinterlands**.

SCENE THREE: THE BONEYARD

The PCs descend to Yand—an alien world of harsh weather and tortuous gravity—and search the Mongute pedestal city of Gana Boneyard to pick up the kidnappers' trail.

Places to Visit

THE OLD PILLAR

The PCs ride a capsule from An-Shun's Old Pillar Station—a terrifying descent down the 11000km of a decommissioned space elevator (page 21).

GANA BONEYARD

The ancient "boneyard" metropolis of Gana is a low-slung high-G city of over a million Mongute hominids (page 17), 2000km south of Tensor Down (page 21). It's a sprawling dilapidated conurbation of disaffected Mongute natives (page 33).

GEVIR CLAN TERRITORY

Mongute boneyards are divided into clan territories, tightly policed and self-contained. They're havens of Mongute culture, where Universal and even Yandic are rarely spoken. Buildings are heavy-set and one-storey: Tensor Down is one of the few boneyards with two-storey buildings.

THE LEV TERMINUS

Yant Mongute's **pedestal** metropolises are connected by a high-speed maglev known as the LEV. Reaching speeds of over 1000kmh, LEVs travel between pedestals in twelve hours or so, with daytime and sleeper services and several classes of travel. The *Dienja Terminus* LEV station in Gana has seen better days, but is still an impressive edifice, heavy and low-slung and encrusted with monolithic carvings, with intermandate services leaving every hour. Travellers usually book ahead; it's a Good (+3) Resources roll to get a ticket immediately.

People to Encounter

The PCs encounter high-G **Mongute** hominids in their native habitat. There are over 20 million of these in Yant Mongute, aggressive and obstructive unless you're a proven "planet friend".

THE TY-DAN-GEVIR HOUSEHOLD

Ty-Dan-Gevir is a typical Mongute among the alleged kidnappers (page 26) whose household lives in poverty

in a single-storey Mongute dwelling. A Fair (+2) Empathy, Investigate, or Notice roll reveals the Mongutes are little more than slaves, despite being lauded by the Yand for their “noble sacrifice” providing foodstuffs for Mandala above. They have no right of free movement, and the **awardees**, the few Mongutes invited up to Mandala for luxurious vacations in ring resorts, are few compared to the vast majority who never make it offworld.

The Main Action

This scene’s main action showcases the harsh conditions and alien culture of Yant Mongute.

DESCENDING TO GANA BONEYARD

If the PCs travel to Gana Boneyard via Tensor Station, their descent by the “New Pillar” space elevator is spectacular yet routine, but causes them to lose the kidnappers’ trail. If they want to keep that trail and arrive at Gana Boneyard during daylight, just as the second daylight work period begins (page 16), they must make an illegal and dangerous descent via the decommissioned Old Pillar Station (page 21).

Descending the Old Pillar is a **hazard**. In a hazard, the **Mindjammer** rules treat dangerous situations like characters, giving them skills and sometimes stress tracks, and requiring characters to overcome or even “fight” them to succeed.

GRAVITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

PCs on Yand’s surface are *Staggered by the Overwhelming Gravity*, suddenly feeling three-and-a-half times heavier. Walking is tiring, their shoulders sag, and the slightest bump leaves a bruise or breaks the skin. Even breathing is an effort, especially in the sulphurous haze which burns their throats. And yet the native Mongutes are doing fine...

Characters who aren’t native to tainted atmosphere worlds require a **breather** on Yand, available at pillar terminals at minimal cost. Without one characters incur one point of physical stress per hour, which won’t return until they don a breather or enter an untainted environment.

The high gravity also imposes the following penalties:

- Opposition when lifting things and jumping over obstacles is +2 harder; characters add their **habituated gravity** score (page 9) to the roll;
- The difference between the High (+2) gravity and a character’s habituated gravity becomes a **penalty** to all rolls involving agility (including dodging); athletics other than jumping; and unarmed and melee combat.

Characters may use grav packs to offset the high gravity. These T8 devices aren’t generally available on Yand, but Good (+3) Resources rolls may acquire them at Tensor Station starport.

DESCENDING THE OLD PILLAR

The capsule grav regulators are shot, and anyone making the three-hour descent of the Old Pillar space elevator must control them manually. As the speed and the planet’s gravity increases, the capsule shakes and jerks alarmingly, threatening to decouple from the elevator and plummet in a re-entry fireball to the planet’s surface far below.

Aspects: Screaming Claustrophobic Re-entry Capsule!

Skills: Great (+4) Intensity.

ACTIONS

- Every exchange, the capsule’s hostile conditions try to harm its occupants. Roll the capsule’s Intensity once, and have every character make a Physique roll to defend against the result. Any shifts generated are taken as physical stress.
- Each exchange, one PC may make a Technical **contest** roll (page 5) against the hazard’s Intensity to keep the pod under control. Teamwork is possible, but there’s no Mindscape connectivity.
- If the PCs win the roll, they acquire one victory, or two victories on a success with style. If the PCs accumulate three victories, they successfully reach the Gana Boneyard.
- On each exchange after the first, the hazard’s Intensity skill increases by +1.

Incremental Hazard

TALKING TO THE TY-DAN-GEVIR HOUSEHOLD

Talking to the Ty-Dan-Gevir household highlights inconsistencies in the descriptions of the alleged kidnappers. Everyone agrees Ty-Dan-Devir was heavier and behaved very differently from the kidnapper the PCs witnessed at first hand or in the direction perception feeds—even though he looked identical.

A Contacts or similar investigation roll when talking to the household or other locals reveals their disaffection with Mongute life on Yand, and their resentment at how little the Alliance is doing to persuade the Yandics to make their lives easier. Some suggest the Venu would do a better job. Give the PCs a *Mongute Culture Ready to Defect* situation aspect for the rest of the adventure—something they may use to affect the Alliance’s attitude to Yand if they rescue Controller Belleme (page 44).

TRACKING DOWN THE KIDNAPPERS

Tracking the Dominate agents in hot pursuit through Gana Boneyard is a Notice roll if the PCs arrive within minutes of the kidnappers, or otherwise Investigate. If the PCs have a starship in orbit or contacts within M-COP or other security

agencies, they may make Active or Passive Sensing rolls to create advantages. This is Fair (+2) opposition if they arrive just after the Dominate agents, Great (+4) if the trail is going cold, or Fantastic (+6) if they're in cold pursuit.

The trail leads west through the smog-filled high-G industrial metropolis, looking towards the huge hemisphere of Gaffa hanging in the sky over the horizon—to the LEV station, where the kidnappers boarded a maglev to the pedestral metropolis of Meibad at the south pole.

Follow Up

If the PCs are in hot pursuit and board the LEV, proceed to **Scene Four: The LEV**. Otherwise they must make a Fantastic (+6) Investigate roll to remotely track the kidnappers to Meibad and up to the Hinterlands, where they may lay in wait for them—see **Scene Five: The Hinterlands**. If they fail at this, then the trail has gone cold and they're thrown back on their own devices—see “The Stake Out” on page 30.

SCENE FOUR: THE LEV

The PCs board a maglev across the high-G wilderness of Yant Mongute. Somewhere on the train are the kidnappers—can the PCs confront them before the journey ends?

Places to Visit

AN ALIEN WORLD

The LEV travels thousands of kilometres from Gana Boneyard to the south polar city of Meibad, and then north to Shebad. Close to the cities the land is agricultural, but towards the looming Gaffa on the horizon quickly becomes wilderness.

THE LEV

The LEV is Yant Mongute's main inter-mandate surface transport, circling the world from pole to pole roughly along the path of the Mandala overhead.

Each train is a kilometre long, twenty single-level cars fifty metres long and ten wide, pulled by a fusion engine. Carriages have four classes: an economy-class seat (Average (+1) Resources), a standard-class seat / sleeper combo (Fair (+2) Resources), a private-class shared seat-sleeper compartment (Good (+3) Resources), and luxury-class single and double occupancy suites (Great (+4) Resources). There are dining cars, waiter service, bars, lounges, freshers, and other amenities.

People to Encounter

THE KIDNAPPERS

See page 25 for stats for the face shifter agents. There are two supporting NPCs and two minor NPCs on the LEV—or the survivors of the attack on Tensor Station, if fewer. Controller Belleme (page 43) is with them, in a strangely compliant state—see below.

SURLY MONGUTES

PCs searching the LEV and questioning people run into native Mongutes travelling between mandates—obstructive individuals who don't relish being quizzed by offworlders.

THE CRADE MECHANICAL

Crade is the name of the two avatars of the *Cat's Cradle* ship sentience, a Hinterlands (page 20) underworld power involved in the kidnapping of Controller Belleme. This avatar is a lumbering combat mechanical, based in an abandoned industrial zone on the Meibad outskirts. It arrives during the



GI-DA-REN

Gi-Da-Ren is a typical Mongute agricultural worker—salt of the earth, with an instinctive dislike of the “ringers” coming down to Yant Mongute to patronise and cajole. He blushes furiously when addressed, and always looks on the verge of tears—or rage—when under duress. He can make a lot of noise and attract attention when the PCs are trying to be circumspect...

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: *Surly and Obnoxious Mongute; Looks As Guilty As Sin; Who the Hell Do You Think You Are? Flies Off the Handle; Has the Support of His Peers.*

Skills: Good (+3) *Provoke, Will*; Fair (+2) *Deceive, Unarmed Combat*; Average (+1) *Contacts, Physique*.

STUNTS

♦ **Indomitable:** +2 Will bonus to defend against *Provoke* intimidation and fear attacks.

♦ **Mob Rule:** +2 *Provoke* attack bonus when surrounded by peers.

pursuit from Gana Boneyard to Shebad, together with two squads of goons, to delay the PCs while the Dominate agents get away. It stands in the back of a heavy-duty *Thunder Shield* APC firing a pintle-mounted autocannon.

The Main Action

This scene's main action is the PCs searching the LEV for the kidnappers—and coming up violently against those trying to stop them.

SEARCHING THE LEV BEFORE MEIBAD

The twelve-hour journey from Gana Boneyard to Meibad probably starts during the second daylight work period and heads into sunset and darkness as the first nighttime rest period begins.

Tracking down the Dominate agents on the LEV is a **challenge**: a series of three separate actions aiming at a single goal.

Action 1: Find the Kidnappers

Finding the kidnappers on the LEV is a **contest** (page 5) of Investigation against Good (+3) opposition; it's a **big** train, there are a lot of passengers, and the PCs aren't normally allowed to break into compartments (if they are—perhaps through the cooperation of M-COP—they may invoke this

as an aspect). If the Dominate agents know they're being followed, then the opposition is Superb (+5). If the players opt for a success at a cost at any point, throw a surly Mongute like Gi-Da-Ren (see the adjacent stat block) in their way.

On a success, the PCs find a passenger group who fit the kidnappers' profile—although they look nothing like them.

Action 2: See Through the Kidnappers' Disguises

The Dominate agents are in disguise. Ordinarily this requires an Empathy, Investigate, or Notice roll against their *Deceive* to see through, but Controller Belleme is with them. Drugged, passive and lethargic, she nevertheless recognises the PCs unless they're disguised, but initially she won't react—one of the agents has a handgun secretly trained on her.

It's a Good (+3) Investigate or Notice roll for the PCs to recognise Belleme, although they may invoke the *Mindscape* on the roll—they've certainly seen her in virtuality. If the PCs recognise her, or see through the kidnappers' disguises, all hell breaks loose. Belleme tries to help, but probably flops ineffectually to the floor under the influence of the drug. However, the Dominate agents won't shoot her; she's a valuable asset.

At this point, one PC is targeted by a Domination attack (see the textbox) forcing him to fire clumsily at his comrades!

The Domination Attack

A **Domination attack** is a form of **technopsi** which overrides an individual's will and lets another person control their actions and words—albeit crudely. It requires *Mindscape* connectivity and a special operations or black chip.

In rules terms, a Domination attack is a **contest** (page 5) of Will against Will. If the attacker succeeds in a given exchange, he controls the defender's actions in a jerky fashion for that exchange. If he gains 3 victories, he controls the target for the rest of the scene. If the target wins the contest, the attacker may not try again that scene.

The PCs should be surprised by this attack—it doesn't seem to be coming from any of the agents, and in fact originates in the *Mindscape*, possibly from anywhere else on Yand (or even Mandala). They should suspect a powerful **technopsi** master behind the scenes. Let them speculate—maybe they can trace the attack to the Mandala Hinterlands above (a Great (+4) Hacking, Investigate, or Passive Sensing roll). Who is attacking them?

THE CRADE MECHANICAL

Avatar of the Cat's Cradle (page 38), this intimidating mass of servomotors is slow yet hugely strong, armoured and with a built-in blaster.

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴ **Mental Stress:** □²□³

Systems Stress: □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Tech Index: T8

Aspects: Hulking Metal Soldier, Draining Subdermal Blaster.

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke*; Great (+4) Contacts*, Deceive*; Good (+3) Hull Strength; Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat, Resources*; Average (+1) Close Combat, Manoeuvre, Will*.

STUNTS

♦ **Domination*:** Roll Will vs Will to control the target's actions. See page 33 for more.

♦ **Heavy Weapons Specialist*:** +2 on heavy weapons attacks.

HALO

★ **Special Ops Mindscape Instance:** Special ops Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Armour Plating:** Reduce any physical stress damage incurred by 2 points.

★ **Subdermal Blaster:** +2 Ranged Combat attack bonus, and does +2 physical stress damage and creates an On Fire advantage on a successful attack, range 1; Draining.

*skills and stunts marked with an asterisk are provided by the Cat's Cradle sentence (page 38).

In the chaos, the Dominate agents try to escape, and head towards the engine car to bring the LEV to a halt—see “Stop and Search” below.

Action 3: Cut-off the Kidnappers' Escape Route

Let the PCs try and stop the kidnappers from escaping to the engine car however they want—perhaps by physically stopping them using Physique or Athletics, intimidating them using Provoke, tricking them with Deceive, or just hosing the LEV with gunfire and pinning them down with Ranged Combat. These actions should be run as a **contest** (page 5); if the confrontation devolves into violence, switch to a **physical conflict** (page 7) instead.

THUNDER SHIELD HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT APC

The Thunder Shield is an ATV built by Mongute Metals for use on the Gaffaqa plateau. This model has been converted to APC-use and fitted with a T6 autocannon.

Physical Stress: □²□³ **Systems Stress:** □²□³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Large (+1)

Tech Index: T7

Aspects: Thunder Shield” Hostile Environment Personnel Carrier, Sacrifices Manoeuvrability for Ruggedness, Hydraulic Piton Stabilisers, Low Target Profile, Pulse Cannon Pintle Mount.

Skills: Fair (+2) Hull Strength, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Systems.

STUNTS

♦ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 1 passenger.

♦ **Rugged Superstructure:** 1/session, pay 1 fate point to reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild.

EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** Reduce any physical stress incurred by 1 point.

★ **Autocannon With Tracer Kino Ammo:** Increase any physical stress done by +3 points*, range 4; fires kino (kinetic) tracer ammo automatically creating a Tracer Targeting advantage for the subsequent exchange.

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 10 passengers.

*see the Attacking Larger- and Smaller-scale Targets textbox on page 35.

STOP AND SEARCH

Regardless of whether the PCs succeed in rescuing Controller Belleme, at some point the LEV is stopped and searched. This is probably just outside Meibad Terminus, but could be earlier if the Dominate agents deliberately bring the LEV to a halt (see “Searching the LEV Before Meibad” above).

It's no authorised police force stopping the LEV, but plain clothes individuals under the command of the Crade Mechanical, who is waiting outside in his *Thunder Shield* APC.

If the PCs haven't yet found the Dominate agents, a Notice roll while looking outside the LEV spots them boarding a

THE PRIVATE ARMY

2 GROUPS OF 5 AVERAGE (+1) MINOR NPCs

Ten goons dressed in camo fatigues consider themselves honourable defenders of the Mongute underworld, and not the gangster muscle most people think they are.

Stress: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Mongute Underworld Grunts.

Skills: Average (+1) Ranged Combat (+4 teamwork bonus).

Attacking Larger- and Smaller-scale Targets

As a Large (+1) construct, attacks by the APC against human-sized Medium (+0) scale targets incur a -2 penalty on attack rolls, but do an additional +4 points of stress damage if they succeed. Attacks against Huge (+2) scale starships, etc, gain a +2 bonus, but do a reduced -4 points of stress damage if they succeed; the same applies when Medium (+0) sized humans attempt to attack the Large (+1) APC.

second LEV engine car on the rail ahead while the stop and search is underway—and rapidly departing towards Shebad. If they've rescued Belleme already, Crade's goons are looking for the PCs instead. Unless they avoid detection, a firefight ensues in the *Stormy Meibad Polar Wilderness*.

The Crade mechanical attacks with the APC pintle-mounted autocannon: roll as if the APC was attacking, but give it a +1 bonus to its Ranged Combat skill because of the teamwork bonus from the mechanical. PCs attacking the mechanical are considered to be attacking the vehicle; damage is reduced as per the APC's larger scale. The mechanical (ie the GM) **may** decide to take damage itself instead of passing it onto the vehicle, but doesn't have to.

To specifically target the Crade Mechanical, a character must first spend an exchange making a create advantage roll with their Ranged Combat skill, resulting in an Aiming at Crade aspect. The next exchange, they invoke that aspect for a bonus and make their attack roll. Damage is reduced for

attacking a large scale construct as usual, but if the attack succeeds then the damage affects the Crade Mechanical directly.

Follow Up

If the Dominate agents get away, the PCs must deal with the Crade Mechanical before they can follow. The agents head towards Shebad, another twelve hours away, in a second LEV, where they ascend the Shova Pillar—see **Scene Five: Hinterlands**. If the PCs rescue Belleme, see **Plot Variation: Rescuing Belleme** (page 44).

SCENE FIVE: THE HINTERLANDS

The PCs travel to "Punk Town" in search of Dominate agents or the mysterious individual behind the attack on the LEV.

Places to Visit

THE HINTERS

The Hinters are the worst of the Mandala Hinterlands, popularly called "Punk Town". A warren of battle-damaged tunnels and disused industrial units on the ring's outer hull, life here is poor, grim and violent. Even getting enough to eat is a feat.

CRADE'S HQ—THE SECRET DOCKING BAY

Crade lives in tunnels and abandoned storage units on the starward side of Mandala's outer hull, around a little-known docking bay housing the *Cat's Cradle* planeship. It's a Superb (+5) Bureaucracy or appropriate research roll using the Mindscape or local contacts to spot there's a docking bay here at all.

Crade's HQ is a typical gangster base: outside accesses are welded shut, apart from a heavily guarded entrance gate, and Crade can activate a *Monitor Band Shield* around the whole HQ at a moment's notice, cutting it off from Mindscape contact unless the intruder makes an Intrusion (Hacker) roll.

The HQ houses about 100 people, including families of Crade's lieutenants and goons. They're engaged in real but illegal activity: racketeering, protection, and some technical and repair work (a giveaway that there's more technical expertise and gear here than meets the eye). There are guarded outer offices for meetings with "customers", but it's almost impossible to get further without intrusion or a firefight.

People to Encounter

CRADE

Crade is a mysterious underworld figure and a leader in the Hinterlands; it's not widely known that he's also an **avatar** of the *Cat's Cradle*. He's waiting for the Dominate agents to arrive with Belleme, whereupon the *Cat's Cradle* will depart the Yand system—see **Scene Six: Pursuit to Zarus**.

The Main Action

This scene's main action is the attempt on Crade's HQ. The PCs may be trying to rescue Belleme, stop Crade, or prevent the *Cat's Cradle* from leaving—or all of these things.

FINDING CRADE'S HQ

PCs tracking Controller Belleme by monitor band signal find Crade's HQ easily. Otherwise it's a Superb (+5) roll to track the Dominate agents' movements through the Hinterlands, with invokes for *Being In Hot Pursuit* and having *Sensorium Access to the Mandala Systems*.

Failing that, the PCs can monitor activity in the Hinterlands and hope to stumble upon the agents arriving. This is a Superb (+5) Investigate roll, with advantages from Deceive, Rapport (talking to the Hinterlanders), Notice, Hacker, and so on. On a success, the PCs spot Dominate agent activity leading them to Crade's HQ; otherwise a success at a cost alerts them as the *Cat's Cradle* is about to leave—see “Getting Into Crade's Base” below.

GETTING INTO CRADE'S BASE

Sneaking In

Sneaking into Crade's base undetected requires Average (+1) Stealth and Intrusion rolls. If both are successful, the PCs get to the ship undetected.

If they fail Stealth, they're fired upon by one group of 4 Fair (+2) minor NPC goons defending the base (see above). One PC may stay behind to deal with them while the rest move on. At that point, the *Cat's Cradle* will begin its **departure prep**: see below.

Direct Assault

Attacking Crade's HQ directly requires Ranged Combat and Intrusion. Crade and his goons appear and fire on the PCs. Breaking through the gate is a **contest**: the PCs must roll Intrusion to accumulate 3 victories while being fired upon. They may use Ranged Combat instead if they're using heavy weapons or explosives (not just grenades).

DEPARTURE PREP

Once the *Cat's Cradle* realises the game is up, it begins its departure prep. This is a **contest** (page 5): the ship makes a Fair (+2) Technical roll, while the PCs make appropriate skill rolls (Athletics, Intrusion, Stealth, etc) as they break into the base. If the PCs succeed they get to the ship just before it leaves; otherwise they arrive just as it's leaving, or confront Crade if they haven't already.

CONFRONTING CRADE

The *Cat's Cradle* uses Crade to delay the PCs while it gets away, ideally with the Dominate agents and Controller Belleme. Crade appears with his 12 goons, guns blazing and

CRADE

To the untrained eye Crade looks like a Yandic native, down to silver hair and elaborate tattoos—but his body is synthetic.

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Systems Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Underworld Kingpin With Imperial Ambitions; Tattooed Yandic Synthetic Body; Avatar Reactions; Adaptive Moral Code; Sublimated Xenomorph Mindset.

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke*; Great (+4) Contacts*, Deceive*; Good (+3) Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics, Ranged Combat, Resources*; Average (+1) Notice, Unarmed Combat, Will*.

STUNTS

◆ **Domination*:** Roll Will vs Will to control the target's actions. See page 33 for more.

◆ **Heavy Weapons Specialist*:** +2 on heavy weapons attacks.

HALO

★ **Special Ops Mindscape Instance:** Enables special ops technopsi and local Mindscape connectivity.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Fusion Lance:** Increase any physical stress done by +4 points. Range is 1 zone.

★ **Haze Field:** +1 defend bonus and basic ray shielding.

*skills and stunts marked with an asterisk are provided by the *Cat's Cradle* sentence (page 38).

Supporting NPC

using Domination attacks on any susceptible targets.

If the PCs know that Crade is an avatar, they may attempt to jam its control signal. This is an attack on the avatar's systems stress using Intrusion (Hacker), EW, or another appropriate skill. The PCs may normally only do this from inside the HQ, as the *Monitor Band Shield* prevents attacks from outside once activated unless hacked.

GETTING TO THE GOAL

Once inside the HQ, the PCs may get to their goal.

Getting to Crade

If the PCs' goal was to confront Crade, they do so easily—in fact Crade confronts them (see “Confronting Crade” above). If

CRADE'S GOONS

3 GROUPS OF 4 AVERAGE (+1) MINOR NPCs

There are as many as fifty combatants in Crade's HQ; these twelve are those whose job it is to protect Crade and the HQ from intruders.

Stress: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Stylishly Violent Singularitypunk, Hinterland Natives.

Skills: Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Athletics, Ranged Combat (+3 teamwork bonus).

they survive the encounter, it's clear they've solved nothing, and that Crade can't be their ultimate goal, as the *Cat's Cradle* departs (see "Departure Prep" above).

Getting to Belleme

If the PCs get into Crade's HQ by stealth, then Controller Belleme is in a detention area, guarded by 1 group of 4 Fair (+2) minor NPCs (see above). It's a (Great (+4) Intrusion contest to free her before Crade can be alerted; the guards attack every exchange.

If the PCs get into the HQ by assault, Belleme is aboard the *Cat's Cradle*—see "Getting to the Ship" below.

Getting to the Ship

The *Cat's Cradle* is in a docking bay deep inside the HQ.

Explosive Decompression

Explosive decompression is a **challenge hazard**, handled as follows:

- **Action 1:** Each PC must make a Superb (+5) Physique roll if not wearing a p-suit or similar protection. On a failure, incur physical stress damage equal to the amount the roll was failed by.
- **Action 2:** Each PC must make a Good (+3) Athletics roll to avoid being swept into space. On a failure of more than 3 points, also incur a Spinning Out of Control situation aspect.
- **Action 3:** Each exchange thereafter that a character is exposed to vacuum, incur 1 physical consequence.

Discovering Crade Is an Avatar

Commonality characters are more accustomed to finding out people they're interacting with are avatars: non-Commonality characters may not automatically admit the possibility. It's a roll of Investigation, Notice, or Passive or Active Sensing against Crade's Great (+4) Deceive skill. Crade can invoke his HQ's Monitor Band Shield to obscure his origins; the PCs may invoke a Commonality Culture or other appropriate aspect, and also the fact that they've already met the Crade Mechanical.

Depending on the PCs' actions, it may be in full departure prep, or under normal docking bay ops. If the latter, Belleme won't be there—see "Getting to Belleme" above.

The PCs may break into the ship, requiring a moderate consequence (of any kind) against the *Cat's Cradle* (page 38). They may attack using technopsi. In the meantime, the ship tries depart.

This is a lethal situation. If the ship hasn't already started its **departure prep** (see above), it does so now; otherwise continue the countdown. If the ship accumulates 3 victories before the PCs break in or take it out, then it explosively decompresses the docking bay and escapes into space!

Follow Up

If the PCs can't stop it, just before dawn and the start of the first daylight work period the *Cat's Cradle* leaves the Mandala, with or without them. See **Scene Six: Pursuit to Zarus**.

SCENE SIX: PURSUIT TO ZARUS

The PCs board their planeship and pursue the *Cat's Cradle*. Can they stop it before it reaches Yand's heliopause and leaves the system?

Places to Visit

N-SPACE

N-space is normal space—the near vacuum between a star system's planets or the interstellar medium of deep space. The *Cat's Cradle* is powering outwards from Yand to the edge of the solar system—to the **heliopause**, where it can activate its faster-than-light planing engines and enter **2-space**.

2-SPACE

The uncanny warped space created when a starship activates its **planing engines** and travels faster-than-light. It's a lethal superluminal realm, where collision with a grain of sand can destroy a ship, and where only the accelerated minds of planeships can manage the nanosecond-scale corrections needed to navigate a course.

People to Encounter

THE CAT'S CRADLE

The Cat's Cradle is a rogue planeship which started life as a Wayland-class explorer before the Venu War. Its **eidolon sen-**

tience was derived from the personality matrices of a dead xenomorph pilot, and like many of its comrades it was natural for it to take up a life as a fast patrol ship in the Sentient Alliance.

The ship has since become disaffected with that life, and increasingly attracted by the possibilities of roguery beyond the Commonality sphere. It has a crew of 20 and 12 marines, who live in Crade's HQ when not required.

THE CAT'S CRADLE

Major NPC

Physical Stress: □ □ □ **Mental Stress:** □ □ □

Systems Stress: □ □ □

Consequences: 3

Scale: Huge (+2)

Tech Index: T9

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Underground King In Search of a Hill.

Trouble: That Chip On My Shoulder Is Wounded Pride.

Other Aspects: Exemplary Xenomorph Pedigree, Feral Vigilance, Adaptive Moral Code.

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Provoke

Great (+4): Contacts, Deceive

Good (+3): Active Sensing, Manoeuvre, Planing

Fair (+2): Hull Strength, Ranged Combat, Resources, Systems

Average (+1): Close Combat, Passive Sensing, Stealth, Technical, Will

STUNTS

♦ **Domination:** Roll Will vs Will to control the target's actions. See page 33 for more.

♦ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in atmospheric actions.

♦ **Marksman:** Provides avatar for using Ranged Combat skill for character actions.

♦ **Phantom Bogey:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Deceive bonus to misdirect, feint, or conceal your current position.

♦ **Remote Sensor Package:** Use Passive Sensing via avatar as Notice skill for character actions.

HALO

★ Avatar (Crade):

Stress: Phys 4; Mental 3; Systems 2?

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke; Great (+4) Contacts, Deceive; Good (+3) Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics, Ranged Combat, Resources; Average (+1) Notice, Unarmed Combat, Will.

Stunts and Extras: Fusion Lance (3S: w4, r1, T8), Haze Field, Heavy Weapons Specialist (1S).

★ Avatar (Mechanical):

Hulking Metal Soldier

Stress: Phys 4; Mental 3; Systems 2.

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke; Great (+4) Contacts, Deceive; Good (+3) Hull Strength; Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat, Resources; Average (+1) Close Combat, Manoeuvre, Will.

Stunts and Extras: Heavy Weapons Specialist; Armour Plating (reduce physical stress damage by 2); Subdermal Blaster (+2 attack, +2 damage, creates On Fire advantage, range 1: Draining).

★ **Special Ops Mindscape Instance:** Special ops technopsi and Mindscape connectivity.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Chameleon Coating:** +2 Stealth or Deceive bonus to pass unnoticed or as another construct.

★ **Haze Field:** +1 defend bonus and basic ray shielding.

★ **Null Cannon:** Default Ranged Combat weapon.

The Main Action

CATCHING UP WITH THE SHIP

The *Cat's Cradle* is **running for the jump point** at the heliopause, the outer boundary of the Yand star system, where it can safely engage its planing engines. Can the PCs catch up?

A race through n-space uses a ship's **gravity engines**, represented by its Manoeuvre skill. The *Cat's Cradle* has Good (+3) Manoeuvre, propelling it through n-space at an acceleration of up to 900Gs! To make the jump point, the ship must succeed in a special contest requiring it to accumulate just two victories.

The PCs roll their ship's Manoeuvre skill, increased by a +1 **teamwork bonus** (page 8) if one of them has the Starship Pilot stunt; alternatively, if the PC has the Starship Pilot stunt and a Pilot skill that's higher than the ship's Manoeuvre, they may get a +1 teamwork bonus from the ship and roll their own Pilot skill instead. The PCs need only 2 victories to catch up with the *Cat's Cradle*, or 3 victories if they suffer any delay of more than a few hours before they can get their own ship prepped for departure.

If they catch up with the ship, then a space combat between the two ships ensues (see page 40). Otherwise the *Cat's Cradle* jumps into 2-space.

THE 2-SPACE JUMP

Jump Wake Detection

At the heliopause, the *Cat's Cradle* vanishes into 2-space in a gravitic lens flash of zero-point light. Can the PCs follow?

The *Cat's Cradle* has jumped to the **Clascamurd system** in the neighbouring Zarus Dominate, a hostile successor state beyond the Sentient Alliance frontier. It's 27.6 light years away, 9.2 days in 2-space.

To figure this out, the PCs must detect the *Cat's Cradle's* **jump wake**, an opposition equal to its Good (+3) Planing skill. Once detected, the PCs must make an Average (+1) Investigate roll using the **Track FTL** stunt to calculate its destination. If they don't have this stunt, they may "borrow" it for a single use at the cost of a fate point.

Making the Jump

In the Commonality, people tend to travel along **Mindjammer routes** as they're well-travelled and safe—navigation plans are publicly available and continually updated. Travelling off the **Mindjammer** routes means you must make the complex 2-space calculations yourself—which is what the PCs have to do now.

Making the 2-space jump to Clascamurd is a Great (+4) Planing roll. The ship must know its destination, and must spend half an hour prepping for jump; any PCs with Pilot skill and the **Starship Pilot** stunt may create a *Navigation Plan* advantage (page 5).

On a success, the PCs emerge in the Clascamurd system. On a success with style, they gain a boost (page 7) such as *Optimal Trajectory* or *Stealth Emergence*. On a tie, the jump succeeds, but the *Not From Here Either* takes a mild mental consequence from the stressful navigation.

On a failure, the PCs may still make the jump, but at a cost: the ship arrives in the Clascamurd system, but sustains a consequence equal in severity to the shifts of failure (if they fail by 2 points or less, it's a mild consequence, by 3 or 4 points, a moderate consequence, and so on). Otherwise the ship **mis-jumps**; it spends 9.2 days in 2-space as expected, but when it emerges, the system is another system on the starmap on page 47. The adventure is over—but a new one is beginning!

Follow Up

If the PCs successfully follow the *Cat's Cradle* to Clascamurd, see **Scene Seven: Warhawk**.

Time Dilation

*Racing for the jump point causes time dilation effects in both ships. Whichever ship has the higher Manoeuvre skill suffers a Slower Reactions Due to Time Dilation situation aspect. The *Cat's Cradle*, with Good (+3) Manoeuvre, makes the heliopause in just under 21.5 hours, but experiences only 11.27 hours subjective time; a ship with Fair (+2) Manoeuvre makes the same journey in just over 27 hours, but experiences only 20.5 hours. A ship with Great (+4) Manoeuvre takes only 19 hours, but experiences only 7.5 hours.*

SCENE SEVEN: WARHAWK

*The *Cat's Cradle* makes a rendezvous with a Venu warhawk in the Clascamurd system to hand over SCI Force Controller Bel-lemel!*

Places to Visit

THE CLASCAMURD SYSTEM

Clascamurd is a world behind Venu lines, in the Zarus Dominate successor state. In an outer system orbit around a huge red giant, inhabited by bizarrely over-evolved life forms and an oppressed human population with a persecuted xenomorph minority, it's a world of torchlit processions, mass rallies, and hysteria, overseen by sinister Venu "advisors".

THE RENDEZVOUS POINT

The *Cat's Cradle* is heading towards a rendezvous point with the *Claw Vengeance*, a Venu warhawk, around an inner system **cththonian planet**—a former gas giant with its hydrogen and helium atmosphere blasted away when its sun expanded. It has *Crushing Gravity* and is a *Searing Airless Hellhole*.

People to Encounter

THE CAT'S CRADLE

The PCs may come into conflict with the *Cat's Cradle* (page 38)—see “The Rendezvous—Space Combat!” below.

THE CLAW VENGEANCE

The *Claw Vengeance* is a *Warhawk*-class strike ship—an archetypal Venu vessel. It's built for warfare, but is less sophisticated than Commonality starships, powered by a badly reverse-engineered zero-point power plant based on stolen Commonality tech—the notorious **Venu dirt drive**. It leaks z-radiation like a sieve, has a crew of eight plus a complement of Venu marines, and is armed with the legendary “Dirty Mary” disruptor cannon.

The Main Action

TRACKING THE CAT'S CRADLE

When the PCs' ship emerges from 2-space in the Clascamurd system, the first thing it does is a **system scan**, an Active Sensing or Passive Sensing roll. Success reveals the nature of the Clascamurd system as described above, while failure reveals little or nothing, or indicates that the PCs have been spotted by the *Claw Vengeance* and possibly by Clascamurd itself.

Finding the *Cat's Cradle* is an Active Sensing or Passive Sensing roll opposed by the *Cat's Cradle's* Average (+1) Stealth. Shifts generated indicate the range in zones (page 8) at which detection has taken place. On a failure, the *Cat's*

How to Destroy a Ship

When an attacker reduces an opponent to **taken out**, the attacker gets to decide what happens. If you've been firing your null cannons at an enemy starship, you can declare that it explodes in a ball of fiery plasma, or that its gravity engines fail spectacularly and it ends up drifting in space. If the PCs are trying to rescue Controller Belleme, they'll probably want to disable rather than destroy the enemy vessel; but it still requires a **taken out** result to do so.

THE CLAW VENGEANCE

Major Ship

Physical Stress: □□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 3

Scale: Huge (+2)

Tech Index: T7

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Venu Raptor Strike Ship.

Trouble: Leaking Z-Radiation.

Other Aspects: Intimidating Attack Profile, Versatile and Deadly, Venu Mutant Marines.

SKILLS

Great (+4): Manoeuvre

Good (+3): Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat

Fair (+2): Deceive, Planing, Systems

Average (+1): Active Sensing, Close Combat, Hull Strength, Stealth

STUNTS

★ **Boarding Actions:** +2 to attack and create an advantage Close Combat actions when boarding.

★ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

★ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in atmospheric actions.

EXTRAS

★ **Disruptor Cannon:** Add +3 to physical stress inflicted, range 3; Radioactive, Recoiless.

★ **Disruptor Shield:** +1 defend bonus; Highly Detectable, Unstable.

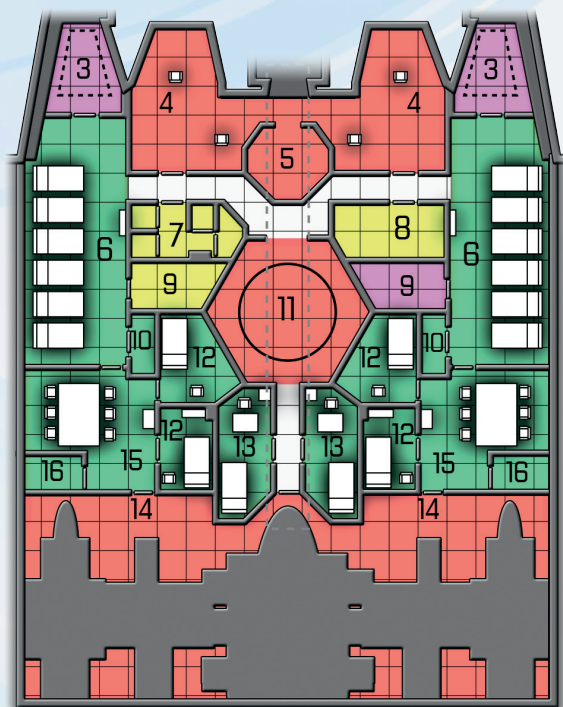
Major Ship

Cradle has detected the PCs; on a success with style, the PCs have detected the *Claw Vengeance* as well.

THE RENDEZVOUS—SPACE COMBAT!

The *Cat's Cradle* is heading to a rendezvous with the *Claw Vengeance*—see “The Rendezvous Point” above. Let the PCs decide what to do, based on who has detected whom, where they believe Controller Belleme to be, and the fact that the Commonality would want neither Belleme nor the *Cat's Cradle* to fall into Venu hands. If Belleme has already been

Venu Warhawk: The Claw Vengeance



1. AP Weapon Mounts: Anti-personnel weapons cover the approaches to the bridge, disruptor cannon, and airlocks, enabling the ship to use its Close Combat skill against individual characters.

2. Sensor Array: A basic T7 sensor suite capable of both passive and active sensing.

3. Airlock / Troop Ramp: A hydraulic troop ramp leading into a large airlock. Everything here is pretty manual.

4. Bridge: A cluttered and functional Venu bridge, with 4 bridge staff at the gunnery, n-pilot, comms/sensor, and tech curacy stations, as well as the command chair of the feared

Venu executor, Gidra Mur (see below).

5. Brainjack Pilot Cocoon: The Venu aren't sufficiently advanced to use ship sentiences to navigate the chaos of 2-space, but instead wire humans directly into the planing engine control circuitry. The overclocked activity drives these hapless **brainjacks** insane.

6. Barracks: Double bunks in these two barracks house five platoons of **Venu marines** (five groups of 5; see below).

7. Holding Cells: These primitive cells hold Controller Belleme once she's transferred to the Claw Vengeance. A Fair (+2) Intrusion or Technical roll frees her, as does a Fair (+2) overcome roll with an appropriate weapon skill, also causing a mild consequence to Belleme.

8. Pain Chamber: This room is fitted with Venu neural excitors, causing extreme pain and used for torture and punishment. Anyone entering causes bars at the doors to drop and triggers the excitors, a Great (+4) mental stress attack resisted by Will. It's a Good (+3) Intrusion or Technical roll, or a Fantastic (+6) Physique roll, to raise the bars; an attempt may be made each exchange.

9. Tribute / Stores Rooms: These rooms contain precious, semi-precious, and honour items from Clascamurd and other worlds of the Zarus Dominate. They provide an Insight Into Venu-Zarusian Relations which may be useful back in the Alliance.

10. Fresher: Showers and latrines.

11. Honour Room: This room contains trophies, including heads, faces, and masks of the fallen. It provides an Insight Into Venu Culture.

12. Crew Quarters: The crew quarters are occupied by the Venu tech curate (engineer) and his two assistants; the gunner; the n-pilot; and the comms officer / sensor op. They're usually found on the bridge (location 4).

13. Officers Quarters: One of these status quarters is occupied by the Venu executor, Gidra Mur (who is normally on the bridge). The chief of the Venu marines in the barracks (location 6) is found in the other.

14. Engineering: Location of the blistering Venu dirt drive, a source of Fair (+2) Intensity Z-Radiation which causes physical stress unless resisted by Physique. The tech curate and his two assistants are often here, together with two "motes" (the primitive pre-sentience non-humanoid robots ubiquitous in Venu Space).

15. Eating Area: Two refectories used by the Venu marines.

16. Galley: The galley serves basic Venu food—acrid and cloying to non-Venu palates. It's not at all automated.



transferred to the *Claw Vengeance*, the Venu ship **runs for the jump point** (page 39) if it starts to lose any conflict, requiring the PCs to take out its gravity engines to immobilise it.

Conflicts between starships happen similarly to those between characters, usually using Ranged Combat and Manoeuvre. Technopsi may also be used against sentient ships, and the PCs may come up with cool manoeuvres, tricks, tactics, aimed shots, and so on, which can **create advantages** (page 5) for invoking in the conflict.

Where Is Ellen Belleme?

Controller Belleme's whereabouts depend on when the PCs arrive. If they're in hot pursuit—a few hours or less—then she's still captive aboard the Cat's Cradle. If a longer time has passed, she has already been transferred to the Claw Vengeance, which is making ready to leave system for a destination deep inside Venu Space.

Make a judgement based on your game's pacing: an exciting option may be to have the PCs arrive just as the Cat's Cradle is transferring Belleme into the Venu executor's clutches!

Follow Up

BOARDING ACTION

If Belleme is aboard the *Cat's Cradle* and the PCs destroy or disable both vessels, the *Cat's Cradle* sentence may surrender Belleme to the PCs. The Venu warhawk won't surrender but, if you like, you as GM can declare it's no longer a threat once it has been reduced to **taken out**.

On the other hand, if you'd like to take the adventure further, you can declare that although the warhawk is disabled, it still requires a boarding action to rescue Belleme before the defiant crew can raise help from the nearby planet of Clascamurd.

In this case, make a Close Combat roll against the warhawk's Average (+1) Close Combat skill to force your way into the ship; on a failure, you succeed at a cost, with every member of the boarding party taking stress damage equal to the shifts of failure. Then go to **Scene Eight: The Rescue**.

SCENE EIGHT: THE RESCUE

The PCs board the disabled Claw Vengeance as the Venu desperately try to repair it—and fight their way through to rescue Controller Belleme!

Places to Visit

THE CLAW VENGEANCE

The Venu warhawk *Claw Vengeance* is disabled and floating in space, and the PCs undertake a boarding action. They probably enter by the airlock / troop ramp at location 3, but let the players decide if they want to try and cut through the hull elsewhere.

venu trooper platoon

GROUP OF 5 AVERAGE (+1) MINOR NPCS

These typical Venu marines wear standard-issue Venu Trooper armour and carry Venu disruptor rifles. Although they have no special abilities, they bear burns and disfigurements from extended z-radiation exposure, and all wear Venu masks as part of their armour. Five platoons make up a section—the full marines complement aboard the Claw Vengeance.

Stress: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Violent Nucleic Z-Light.

Skills: Average (+1) Ranged Combat (+4 teamwork bonus).

Group of 5 Average
(+1) Minor NPCS

GIDRA MUR

Venu Executor

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Unfathomable Abilities, Advanced Radiation Poisoning, Cold and Cruel Amoral, Scion of an Insidious Star, Will Never Be Taken Alive.

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke, Will; Great (+4) Deceive, Ranged Combat; Good (+3) Investigate, Notice; Fair (+2) Empathy, Rapport; Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Resources.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Coolness Under Fire:** Use Ranged Combat to defend against ranged physical attacks.
- ♦ **Heavy Weapons Specialist*:** +2 on heavy weapons attacks.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ★ **Cloud Mind:** Use Provoke in an attack against Will doing mental stress damage.
- ★ **Energy Generation (Radiation):** +2 bonus to Ranged Combat attacks, doing +2 physical stress damage.

OTHER EXTRAS

- ★ **Neural Whip:** +3 bonus to Melee Combat attacks doing physical or mental stress damage. Range 0; Agonising, Cruel.
- ★ **Venu Status Suit:** Light armour reducing physical stress damage by -1 point; Venu Face Mask, Showy, Vac Sealed.

People to Encounter

GIDRA MUR, VENU EXECUTOR

The scion of a well-placed family and an officer of the mysterious Dark Radiance Executive, Gidra Mur is tasked with escorting SCI Force Controller Belleme back into Venu Space. Like many Venu encountered, Gidra Mur has abilities which appear to be caused by mutations arising from z-radiation exposure—although Commonality science is at a loss to explain some of their effects.

DOMINATE AGENTS

Gidra Mur and the Venu marines are reinforced by any Dominate agents (page 25) who have survived since the initial kidnapping.

ELLEN GALEN BELLEME

Supporting NPC

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Controller Among Equals; Brutalised Defiance From a Civilised Mind; Arch-Empath; Creative Fires Rage All Along the Frontier; Quick—This Way!

Skills: Superb (+5) Empathy, Rapport; Great (+4) Investigate, Will; Good (+3) Deceive, Science; Fair (+2) Intrusion, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Contacts.

STUNTS

- ♦ **Hacker:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Intrusion bonuses when hacking the Mindscape or haloes.
- ♦ **Mindburn:** Use Will for mental attacks using the Mindscape.
- ♦ **Probe:** +2 create an advantage Will bonus to discern surface thoughts.

HALO

- ★ **Monitor Band Cloak:** May cut you off from the Mindscape.
- ★ **Neurosynthetic Extensors (Hyperintelligence):** +2 reasoning bonus on Knowledge, Science, and Technical skill rolls; may be invoked as aspect.
- ★ **Special Ops Chip:** Local Mindscape connectivity and special ops technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

- ★ **Cosmetic Enhancer:** Appearance Changes to Match the Situation aspect to customise physical appearance.
- ★ **Sensory Enhancement (Artificial Eyes):** +2 Investigate or Notice bonus for visual field; may be invoked as aspect.

SCI FORCE CONTROLLER ELLEN GALEN BELLEME

Controller Belleme is restrained in the ship's holding cells (location 7), and is still affected by the active monitor band cloak.

Main Action

This scene's main action involves a running firefight through the *Claw Vengeance* in search of SCI Force Controller Belleme.

SEARCHING THE SHIP

While the PCs may doggedly search every part of the warhawk, it makes more sense to hack Controller Belleme's monitor band cloak (page 28). PCs may use hand scanners or PSAs, or even their ship's Active or Passive Sensing skills, to identify and then locate the cloaked signal. If Belleme suspects the PCs are looking for her, she makes a hacking attempt herself, creating a *Mindscape Flare* advantage the PCs can home in on.

FIGHTING TO THE DETENTION BLOCK

Once the PCs know where they're going, they must fight through the warhawk defenders to get there, a **contest** (page 5) using Athletics, Deceive, or Stealth; other characters can provide *Covering Fire* advantages. The opposition is the attack rolls of the Venu opposition: Gidra Mur, the Venu Marines, and any survivors from the Dominate agents. If they accumulate 3 victories, the PCs push through to the holding cells (location 7); in any exchange where they fail, characters pushing through take physical stress damage equal to the amount by which they failed their rolls.

Alternatively, the PCs can treat this encounter as a physical conflict—attacking the Venu defenders directly to take them out before attempting to reach the holding cells.

Follow Up

At the end of this scene, the adventure is finished—although there may be more to do: see the **Epilogue**.

EPILOGUE

There are many ways to conclude **Dominion**. If the PCs have done badly, the Yand system may now be in a secessionary crisis, attempting to leave the Sentient Alliance and join with the Venu-allied Zarus Dominate. They have some explaining to do!

If they've done well, then Yand is still a bastion of Alliance culture against the Venu. If Controller Belleme has been rescued, the PCs have a new boss and a life in the Security and Cultural Integrity Instrumentality to look forward to—see the adventures **Hearts**

and **Minds** and **The City People** for possible things to do next.

If Controller Belleme wasn't rescued, the PCs may be on their own. What will they do? They can return to Commonality Space to the nearest SCI Force bureau to request instructions—or they can reject a future in SCI Force, and head out on their own, looking for adventure. The star map on page 47 provides a starting point, and the **Mindjammer RPG** core book and upcoming **Mindjammer Companion** detail many worlds and octants of space to explore. Perhaps they'll go beyond the Commonality frontier, and take part in the independence conflicts flaring across **The Far Havens**?

What If the PCs Capture the Warhawk?

The PCs may find themselves in control of a Venu warhawk at the end of this adventure. Although it's a potential intelligence coup, there are problems.

First, the Venu brainjack won't cooperate with the PCs' requests to pilot the ship through 2-space (in fact, the PCs will barely have a clue how to communicate with it). Short of a Commonality 2-space jump tender or a planeship with a huge docking bay, there isn't any way to get it out of the Clascamurd system.

*Second, the Venu and Zarusians on Clascamurd will investigate the scene of the battle. Unless the PCs return to Yand **almost immediately**, they'll face an overwhelming force unless they can **run for the jump point** again (page 39).*

In the final analysis, though, the PCs can extract valuable information from the warhawk even in the short time they have, thoughtcasting direct perception feeds to the Mindscape for later analysis. Treat this as a Detailed Intelligence on the Claw Vengeance Warhawk situation aspect which the PCs can make use of back in Alliance or Commonality Space.

Plot Variation: Rescuing Belleme

Even if the PCs rescue Belleme before the end of the adventure, you can still continue play. Now they have a "boss", and a new goal—to find the mastermind behind the kidnapping plot. There may be surviving Dominate agents to interrogate, and then an assault on Crade—who may even now make a break for the Clascamurd rendezvous point.

Advancement

At the end of any **Mindjammer** adventure, players have an opportunity to improve their characters. In addition to the usual **minor milestone** they get at the end of every session (page 9), they may also do all of the following:

- Gain a new skill point to buy a new skill or increase an existing skill by 1 point (remember you can't have more skills at one level than any of the levels below it).
- Rename a severe consequence to begin the recovery process (page 8), if you haven't already.
- Buy a new extras aspect in exchange for 2 points of your refresh (page 4).

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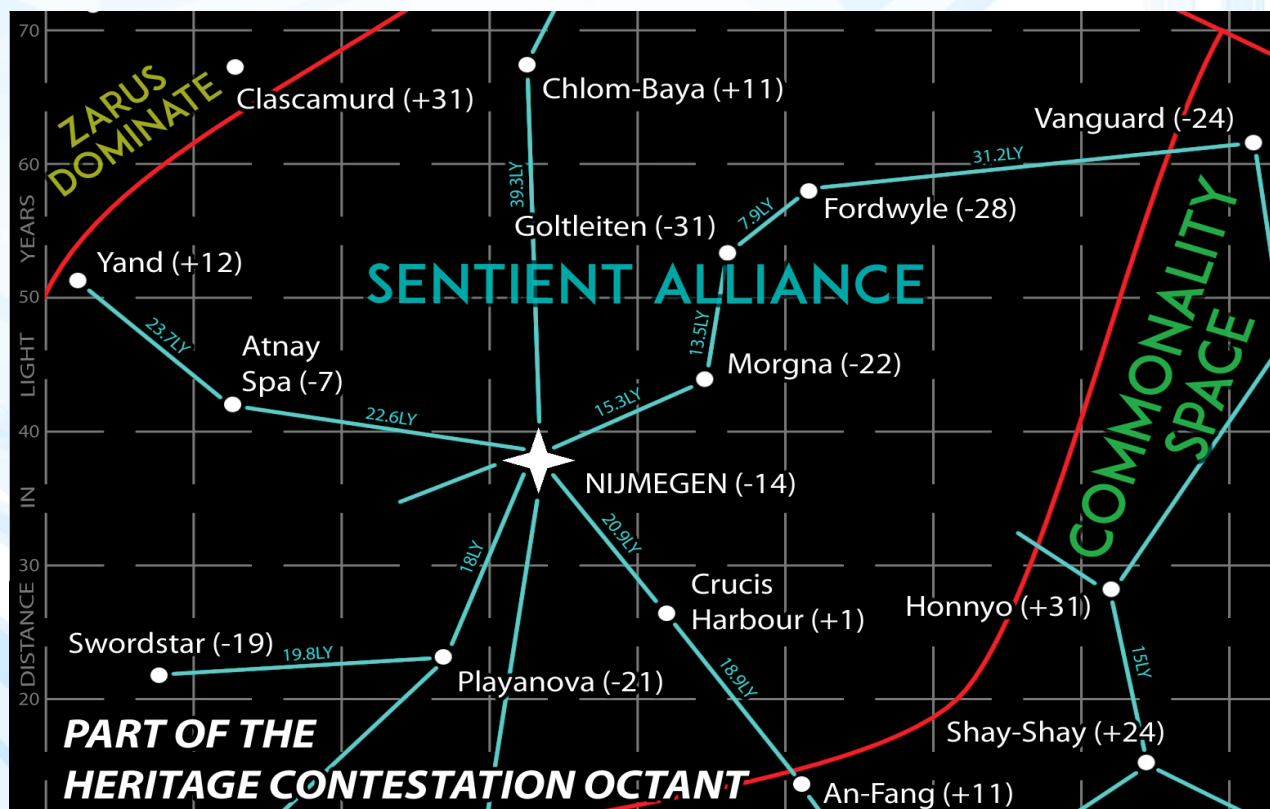


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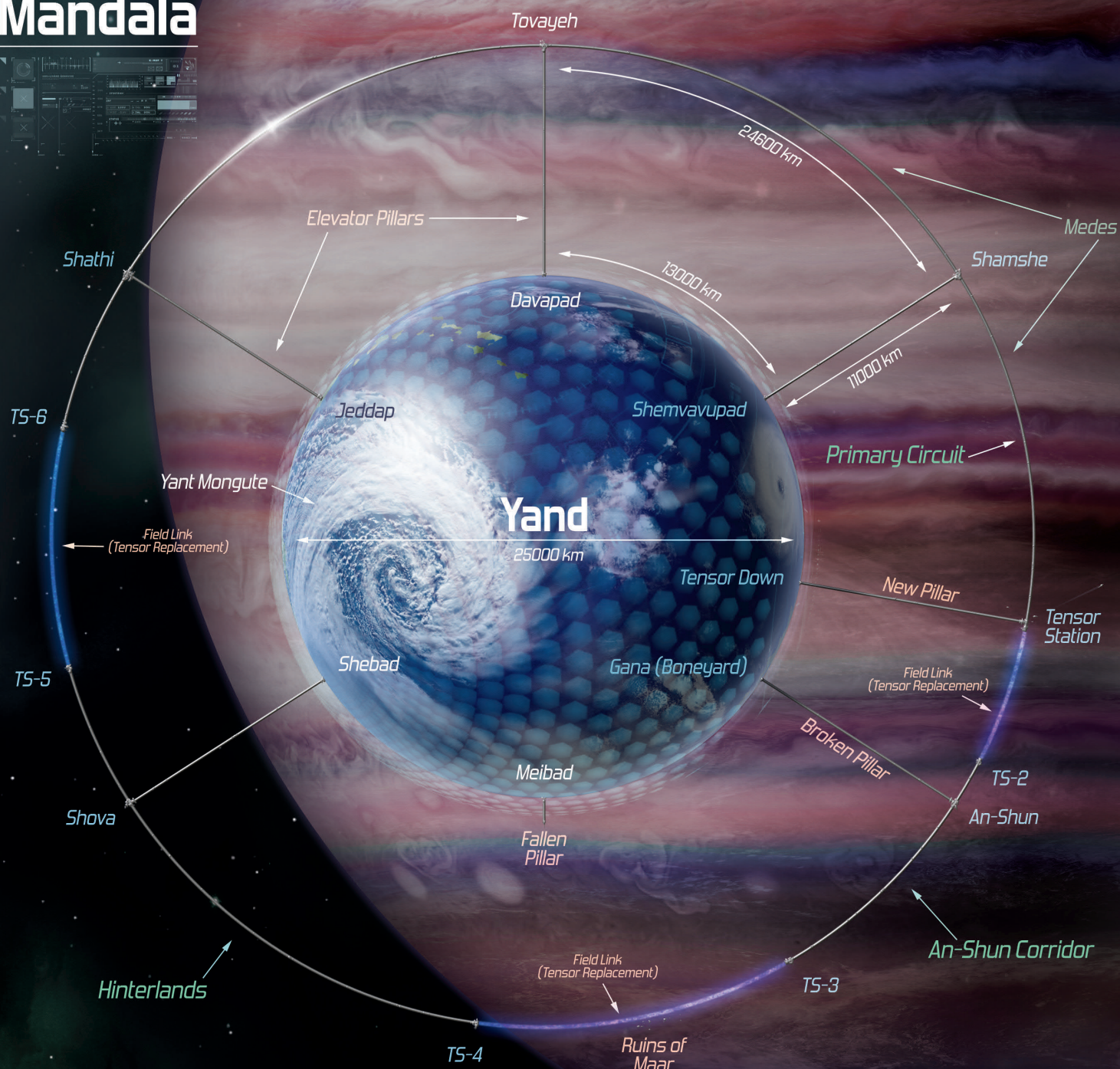
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