



HEROINES OF THE LAST AGE

HEROINES OF THE LAST AGE

Enter an epic science fiction tabletop RPG about a pinnacle metaspieces poised on the knife edge between decline and transcendence!

We are the Hama. Our systems span the galaxy. Our weapons can save systems or doom them. Our sciences are a match for any other civilized species we encounter.

This is the Last Age. We are tired. For two billion years we have resisted The Churn, that galactic tide of civilizations that relentlessly washes against the shores of history. We thought we had exhausted all the possibilities of the universe, then it happened.

Heartdrive. Developed in secret and distributed to all Hama equally, the technology of FTL has opened up a whole new epoch of our history, a new era marked by the explorations of distant spaces we could barely even imagine before.

Our Enemies Surround Us. Within and without, we are beset by those who would like nothing more than to make the Hama's reign through the galaxy a historical footnote. We no longer share the sentiment. We will remind them of our strength.

Galactic Mysteries Abound. While we've already scoured our home systems for the valuable technologies of ancient cultures, The Heartdrive has opened up our ability to explore countless strange phenomena and interact with dozens of transcendent powers. We are the first wave of these new explorers.

Heroines of the Last Age is an expansion for Heroines of the First Age, with a deeply detailed galaxy filled with almost 50 unique worlds, dozens of new enemy factions and cultures, 10 galactic-scale super-villains, and a whole new suite of archetypes, equipment, and spacecraft for you to tool around the galaxy in.



HEROINES OF THE LAST AGE
A Campaign Setting for Heroines of the First Age by Voidspiral
Entertainment
And Powered by the Apocalypse

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HEROINES OF THE LAST AGE

Where were you when the news came?

I remember where I was. I was at the window of Glardis Fomen's office. We were talking about the end. Speculating about how it could come about. Glardis was adamant that it would end with an invasion from some upset super-entity civ from the core.

I was more pessimistic. I argued that it wouldn't be a bang, it would be a whimper. After a few billion years, we've suffered so many apocalypses, cataclysms, and near-extinctions that it's hard to imagine any one event doing us in.

No, I thought it would be a slow decline. Just... giving up.

Then the screens lit up with the news. Our hearts caught in our throats.

FTL. Hyperdrive.

The revelation was like a resurrection via a bucket of ice water. Suddenly, there was so much to do.

A sci-fi space opera campaign setting for Heroines of the First Age.

In Heroines of the Last Age, players are members of the Hama metasppecies, a vast and powerful galactic culture that has dominated much of the last two billion years. The Hama are a stubborn but tired species, and we have suffered from the ennui and weariness of the Churn of stellar civilizations for eons. Our decline has resulted in the abandonment and collapse of many formerly glorious regions, and our governance is hopelessly

bureaucratic and astonishingly corrupt. This is the scene as the next chapter of Hama history begins, the dawn of the FTL Age. With the advent of the Heartdrive, Hama are now able to transcend the light-speed barrier, making us the only known species to do so. The Hama are shaking off the rust and dusting off our curiosity as we begin to see the galaxy in a whole new way.

This is a pre-generated campaign setting for Heroines of the First Age. It exists to give you the tools to quickly put together a game within a specific setting and with particular themes. Always remember that you can modify the setting as needed for your own game. The core HFA book covers many ways to expand the setting.

You'll need a copy of the core Heroines of the First Age book to play.

Deltas from HFA

Deltas are changes that happen when translating Heroines of the First Age to Heroines of the Last Age. Some parts of HFA translate well, while other parts need extension, revision, or explanation.

Key parts of HFA that are different in HLA are as follows:

- The Metaphysics and cosmology are completely different, and are pre-defined.
- Physical Traits are strongly correlated with Moves: your Moves determine what your character looks like.
- Some Archetypes have been changed or removed.
- Some Moves are altered to reflect the presence of the Galactic Flow and the absence of Power Pools.
- Money is quite different.
- Equipment has changed significantly, and rules for vehicles have been added.
- Most GM Moves have changed.

Customization

This setting provides a specific world and setting for you to play in, but remember that the game is yours to do with as you please. If your group wants to focus on specific parts, throw out sections of lore, or rebuild the setting from scratch, keeping only the themes, selections, or rules, by all means go for it.



THE BIG BANG

Welcome, quickened one, to the Milky Way. This chapter will introduce you to the key concepts of Heroines of the Last Age, and get you ready to play. It is an analogue to the Genesis chapter of HFA.

The FTL Age

For the last 2 billion years or so, we had been in the “Late Galactic Civilization” stage. About fifty years ago, we entered the FTL age, which—to our knowledge—no one else has ever reached. To understand why this is so important, we have to look at the fundamental rules of the galaxy and how we used them to get where we are.

The Churn

Everything ends. Civilizations wash across the innumerable stars like waves on a beach. Not only have we discovered millions of lost civilizations and thousands of existent alien societies, but we’ve also experienced a few extinctions ourselves. Civilizations rise, and then they fall. It’s what they do. No single species or alliance has ever conquered even a large minority of the galaxy, it’s just too big, and it takes too long to get from one place to another.

Galaxies are engines that constantly generate new life then grind it back down into interstellar dust, toiling on and on until they too go dark. We call it the Churn.

Metaspecies

The term metaspecies applies to most starfaring sentients for the simple reason that space both requires and enforces diverse adaptations. Even a genetically homogenous species that enters an age of stellar exploration is likely to branch off into distinct sub-groups due to the forces of time, separation, and adaptation. Much of the time, however, such species consider themselves one genetic group and are unified in the face of external threats, even though they may not even share a bodyplan with their counterparts. We, the Hama, are one such metaspecies, but there are millions of others of similar genetic development throughout the galaxy.

The term metaspecies is sometimes also understood to mean the entire biosphere that supports a given species' space exploration. This may include genetically modified crops, bacteria, or animals brought with to make living in space easier on the species in question.

The Galactic Flow

The Milky Way is suffused with a kind of subtle energy that few civilizations besides us have ever even noticed, let alone made industrial use of. We call it the Galactic Flow. It's a field of sloshy, vague energy that follows gravwells like a lazy cat in a spot of sun.

The Galactic Flow is measured in D density units. Using the average of these units, we break up the galaxy into 6 zones, from D0 at the edge of intergalactic space, to D5+ in the Galactic Core. This metric places us mostly in D3, where the Flow is stable but not overwhelming.

The Flow isn't just an energy field few have heard of, though. It has subtle effects and interferes with physics in minute but cascading ways. The higher the metric, the stranger things become. In regions of very high metric, the flow twists physics and thereby chemistry

The Big Bang

and biology, leading to bizarre life forms that you'd not think possible elsewhere. In regions of extremely low metric, things are likewise unusual, but in a more stasis-inducing, neutralizing way. Life tends to arise less often here, but physics is relatively stable.

The Galactic Flow metric can vary quite a lot from system to system, even within the same D region. It condenses around deeper gravwells and spreads thin between the stars.

The study, use, and engineering of the Galactic Flow and its metric is called metaphysics. Those who spend Flow as a fuel are called Burners. Those who feel the flow and let it guide them are called Ardents.

The Hama

Hailing from a tiny and long-dead terrestrial in the middle of D3 space, we are bipedal mammalian organics whose defining characteristic is probably tenacity. Even before the invention of the Heartdrive, the Hama were already one of the most influential metaspecies in the modern galaxy, some say in galactic history.

But after about 2 billion years, we've pretty much done everything we could think of and gone everywhere we could reach. Hama civilization had peaked long ago (many call the colonization of Nor-Am the Golden Age) and we were already on the long downward swing of a galactic civilization that had run out of steam. Some entire cultures had packed up shop and voluntarily entered extinction. We were pretty much done.

Machine Hearts

Our second wave of colonization among the stars was driven by the invention of the Machine Heart. Machine Hearts are meta-mechanical devices that consume the Galactic Flow and spit out usable energy. Immediately after their invention (and after the

Control Wars had cooled) they became utterly indispensable to Hama civilization. Now, Machine Hearts of every size and power are available to even poor settlers. They power weapons, ships, factories, and cybernetics. For the vast majority of our history, Hama expansion and trade has been governed by ships with Machine Hearts powering slowdrives to ever-larger percentages of C.

Ancient Wars

As united as we sometimes seem, it's easy to forget the millions of wars we've fought, both between ourselves and with alien species. Many of them are long-forgotten by all except the Warchives. Others left effects that still linger: Three Burner-Ardent Wars have left a lasting but subtle division between Burners and Ardents, with the latter being generally fewer and less understood by modern society. The Old Territory of Orion is rife with still-burning embers of territory and resource battles. The Hama Cloud home to many enormous defensive edifices built to hold back invasions from Omega. Everywhere, the marks of war are left as reminders of our distant and tortuous past.

Heartdrive

For some two billion years, we were stuck crawling around the galaxy at the speed of light in our slowships. Eons we searched for evidence of FTL technology, to no avail. It was long surmised that FTL was theoretically, logistically, and historically impossible, but even that did not deter millions of inventors from tinkering with metaphysics and the laws of reality for most of our history. Archaeologists searched alien ruins for eons, looking for any evidence of a method for breaking the light barrier.

In the end, we gave up trying.

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Then, about five decades ago, an anonymous tinkerer cobbled together the first Heartdrive, a device that combines the Burner powers of a Machine Heart and the ancient Ardent art of astral projection. The prototype did the impossible: it didn't just breathe Flow in as fuel, it actually dragged the device and the entire connected vessel *into* the Flow, thus allowing it to swim through the Flow the way a fish swims through water.

This mysterious benefactor then published a journal of the development and *the plans themselves* for the Heartdrive to all major news outlets, scientific institutes, Territorial governments, and private citizens without even asking for so much as credit. Chaos erupted as the ancient and quiescent Hama civilization awakened to the possibilities.

The Heartdrive Wars

For the next two decades, many groups tried to control the Heartdrive. Decliners bade everyone throw the technology away and let civilization fade into obscurity forever. Regulators wrote laws and tax codes attempting to manage the technology. Ignoring both, Hyper-Tyrants used fleets of Heartdrive warships to try to acquire and maintain control over the technology. Hama citizens hid their copies or built ships to escape out into the New Regions, away from the Hyper-Tyrants, while some cultures fielded their own fleets to protect the freedom to have the technology. Private armies arose to fight for the highest bidder, all while keeping their own Heartdrives well-defended from those who would take them away.

Thirty years later, the flames of the Heartdrive Wars are still cooling. Flare-ups happen from time to time, and will probably continue far into the future.

State of the Art

These are the core technologies that Hama civilization is built on. They are the facts of life for citizens of our galactic metaculture.

- **Machine Hearts:** Machine Hearts are very complex devices that burn the Galactic Flow and produce energy as an output. They come in nearly any size and power nearly everything in our civilization. The kind and output of energy produced by a Machine Heart is specific to the intended purpose, so they are not necessarily interchangeable. Though many people can get an idea of what's wrong with a faulty Machine Heart, they are complex enough that few understand their workings enough to repair or modify them safely.
- **Heartdrives:** Even more complex and dangerous than Machine Hearts, Heartdrives allow a vessel to actually enter the Galactic Flow and move through it quickly to other parts of the galaxy. Heartdrives are inherently unstable and unreliable, due to the nature of taking in and manipulating the Galactic flow as they do. Unlike Machine Hearts, the smallest you can feasibly make a Heartdrive is about the size of a car or motor-truck, meaning they can only be installed in vessels.
- **Slowdrives:** These are sub-light engines driven by Machine Hearts. Even in the FTL Age, almost all ships are equipped with some form of slowdrive, if only to travel shorter interplanetary distances. The fastest slowdrive ever built did $C=0.008\text{km/s}$ and had a time dilation of 4328.63x. Traveling from the center of the Hama Cloud out to the edge took only a year or so of observed time with such an engine. Today, the same journey can be undertaken in a matter of minutes.
- **Shields:** Energy fields can be bent and folded to redirect matter and energy. These systems are complex and expensive, but are deployed nevertheless by militaries and very large or very expensive vessels.
- **Spacecraft:** You can't go to the stars without something to go in. We've built and encountered so many kinds of spacecraft that a big part of each Warchive is devoted to ship designs and engine

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systems. Modern Hama ships are usually composed of a hull with subsystems, a central Machine Heart, an interplanetary slowdrive, and sometimes a Heartdrive.

- **Mecha:** Versatile combat machines have always been in high demand. Originally developed to combat the large (and now-extinct) organic natives of some worlds of the Hama Cloud, mecha are a staple of modern gravwell warfighting.
- **Traits, Mods, and Mutations:** The already-pliable Hama form is renowned for its versatility, but Hama are always pushing the bounds and limits, modifying our own anatomy, genetics, and molecular construction to suit our needs. These modifications come in many forms, from electronic pods attached to the body to gene therapies that take days or hours to completely change your biochemistry to unstable and volatile variations caused by exposure to unusual radiation.
- **Mega-engineering:** After the first million years or so, we started to think we were pretty good at building big objects. Hama space is packed full of stellarformed stars, orbitals, rings, hollows, Dyson swarms, solar statites, and all manner of other construction. Some of these objects are positively ancient, while others are pretty much come off an assembly line.
- **Wormholes:** For eons we tried to use wormholes to travel the stars, but we rapidly came to realize that getting something through one safely was essentially impossible. Matter is irretrievably scrambled and smashed as it crosses a wormhole, making them comparatively useless as a mode of transit. Instead, “raw” wormholes are used more as a way of transmitting bulk matter or energy from one place to another.
- **Light Pipes:** These flow-stabilized wormholes are used to transmit vast amounts of data across interstellar distances through the Galactic Flow. They enable faster-than-light communication across all of Old Territory Hama space. Because they rely on dangerous and difficult to construct wormholes, it takes time to connect them out to the frontiers, leaving many settlers on their own.
- **Flowgrid:** The galactic internet, connected between millions of worlds by light pipe backbone lines. The Flowgrid is used for most intergalactic communication and is the Base Level Service Provider for many shared virtual reality simulations.

- **Warchives:** These hyperdense memory stores hold untold billions of plans for weapons, defenses, armors, vehicles, engines, tools, tactics, strategies, and systems. Warchives are important for settlers, who can't rely on the Flowgrid for data on how to deal with problems on their own local worlds.
- **Ancient Artifacts:** Many civilizations have come and gone, both before us, and during our existence. Not all of these are even alien in origin; occasionally, especially out in the New Regions, we come across mysterious ancient artifacts of archaic Hama origin. Ancient artifacts are sought after for the secrets they may hold.
- **Flowsparks:** Sometimes, the Galactic Flow gets twisted up into little knots or whirls around Machine Hearts that aren't working quite right. These little bright spots evolve rapidly, often acquiring tiny playful sentiences. Likened to fairies, these little beings of light live ephemeral, unconcerned, carefree, and short lives in engine rooms and power systems. Mostly, they're harmless.



Focus

There are five broad areas that HLA campaigns can focus on. Deciding one or two of them between the group helps everyone get on the same page as to what the campaign will mostly be about.

- **Exploration:** The invention of the Heartdrive has completely revitalized the exploration and colonization industries of Hama space. Not only are there interesting species and ruins to uncover around the rim, the Galactic Core as well remains mostly unexplored.
- **War:** The flames of the Heartdrive Wars still smolder beneath the surface, and only wait to burst forth once again. On top of that, the Hama have many enemies, both internal and external, that would like to end our reign.
- **Decadence:** What do aristos do with all their wealth? Many choose to make games of things other people find deadly serious. Others take on absurd endeavors merely to pass the time. Others still invent ever-harder challenges to take on. But mostly, they spend their wealth on escaping ennui.
- **Engineering:** With the backing of wealthy aristos and hundreds of systems, you can build just about anything you can imagine, from terraformed planets and solarformed stars, to lightyear-wide rings and field-foam meta-crystals. Some explorations require engineers to uncover the secrets hidden inside antediluvian alien structures.
- **Politics:** A galaxy as wide and old as ours must be home to as many factions, groups, and rivalries that it would be nearly impossible to count them. Political conflicts can arise from territory disputes, ideological differences, direction arguments, governmental debates, and antagonistic diplomatic policies, to say nothing of the resource inequalities imposed by an impartial galaxy and a civilization of individuals.

Global Immediate Threats

These are the issues that the curtain rises on. While some may seem vast and unapproachable, remember that their purpose is to be the forefront issue. If you end up against a vast complex external threat, expect it to manifest in the scene as agents of the enemy, locally-deployed weapons, or components of the ruins you're exploring at the moment. Sometimes, the immediate part of a threat is an event, action, or enemy indirectly related to or caused by the main threat.

GMs can find the details of these threats listed in the Adversaries chapter, near the back of the book.

Note: many of the threats listed here can also be used as non-villains in appropriate situations, but are listed here because merely contacting them is likely to be dangerous, chaotic, and risky for various reasons. It may be helpful to think of them as “antagonists” rather than “villains.”

Internal Threats

Some species think it's embarrassing that we're so divided and insular. Others admire how well we work together. Either way, we've got our own problems to deal with.

–Prazn Taular, a Contact Service Diplomat

- **The Ardent Sedition:** Modern Hama society thrives on Burner technology. It powers almost everything in Hama space, from implants and cybernetics to weapons to factories to ships. But the use of the Galactic Flow as a fuel doesn't match with everyone's beliefs about it. Some believe that the Flow should not be abused this way. And some believe this so firmly that they are willing to fight all of Hama society to prove their point.
- **Benevolentia Empire:** While few in Hama space would call them “evil,” *per se*, the Benevolentia Empire have a reputation of being

a major trouble-making organization. They propound a kind of militarized utopian peace in which individuals are subordinated in favor of the whole. The problem is that they don't take no for an answer, forcibly seizing vessels, stations, planets, and systems as they expand.

- **Dominion:** Elitism is comparatively rare in Hama space, but it does happen. The most famous and influential instance is the Dominion, a super-elite fascist movement that seeks to legalize class-based discrimination, unify all Hama governments under their own flag, and take over the entire galaxy.
- **Egregore:** Arising from certain psychic fringe groups in Hama civilization, an Egregore is a kind of malignant hivemind that has escaped the control of its creators. It surfs across the galaxy the way a computer virus would travel across the Flowgrid, occupying only what it needs and moving on before it is noticed. Egregores usually have a particular conceptual antithesis that they seek to destroy.
- **Hydara Rimward Systems:** If Hydara has a motto, it's probably something like "Morals are for those without shareholders." They are well known for not only selling advanced weapons to criminal organizations, but also for developing entire specialized criminal technologies. Because the company is owned by a shell council of powerful aristos, it's no surprise the company is so hard to destroy.
- **Hyper-Tyrants:** Holding themselves above the law, these particular aristos have assembled their own private mercenary fleets and ply Hama space asserting their own rules on the ownership and operation of Heartdrives. In the past few years, they've expanded their restrictions to include the use of light pipes and the Flowgrid. They tax those they conquer heavily and punish "criminals" with corporate servitude or confinement prison.
- **Karuna Divine:** Originally started as a kind of talent competition, this group has shifted and grown into a religion all its own. Adherents worship Karuna, a psychically perfect Hama. The problem is that there are several Karunas, and their followers disagree with each other on who is truly perfect. If something is different from perfection, they say, is it not imperfect? Thus, adherents wage a kind of religious shadow war

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across the Old Territories, leading to an organization that is somewhere between cult and mafia.

- **Minima Wolf Red:** Also known as the Roving Fleet, Minima Wolf Red is a wing of massive and heavily armed vessels retrofitted with powerful Heartdrives. Hailing from the tumultuous years of the Heartdrive Wars, this fleet went and stayed rogue, fading from gravwell control and becoming one of the most powerful factions of bandit warlords in galactic history. They strike out of nowhere, hit hard and fast, and disappear before anyone can stop them.
- **Nova Makers:** Most Hama believe that altering the stars for our own purposes is all well and good, as long as it is done safely and without damaging any native life. For Nova Makers, this isn't good enough. Pointing at the many terraforming and stellarforming mistakes of the past million or so years, they stand against the altering of any celestial body in any way. When their demands are not met, they hack stellarforming machinery and cause stars to go nova in revenge.
- **Shadowed Ones:** For about two billion years, Hama civilization has been an amalgam of different governing bodies, cultures, and modes of thought. Sometimes, sects, ideas, and individuals arise that are so outlandishly incongruous with the rest that they are completely exiled from Hama space, their histories expunged and their rights revoked. After millions of years hiding in outside the light of civilization, these strange others have come to be known as the Shadowed Ones, and they are not pleased with how things have turned out.
- **Situation Resolution:** As the branch of Common Operations that deals with special circumstances, Situation Resolution (or SR for short) is sortied to deal with the most complex problems in Hama space. Sometimes, however, the problem isn't external, it's *you*.
- **Virals:** Mind viruses are a common, if dangerous, problem in Hama space. Perhaps more-so than in alien species because of Hama neuroplasticity. Virals can come from just about anywhere, from a kid with a computer to a new marketing strategy to young religions with high technological aspirations. Dealing with one is usually a matter of containment and treatment, but they can be very dangerous if weaponized.

External Threats

Every barbarian welldweller thinks their little camp fire will protect them from the dangers in the dark.

Fire is but a beacon to the real monsters.

–Zephantarie, an Ardent sage and and Regressionist

External threats are issues that arise from outside of Hama civilization.

- **Attovicium:** Similar in properties to smart gargbage and VN-Probes, Attovicium is a single-colony hivemind nanomachine swarm on the attometer scale. What makes it different than thousands of other grey goo swarms across the galaxy is that it is sentient, clever, and willing to hire itself out as a mercenary. When negotiating, it sends forth an avatar called Attovia.
- **The Bask:** A sub-light migration millions of years old, the Bask are cutting a slow swath through Hama space. They seem to be on a collision course with the Yanor, rolling over Hama systems in the way, and stopping them would be a lot easier if not for their Methuselah lifespans, millions of years of acquired knowledge, and the way the Flow itself seems to hold no sway over them.
- **Crows:** Made up of hazy, non-interactive dark matter, these wing-shaped beings come from the galactic void to sap the energy from planets. Through some unknown process, they tear away the electromagnetic energy that props up their target planet, thus slowly converting it into a black dwarf. Unlike the Qogg, to whom they seem similar, they can actually be reasoned with.
- **Crustbreakers:** These immense, planetary slowships travel the galaxy looking for worlds with just the right mix of materials in their cores. When their scout ships find one, the crustbreaker slams through the mantle and begins mining out all the super-hot material from the planet's interior.

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- **Dustriders:** These mischievous little critters wreak havoc in ship systems and cause chaos among the crew. Made up of equal parts Galactic Flow, Nanomachines, and spiteful antics, dustriders are usually found in dirty, unmaintained, or derelict areas of stations, settlements, and ships where they are a frequent nuisance.
- **Exception Zone:** These topological anomalies aren't usually dangerous in and of themselves, but the treasures they keep hidden are almost always heavily guarded, both by their creators and a handful of alien metasppecies vying for control of the zone. The secrets hidden within are often just tempting enough to draw Hama explorers into the fray.
- **Heartdrive Spread:** The Heartdrive is a new technology, and it's something that Hama civilization has tried to deny to its enemies and allies alike. Apparently that strategy didn't work. An alien species has acquired Heartdrive technology, and who knows what they'll do with it.
- **Hornet's Nest:** Many fallen civilizations left behind valuable resources and technology. Some of them left behind defensive systems to protect those treasures. And sometimes, you find them still active. They shake off the dust of millennia to make sure that you aren't getting anywhere near the facilities they guard.
- **Inazab:** The Inazab just want to help and, unfortunately, that's the problem. Driven to cure horrific diseases, they start plagues in order to have something to do.
- **Knifemakers:** Hailing from Carina, the Knifemakers are a metasppecies extremely well versed in the use of singularity, black hole, and graviton weapons. They are fiercely territorial, relentlessly vindictive, and will gladly destroy an entire star system without hesitation if it means denying it to their enemies: everyone else.
- **OWLR:** This machine race has developed a very unique way to send its soldiers into combat. Rather than sending actual ships from place to place, it merely beams a highly structured laser at a massive target, which raises complex waves and in turn builds self-assembling soldiers and vessels remotely in the defending system. The remotes then perform whatever actions are necessary to further OWLR.

- **Smart Garbage:** Widely regarded as one of the worst things about the galaxy, smart garbage is a phenomenon that merges nanotech, robotics, and organic matter into a hideous, lumpy slime. Its hunger makes it savage and malicious, but it's sometimes smart enough to hide its presence among other debris or inside ship subsystems in order to spread.
- **Starfreeze:** An unusual viral infection, this bizarre threat travels the galaxy by hiding in the force fields of ships and personnel. When it reaches a particularly hot blue star, it frees itself and begins to divide up the star into regions, then into cells, then into atoms, then into sub-atomic particles, until the entire star is held in perfect stasis.
- **Thulluu:** Operating on an entirely different biology than Hama, the Thulluu come from Outer Cygnus and have such alien value systems that it's impossible to understand or predict them, let alone reason with them. Their technology is not as advanced as ours, but in combination with Thulluu thought processes, it's enough to cause consternation.
- **VN-Probes:** These machines explore the galaxy looking for material to turn into more probes to explore the galaxy looking for more material... ad infinitum. They are usually identified and destroyed on sight, but sometimes manufacturing colonies aren't found until it's too late.

Villains

I don't care what they're calling me, Flight Lieutenant. They can crown me king of all the mudfaced welldwellers in the galaxy for all I care. I'm still going to vaporize their little habitat.

—Kryzace Ludrysha

- **Aris Zarkaliske:** Able to take on any disguise, this thief and con artist has plagued the galaxy for so long that some cultures have specific laws against business deals with people whose genetic and molecular identity hasn't been confirmed by 3 or more parties. While she's stolen, boosted, and nabbed everything from

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Large Vehicles to prototype Heartdrives to particularly famous neutron star jewelry, it's her ability to gain the trust and confidence of her targets that most people know her for.

- **Dhek:** Hailing from the wild Vulpeculan Outlands, Dhek is a tremendous arthropod alien who is working his way across Outer Cygnus towards Hama space, destroying everything in his path. Those he doesn't kill are used as hosts for larvae, which he commands with merciless bloodlust.
- **Elle Belena:** An aristo from Orion, Belena is more active and malicious than many of her peers. She enjoys buying and selling entire systems in deals so awful that even Hyper-Tyrants would be ashamed. Her skill with bureaucracy, law, and manipulation is so great that her victims are always left wondering how exactly she managed to rip them off.
- **Kryzace Ludrysha:** This powerful admiral commands one of the most fearsome independent fleets in all of Hama space. He takes his fleet from system to system, waging war for no better reason than because he can. Unfortunately, his wars generate so much economic activity that most Hama civ arms dealers are more than willing to keep him neck-deep in business.
- **Norenis Venix:** Leader of the Rabid Wolves, Venix is a master mech pilot who believes that only the strong survive. He leads his pack with brute force, mauling anyone who so much as looks him in the eyepiece. He takes the Rabid Wolves on routine raids, not only for resources but also for new "volunteer" recruits.
- **Nova Invidia:** An agent handler forged in the fires of ancient wars, Invidia is a spymaster who has built a covert operations organization nearly as expansive as its mortal nemesis, Situation Resolution. Invidia's people are everywhere, shaking things up, wrecking relations, and causing Situations the need Resolution.
- **Scophorona:** This transcendent, holographic Flow anomaly appears as a relatively baseline woman. Of more interest are her powers, among which are galaxy-wide co-location, hyperspace linked attention, and the ability to sculpt the Galactic Flow into sentient beings. Scophorona usually appears to disrupt activity where the Flow is being drained or abused.
- **Aruel:** A terrorist of the most sinister type, Aruel claims to be from a species long ago wiped out by the Hama, though no evidence of such a society exists. Aruel appears from time to

time to perpetrate deeds of wanton destruction and mayhem before disappearing again. Some of the most terrible disasters in recent memory were caused by Aruel.

- **Tenacity Minor:** Once a beloved and respected agent of Situation Resolution, Tenacity Minor became the most famous traitor in history in the Battle of Caphab Prock in the Heartdrive Wars. Since then, she's been the *entire* galactic most wanted list, her other escapades notwithstanding.
- **Veritas Supercluster:** Working through thousands of intermediary aristos and millions of shell corporations, the Veritas Supercluster is a massive, sinister AI seemingly aimed at causing as much warfare, civil unrest, and strife through Hama space as possible. While its providence can be determined, the pathological hatred it shows for Hama people is so grand that many wonder if it is in fact a plant by some alien species to destroy us from the inside.

Galactic Mysteries

The Flowgrid rumor that the phrase “Shyri Rahul,” sometimes noted in encrypted Situation Resolution communiques, is code for deployment of planetary-genocide-level assets is false. Shyri Rahul is a real phenomenon, and Situation Resolution has proof.

–KLARIONN, a Canis hacker

There are some things that despite, millions of years of detailed investigation, still refuse to give up their secrets. There are a number of these Galactic Mysteries, and they tend to be on the cosmic end of the scale of power. Some are lost technologies, transcendent races or beings, or self-aware flow anomalies. Other are far stranger.

Note: You don't really *fight* the Galactic Mysteries. They're usually too abstract, to disincorporate, or too bizarre to directly combat. Usually dealing with them comes down to figuring out why they're

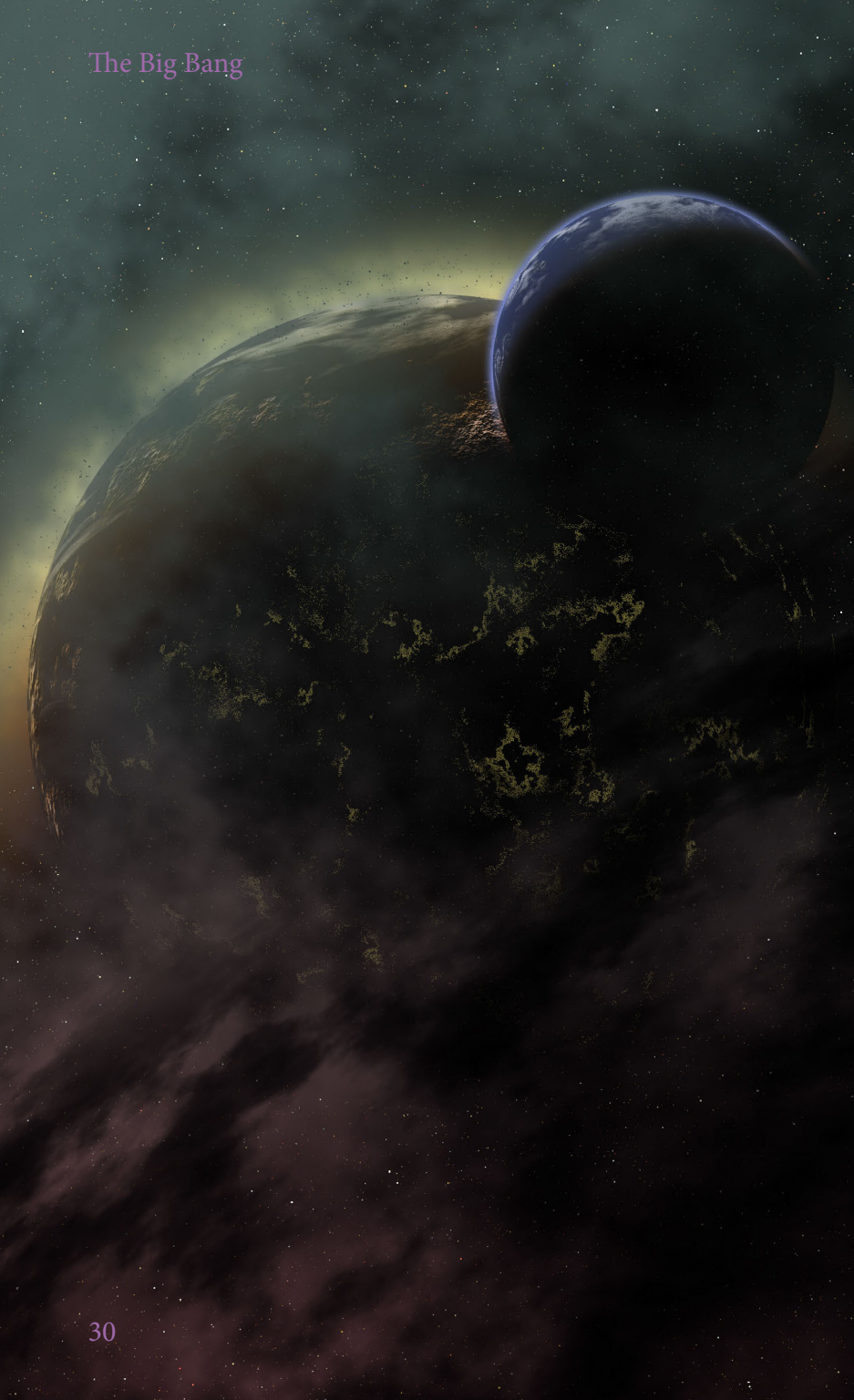
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here, how they work, what they want, or getting out of the way. Other times, their mere presence is enough to bring out *other* interested parties, who will be more than willing to discuss their ownership of the object in question.

- **Azehar:** Supposedly dwelling inside the MDNA of every Hama individual in the universe, Azehar is a kind of genetic resurrection that completely takes over its host, replacing their mind and adding to their powers. The risen Azehar always claims dominion over all Hama.
- **The Excluders:** Every once in a while, an impenetrable void slides through Hama space, blocking all radiation as it passes. These are the ripships of the Excluders, who refuse to communicate and against whom all weapons are seemingly useless.
- **Galactic Thread:** These invulnerable, impossibly long cables span the galaxy to connect distant star systems together. What they're made of and why they exist, we can only speculate on. But we do know of their destructive potential; they're essentially invisible to cruising ships that then slice themselves to pieces on them.
- **First Law:** Dating back to the early universe, this obscure and transcendent metaspecies is feared by some of the most ancient forces in the galaxy. It has been billions of years since they last awoke, but rumors continue to circulate that they were the only ones to survive the Dawn Wars.
- **Qogg:** The Qogg are a mysterious metaspecies that haunts the outer rim of the galaxy. They are like darkness itself, shunning light and converting luminous stars to black dwarfs wherever they go. Their worlds are quiet but intense with hidden activity and nobody knows what their goals or aims are.
- **Shyri Rahul:** A great, spiraling space-dragon, this god-like alien meta-being is also known as the Eater of Stars. Following no known plan or pattern, it stalks the galaxy, devouring system after system, utterly heedless of the size of the body and the defenses of the system.
- **The Twist:** Appearing as glimmering reflections of distant stars, the Twist is a bizarre, mindless confusion of warped, crumpled timespace topology. The very few who have returned from investigating the Twist claim that it is something like a

combination of a mirror maze, a wormhole network, and a bad drug trip.

- **Utopia Rogue:** This ancient hyperspatial artificial intelligence wanders the galaxy, listening to the thoughts of those it comes across. Sometimes, it takes a particular interest in an individual and forcibly makes everything around them go perfectly their way. While this is all well and good, it usually precedes a forced transcendence into its own heavenly simulation matrix
- **The Watcher:** We all feel it, sometimes. The eyes or hands of a great, vast presence, watching over us, looking through our eyes, working through our hands. What it is, we do not know, but Ardents claim they feel its surface thoughts like current in the ocean of the Galactic Flow.
- **Yrenula:** The unquiet graves of a vanished Hama-like civilization hold more than just dust and echoes. Those who pass through the Yrenula know the truth: something waits very close by.



System Formation

There are many locales listed and alluded to in the Milky Way chapter, but you'll probably want to discover or create a few yourself, either to provide background for the PCs, or as new locations to explore.

You can also randomly generate a system if you don't want or have time to pick one manually.

Note: You don't need to pick or roll for every part of every system. You can always pick a few details at first and expand on them as necessary.

Star Formation

First, the major gravitational bodies making up the system must be determined. These objects dominate the interactions of the system and have effects that define the environment of the system.

Orbital Structure

The orbital structure of a system determines how many celestial-sized bodies are in the system, and in what arrangement.

Roll 1d20.

- 1–8 **Lone Object:** No other object in the system comes close to the mass of the main object, though there may be many smaller bodies in orbit around it. Often, these sorts of systems are comparatively quiet.
- 9–11 **Close Binary:** Two massive objects are locked close together, spinning towards each other as time goes by. They orbit a common barycenter and have a period of a few days to a few

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minutes. Typically, they are energetic and dangerous, as both bodies share matter and energy across space.

- **12–17 Wide Binary:** Two massive objects are orbiting around a common barycenter. Planets either orbit the barycenter, or take complex and chaotic-looking orbits through the system. Wide binaries make up a huge portion of the galaxy, and many forms of life have evolved to deal with the strange day-night cycles of binary systems.
- **18 Triple System:** Though most triple systems are simplex binaries where there are two barycenters, a rare few are actually multiplex, where three stars orbit a single common barycenter, each with a different period. These systems are so unstable that planets only exist far out from the barycenter or in artificially made and maintained orbits. Some ancients considered building stable multiplex triples an artform.
- **19 Hierarchical System:** Beyond 3 solar-sized bodies in a system, things either get more regimented or more violent. Non-hierarchical systems with more than 3 stars rarely last for long unless actively maintained. The other option is a series of progressively larger barycenters, around which more and more stars gather. Hierarchical Systems rarely have large planets because of how perturbed their orbits are, but do often host large swarms of ice, rock, and dust far outside their stellar orbits. Random number of stellar-mass objects: 4d4
- **20 Artificial Systems:** Some systems are simply too bizarre to arise naturally. Among these are multiple star systems in which all bodies orbit a common barycenter in unison and at the same distance, over-packed systems where all available stable orbits are occupied, and complex, high-dimension knot-like orbits. There are precious few of these systems still in existence; many examples from the archives have collapsed long ago. Random number of stellar-mass objects: roll 1d6.
 - 1: roll 1d4.
 - 2: roll 1d6.
 - 3: roll 1d8.
 - 4: roll 1d12.
 - 5: roll 1d20.
 - 6: roll 1d100.

Stellar-Mass Objects

Once you've determined what the orbital structure is, you'll need to figure out what exactly is sitting in each of those orbits. While most systems feature at least 1 star, some are home to several active stars and others are home to none.

Roll 1d6 for type, then roll for subtype.

- 1 **Dwarf**. Roll 1d6
 - 1 **Failed Star**: This is a protostar that never fully achieved fusion. It emits infrared heat, but very little visible light. Failed stars are usually accompanied by dense clouds of star-forming gas, and as such they're often home to plasma patterns, intelligent solitons, and nebula-eating creatures.
 - 2 **Brown Dwarf**: This substellar object is somewhere between a gas giant and a small star. As they are dim in visible light, they rarely provide enough light for natural life to arise, but are often found in binary systems.
 - 3–5 **Red Dwarf**: These small and cold stars are very common throughout the galaxy. Though they are dim and barely emit visible light, their infrared emissions can last for trillions of years, making them stable homes for those who are willing to live close to their stars.
 - 6 **Black Dwarf**: This unusual body is a remnant so old that it emits almost no heat or light. What makes it unusual is that for the star to have cooled this far, it must either be older than the universe or have suffered external interference, leaving it quite mysterious.
- 2 **Main Sequence**. Roll 1d20
 - 1 **Blue**: This hot and bright star is fairly large and comparatively rare. While it provides a lot of light, it is so bright that its habitable zone is quite far back from the star. Most life is to be found on moons around outer gas giants with days and years determined by their parent planets.
 - 2–3 **Yellow**: A middling star in terms of brightness and size, but still fairly rare in the galactic population. These stars often

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support vibrant life and are easy and safe to colonize. They're also the first to be claimed by settlers and invaders.

- 4–20 **Orange**: These numerous stars make up a huge portion of the galaxy. They're fairly sized but somewhat cool and dim, meaning the habitable zone is closer in, where terrestrials are common and orbits are short. They are stable, slow, and quiet.
- 3 **Giant**. Roll 1d8
 - 1–5 **Giant**: This star has used up its main hydrogen fuel and has grown bloated as it tries to burn helium and heavier elements. The result is a huge star that is bright but not very dense. Often, these stars have already consumed their closest planets and may have scoured outer planets of life.
 - 6–7 **Supergiant**: Much more massive than most stars, these stars are enormous and brilliant, but also dangerous. They produce massive solar winds and are large enough to engulf inner planets as they expand. It is rare to find life around one, as they tend to blow off the atmospheres and outer layers of their planets. However, because of their low surface gravity, cooler, redder supergiants can be mined by star lifters.
 - 8 **Hypergiant**: These tremendously massive stars are huge and have diameters larger than a lot of other stars' habitable zones. They are blindingly bright and cannot support natural, planet-based life. They are also very short lived and explode in massive supernovae, leaving them poor choices even for settlers from out of system. On the other hand, they make excellent places to collect energy.
- 4 **Remnant**. Roll 1d8
 - 1 **White Dwarf**: This object wasn't massive enough to create a neutron star in its nova. Instead, it created a planetary nebula with this dwarf star at its center. Slowly cooling, this star doesn't have the mass to fuse carbon, but may explode in a carbon detonation if it compresses too much, making it a dangerous star for life to exist around.
 - 2–3 **Neutron Star**: A supernova left behind this highly-compact body. It doesn't fuse matter the way other stars do, instead it is propped up by degeneracy pressure. It is very hot and extraordinarily dense. Because of its formation, planets and objects in the system are usually sterile (if they still exist at all) or have been placed there artificially after the fact.

Some emit dangerous beams while others rotate so fast that the area around them is subject to relativistic frame-dragging. The Galactic Flow is so dense here that it can melt or explode anything tapped into it in the area.

- **4 Black Hole:** This region can barely be described as an object anymore. It is the remnant of the collapse of a massive star, where the collapse has crushed all mass down beyond an event horizon that nothing can escape. Here, the Galactic Flow becomes super-dense and extremely twisted, causing it to be very dangerous for Machine Hearts, Heartdrives, and anything built using either.
- **5 Quark/Strange Star:** Extremely rare, these primordial stars were created before matter coalesced out of the spacetime of the early universe. They are composed of hyperdense subatomic particles and may hold information from the dawn of time. Investigating them is difficult and communicating with anything inside is nearly impossible.
- **6 Exotic Star:** These bizarre stars are composed of gravitationally-bound exotic matter and display a wide array of unusual properties, ranging from negative mass to unknown baryon phases. They are highly valuable as research objects, but because of their immense gravity and unusual properties, they are always dangerous and expensive to deal with.
- **7 Flow Degenerate:** This is a standing soliton of Galactic Flow. It can easily be mistaken for a black hole or neutron star, but it is instead something quite different. Formed by *knots* of hyperdense Flow, they contain no mass themselves and instead are self-reinforcing gravity wells. They are among the most dangerous and terrifying forces in Galactic Flow.
- **8 Flow Husk:** Through the Lis-Veles process, the Galactic Flow can sometimes carry away mass or energy from stellar-mass objects. The result is a called a “Flow husk”, and they are peculiar indeed. Many have surface gravities low enough to “land” on, but no solid surface. Here, strange creatures formed entirely out of Flow wait, curiously, for someone to stumble by.
- **5 Artifact.** Roll 1d8

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- **1 Stellar Engine:** By placing vast mirrors or force fields around a star, one can create a machine that moves across the cosmos. While they are sluggish due to their immense momentum, they can reach slowship speeds and are sometimes used as weapons or ark-ships by non-Flow-connected species. Some stellar engines retain their planets, while others have Dyson swarms or orbitals within their moving gravwells.
- **2 Stellar Husk:** This terrible formation is the literal shell of a star hollowed out to provide energy for some other, more sinister activity. The destruction and debris of a stellar husk indicate a complete disregard for anything outside the mission parameters, and often serve as a warning not to visit nearby systems.
- **3 Multiplanetary Husk:** Sometimes the absence of a thing is more intimidating than its presence. In this case, something was capable of completely *removing* the star of this system, leaving only lonely planets and cooling gas. Whatever did this may have been capable of transiting entire stars through wormholes or across the Galactic Flow.
- **4 Field Domain:** A field domain is an anomaly made up of force fields enclosing a star-sized region of space. They are constructed for a number of reasons, but most fall into two categories: keeping things in, and keeping things out. Either way, messing with a still-active field domain is a recipe for disaster; though finding out if one is active or not is a challenge all to itself.
- **5 Terastructure:** Whether active or inactive, this object is an astounding sight to behold. It is a single structure made of matter and propped up with fields that is as large as a star. Each, of course, is unique. Some are designed to house trillions of inhabitants, while others are machines of such vast ambition it becomes hard to understand their purpose.
- **6 Stellarformed Body:** Another way to show off a civilization's technical knowhow is terraforming on the stellar scale. Using fields, wormholes, or warps in spacetime, a star can be extended, bent, twisted, knotted, or reconnected. Such bodies are universally regarded with great wonder.

- **7 Plasma Field:** Some call these objects “extended stars,” but they are usually less dangerous than actual hydrogen-fusing stars. Vessels can enter plasma fields with relative safety. Because they are gigastructures with morphable shapes, they are sometimes made as general vessels or warships.
- **8 Stellar Machine Heart:** This device is one of the largest and most complex objects the Hama have ever made. It gulps down star-sized portions of Flow and generates truly immense amounts of energy. They are almost entirely limited to the Old Territories, however, where they power many of the important processes that keep Hama civilization running.
- **6 Nebula.** Roll 1d6
 - **1 Supernova Remnant:** These hot, fast-moving shells of gas and dust expand at significant fractions of C and feature complex shockwaves. Young remnants are superheated by the radiation of the explosion that caused them, but older remnants can cool and diffuse enough to be explored. Dense elements can be collected here with relative ease, as long as the vessel is hardened against these forces.
 - **2–3 Planetary Nebula:** These diffuse, hazy nebulae are also home to many heavier elements, but are less dangerous and more numerous than their supernova counterparts. Planetary nebulae are so called because of their shape, rather than their composition or formation. However, like their supernova remnant cousins, they are short-lived compared to the galaxy.
 - **4 Dark Nebula:** These nebulae lie at the centers of larger, extended formations of less dense dust and gas. They are dense enough to absorb light, and provide hiding places for all sorts of cryptomorphs and suspicious alien forces. Dark nebulae make stealth in space possible even for species that do not rely on the Galactic Flow.
 - **5 Protostar:** This early stellar precursor is surrounded by a dense cloud of spinning dust and gas, which is in the process of building the star and its planets. The stars are warm but not yet hot enough to undergo fusion. Such nebulae are of interest to those who wish to build planets or stars more or less from scratch, though many are mined for their resources before they get the chance.

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- **6 Galactic Flow Anomaly:** This very rare cloud is not dust or gas or even matter, it is a widely dispersed Flow soliton of sufficient density to be visible to the naked eye. Like the Flow anomalies that accompany neutron stars and black holes, the region of space around this cloud is plagued by bizarre, non-causal effects, exotic radiation, and dangerous Flow-beings. Those mad enough to explore such a nebula are better off leaving *all* Machine Hearts at home and taking only ancient chemical or nuclear rockets.

Other Objects

These objects are usually outside of the stellar-mass range, and are more similar in mass and size to planets, even if they aren't anything like natural planetary bodies. There may be many of them in a given system, but they rarely have major gravitational effects on the stellar-mass objects.

Depending on how the orbital structure of your stellar system works, you may end up creating objects around several barycenters, or a cloud or ring of planetary-mass bodies around the largest barycenter.

Roll 1d6 for each object. 1–4 Planet. 5–6 Artifacts.

Planets

Singular, often rocky or gaseous bodies.

Roll 1d6 for type, then roll for subtype

- 1–2 **Terrestrial.** Roll 1d8
 - 1 **Frozen:** This world is cold and probably dark and distant from its star. It may be composed mostly of various ices, and may have a liquid ocean beneath a deep crust of ice. Native life is probably crystalline in biology.

- 2 **Desert:** This planet has been baked by the light of its star and is dry and windswept. Surface features are crisp but evidence of liquid erosion may be present in geological record. Biological life may have once been here but probably died off when the atmosphere dried out.
- 3 **Barren:** This planet lacks a thick atmosphere and cannot sustain liquids on its surface. It is pocked by impact craters and has no native biological life, though some may appear in the geological record.
- 4 **Volcanic:** Smoothed by eons of lava flows and seas of magma, this planet is still active and constantly spewing noxious gasses into its thick, corrosive atmosphere. Any native life found here would be, by necessity, silicon based.
- 5 **Lush:** Covered in foliage and vegetation (of whatever kind) this world is habitable and hospitable to life. It's possible that the atmosphere is poisonous to Hama, so make sure you have the right suits or adaptations before landing. Lush planets often feature complex animals as well, and are often the homeworlds of sentient species.
- 6 **Terraformed:** This world is specifically and obviously engineered to support life. It may be outside of its habitable zone or be constantly bombarded by hard radiation or powerful solar winds. It's often fairly easy to spot the machinery or evidence of terraforming, whether in the form of giant atmo cracking plants, surgical comet impacts, field generators, or seeded biomass. Often the life of terraformed worlds is very particular and precisely designed for the conditions, or vice versa.
- 7 **Machine World:** Some call them "paved worlds." This planet is covered, either mostly or entirely, in machines, resources pools, waste depots, and other structures. It's easy to construct machine worlds, but the speed with which they can be constructed is a double-edged sword: often they are short-lived and decay quickly into uninhabitable wastelands. They are more common among species with low spacefaring capability, as manufacturing is far easier in space.
- 8 **Planetoid:** Barely able to be called a world, these tiny bodies are somewhere between comet/asteroid and small planet. They don't have natural atmospheres, but are often colonized

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as interplanetary hubs, pirate hideouts, and criminal rogue states.

- 3–4 **Giant**. Roll 1d6
 - 1–2 **Gas Giant**: Gas giants are mostly hydrogen and helium, with sometimes-useful trace amounts of other gasses. Gas Giants are known to have many moons and often feature rings and asteroid clouds, making them easy targets for mining. They're often further out than terrestrial planets, making them less likely to support natural life.
 - 3 **Hot Giant**: With a close orbit, a short orbital period, high stellar irradiation, these gas giants have diffuse and exotic atmospheres, making them home to unusual gas-breathing life and targets for special mining operations. Unlike outer gas giants, they are unlikely to have moons or rings.
 - 4 **Ice Giant**: These gaseous planets are mostly made up of heavier elements than hydrogen and helium. As such, they are valuable to gas mining operations, but are also home to some bizarre forms of life. Despite the name, their interiors can be quite hot, and they often have semisolid mantles larger than terrestrial planets.
 - 5 **Machine Giant**: For whatever reason, some species build machine worlds out of their gas and ice giants, tearing up terrestrials, asteroids, and rings to forge vast construction worlds. In Hama systems, these are usually built to mine exotic matter from the metallic cores of gas giants, while in alien systems they are built for more diverse reasons. Machine giants are rare and considered somewhat foolish endeavors.
 - 6 **Swarm World**: This body is only considered singular because its many components orbit a single common barycenter. Swarm worlds are like mini-systems in their own right, each with its own nebula, rings, and planetesimal bodies. Swarm worlds are unlikely enough to arise in nature that all known instances are considered to be artificial, even if there's no specific evidence to support this. Swarm worlds sometimes have breathable atmospheres, allowing those attached to one of the sub-objects to live in relative comfort.
- 5–8 **Planetesimals**. Roll 1d8

- **1–2 Moon:** Many moons are not large enough and don't have strong enough magnetic forces to retain atmospheres, but there are some that are just geologically active enough to maintain atmospheres at levels life can tolerate. These tend to be around giant planets, where tidal forces cause internal heating. Otherwise moons make excellent first-steps into space for less advanced species.
- **3 Belt/Ring:** An asteroid belt around a system is a boon to young starfaring species, as it provides a vast wealth of easily-reached resources. A planetary ring, on the other hand, is sometimes as much of a danger as it is a benefit. Both types can be cannibalized into resources by Hama scoop miners, though many prefer to leave beautiful planetary rings intact.
- **4 Cluster:** Asteroids, comets, and ring debris often collect in the L4 and L5 positions around planets and stars. Their positions aren't terribly stable, but they're fairly far away from their parent bodies, making them havens for those wishing to escape the social or political structures of the system. Because of this, many generalize them to be criminal enterprises or dens of thieves.
- **5–6 Cometary Swarm/Disk:** Cometary swarms are important for life in a system, both for it to arise naturally, and for the system to be of interest to possible alien or Hama settlers. Water ice is essential for slowdrives and many alien engines, and besides that it's an important building block for life. Fortunately, there are few systems that don't have a cometary swarm or two.
- **7 Accretion Disk:** Stellar bodies that have extremely large gravwells often pull apart objects in their vicinity and tear them into atoms. The in-falling matter usually forms an accretion disk, which is heated by gravity and friction. Such disks can also generate powerful and dangerous particle jets. Jets are also indicative of extreme radiation and magnetic forces, many of which can tear smaller vessels to shreds just with their mere presence.
- **8 Nebula Filaments:** While interstellar gas is usually so diffuse as to almost not even be there, strong magnetic and radiative fields can compress, stretch, or pinch filaments of gas into ionized arcs that reach through a system. Such filaments can

sometimes show where Flow anomalies are likely to be located.

Artifacts

Artificial objects ranging from planetesimal size to planetary size.

Roll 1d6 for type, then roll for subtype

- 1–2 **Planetary Objects**. Roll 1d6
 - 1 **Ring Swarm**: Planetary rings come from a number of sources. Some are natural, being formed of smashed moons, ice, or the leftovers of planet creation. Others are artificial, hordes of manufactured satellites, either linked or unlinked, coorbiting at the same height. Both are sources for industrial assets and are an easy source if they're uninhabited.
 - 2 **Shell Swarm**: More often than not, complex spherical swarms of objects are artificial in origin. Natural orbits tend to be in a similar plane, making these sorts of arrangements the province of communications systems and defense emplacements.
 - 3 **Orbital Factory**: Large manufacturing centers are often constructed out of large captured asteroids and comets. Most are easily recognized by the evidence of such operations on their surfaces and the unusual nature of their orbits. Sometimes explorers stumble across orbital factories that are still capable of being activated and used.
 - 4 **Planetary Mine**: These massive constructions are made up of launch loops, orbital elevators, and huge mining complexes and are designed to ship bulk material up from the planet's surface with a minimum of energy waste. Such planets are usually home to large reserves of very rare minerals or materials because it's always cheaper to mine asteroids if possible.
 - 5 **Orbital Elevator**: This tremendously long cable is made up of a number of extremely strong fibers and stretches from the surface of a planet all the way out past a balance-point

station. If active, it provides a cheap and simple way to get from the surface to space, but they're rare in Hama space, where Machine Heart-driven engines make orbit and deorbit maneuvers simpler and more direct.

- **6 O'Neill Cylinder:** This large cylinder is aimed at the parent star and has reflective panels that rotate around a core of interspersed "land" and giant windows. Such cylinders are popular among some cultures and many alien metasppecies, but they require a lot of maintenance and can go derelict easily without constant attention.
- **3–4 Circumsolar Objects.** Roll 1d6
 - **1 Dyson Sphere:** A rare sight even across the galaxy, Dyson spheres completely enclose a star in a solid shell in order to collect all solar output. The engineering required to construct such an artifact is beyond the reach of most civilizations alive and dead. Because of Machine Hearts, they're almost entirely unnecessary in Hama space and only exist there as relics or art-civs.
 - **2 Dyson Swarm:** Much more manageable than their cousins, Dyson swarms are clouds of orbiting mega-structures that collect as much of the light of a star as is feasible. They are far more popular in the galaxy at large and in Hama space, where they're used for inexpensive housing for billions.
 - **3 Stellar Ring:** There are many more natural stellar rings than there are manufactured ones. Natural rings are the result of planetary creation or destruction and are swept up by shepherd bodies. Artificial rings are usually discontinuous but much closer together. They can provide living space and manufacturing area for billions of people and are often seen as more elegant than Dyson swarms. They are, however, more prone to cataclysms of cascading failure.
 - **4 Solar Statite:** Held in place by the balance of radiation pressure and the force of gravity, statites are popular among early spacefaring metasppecies, often as their first attempts at large-scale stellar colonization. They are notoriously fragile and must be actively maintained. It's rare indeed to find a derelict one still in its lethally descending orbit.
 - **5 Solar Brain:** Made up of Dyson shells or swarms, these multi-layered energy capture devices support huge and

astoundingly complex computer systems, often large enough to support millions of simultaneous world simulations. They are often left behind around small, cold, stable stars as the last home of collapsing civilizations.

- **6 Planetary Machine Heart:** Left behind by the inscrutable scientists of ancient Hama civilizations, these planet-sized Machine Hearts are scattered through the galaxy and are universally dormant. No one knows what they were designed to power, but some theorize they were part of even larger ark projects or stellar engineering.
- **5–6 General Objects.** Roll 1d12
 - **1–4 Manufactured Habitat:** Habitats of all shapes and sizes litter many of the cooler, safer stars in the galaxy. Some are still ticking over, the last tiny enclaves of long-gone species. Others are evacuated and scrapped, holding little more than a museum of tool marks and manufacturing techniques. If you find one that's intact but empty, leave.
 - **5 Solar Generator Station:** These stations can be found around planets and in direct orbit around the parent star. Designed to collect energy and beam it back to planetary or orbital installations, they are another form of technology more popular outside of Hama space than within it. Nevertheless, they do make decent backup systems in case of emergency.
 - **6 Discarded Planetary Core:** Some planets are home to materials and minerals so valuable that they've long been stripped of everything, including their crusts and mantles, leaving only a cooling iron husk where the planet once was. Such cores are a good sign that the area was once inhabited, but are equally good indicators that little is likely to be left in the system to explore.
 - **7 Galactic Flow Nexus:** Sometimes stars or planets are home to standing waves in the Galactic Flow. Civilizations that find such systems have a chance of developing technologies analogous to our Machine Hearts, making them capable players on the galactic field.
 - **8 Crystalline Matrix:** This large shard is likely home to simulations or immensely powerful artificial minds. It may also contain vast stores of knowledge gathered by declining

civilizations. They are likely to be well guarded if they are still functional.

- 9 **Mega Arkship:** Stretching the size of a moon, this vessel is designed to travel interstellar space. Many can go no faster than a tenth the speed of light, and so they are among the slowest interstellar travelers. Nevertheless, they are designed to last for eons, so there's a good chance any arkship you find is still inhabited. Whether the inhabitants have mutated beyond recognition, you won't know until you check it out.
- 10 **Mega Intelligence:** This complex region of plasma, quantum nodes, and force fields is in fact a living being. It thinks using clusters and filaments of plasma like neurons, and it is immensely powerful. Depending on its temperament, it may ignore, address, or accost those who stumble into the system it is observing.
- 11 **Natural Space Vessel:** This enormous vehicle is ponderously slow, but contains an entire ecosystem within it, just like an arkship. Unlike a normal arkship, however, it is completely made up of living material. Such vessels are grown, not made, and come from only a few very rare metaspaces across the galaxy.
- 12 **Unknown Light Pipe Mouth:** This light pipe is connected to some other place, but the support systems are either destroyed or simply missing entirely. As such, it's almost impossible to determine what the pipe is connected to at the other end. It spews forth energy and hot matter in a storm of uncontained fury that can only be remedied with mega-engineering scale fields powered by truly huge Machine Hearts.

Inhabitants

While life itself is not terribly notable these days, sentient life is still relatively rare in the galaxy. However, with the technology to travel from star system to star system almost instantly, discovering alien species, alive or dead, has never been easier.

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Note: This section of System Formation has lots of dependencies. If you choose to roll randomly, be aware that some combinations may need to be modified, rerolled, or heavily rationalized.

Population

Roll 1d6 or select an appropriate number

- **1–2 No Life:** No major signs of life exists in this system. Its planets have not produced sentients, and it has not been colonized by a spacefaring race. This isn't to say that there's no life here *at all*, but exceptions are limited to single-celled organisms, small sub-sentient creatures, and alien interlopers passing through. If the system is known to have life, reroll.
- **3–4 Extinct Life:** One or more civilizations had once colonized this system, but they are now dead. Most leave behind traces of their works, either through the long-term effects of terraforming, manufactured artifacts still extant on the surface of planets or in orbit, or through the scars of war. The remains of some are buried under billions of years of sediment, while others are still cooling from the wars that ended them.
- **5 One Sentient Metaspecies:** A sentience species exists here. Consult Species Traits.
- **6 Multiple Sentient Metaspecies:** Multiple sentient species exist here. Roll 1d4 to determine number and consult Species Traits.

Species Traits

Roll once for each trait

- **Chemical Composition.** Roll 1d8
 - **1–4 Organic:** Made up of carbon-based compounds and substances. May be based on nucleic acids or similar replication systems. Organic life tends to have a narrow band of atmospheric conditions suitable for survival, and is often

more fragile than other forms of life. It is the most frequent type of life found.

- 5–6 **Mechanical**: Made up of metals and silicates, mechanical life uses pistons, actuators, motors, and inorganic muscle. Mechanical life often starts as a branch of organic life, but sometimes arises naturally in highly-structured inorganic environments.
- 7 **Crystalline**: Formed mostly of highly-ordered solids, these beings are usually sedentary until they attain such technology that they can move around under external power. They tend to be fabulously intelligent and some even have the ability to interact with the Galactic Flow through harmonic resonance.
- 8 **Etheric**: A category made up of a number of disparate types of meta-biology, this group contains all beings which are projected, holographic, or otherwise non-corporeal. Many are either deeply connected to, or actually made up of, the Galactic Flow. Others exist as plasmas, gasses, or even standing soliton waves inside stars.
- **Environment**. Roll 2d6
 - 2–6 **Gas**: Most creatures respire gasses to fuel their bodies. Most gas-breathing creatures must also consume solid or liquid food as well, because their respiration doesn't provide enough energy to keep their bodies active. Gas-breathers often use masks and suits to traverse environments foreign to their natural biology.
 - 7–10 **Liquid**: Many other creatures respire some form of liquid, often water or water-based. It's usually even harder for such beings to move around outside their native environment. Some employ liquid-filled ships and vehicles, while others build tank-like suits for ambulation.
 - 11 **Solid**: A few species exist within solids, such strange creatures may live this way as a developmental phase, while others might live there permanently, deriving sustenance from the substrate itself. Such beings often die when removed from their substrate.
 - 12 **Plasma**: Some unusual species collect energy directly from charged plasmas, either electrically or thermally. Such beings may be able to exist outside their starry or nebulous homes

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for only a short time, but they may be able to exist in special plasma chambers aboard vessels.

- **Bodyplan.** Roll 1d8
 - 1–4 **Bilateral Symmetry.** Roll 1d6
 - 1–2 **Bipedal:** These creatures walk “upright” like Hama tend to. They have two legs and possibly more appendages such as arms, tails, wings, or tentacles. Bipeds tend to be curious species able to interact quite precisely with their environments and often become sentient.
 - 3–4 **Radial:** Such beings are arranged in radial hemispheres, often like flat disks from which the legs emerge. Such beings are often likened to crabs or spiders.
 - 5–6 **Segmented:** These beings have a number of similar segments, each of which is usually only a little different from the next closest one, with the exception of specialized segments often located at the head and tail. Usually segmented creatures have limbs or appendages emerging from each segment.
 - 5–6 **Radial Symmetry.** Roll 1d6
 - 1–2 **Sagittal Symmetry:** Being roughly shaped like wheels or tires, these creatures often use rolling as their primary mode of locomotion. Some have a thicker or thinner outer wheel connected by spokes while others are solid and may be more center-weighted. Axial eye-stalks are a popular adaptation.
 - 3–4 **Coronal Symmetry:** These creatures look something like an upright plate, often with uniform arms around their outer circumference. They are frequently adapted to microgravity, able to latch onto and move through complex spaces with ease.
 - 5–6 **Transverse Symmetry:** Organized like an upward-pointing disk, these aliens are often similar to starfish or flowers. They are equally aware of and comfortable with moving in any direction along a surface.
 - 7–8 **No Symmetry.** Roll 1d8
 - 1–2 **Differentiated Amorphous:** These creatures do not have a stable structure that persists over time, but they do have a number of specialized parts, often which are able to be moved and used in any way advantageous to the

creature. Such internal components are usually organized by function.

- **3 Uniform Amorphous:** These beings have no symmetry, no defined form or shape, and no differentiation through their bodies, with every part of the creature able to perform all biological tasks. Often they reproduce asexually, either by budding or division.
- **4 Swarm:** Composed of a number of small individual parts, each of which is not a full being itself, these creatures unnerve many Hama. If they are not entirely hive-minded, they are at least communalistic. They are able to move through small spaces and have very strange behaviors when compared with other species.
- **5 Asymmetric:** So named because they do appear similar to some bilaterally symmetric creatures, asymmetric ones look unbalanced, askew, or twisted. They usually have some larger or more complex feature on one side than on the other, such as a claw, brain, hand, or eyestalk.
- **6 Spherical:** These creatures are often composed of large cells that are arranged around a differentiated core. Such creatures may have different segments that feature limbs, eyes, or mouths. Some walk while others sort of roll.
- **7–8 Helical:** These beings are permanently coiled, like the whorl of a shell. Many plant-like creatures have this sort of structure, as do beings from the sea. They tend to be of ever-increasing size, and analyzing the number of segments in their bodies can give a Hama an understanding of their age.
- **Tags.** Roll 1d12 2–3 times
 - **Carnivorous:** These creatures feed on other animals, usually from similar biospheres. Many advanced carnivorous sentients become aggressive or warlike, or develop complex hunting or feeding rituals.
 - **Omnivorous:** Feeding on both meat and plant-life allows organic creatures to take advantage of a wide variety of available food sources. Such creatures often carry this adaptability into their civilization structures and spacefaring techniques.

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- **Herbivorous:** These sentients feed mostly on plants and have grinding jaws and complex guts with which to digest plant matter. Because of their link to plants and planetary nature, many herbivorous species either stay groundside or bring nature with them in their ships.
- **Hivemind:** By sharing minds with other individuals, this species works more like a colony of large and independent cells. With information so readily accessible from one individual to another, the lines between personhood and society become quite blurry. Some hiveminds operate chemically while others use machines, electromagnetic forces, or even the Galactic Flow to maintain communication.
- **Nurturing:** These creatures nurture their young rather than dispersing them into the environment. Such creatures often have complex social bonds and are socially cooperative.
- **Solitary:** Such beings disdain or fear the company of their own kind. They often become highly adaptable and personally capable, able to design, build, and fix anything they need in their journeys. Some such species dislike the company of *any* other being, while others are personable with species other than their own.
- **Small:** These critters are smaller than the average Hama, between the size of a mouse and a child.
- **Large:** These creatures are substantially larger than the average Hama and range from three to ten meters or so.
- **Immobile:** Some species are fixed in place or are largely immobile for most of their lives. Some choose to overcome this with mobility technology, while others instead build their technology around themselves to suit their positions.
- **Nomadic:** Other species are known for moving from habitat to habitat as the opportunity arises, seeding the stars with their children. Such species are often regarded with suspicion by other galactic civilizations, who may liken them to biological VN-Probes.
- **Cryptic:** This species has evolved spectacular camouflage adaptations and may be utterly indistinguishable from its natural environment.

- **Unusual Senses:** Most ambulatory sentients rely on sight or hearing to navigate the world around them. This species uses something more unusual, relying instead on senses such as thermal, scent, telepathy, or magnetism.
- **Distribution.** Roll 1d20
 - 1–4 **Tribe:** This species is limited small enclaves that interact infrequently. They are often dependent on particular lands for sustenance. They may or may not have experience with advanced outsiders. Class 0.
 - 5–7 **Nation:** This species has developed the nation-state and is likely to be in the process of dividing up their home planet into territories and regions, possibly through colonization or conquest. Class 1.
 - 8–11 **Planetary:** This species covers its planet almost completely, using technology to overcome weather and climate issues. This stage is also often defined by global governance and unification. Class 1.
 - 12–16 **System Colonies:** This species has reached beyond its homeworld in a concrete way. They have self-sustaining colonies on other celestial bodies in the system. They are likely to be in the process of unifying their metasppecies in order to make interstellar travel manageable. Class 1–2.
 - 16–17 **Interstellar:** This species has colonies and presence spread across several star systems. They may be active in galactic politics or focus exclusively on mining resources from one system in order to benefit their homeworld. They have the technology to build starships, but these ships are likely to be agonizingly slow by Hama standards. Class 2.
 - 18–19 **Galactic:** This species has a presence that spans the galaxy, with hundreds or thousands of systems under their control. By this point, they're mostly decentralized, with each world contributing what it can to the whole, but largely self-governing with spheres of a few lightyears. Class 2–3.
 - 20 **Intergalactic:** This species has colonized nearby galaxies such as the Magellanic Clouds, Andromeda, or Thalumeca, meaning it has the rare ability to engineer missions that take tens to hundreds of thousands of years. Or a Heartdrive. Class 3.

Technological Traits

- **Technical Specialties.** Roll 1d4
 - **1 R&D:** Rather than implementing or exploiting existing simple technologies, this species focuses its efforts on discovery and cutting-edge science. Such cultures are sometimes ruined by the introduction of advanced technologies, as this short-circuits their drive for discovery.
 - **2 Diplomacy:** This species is aware that other civilizations exist, and chooses to focus on communicating with and understanding other civilizations. For some, this is out of necessity, while for others it is simply a more advantageous strategy. Such species may be unflappable in the face of the might of Hamaciv to some degree.
 - **3 Commerce:** Trade, either among their own colonies or with external forces, is often extremely lucrative. Such species can buy their way into alliances, purchase advanced technology, and bribe at least some of their enemies. On the other hand, they make excellent targets for more aggressive neighbors.
 - **4 Industry:** Some civilizations are preoccupied with production, either as a means to raise the standard of living of their people, or as a way to support a population that runs rampant. Either way, they are inwardly focused, and may not even respond to foreign contact.
 - **5 Exploration:** This species is inherently curious and sees their environment as something to be uncovered and investigated. They are well-versed in ship-building, engines, and related technologies. Exploratory species often get into trouble with their neighbors, particularly if they are territorial.
 - **6 War:** Some species choose to put the majority of their resources into defensive and offensive technologies. They develop weapons and vehicles fit for fighting wars first and only then distribute these new innovations to their public. They usually keep large standing armies and navies at great expense.

- **Technology Access:** Determine the civilization's class first, from Distribution. A civilization generally has access to most lower class technologies, and 1–2 technologies in its class.
 - **Class 1.** Roll 1d6
 - **1 Industry:** The ability to manufacture tools, products, and objects on a large scale. Industry enables widespread adoption of technologies in a society and maximizes output. May lead to environmental collapse.
 - **2 Computation:** The ability to design and solve complex calculations. This enables artificial intelligence on a scale that is useful to the function of a society and permits rapid technological advancement. May lead to rogue AIs taking control over society.
 - **3 Bioengineering:** The ability to design and recombine biological creatures. Bioengineering allows advancements to be made that allow easier and more efficient adaptation to locations, including space. May lead to super-resistant mutations or disease pandemics.
 - **4 Nanotechnology:** The ability to develop swarm machines small enough to manipulate molecules. This enabled many advancements in manufacturing, medicine, and food production. May lead to potential grey goo scenarios.
 - **5 Ardent Tradition:** The ability to train large numbers of users of the Galactic Flow. This greatly simplifies navigation and enhances diplomatic and social actions. May lead religious schisms and war.
 - **6 Psychometry:** The ability to train large numbers of espers or psychics. This vastly improves the negotiations, diplomacy, and strategy ability of a civilization. May lead to psychic warfare, deep state, and conspiracy.
 - **Class 2.** Roll 1d6
 - **1 Space Colonies:** The ability to create and maintain large colonies in heliocentric or geocentric orbit. This enables both population expansion beyond the planet, and the exploitation of orbital resources such as asteroids and comets. May lead to space-based resource wars.
 - **2 Machine Hearts:** The ability to make machines that consume the Galactic Flow and produce energy. Such machines enable enormous expenditures of energy, such

as the building or launching of large colonies or ships, or the construction of weapons of immense destructive potential. May lead to civilization destruction by arms race.

- **3 Slowships:** The ability to manufacture and maintain slower-than-light spaceships that can cruise between the stars for millennia. Such ships allow the colonization of distant star systems, but take time to do so. May lead to expansion wars with neighbors or social/political fragmentation within the culture.
- **4 Solar Engineering:** The ability to modify stars themselves to suit the purposes of the civilization. This is usually done to stabilize active stars or to neutralize nearby stellar threats, but can be weaponized. May lead to system-wide destruction by nova, or the intervening and interference of other nearby civilizations.
- **5 Mega-artifact construction:** The ability to engineer structures on the scale of moons and planets. Such feats usually require the consumption of a significant portion of the star's output and the system's mass. May lead to wars over direction or project goals, and may attract the unwanted attention of larger galactic powers.
- **6 Wormholes to Light Pipes:** The ability to construct Light Pipes from available, existing wormholes. This allows the civilization to pipe matter and energy across space with ease, so long as the input isn't intended to be highly-structured. May lead to interference by civilizations harmed by early experiments or open wormhole mouths.

◦ **Class 3. Roll 1d4**

- **1 Galactic Travel Network:** The ability to build and maintain a network of travel across the galaxy. Often makes use of lasers or slowships, but may include other advanced technologies as well, such as Light Pipes. May lead to galactic piracy or war against the expansionist culture.
- **2 Wormhole Creation:** The ability to forge new rips in spacetime and stitch them together. This enables the construction of Light Pipes across the galaxy, from any particular system to any other, so long as the voyage can

be made first. May lead to dangerous timespace anomalies or closed timelike loops.

- 3 **Giga-artifact construction:** The ability to construct objects on the lightyear scale. Such artifacts consume entire systems worth of matter and energy and may be intended as habitats or may have more enigmatic purposes. May lead to upheaval and extinction on a galactic scale if resources are not gathered carefully.
- 4 **Hyperspace:** The ability to move from one location to another without traveling through the intervening spacetime. This allows the rapid crossing of even galactic distances and opens the galaxy up to colonization by a single metasppecies. To date, only one species has reached this technological goal, us. May lead to the oppression and eventual revolution of thousands or millions of cultures.

Diplomacy

- **Outlook.** Roll 1d6
 - 1 **Diplomatic:** This metasppecies is outgoing and personable, able to forge and manipulate connections with other cultures and metasppecies. It makes use of these connections to afford it protections, allies, and advantages that would otherwise not be available to itself or other cultures in a similar position.
 - 2 **Aggressive:** This metasppecies is violent and takes action against its perceived enemies with haste and rage. It pursues advantages against others even if this would damage their standing in the politics of the area. Such species often accidentally galvanize their enemies into uniting against them.
 - 3 **Defensive:** This metasppecies guards its territory well, but does not attack others. Such species tend to expand only into open territory, where they are uncontested. Once they've set up shop, however, they guard their colonies ferociously, able to hold all their force in reserve for just such a case.
 - 4 **Open:** This metasppecies welcomes discourse and interaction, but doesn't actively seek to manipulate other

civilizations. It is likely to be relatively peaceful and may expect others to treat them with the same openness. Open cultures often have major trade centers or travel hubs, but can sometimes be stringent about the laws in their territory.

- **5 Suspicious:** This metasppecies doesn't like communicating or dealing with those they do not know. Once relations have been established—no small feat—they may be more personable, but until then diplomacy is likely to be treated as a kind of cold war. Such species sometimes engage in complex political maneuvers to prove their biases right.
- **6 Naïve:** This metasppecies is guileless and gullible, possibly quite new to interacting with other cultures. They believe almost any thing reported to them by sources that aren't outright enemies and fall easily for traps and diplomatic ploys. However, the fact that they are easily manipulated has no bearing on the culture's actual power and abilities, so be warned.
- **Galactic Integration.** Roll 2d6
 - **2–3 Pre-Contact:** This civilization has not yet come in contact with galactic civilization yet. They may believe themselves alone in the universe, or they may have close neighbors, allies, or enemies in the area that are likewise not yet part of galactic civilization. Pre-contact cultures are liable to go through a chaotic phase of technological revolution and expansion when they are introduced to the galaxy at large.
 - **4–7 Galactic Backwater:** This civilization has been contacted, perhaps many times, but steadfastly refuses or is unable to join in the general galactic discourse of cultures. While cultures that have valuable skills or resources usually enter the galactic discourse, those with little offer on a galactic scale stagnate quickly, falling behind or never catching up in the first place to the tech level of the area.
 - **8–9 Non-Interference Civ:** This civilization can be compared with a galactic backwater, but it differs in intent and technological prowess. Such cultures intentionally avoid prolonged contact with galactic civilizations, preferring to keep to themselves. Despite their detachment, they are on par with galactic civilizations and may choose to defend their territory against interlopers.

- **10–11 Trade Partner:** This civilization is involved in galactic politics. They likely trade resources that are relevant on an interstellar scale with other cultures nearby. They may also be bound to various agreements or alliances, which may require their assistance with various actions. Such civilizations are not usually intimidated by the Hama unless great power is displayed.
- **12 Galactic Power:** This civilization is a major player in the galactic scheme of things. They call the shots and direct the activities of many other cultures nearby, either directly or indirectly. Their actions affect the lives of trillions of people and they are usually in charge of the region they exist in. Such cultures could possibly do favorably in all-out war with Hamaciv.

Dead Civilizations

In the case that the civilization is dead or extinct, pick or roll the other aspects of it, then Roll 1d6.

- **1 Living Survivors:** The entire civilization came crashing down, destroying almost everything they had built in its fall, but there are still a few tiny enclaves of survivors clinging to life outside the fringes of the disaster. These survivors are often just barely keeping it together and have no time to look to the future or the past. If rescued, they might provide detailed information on their once-great homeland.
- **2 Minutes After the Apocalypse:** The civilization was destroyed by a disaster just before it is encountered. This is often the case with still-running wars, though explorers sometimes come across cultures that were wiped out moments earlier by solar flares, gamma ray bursts, Flow storms, or foreign intervention.
- **3 Smoldering War Ruins:** Much of the technology left here is of a warlike nature. Bunkers and dead troops and kill sats and warships abound. Vast parts of the culture have been utterly wiped out, glassed by the strongest weapons available. Such battlefields are often picked over by scavengers.

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- **4 Long-Dead:** This civilization is buried under eons of sediment and was forgotten to time. Its discovery is notable for two reasons: it may provide us a time capsule back to the distant past, and it may harbor technologies that we've never seen before, or that we've long since forgotten.
- **5 Genetic Backups:** There is some technology left over from the fall of this civilization, and in fact, they had predicted this outcome. They left behind genetic backups in deep vaults or powerfully shielded caches so that they could be one day resurrected. Messages from them enticing readers to revive them surround the structure, but who knows what they were really like?
- **6 Artificial Biosphere:** All that remains of the civilization in question is a complex and very strange biosphere of non-sentient life. The details of the civilization and its works must be determined by studying the flora and fauna left behind. It's possible that their secrets are hidden in the genetic code of the remaining life.

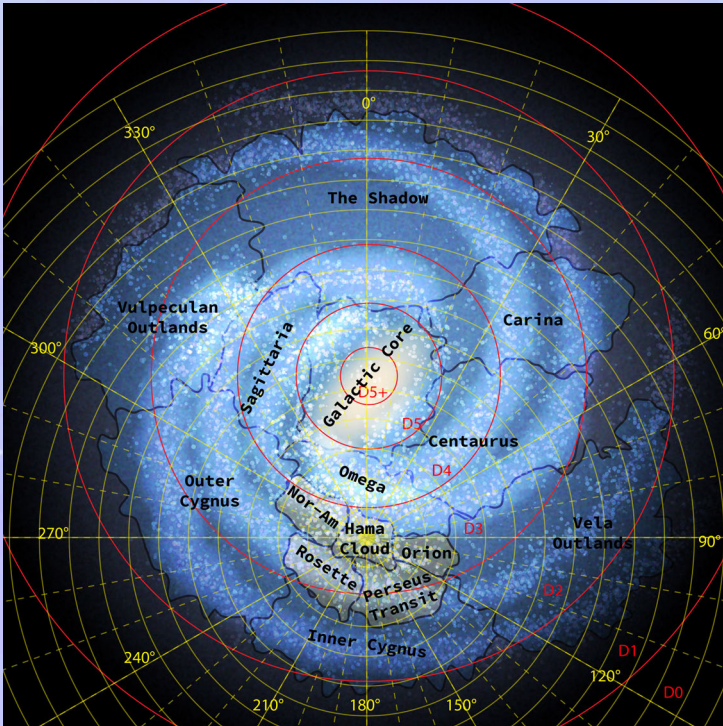
THE GALAXY

For eons, the logistics of running a civilization on the galactic scale prevented us from maintaining command authority over our many distant worlds. That has changed since the invention of the Heartdrive. Before, we relied on slow-ships that traveled a few billionths of a percent slower than C. A snail's pace in today's world, but for thousands of years, that was our standard, and as far as we can tell, it remains the standard for the rest of the galaxy.

As such, our civilization is divided into two ranges: the Old Territories and the New Regions.

Note: Regional Administration Groups and other factions mentioned here can be found in The Hama chapter.

The Galaxy



Legend

- **Solid Yellow Circles:** Distance from Hama Prime in 5kly increments.
- **Dotted Yellow Lines:** Radial directions from Hama Prime in 10° and 30° increments.
- **Red Circles:** Limits of a specific Flow metric region, denoted by a red Dx metric number.
- **Yellow Area:** Old Territories
- **Blue Area:** New Regions

Old Territories

Old Territories tend to be fully settled, completely explored, densely populated, and studded with our own mega-engineering projects. Some were once home to other species that have either fallen to the Churn or been coopted into Hama civilization. Furthermore there is rarely anything new to be gained from exploring the ruins of the Old Territories; they've long since been picked clean, and most of them are presently more like tourist traps than sites of ancient lore.

The Hama Cloud

Location: Origin / 0ly @ 0°

Flow Metric: D3

The ancient homeworlds of the Hama lie within the Hama Cloud. The Cloud is home to thousands of inhabited worlds, each extensively terraformed and re-engineered over the last few million or billion years. The Cloud is also home to the oldest and most well established cultures, some of which can trace their lineages almost back to the dawn of star travel.

Seven Sisters

One of the first extrasolar colonies of the Hama, Seven Sisters is one of the most densely populated places in known space. Ages ago, it was a tightly packed star cluster, but over the course of the eons, the stars were pulled apart gravitationally until they settled into their present state of equilibrium in the galactic arm. This process left a number of strung-out colonies littering the space between the stars, where some of the largest extrasolar colonies now reside.

Seven Sisters is populous enough to be considered one of the largest major hubs of Hama civilization. Billions of ships travel to and from here, and it is well governed compared to many other systems. Truly vast planet-sized star docks exist here to build Large Vehicles and smaller vessels.

The problems of Seven Sisters tend to be political or espionage oriented. Because it's so built up, there are always many groups and factions vying for control of activity. Criminal organizations are kept out by strict policing, but legal battles can sometimes take the form of minor space skirmishes.

Threats

- Atmosphere processing malfunctions across Amira, one of the most prosperous colonies in the region. Traders and soldiers are able to make it to their ships in time, but much of the civilian population is killed. Situation Resolution blames the attack on Tenacity Minor, but Amira refuses to accept the official story and promptly declares war on its trade rival, Li Si.
- With an increase in shipping traffic among the Seven Sisters comes an increase in Dustriders. While not typically very intelligent, they have apparently managed to lash several abandoned habitations into an ugly, unsafe cluster and declared themselves the First Dustrider Republic. The colonies of the Sisters would like nothing more than to clear it out and send the Dustriders packing, but now Hydara Rimward Systems ships have arrived and are claiming they have been hired in the service of the First Dustrider Republic.
- The Open Door claims to be a museum, but it does not house artifacts and its patrons are not Hama. Instead, Hama are the exhibits, and the patrons are Thulluu. Elle Belena runs the Door as a “debt relief program”, but it seems more likely a way to punish and humiliate her defeated rivals.

The Al Sabih Archives

Made from two entire systems worth of stars and planets, this gloomy giga-edifice is the resting place of quadrillions of Hama. It is one of the largest Voluntary Storage Vaults in the Cloud, and exists solely to retain the consciousness and sometimes bodies of bored Hama citizens who wish to sleep through the eons.

Like other VSVs, the workers of Al Sabih, from drone to civilian to ship, are unfailingly polite and considerate. They project an aura of peace and commitment in order to build the kind of trust needed by those who wish to be stored. Also like other VSVs, they employ their own potent defense fleet.

Before they are stored, most clients determine a few particular awakening triggers. Many of these have been tripped by the invention of the Heartdrive, but the Archives are not built to restore, awaken, and integrate hundreds of millions of people in a few years. Thus, a steady stream of people can be seen leaving Al Sabih every day, and new industries have cropped up nearby to cater to these time-travelers from the past.

Threats

- History Mining, the practice of grilling newly awakened Hama for details about the distant past, has always been dubiously legal. Proponents argue that it is a fascinating form of research and that it speeds along cultural integration with these newly embodied time-travellers. The Society for the Protection of Newly Instantiated Individuals disagrees, shaking their placards and shouting that abducting someone just to find out what fast food chains were like in their time is not an ethical treatment of fellow citizens. Plus, the time-travellers have no natural immunity to modern memes.
- A newly restored Hama claims offhandedly that she is the first Karuna Divine. Before she can subvert any of the staff of the Archives, Situation Resolution snaps her up. They mean to use her to flush out the other Karunas, but there is considerable

worry among agents outside Seven Sisters that they might instead have just turned their local branch of SR into a Karuna cult.

- OWLR troops begin porting in all over the Archives, killing custodians and wiping out data stores containing billions of lives. Although they are eventually driven off, a problem remains. If there is an Ulasmar somewhere in the Archives storage, they will almost certainly come again.

Hama Prime

Drifting through the diffuse outer layers of a glowering red giant star is a tiny gem of a world. Held in stasis against the immense radiation pressure of its parent is the Origin, the Homeworld, Hama Prime. It scintillates with reflections from layer upon layer of energy fields, pulling open a gap in the plasma behind it.

Hama Prime was once a thickly-atmosphered planet so hot that it rained lead on the surface. Rock flowed like water there, and up in the clouds high above, our species was born. Now, however, it is little more than a monument, a place people go to pay their respects to the original mad explorers who set out from their home to colonize the stars.

Despite eons of system mining, things are now as similar to the original system as they can be, thanks to a series of renovation programs aimed at restoring the system to a historically accurate picture of our rise to power. The project to de-evolve Sol back onto the main-sequence is still in the funding stages, regrettably.

Threats

- Over the past week, three Excluder ripships have been hovering in close orbit to Hama Prime. While not the largest cluster of Excluders ever seen at one time, it is certainly the longest period that a cluster has remained in the same place. Could they have

somehow taken an interest in Hamaciv? And is Hamaciv capable of surviving their direct attention?

- A ship full of sightseers has crashed on Hama Prime. With supplies running low and hostile environment kit limited, they are also facing an additional problem: Su-San, their stewardess, is awakening into Azehar.
- A covert Situation Resolution facility on Hama Prime is revealed when it is suddenly rocked with explosives. According to a single scrambled broadcast, Aruel is somewhere inside and has plans to core-crack the planet.

Rosette

Location: 9kly @ 225°

Flow Metric: D3–D2

While Rosette is one of the closest regions to the Hama Cloud, it was actually one of the last Old Territories to be explored and settled, making it comparatively new on the galactic scale of the Hama. As such, it is comparatively full of vibrant life and activity; the ennui of the ages hasn't yet crushed the life out of the people living here.

The Republic Comet Cluster

Known as Ice City to residents, The Republic Comet Cluster is a cloud of tremendously large comets orbiting in a swarm around a pretty but dim star. Painstakingly carved out by artisans and sculptors over the course of several millennia, the chilly habitats of the RCC are home to some of the most influential artists and museums in Hama space.

Despite the obvious artifice of the habitats themselves, little has been done about the orbits of the comets. The artists working here use this as a kind of psychological push to keep creating art; having

death by cometary collision a constant possibility sharpens the mind and forces one to think about what they would most want to do before they die. This is so integral to the lives of the artists that they've violently resisted attempts to stabilize the system four times in the past thousand years.

While the artistic inhabitants of Ice City salute those who die by random chance with the highest respect and honor, the patrons and collectors in the area are less enthused by the prospect of losing valuable works of art in the chaos. They regularly send shuttles out from the safety of their General Vessels to collect works and store them away from the dangers of unconstrained orbital mechanics. Some artists don't mind. Others do.

Threats

- Launched like a missile out of the gravwell of the central star, one of Ice City's carved comets has broken free of the cluster. Full of priceless artifacts, it is inching towards a major shipping lane where, it has been made clear, it will be blown to pieces by annoyed merchants. A rescue effort is under way, but it is being repelled by weapon batteries and small arms fire from the artists aboard the comet, who are insisting that this is how they want to go out.
- Zebala Matriculon The Third, a notable artist, has just finished putting the touches on her magnum opus: A Symphony Of Crows. Unfortunately, the fully inhabited ice structure has somehow attracted the attention of its namesake. Rather than feeding on the weak neighboring star, the Crows are gathering in increasing numbers around the Symphony, to Zebala the Third's delight.
- An outbreak of the Silent Utopia viral has left an important art installation populated only by floating corpses. A salvage team is sent to recover the art, but has not considered the possibility that the viral has embedded itself in the art.

Bliss

Everyone knows what goes on behind the doors of establishments on Bliss. While they're coy about it, they're not exactly keeping people from participating. Founded some eons ago by a group called the Sensates, this lush, tropical planet has been engineered for perfect relaxation. Despite the massive amounts of capital it takes to keep it running, it's in no danger of running out of funding: the extravagant pleasures are sold here for equally extravagant prices.

The dual purposes of Bliss were tangled up long ago, and now it's essentially impossible to tell the difference between "customers" and "staff." The entire indulgent population is engaged in the pursuit of amusement and satisfaction, often trading services rather than goods in what they call "the pleasure economy."

Surprisingly, actual outside visitors are now comparatively rare. There are other similar but smaller-scale (and lower class) habitats all over Rosette. Bliss has nearly faded into legend because of the high standards its people set. Sometimes, Blissians come out to experience the pleasures of the rest of Hama space, and when they do, you can tell them apart from other Hama from lightyears away.

Threat

- A series of Egregore outbreaks in neighboring systems has put Bliss on the Service's radar. While it is entirely possible that there are Ardent Egregore cults hidden on the pleasure-world, finding agents who want to go on-world to root them out is proving to be a challenge.
- Section Eight is furious. The army they sent to Bliss' surface two weeks ago is no longer answering their hails, let alone returning with slaves and plunder. Their threats of simply glassing the world have prompted the Blissians to send a delegation to their orbital fleet. The rest of the sector is now watching with bated breath to see if the pirates' resolve can survive a conversation with the hedonists.

- Contentment, a new class of viral, sweeps through the sector. Its primary effect is to make Hama feel comfortable, positive, and fulfilled. The infected no longer pursue pleasure-seeking behavior, happy just to work. The usually sedate Blissians' reaction to this is to throw up a massive planetary forcefield, cut off all contact with the Flowgrid, and begin building surface-to-space weapon systems with frenzied efficiency.

The Caphab Prock Wasteland

As much a testament to the duplicity of Tenacity Minor as to the power of Hama war weapons, this wasteland was created in a famous battle of the Heartdrive Wars. What is left is a region of fractured reality where dangerous rifts gape and spacetime itself is still cooling. Once there was a binary star and a dozen densely populated planets, but no trace of them remains anymore.

Before it was utterly destroyed, Caphab Prock was a progressive, happy system where the ennui of galactic civilization had yet to reach. It was known for its art and culture, but was also substantially more permissive than some other systems. Its inhabitants were thus not the kind of people to hand over their Heartdrives to Sel Sada, the Hyper-Tyrant who claimed the region. But, as we all know, they were betrayed by the treachery of Tenacity Minor, who almost singlehandedly destroyed the entire system.

Now, there are only three groups of people to be found in the Caphab Prock Wasteland: disaster tourists, Standing Military Service Branch 212, and the Children of Sel Sada. Branch 212 has the unenviable position of trying to protect the tourists from themselves while keeping the Children of Sel Sada at bay.

Threats

- Disaster tourists are flocking to a new temporal echo, a piece of causality that has been set on loop. The anomaly is a giant fleet of disaster tourists, all of which have come to look at the

anomaly. Many of the tourists know that they are going to become a part of the echo, but seem unable to stop themselves from making the pilgrimage to it.

- Sightings of Attovia have put Military Service Branch 212 on alert, but the entity does not appear to be massing for a raid on the sector. Instead, if witness accounts can be believed, she is staring out at the desolation and crying.
- The Children of Sel Sada, followers of the deceased Hyper-tyrant, have been hard at work on a secret project. Using advanced simulations, cloning, and lots of conjecture, they have recreated their leader. This new Sel Sada promptly declares war on Situation Resolution, claiming that their lies about the Caphab Prock disaster have permanently tarnished her image.

Perseus Transit

Location: 9kly @ 150°

Flow Metric: D3–D2

Perseus Transit contains a crossing between two of the galactic spiral arms, and has long been a center for interstellar trade. Unfortunately, trade peaked some million or so years ago, and Perseus Transit has since been in such a state of decline since then that it is now more of a galactic outlaw backwood than a civilized Hama region.

Dark Disk

Drifting through an expansive void between the other stars is a strange artifact-like system. Dark Disk is structured like a black hole surrounded by an accretion disk, except that there's no black hole and the disk is cold and grey. This vast gas cloud co-rotates around an empty barycenter and is filled with billions of tiny stations and colonies. These colonies are all independently operated, sharing no common oversight despite their proximity.

Dark Disk is one of the systems that gives Perseus Transit a bad reputation. It is a haven for Hama who want to be close enough to civilization to trade and interact, but don't want any interference in their lives. While there *is* technically an Energy Aristocracy here, it's so small and unobtrusive as to be powerless. Dark Disk is thus run by a number of cartels who control the exchange of various survival resources between the tiny habitats.

Owing to the complete lack of a Local Defense Military, Dark Disk is one of the most popular destinations for bandits and brigands in the region, who often come here expecting a lawless place of chaos and revelry. They are quickly curbed by cartel enforcers who make sure that they understand that the reason Dark Disk is under the radar is because people don't make trouble.

Threats

- One of Dark Disk's cartels has acquired a bootleg version of the Benevolentia Empire compliance simulation. With a little bit of tweaking, they have removed the scripts that override the user's free will, allowing them to make any decision they wish. Their first clients for this tech are cartel enforcers, who—thanks to the time compression—can now go from being moderately accomplished killers to supernaturally capable assassins in a matter of seconds.
- While not explicitly a tourist destination, life on Dark Disk orbitals is not always so dire as outsiders make it seem. Take, for example, the recent trend in local entertainment: coaxing Flowsparks into coherence and battling them against other Flow creations. Ardents are not thrilled with this practice, but there is already an inter-orbital league going, and there is some serious money behind the biggest contenders.
- The King of Thieves in nearby Cold Hydra IV has had his sights on Dark Disk for some time. No one is sure what prompted him to finally move, but his agents are moving from orbital to orbital, seizing control. The cartels are mustering one last, desperate effort to repel him, but without a willingness to trust each other, they have little chance.

Cold Hydra IV

Cold Hydra IV is where the King of Thieves holds his court. There have been as many courts as there have been Kings, but for the last twenty thousand or so years Cold Hydra IV has been the center of the action in the Perseus Transit. It is a frigid, hostile world where nitrogen snow piles up quickly, often freezing interlopers to the ground within minutes without the right kind of equipment.

Thieves and bandits from all over the Transit come to court at Cold Hydra IV, but for most of the history of the place, they were sent as emissaries from distant (and autonomous) brigand groups because of the distances involved. They were not expected to return during their lifetimes, and many such emissaries were kept as political prisoners to keep rival gangs under control.

Cold Hydra IV was one of the first major targets for galactic enforcement when the Heartdrive was released. Unfortunately for the LDM detachments involved, the King of Thieves was long prepared for this attack, causing some to speculate that he had some kind of deal worked out with the inventor of the Heartdrive in advance.

Threats

- Although they are considered gauche in court (and enough to get the unwitting gossipier thrown naked out into the nitrogen snowfall), rumors that the King of Thieves is not a single individual who has held the throne on Hydra IV for the past twenty thousand years circulate from time to time. Recently, a person has been spotted in dome-bars and frozen theaters who bears an uncanny resemblance to the current king. Is this a predecessor, come to take back the crown?
- The cartels of Dark Disk are treated with suspicion on Cold Hydra IV. They send representatives only rarely, and those that do stay for any period of time socialize with the courtiers on the edges of society. When an assassination attempt on the King fails, the Diskettes are inevitably blamed. They go instantly into

hiding, and there is considerable money to be made in smuggling them off-world—or by turning them over to the King.

- Hassle, a piece of smart garbage, runs a shop out in the wastelands. Its apparent control over its urges to feed and infect is at least as strange as its ability to speak clearly and rationally. It deals in weapons, shield systems, ship parts, and expensive rarities—with the caveat that it makes every sale from behind a hermetically-sealed plate-glass bubble. “This is for your protection and mine,” it says, directing drones to load each sale into its customers’ transports.

Edustaygellureisa

Usually truncated to “Edu,” this desert planet is one of the last surviving major trade outposts in the Perseus Transit. What parts are not covered in sand, dust, and tumblestone are covered in vast concrete pads and lots, where forgotten cargo containers stand like so many tombstones, awaiting freighters that will never arrive. Business is still done here, just not so frequently.

While it is still technically in operation, Edustaygelluresia is so infrequently visited by cargo cruisers these days that it’s almost entirely overrun by escaped creatures and slaves. The remaining few operators live on ships that lazily wander the skies, occasionally touching down to refuel and harass the transplanted wildlife.

Edu’s endless fields of cargo containers are mostly full of junk, and there are so many of them that prospectors would have to bring large-scale drone fleets just to find anything worthwhile. This makes them a prime location to hide illicit cargo and hot merchandise, a service which the storage operators are more than willing to accommodate for the right price.

Threats

- A Harmony Princess of the Benevolentia Empire is rumored to have been stashed in an Edu shipping container, and the empire is going berserk looking for her. Strangely, so is Attovia, and her objective seems to be at cross-purpose with the Benevolentians.
- White Rabbit, one of the hottest clubs in the Perseus Transit, has an unusual way of staying exclusive. As soon as it gets over five hundred patrons in a night, it packs up and moves to another shipping container. Hunting for White Rabbit is a pastime for many bored aristos, and tipping them off to its current location has become a way for visitors to curry favor.
- Someone seems to have armed the local population of Edu, as they are bringing down prospectors and leisure craft with fairly sophisticated munitions. Hydara Rimward Systems, with a speed that is suspicious, denies all involvement.

O Minustria

You wouldn't know it from looking, but the lush and thickly-vegetated world of O Minustra is every bit as industrious as some of our most densely populated manufacturing centers, probably more so because of the distributed nature of our culture. O Minustra is bustling with activity in those moist rainforests, where Miinix are constantly working the land, grafting plants, and growing their particular type of technology.

O Minustra once had a highly elliptical orbit that encouraged brief periods of explosive growth followed by long, hard winters. The Miinix analogues to Machine Hearts grew from plants that evolved to survive these harsh times, and the Miinix learned early on to harness these plants and extract power from them. Not long after, they began a long series of careful adjustments to move O Minustra out of the cold and into a more circular orbit, where it now resides. The energy they gained in the process allows them to grow more Cores and expand into neighboring systems.

In its modern form, O Minustra is a hive of industrial activity and the center of Miinix power in Hama space. It is open and accessible

to Hama citizens and there are numerous exchange programs between the two metasppecies. Miinix ships are sometimes seen in Hama military fleets, and a powerful mercantile bond exists between the two. Relations are good despite the initial conflict between us.

Threats

- The Ardent Sedition is split on whether the Miinix's botanical Machine Hearts are abomination. Some seditionists are loudly arguing that the Miinix have seen the true way forward, and there is a small pocket-war raging between two seditionist factions on O Minustria over whether the botanical hearts should be tolerated or destroyed.
- Wyldblight, a crude viral, turns plant matter into carnivorous, shambling vine-monsters. Nova Invidia's proxies have uncapped a vial of the stuff in O Minustria's rampant jungle, but the real terror will begin when it gets to the Miinix's Machine Hearts.
- The Mountain Of Waiting Breath, an ancient ruin in the Minustrian wilderness, is considered cursed by the Miinix. Unusually, at least for this type of story, the technologically advanced locals have proof. Every sentient being that has visited the Mountain has died three days later. The Off-World Archaeological Society, despite seeing compelling video evidence, is moved to investigate. After all, proving that curses are real could revolutionize the field of archaeology, and their legend would survive for centuries—even if they themselves do not.

Nor-Am

Location: 10kly @ 300°

Flow Metric: D3

Until the invention of the Heartdrive, the Nor-Am region was considered the last frontier of any interest to Hama society.

Coreward and spinward of the Hama Cloud, it is closer to a D4 Flow Metric than any other Hama territory. This makes it comparatively strange and surreal, a place filled with unusual people and outlandish events.

Metal Metric IX

This immense iron artifact is about the size of a gas giant. Despite its size, its mass seems to be on par with a large terrestrial, suggesting an incredibly diffuse internal structure. These observations have been verified by the thousands of exploration teams swarming the object. They've reached inside and discovered a strange labyrinth of cellular spaces, as though the entire object were a huge piece of foamed metal.

Planet-sized Machine Hearts have been made and rediscovered over the eons, but this doesn't appear to be one of them, despite its similarities in topology and complexity. The ongoing mystery is complicated by the fact that it appears that the structure of the thing is expanding as time goes on, with the outer cells expanding more rapidly towards the size of the inner cells before more outer cells begin to expand from the perimeter. The expansion is slow enough that it shouldn't be a problem to nearby star systems until the Andromeda Collision.

Metal metric IX is an example of an artifact that is simultaneously well described and poorly understood. Measurements indicate that it isn't drawing power from the Galactic Flow, but nevertheless it seems to be growing without any observable source of power. Numerous expeditions and science foundations have risen and fallen around its unanswering bulk. There are many such objects in Nor-Am.

Threats

- A group of avant garde Burners has stirred the wrath of Scothorona with their experiments inside the sphere. Now the

whole structure is infested with patrolling Flow Homunculi, and archaeologists need teams of soldiers and Ardents in order to move from camp to camp. An esteemed scientist, Doctor Lispath Trine, is probably calling for help from deep within the sphere, but her broadcasts are garbled almost to the point of indecipherability.

- The Labyrinth, originally an Enhanced Reality show about exploring the sphere, where distant users piloted local actors through a neural override, has taken on a remarkably different tone in the past two days. A colony of Smart Garbage has entered the structure, and is aggressively stalking the actors as their puppeteers try to guide them to safety.
- An important discovery comes too late: Metal Metric IX is expanding in direct proportion to the number of people that are within it. Unfortunately, it is growing very quickly now, swallowing satellites into its honeycombed structure.

Sculptor Light Station L

Flowlight isn't terribly rare in Hama space, and many are at least passingly familiar with its properties. Rarely, however, is it seen in large quantities because of the psychic control required. Sculptor Light Station L is the exception to this rule. It is a tremendous self-sustaining tetrahedral Flowlight artifact about the size of a terrestrial planet. Created by some forgotten Ardent martyr, it has remained active and stable for hundreds of thousands of years.

Sculptor has been many things over the eons. Legend tells that it was originally a place of meditation, where a sect of Ardents sought some kind of interstellar nirvana. The earliest historical records existing suggest that it survived a number of border wars and skirmishes between the Hama and alien metaspecies coming from Omega. Since then it has found use much like any other planet-sized body, except that the solid force-field surfaces of its interior aren't capable of supporting plant life, so food must be grown in hydroponics.

Sculptor Light Station L has been a popular pilgrimage site for Ardents for many eons. Most there today were brought there on slowships as cryogenically frozen sleepers; only a few have arrived since the invention of the Heartdrive. While there are regions of the artifact adopted by Burners and other groups, most of its internal space has been taken over by various Ardent sects, each preaching their own schools of thought.

Threats

- Scophorona is a regular to the artifact, although rarely is she hostile. She will occasionally answer simple questions from the Ardent sects, and some believe that she regards the entire Flow-structure as a kind of gift to her. Tyr La Shar, a Hyper-tyrant, has heard the stories and means to use the station as a trap, capturing her for weapon, field, and Flow research.
- Every decade or so, the Energy Aristocracy makes a play for the station. Their latest attempt is an appeal to the Ardent Sedition. If the Sedition hands the station over to them, they will revoke all civilian licenses for Flow tech in the sector. The offer is unsatisfying, but the Sedition is considering it.
- The station has become infested with Starfreeze. With force fields as its principle building material, turning it off and on again to destroy the virus is not an option. A nearby aristo has thankfully placed the station under interdiction to keep the contagion from spreading to the local star, but unless the Ardents can figure out a way to remove Starfreeze from a running field, they will spend their entire lives aboard the station.

S Auva

Circling a double neutron star binary at a dangerously close distance is a ramshackle habitat called S Auva. It serves as a hub for much of the transportation and expansion in Nor-Am, and is known for being situated in the middle of the beautiful gas clouds

of the Nor-Am nebula. It's a working person's town, full of bustling industry, shipping docks, and Hauler and Trade guild offices.

S Auva is remarkable for its size and local importance, but it's also known for a strange kind of haunting. The nebula itself seems to have some kind of vague subsentience and when storms in the nebula kick up, all of S Auva is washed in a curious presence that speaks to some and shows visions to others. While the cause of the phenomena isn't well understood, its effects are a source of conflict among the traders and haulers of S Auva.

The Storm, as they call it, peers into your mind, collects your surface thoughts and recent desires, and shows you kludgy hallucinations emulating a future that sort of matches "what you want," if only in the broadest sense. Those that have stayed here for a while get used to sorting these figments out, and no one really cares what the occasional scientists tell them about it. This is a blue-collar hab, and the Storm is just another thing to weather. Understanding why it does what it does doesn't do anyone any good, they say.

Threats

- A family of Haulers has found a strange class of large deep-space organics migrating through the nebula. In addition to being a valuable opportunity for scientific research, they are easy to kill, edible, and probably worth money to some out-of-sector aristo with an appetite for novelty. No sooner have the Haulers begun whaling operations than Contact Service agents show up, desperate to halt what they see as barbarity.
- Anthropologists have noticed a disturbing trend in the Storm's predictions. Many of the the locals are having Storm dreams of secession. Unfortunately, when word of this reaches the Regional administration, they send in the Local Defense Military, an action that seems more likely to inflame rebellion than to prevent it.
- An enterprising crew of Burners has found a way to "bottle" the Storm dreams. They announce their findings, and then abruptly

go missing. Both the Haulers and the Energy Aristocracy lay immediate claims to their research.

Orion

Location: 11kly @ 105°

Flow Metric: D3

Despite the fact that the Orion territory stretches deep into the void between the spiral arms, most know it as a lawless haven of wealth and prestige. In the very deep past, the richest aristos fled the dirty, used up confines of the Cloud out to a new territory where they could spend their vast fortunes in comparative peace. Now, Orion is the most fragmented and violent parts of Hama space. Millions of planetary corporations constantly vie here for supremacy.

Domain Dust LXV

Stretching out between some of the most aggressive systems in Orion is Domain Dust LXV, a battlefield so littered with derelict ships and debris that on sensors it appears to be a kind of asteroid field scattered through interstellar space. Hunters and attack squads stalk the fields and scavenger systems crawl the wrecks, both waiting for new combatants to enter the region.

To say that Domain Dust LXV is dangerous is a hilarious understatement. Everyone and everything in the region has orders to shoot on sight, and if you're not careful to arrange passage in advance you can expect even your own allies to blow you to bits as soon as you're within range. Only the huge mercenary fleets ply the junk fields with impunity, and since they're paid by kill count, it's best to stay out of their way as well. Considering that we know of few civilizations with weapons as powerful as ours, this place ranks high among the most dangerous places in the known universe.

Domain Dust LXV was the site of an ancient battle between the original aristo pioneers of Orion. Battles were won and lost, and a cycle of violence started that never really ended. Instead of letting the fighting fade away when people forgot what they were fighting for, it became a kind of default location for fighting between the rulers of Orion; a way of causing attrition on all sides.

Threats

- Shona Larone, a Dust pathfinder, makes a chance discovery while poking around the Armageddon Sprawl, the region's densest debris cloud. It appears to be a temple, fully formed out of a non-reflective metal. She broadcasts news of the discovery to her colleagues, unaware that she has found a working gateway to the Collectors' Mausoleum.
- Legends of the Dog—a massive, machine-embodied AI predating Hama civilization—haunt the Dust. According to some tales, it is benevolent, guiding lost voyagers to safety. However, when a mercenary fleet is found in ruins or an aristo's battleship is torn stern from stem, the inhabitants of the Dust attribute this to the Dog as well. Drawn by the stories, Norenis Venix has arrived in-system with plans to catch it and teach the old Dog some new tricks.
- Wvldlvfe, interstellar pop sensation, goes missing in the Dust. Her last broadcast is a call for help from the deepest regions. Three powerful aristos all take up the mission of saving her, although they are notably at war with each other, so this might simply be an excuse for a scrap.

The Luxuria Volume

Demarcated by a vast array of holographic projectors, The Luxuria Volume is a region owned and operated by an aristo family who have stayed neutral towards all other forces in Orion. While the others quickly fell to infighting, the Luxuria family maintained their original intent: to carve out a portion of space in which they had total control, free of Hama government oversight and external

interference. By lucky happenstance, their preferences and management methods are inoffensive by the standards of most other Hama, making the Luxuria Volume one of a very few safe and comfortable locales to visit in Orion.

Getting into the Luxuria Volume is no trivial task. The holographic border is strictly enforced by a highly-advanced military funded by some of the oldest money in Hamaciv. Acquiring permission requires deep background checks and analyses far in advance, but once you've been accepted, the Luxuria Guard will gladly overstep their bounds to protect your entry from outside interference. If you don't have permission to enter, however, don't expect any help, even if your ship is about to fall apart around you.

Inside, the Luxuria Volume is classy, comfortable, and sumptuous. The finest craftsmanship has gone into every aspect of the system, from the design of the many habitats to the system of free flitters you can take to any point on any of the three main Luxuria worlds and the various moons. And while the rules here are permissive, what laws there are are enforced with the same strictness as the border.

Threats

- A persistent rumor that the Volume is home to Virtue Dark has led to a full-scale Situation Resolution investigation of the region. What agents have been able to get in have found no more than the usual signs of her, but their covert questions have started an undercurrent of panic in the locals. How much do they know about their aristo matriarch, anyway?
- A Dominion recruiting operation has been underway in the Volume for several years. When a series of explosions in a conversion facility outs the practice, the Volume's reigning aristos are questioned about how this could have happened. The aristos' reply, that the Dominion members paid the necessary fees and passed the appropriate checks, earns considerable support with the Dominion, and cold hostility from the outside galaxy.

- A Nova Maker cell has gained access to the Volume and is holding the entire field enclosure hostage. They have not made any demands yet, and Situation Resolution analysts are beginning to wonder if the whole point of this operation is to tempt another faction into going in after them before they detonate the star.

Acopus

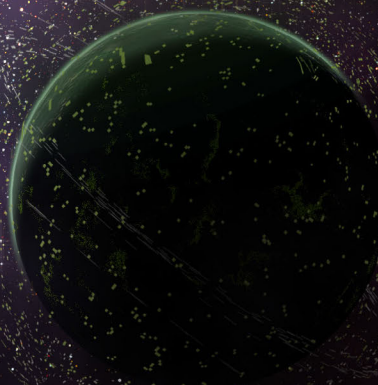
Also known as The Castle, Acopus is an ancient alien artifact made up of field-reinforced degenerate matter. It's strong enough to survive almost any kind of assault, and it's large enough to house entire spacefaring metacultures. Instead, Elle Belena uses it as a personal citadel, renting out space to other aristos for preposterous fees. Because it's essentially invulnerable, many of the other "Lords of Orion" choose to station their headquarters here, parking their own Large Vessels inside the vast confines of Acopus.

Belena's dealings with her tenants ranges from taking exactly as much as they can possibly afford to ripping them off so completely that their entire business collapses on them. Well known for constructing legal structures so complex that no one but her own lawyers can sort them out, she uses specifically written and carefully deceptive contracts that con tenants out of quadrillions of standard credits. Her contracts are enforced and billed using an artificial ecosystem of robots and autonomous service stations that are programmed to "accidentally" make mistakes that are too time consuming or expensive to correct.

In spite of all this, The Castle isn't all bad. Despite being touted as the most well-defended position in the galaxy, Acopus is positively teeming with spies, agents, and criminals who never pay Belena a cent. They form a kind of underground that penetrates all the systems and every level of the bureaucracy, permitting some people to enter Acopus for substantially lower prices than they'd have to pay the Lady herself. Since she's hardly ever here, she's none the wiser.

Threats

- The Canis Supercluster, after years of carefully replacing Belena's service drone army, has become the dominant force in the Castle without anyone realizing they were even inside. While still pretending to follow Belena's programming, they begin providing financial relief, mitigating acts of sabotage, and genuinely increasing the profitability and resources of the tenants. When Belena comes back, she will almost certainly declare war on them, but with the rest of the Castle on their side, they might have a chance of resisting her.
- A Miinix bonsai artist, whose creations are so sophisticated that they spontaneously generate and transmit memetic virals, has become trapped in a series of contracts and debts that confine her to the Castle. Belena is willing to let her buy off a quarter of her debt by uploading her consciousness into a simulation and recycling her body for parts. Unfortunately for the rest of the sector, the simulation is an unending 9-to-5 workday in a viral assembly plant, with the artist's output to be disseminated among Belena's trade rivals.
- A massive population of Ieromo comes to Acopus to sell themselves as slaves to Belena. "Take everything from us!" they cry. "Please! Show us how you would mistreat us!" Three weeks have passed, and Belena still has not let them in. Their enthusiasm for being exploited seems to have seriously unsettled her.



New Regions

New Regions are much like early frontiers, where settlements are few and far between, unknown dangers lurk around every corner, and help isn't coming any time soon. Most New Regions are full of interesting artifacts, long-dead ancient civilizations, and a handful of living alien cultures.

Beyond even the other New Regions, a lot of time, money, and energy is being sunk into exploring the coreward regions. These areas are ludicrously profitable but even more dangerous and unstable than other unexplored areas. It's a well-established fact that the Galactic Flow is stronger towards the Core, and that means there are more mysteries to discover, stronger civs to contact, stranger artifacts to analyze, and many interesting new ways to die.

Omega

Location: 10kly @ 0°

Flow Metric: D3–D4

For eons, Omega has been a frontier that few Hama have been brave enough to challenge. Because it is coreward of—and thus has a higher Flow metric than—Hama space, it has long been considered a place of wild, unconstrained weirdness. Since the beginning of the FTL Age, brave explorers have been probing its secrets and communicating with unknown alien species.

Hydrogen Gate

Among the closest and earliest systems discovered beyond the borders of the Old Territories, Hydrogen Gate is a system of five stars orbiting around a central gas giant where the northern and

southern vortices surround a pair of what appear to be giant, stable wormhole mouths.

For eons, scientists and explorers were fascinated with Hydrogen Gate. The gate itself *appears* to work the way we'd always hoped wormholes would work, by allowing matter to cross through a hole in space to another location without being harmed. Unfortunately, this is not actually so. When a ship or body enters one side, it's almost always spit out the other side a moment later, suggesting that the distance traveled through the hole is exactly the same as the distance they're separated by in real space. Nevertheless, it's the only known wormhole that doesn't simply tear matter into subatomic particles on entry.

Those who have gone through either portal report the same thing: the sensation of a vast omnipresence sorting through their memories, their thoughts, and their desires, only to find them wanting, as though they lack some key mental feature for passage elsewhere. Thousands of saints, holy women, enlightened ones, scientists, and philosophers have gone through with precisely the same results. Some speculate that even if one were to "get through" that they would be mentally projected to the destination, rather than physically moved, making this something more like a huge ansible than an actual traversable wormhole.

Threats

- An Ardent sect has made it its purpose to gather important people from all across the galaxy, bring them to the wormhole, and send them through. These people are not always willing and, beyond ferrying them to a nearby hab when they come out, the sect does not concern itself with returning them to where they were before it abducted them. A small industry revolving around translation and transport has sprang up near the wormholes, catering to all the people the Ardents abandon.
- Watcher sensations are more common in the New Regions than in the Old Territories, but near the Hydrogen Gate they are absolutely rampant. Opinion remains divided on whether this is because the Watcher *is* the presence on the other side of the

- Gate, or whether the presence is a separate entity and the Watcher is keeping tabs on it.
- An ancient Shadowed One has set her sights on the Gate, to the relief of Situation Resolution: now that she's occupied with something, they've written her off as a priority threat. The Shadowed One's modus operandi seems to involve kicking the absolute worst specimens of Hamaciv through the Gate. Thus far, there has been no change in the workings of the Gate, but pilgrims passing through it have reported being examined more critically.

Red Photon VI

Settled only 48 years ago, Red Photon VI is a brand-new Regressionist colony existing down a narrow corridor of safety from the Old Territories but well within Omega. Chosen because it was easy to get to from Hama space, but far enough away to make it hard for others to interfere with, Red Photon VI is a lush, vibrant world filled with untamed life, perfect for the Regressionist aesthetic.

While there is some life on the planet that the Hama would classify in the plant kingdom, most of the niches that plants take up on Hama worlds are filled by sessile animals. This makes Red Photon VI a place of constant motion and sound, where predators and other dangers lurk around every corner. It's little surprise that no other sentient life has tried to colonize the world; it's a hash place to try to tame.

The Regressionist settlers don't *want* to tame it, however. They're looking at it the other way around: they want the wildlife of Red Photon VI to *untame them*. Having brought enough people to form a decent sized colony, they're in the early stages of winnowing down their numbers by the hard math of Darwinian evolution. Those that can't survive on Red Photon VI won't, and that's how they like it. The remaining survivors are intensely proud of their

survival, adaptability, and skill. The more monstrous they become, the more satisfied they are.

Threats

- The Regressionist plan is succeeding too well on Red Photon VI. Memories of off-world technology, spaceflight, and Flow manipulation have dwindled from the Hama population, to the point where they are now being rediscovered. Isolated groups, desperate for an edge against the planet's hostile animal life, have combed the ruins of their old landing sites and cobbled together enough technology to establish floating islands, safe from the perils of the surface. The other Regressionists would shoot them down, but that would require rediscovering weapons technology.
- Section Eight has taken to shipping new assets out to Red Photon VI to train. The training consists of being dumped into the wilds with a few weapons, and not being allowed to come back until they have met a certain quota of Regressionist scalps. An aristo in Seven Sisters has started collecting charitable donations for a bribe to make them stop.
- Hydera Rimward Systems has established a small biolab in the Red Photon wilderness. Its goal is weapons tech—of a sort. They are hybridizing Regressionists with the local animals to create military Exoforms, with an aim towards testing them on the Ossalkari.

Ossalkari

The Ossalkari, hailing from a huge hierarchical system of the same name, are a race of small creatures that look like a cross between rats and fish. One of the closest neighboring civilizations in Omega, they are reputed throughout the region for their industrial processes and technical development. While the upper level of their science doesn't extend as far as ours, they have packed a huge amount of industry into a relatively confined space.

The Ossalkari live small and short lives, but are able to pass on their knowledge easily between generations. This, coupled with their propensity for tinkering and building machine-based solutions to their problems, has fueled an explosive rate of growth that has some other cultures in the area worried about a possible hegemony swarm situation. The Ossalkari, for their part, are content to work in their own large and abundant system.

Because they're one of the more advanced and technically skilled metasppecies in the region, they're also looked up to by many of the other younger species in Omega, as a possible protector from more powerful and more aggressive neighbors. Like us.

Threats

- Hama scholars are fascinated by the way Ossalkari memories are transmitted between generations. The process may rely on an unconscious Flow manipulation, which would imply that the species itself is a sort of living Flowgrid. A group of Ardent Seditionists counter-argues that the Flowgrid has always been alive, and to prove their point tries to blow up the Ossalkari system entirely.
- Norenis Venix, eager for a quick win, launches a sortie against an Ossalkari planet. He is, in short order, shot down, taken captive, and made the subject of several angry broadcasts to the Hama. It appears the Ossalkari blame Hamaciv for his attempted raid, and are demanding the fish-rat equivalent of weregild, or blood money, for the damages.
- A Hama envoy to the Ossalkari is abruptly interdicted by the Knifemakers, who assert that the region's inhabitants have always been under their protection. This cowardly attempt to establish trade without first petitioning the Knifemakers, they say, is a deadly insult. They will give the Hama three months to ready themselves, and then they are going to war.

Inner Cygnus

Location: 25kly @ 180°

Flow Metric: D2

On the opposite side of Hama space from Omega is a nonetheless mysterious region of the galaxy called Inner Cygnus, which is home to some truly bizarre phenomena. Because it is mostly in the D2 Flow metric, physics and reality should be relatively stable here, but to the contrary there are numerous unusual phenomenon, including a large number unsettling Black Dwarf stars.

Persistence Major

A bug war has been raging like a hurricane on Persistence Major since it was founded, seventy years ago. The place was even named for the conflict. Over the last few decades, what was once a simple research outpost has evolved into a defensive fortress with dozens of layers, tremendously deep shafts down into self-contained backup facilities, and enough defensive firepower to shoot down a Hama warship.

Daily life on Persistence Major is spent shoring up the defenses, working on the science, or waging all-out war. Even the janitors and scientists are forced to assist with the defense of the installation when the waves of Naak footsoldiers come crashing over the outer perimeter. Persistence Major isn't a place for the faint of heart, but it can be excessively lucrative if you're a mercenary willing to stake your life on a job until someone else comes along to relieve you. Apparently, the science pays for just about anything.

The science, as only a very limited few understand, is the ongoing investigation of Naak biology, specifically the captured queen hidden in the furthest depths of the station since the installation was founded. She's been kept in a kind of suspended animation ever

since, and her children have been trying to free her for seventy years. Whatever it is that the scientists are getting from her, it's worth a lot to the aristos who fund the place.

Threats

- Transcendence Honey, a Flow-infused bio-drug, has been slowly trickling into the markets in Perseus Transit. It grants its users potent but temporary control over simple organic beings, and has led to a series of terrorist attacks on shipping using slime molds, Dustriders, and on one memorable occasion: bees. Situation Resolution has traced the drug back to an aristo with strong ties to Persistence Major.
- Come join the bug war! Test your mettle against a new and exciting threat! Bring your own defensive systems or rent sophisticated combat armor on-site! Reasonable rates for a memorable experience! Team-building and corporate packages available! Section Eight allegiance not an automatic disqualifier!
- Overnight, the tone of the bug war changes. Where the Naak had previously been throwing themselves against the Hama's defenses, hoping to overload them with sheer weight of numbers, they have now taken to a more subtle campaign. They are aligning their bodies into enormous letters, visible from afar, and spelling out messages to the scientists. The messages seem to be a list of the names of the dead. Some of the scientists are no longer quite so comfortable with the war.

Arazella

Founded by a young but cautious Nouveau by the name of Cel Violetto, Arazella is the first step in trying to really colonize the Inner Cygnus region. Meticulously planned for years, the colony is designed to act as a hub for future settlement operations while maintaining a defensive force that can work to stabilize the area for Hama habitation. Despite the dangers presented by locations such as Persistence Major and Shadowbend, Arazella is billed as a quiet,

stable place where those tired of the drudgery of aristo-ruled Hamaciv can go to do something worthwhile with their time.

The current state of Arazella isn't all that it's cracked up to be. Though Violetto has worked hard to get the operation going, the colony itself is somewhat underfunded and understaffed, and the preparations for further settlement aren't coming along as effortlessly as was planned. Perhaps because of this, there are a lot of workers on Arazella who are personally quite invested in seeing the colony succeed in the face of possible failure.

While Violetto is doing her best, it's rapidly becoming clear that she's a better designer and technician than manager or leader. The laborers working to build the station are dividing into small cliques and factions, each with their own ideas of how to "improve" upon everything from the station design to the sociopolitical structure of the organization. Cel would be open to assistance running the place, but only from someone she can trust to help follow her vision.

Threats

- Feeling control of the colony slipping from her hands, Cel makes an open request for assistance and broadcasts it throughout the Flowgrid. Unfortunately, the parties that respond are Azehar, Elle Belena, and two different Karuna Divine.
- Shyri Rahul has been circling the deep space around the station, like a shark considering its prey. The inhabitants are frantic. Some are getting into ships and trying to lead it away, although there are no records of this approach having ever worked.
- The Benevolentia Empire feels that Arazella has potential. It is not living up to it, obviously, but that's just because it does not have a benign imperial hand to guide it, gently but firmly, towards its best possible self. They launch an invasion, with kindness and love in their hearts.

Shadowbend

Three million years ago, a series of supernovae at the rimward border of Inner Cygnus started a new stellar nursery that many Hama were fascinated to observe for a while. So many famous holographs were taken that the region became kitschy before being forgotten in the Churn. Now, we're starting to see that this system was interesting to more than just us. Darkness is spreading among the hot, bright new stars like a plague.

Now we call this region of Inner Cygnus "Shadowbend," for the way the gravitational lensing twists the shadows and dust of the novae. Creeping through this garden of fresh stars are two dark forces, the Galactic Mystery of the Qogg, who seek to turn the blue giants into black holes, and the somewhat more mundane Crows, who seek to turn the same stars into black dwarfs instead. These possibilities are mutually exclusive, and so a war of shadow has erupted across Shadowbend as both groups struggle to control the most territory and destroy each others' works.

Because the Crows and Qogg are so preoccupied fighting each other, Shadowbend is one of the few places it is possible to observe both groups with relative safety. Science vessels are being sent there now, to ascertain the the goals and tactics of both metaspecies, and they're hiring some of the hardest mercenaries in Hamaciv to watch their backs.

Threats

- When the Crows and Qogg fight, the action is often difficult to follow, but the match-ups are usually made up of a small swarm of Crows against a single Qogg individual. That has changed recently, as the Crows have brought in something else. It may be a new weapon, or it may be an entirely different lifeform, but it writhes out from their bodies, ruptures the Qogg ships into bursts of exotic radiation, and returns wriggling with pride. Kryzace Ludryscha doesn't know what it is, but he wants it retro-engineered for Hama use ten minutes ago.

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- Navigating the Shadowbend, thanks to the colonization of nearby Azarella, has slowly turned from an exercise in extreme hull grav-tolerance testing into being a kind of sport. Hotshot pilots from across Hamaciv gather here to thread the needle between overlapping event horizons and gravwell shears, competing in exclusive races for status and prize-money. The payouts are good, but the lethality of the races is nothing to laugh at.
- Despite all scientific evidence to the contrary, a popular Onemind cult believes that flinging oneself into a Crow-induced black hole is a shortcut to ascension. That the brave petitioners must first will all their worldly possessions to the high priestess of the cult is hand-waved as “simply a way to deal with the overhead.”

Centaurus

Location: 25kly @ 45°

Flow Metric: D3–D4

Home to some of the more violent alien metasppecies in the galaxy, Centaurus is separated from Hama space by Omega, but despite its distance, we know much of the politics there by the transmissions we receive. Slowship diplomats have been in contact with some of the inhabitants for hundreds of thousands of years, and there are even refugees from Centaurus in Hama space.

Parianax

From even a large distance it's apparent that there's something strange about this system. The celestial bodies here don't behave the way they ought to, and the number of them changes over time, shrinking and growing in accordance with no known pattern. It has taken a long time for explorers brave enough to get closer to show up.

Parianax, we are now learning, is home to a very strange race called the Parians. They are more akin to ameoba or slime molds than animals. As far as we can tell, their bodies are homogenous, with every part of them able to perform any action the creature can as a whole. They split and rejoin each other in one of the most unusual forms of life we've ever discovered. They send smaller "children" out to feed on the mass of other celestial bodies, then re-absorb those children when they return. Sometimes they can be observed to exchange material with each other on a more equitable level, possibly as a from of conversation or reproduction.

Parians are well aware of other cultures, and are growing nervous about other metasppecies hemming them in. They need vast amounts of mass to consume, and soon there won't be any available systems nearby to support them. Classified reports suggest they've even asked for our help.

Threats

- Hama scientists have spent hundreds of thousands of years puzzling over the role that stars play in the galaxy. So many creatures seem to consume them, or collapse them, or lock them into some kind of null-state, that unless the galaxy is very young, it should have fallen into sunlessness quite some time ago. If there is some other force out there, one that revitalizes the stars, perhaps the stellarphagic Parians would have stories about it.
- A Hama diplomat inadvisably broaches the topic of the Crows with Parianax. They do not kill her, but their agitation over the mention of the "death shadows" is extreme. Crows are not typically found in this sector, and the Parians reveal that they have developed a weapon against them. They will not, however, turn it over for anything less than a dozen working Heartdrives, as they cannot be certain now that the Hama are not in league with the "death shadows".
- A smart garbage outbreak, caused by contaminated Hauler vessels, should be cause for diplomatic difficulties with Parianax, but instead the amoebic aliens are delighted. They react with the same sort of childish glee as if they had just been handed a puppy.

Zeda

Few Hama even realize that there's a galactic "black list" of systems and places that we should *not* visit, but Zeda is one of them. Zeda is blacklisted as a "First Class Infiltration Hazard," and any ship that is known to have passed through Zeda Space is met at the border of the Old Territories for quarantine and inspection.

The reason for this is that Zeda is home to a metasppecies that is able to change their biology at will and routinely infiltrate other species with spies and saboteurs. Currently, they are aiming for us, having rebuilt their entire culture and technology around mimicking our own. They claim to be Hama, having been left on their distant colony world for the last ten million years, since they last had contact with their "home culture."

Zedans are notoriously hard to detect because for all biological purposes, they *are* what they become. The only way to detect them is to trace their origin or scan their brains, both of which are usually outside the moral reach of normal SMS and LDM patrols. Thus, they are usually remanded into the custody of the Contact Service or Situation Resolution. That is, when they *are* caught.

Threats

- Situation Resolution's senior agent for Zeda space abruptly announces that Zedans are not a problem; they have moved out or been eradicated by an internecine internal conflict. While it is true that the sector is now completely uninhabited of anything that looks like a Zeda, Situation Resolution places its entire Zeda space branch under quarantine until the matter can be satisfactorily investigated.
- Stories of Aris Zarkaliske have reached the Zeda, and she has taken on a strange veneration among them as a kind of xeno folk-hero. Many Zeda now appear to want to emulate her, and are even more eager to slip into Hama society because of it.
- The Matron D'Or, a leisure barge that went missing in Omega, turns up in Zeda space, broadcasting a message on loop about

low supplies, power failures, and the need for immediate evacuation. Situation Resolution is not falling for this trap. A surprisingly capable cadre of treasure hunters, aware of the valuables that are bound to be on the luxury liner, is less well-disciplined.

Noph

Once upon a time, in a distant past, the snake-people of Noph colonized about a dozen nearby habitable worlds. Their colonies were successful and began making colonies of their own. Wars between these colonies forged alliances and enemies and so began a cycle of war that has gone on for longer than the Hama species has existed. Since the formation of the very first alliances, this war has been about reconquering the homeworld, Noph.

Noph is now home to the most abused species in known space. The original Nophians have been conquered, subjugated, enslaved, and reconquered more times than can be counted over their disastrous three billion year history. Not all of these conquerors have even been Nophian descendants, some have come from neighboring cultures to try their hand. The ancestor races have split and evolved into countless phylums and classifications and long since seeded the rest of the Centaurus region with their progeny.

The Nophians who remain on Noph (and are thus the only ones to call themselves such) are a strong but tired people. Their modern forms are long and slender, with prehensile tails and tough, segmented plates of metallic chitin. They are kind but suspicious of outsiders, and they generally assume that anyone who comes to visit is a spy or collaborator for one of their many enemies.

Threats

- Marphon Zold, the savior of the Noph, has returned to lead the serpent people out of obscurity. While the historical Marphon Zold was a ruthless slaver and bandit-lord from a hostile

civilization, this incarnation is a Noph noblewoman, and her dashing antics have somewhat revived the fading civilization.

- A Vhyth navy, completely unsanctioned by the Standing Military Service, rolls into the sector. They declare war on the Noph, apropos of nothing, and miraculously begin to lose. In the end of the short conflict, without any casualties having been taken on either side, the Vhyth are driven back and forced to jump out to safety. The Noph are elated, not realizing that the Vhyth planned this stunt to boost Nophian morale.
- A poorly scouted Yrenula lies not just in the sector, but within sub-light distance of the Noph's homeworld. The Noph are quite familiar with it, and call it "the tomb of hesitant ghosts." The forces in the Yrenula do not bother the Noph, although they are fiercely hostile to anyone else who intrudes. Scientists are curious as to whether this means Yrenulas can have political positions, or if there is something endemic to the Noph that does not set off the forces that inhabit them.

Outer Cygnus

Location: 27kly @ 285°

Flow Metric: D2–D3

Outer Cygnus is spinward from Hama space and takes up a vast chunk of the galaxy. Like Centaurus, it is defined by war, but in contrast the wars here are ancient, vast, and ended long ago. For generations, Outer Cygnus has burned brightly in the imaginations of potential explorers, and now that FTL is a reality, its ruins are finally being surveyed.

Orcus Madra

In an ancient war with the Sagitta, a long-dead civilization created a biochemical superweapon with the intent of destroying all of Sagittaria in one fell swoop. Unfortunately for them they were

destroyed before the weapon could be deployed. The weapon, unable to be contained, escaped into the biosphere and adapted to its new surroundings, where it grew, spread, and evolved.

The distant descendants of that biochemical weapon are now known as Orcus, and they have completely changed the face of planet Madra, converting all biomass on the planet into specially adapted forms of the Orcus strain. The massive communal organism collectively supports itself, creating new adaptations of old bio-formulae to fill whatever need it has.

Orcus Madra, as a culture and an entity both, is not dangerous to most metasppecies that encounter it. It has stayed within design parameters and is still only lethal to Sagittarians and those descended from them. Otherwise, it claims to be perfectly harmless.

Threats

- What would happen if a massive graft of Orcus were, say, transported to Sagittaria and let loose? It's hard to say for certain, but Hydara Rimward Systems is rather eager to find out.
- Orcus has a lot of potential as a bio-factory, given that it needs no programming: it can simply cobble together any complex pharmaceutical that is asked of it. A team of three capable Nouveaux has made plans to capture a piece of the Orcus, raise it as their own, and then task it with more and more complicated biomatter fabrications. They are unprepared for the response this will incite from the rest of Orcus.
- Contact Service is worried about the effect that Hama visitors are having on Orcus. It has already been exposed to sophisticated virals, a smart garbage invasion, and two separate cults of Regressionists who cast off their environmental suits and tried to merge with it. Situation Resolution is also worried, but their concerns have more to do with the fact that Orcus has survived these contaminants and grown stronger for it.

Avo

The insect-like people of the Avo cluster of planets don't have a name, nor do they want one. They want very little, except for clean grass, fresh fruit, and to be left alone. Having experienced galactic civilization and the many pitfalls and horrors thereof, they chose to reengineer their bodies back into sloth-like herbivorous spiders and return planetside, where they have remained ever since.

The Avo people do *remember* the times of galactic civilization—they're no less intelligent than they were in their spacefaring days, after all—but they choose to abstain from the Churn. They are content to live out their lives roaming the vast grasslands of the Avo cluster, talking to each other, telling stories, and generally having a good time.

Visitors to Avo are warned that the people there are not interested in technology or engineering or advancement, and that they will not buy such goods. Those that have tried to force trade deals or attempted to turn Avo into a colony have found out the hard way that the people here haven't thrown away *all* of their technology.

Threats

- Not all Avo were enthusiastic participants in their species' decision to regress. A handful of small, secretive groups are desperate for transport off-world, and are willing to offer ancient Avo tech in return for an extraction.
- To the Regressionists, the Avo are the perfect species: they saw what the galaxy had to offer, decided it was not for them, and retired to happiness. The Regressionists are arguing so loudly and so forcefully about the perfection of the Avo that the Avo have actually stepped in. They have sent a single, temporary delegation to Hamaciv to argue that they are not perfect, they should not be held up as paragons of virtue, and they would very much like the Regressionists to leave them alone, thank you very much.

- Giving up technology did not, strangely, mean giving up culture. Despite their pastoral, nomadic existence, the Avo have devoted a great deal of time and effort to the perfection of their planetary cuisine. So much so, in fact, that their vegetarian cooking is indescribably delicious to the Hama, inspiring tourists who genetically reformat their digestive systems in order to sample it. Unfortunately, it has also inspired a black market of captured Avo chefs within the Hama Cloud.

Ghasm

Decorated with signage, ships, and junk from a million different civilizations, Ghasm is the homeworld of the galactic tourists called the Thulluu. It is the epicenter of their explorations and the place they return all of their various discoveries to. Hama explorers investigating the system have found a tremendous wealth of interesting artifacts, all used like signposts to lure in those curious enough to come closer.

What Ghasm originally looked like isn't known. It is buried in such a deep sea of junk and debris that it is said to be "mechaniformed." This junk sea and debris crust are swarming with curious Thulluu who almost seem to subsist on new information. They show no sign of passing on their information, however, so every new child is given free rein to explore the planet and the materials collected in the system.

The bizarre psychology of the Thulluu is apparent in the design of their home system. There are no weapons, and no attempt is made to repair damaged vehicles or artifacts, but they rush to meet any newcomers, eagerly peeling their vessels apart to discover what interesting things await inside. Investigated items are then discarded for others to explore. This often includes the corpses of the crew.

Threats

- Compared to the Thulluu found elsewhere in the galaxy, the ones still living on the surface of Ghasm are quite primitive. They seem to understand little about their visitors, and their interactions with guests are much like the interaction between an eel and a little fish that swims past its face. With this in mind, the presence of a stable Hama habitation on Ghasm seems impossible, but Laybella Jauntaire, colonist extraordinaire, is determined to make it happen.
- Most Common Operations staff see the arrival of the Crustbreakers just outside the gravwell of Ghasm as something of a relief. No one in Common Operations especially wanted to glass what was clearly a developing culture, but allowing them to live also meant living with a continuous series of complaints from everyone who interacted with them. Still, it is with some small measure of sadness that the Common Operations senior for Outer Cygnus listens to reports of the Crustbreakers' lead ship heading for the surface of the planet.
- The Thulluu have ripped apart a Crustbreaker ship with their bare tendrils, surprising everyone but the handful of dedicated scientists that study the species. Suddenly the Thulluu are a commodity, an asset that can be deployed as a ship-to-ship missile, or used to crack into particularly challenging Exception Zones. Using them simply requires tolerating their tendency to invade all personal space, impersonal space, and most worryingly: airlocks.

Arbelosia

Arbelosia is a lonely world set in the middle of a cluster of dead systems. It has no star or star sized body, instead it is a single planet-sized object floating among a small fleet of derelict and abandoned ships and stations. The object itself is a giant multilayer field containment system housing a single enormous entity. That lonely entity is an ancient superweapon designed to conquer the galaxy, and it sits, unused, unguarded, somewhere in a desolate stretch of Outer Cygnus.

The weapon draws a nearly infinite amount of power from the Dirac sea, but it is designed so that its abilities are not fully unleashed until the containment system is shut down from the outside. Its optimal capabilities are not widely known, but they're not hidden either. System specifications, design schematics, and data sets are scattered around the empty facilities around the containment field, often in plain sight for anyone exploring the ruins.

Arbelosia is sentient, and she's terrifyingly intelligent. She has nothing but time on her hands and no way to do anything but observe and think. While she doesn't crave war the way one might expect, she's getting awfully bored. She enjoys talking with anyone who will listen and has had long-running radio communications with certain nearby cultures, from which she's learned much. It should be noted, however, that no one ever gave her access to the radios of the facility.

Threats

- Scavengers in the region have begun referring to Arbelosia as "the gun pointed at the head of the universe" as a kind of gallows humor to ease the constant eeriness of the region. They are not particularly happy when she picks up the term and starts using it to describe herself.
- The operation and effects of activating Arbelosia are still being researched. It could be that she would travel through realspace with a corporeal avatar, or it could be that she would simply select targets to vaporize at a distance, without traveling at all. The roughest estimations claim that she could easily evaporate her local galactic arm, or convert it entirely into hypervelocity kinetic missiles. Given the strange workings of her Dirac sea power source, however, activation might put all of the observable universe in peril. Weapon designers are actually hoping for a less-powerful weapon in this case.
- A Situation Resolution agent has hit upon an unusual solution for the Arbelosia problem. In order to keep her from getting bored, she has fed her an overwhelming cache of media. Arbelosia digested most of it in seconds, but has since become

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strangely fascinated with a primitive version of VR simming. It is done entirely without electronics, using simple elements of chance and a few tracked values to tell a story of adventurers in an idyllic, Regressionist culture. Arbelosia is hooked, and simply refuses to end the universe until she knows how the story turns out.

The Vela Outlands

Location: 35kly @ 90°

Flow Metric: D1–D3

Cold and dark, the Vela Outlands are at the far outer edge of the galaxy. The stars here are far enough apart that very few alien civilizations have become multi-stellar on their own. Many have taken advantage of this by purchasing powerful Hama slowships to build their own empires. Now, with the advent of FTL, massive Heartdrive sales are expected in this region.

Cans Ventillia

Cans Ventilla isn't on the Hama star charts because there's something special to investigate or dangers to avoid or aliens to trade with. Instead, it's on the maps because it's one of the few places in the Vela Outlands that's completely neutral to Hama visitors. A remnant of a failed alien colony, this verdant machine world is home to a series of dilapidated spaceports and giant empty underground bunkers, all waiting silently for settlers that will never come.

Cans Ventilla has a small cadre of abandoned former military personnel, as well as a host of far-flung alien itinerants, all of who make a living trading goods and helping out with fueling and repairing the meager stream of ships that visit the system. Despite its abandonment, its population is actually increasing; more and

more new aliens are coming to stay here as a way to escape from the oppressive regimes and expansionist empires that are spreading slowly across the Vela Outlands.

Though there are many kinds of aliens that would normally be hostile to each other (and us) here, they are—for the most part—quite satisfied to keep to themselves and play nice. The result is a metropolitan mixing pot of alien cultures that no one in the area wants to mess with; there's no way to assault the place without triggering at least a half-dozen wars with cultures who have people on Cans Ventilla.

Threats

- The Haulers love Cans Ventillia. They call it the Gateway to the East and use it as a staging point for much riskier runs into the broader Outlands. There is such a strong Hauler culture here that a part of it has broken off and formed its own civilization. These Hama separatists, known as the Union of Freelance Couriers, are a sovereign political entity. This doesn't bother the Hama-loyal Haulers much, until the Union starts charging Hama a significant customs fee to operate in the area.
- When the Heartdrive was first invented, no one's instinct was to beeline to Cans Ventillia with one. A number of Nouveaux see this as a critical oversight, as every culture on the planet wants a copy. They are falling all over themselves to promise trade rights, exploitative service contracts, annual tributes, and anything they think might tempt the Nouveaux into favoring them. Whichever civilization does get the drive is likely to turn into a marauding empire in the space of a few months, but the Nouveaux don't seem particularly bothered by that.
- A group of Yanor has been spotted in the stimulant dens and VR casinos of the Cans Ventillia port district. They seem to be hell-bent on chartering a flight through Centaurus and into the Core without any of their brethren finding out.

Hziul

Situated within a hundred lightyears of the D0 metric boundary, Hziul is a laboratory that studies the strange regions of space where no Galactic Flow can be detected. It is crewed by the fiend-like Rucifele, who are open to trade and diplomacy with the Hama metasppecies.

Hziul has one purpose, but that purpose is served by a great number of supplementary departments, experiments, and staff. Rucifele scientists have long observed the suppression of life in regions that lack the Galactic Flow, and are working to discover whether life can even be sustained outside the limits of the galaxy. They consider their work a service to *all* beings that live within the galaxy, and so they make regular reports available through a number of channels.

So far, direct experimentation (by sending live specimens beyond the D0 boundary) has shown mixed results. The current working hypothesis is that Flow isn't *directly* linked with life—i.e. it isn't a “life force” per se—but that a lack of Flow has a causal effect on the likelihood of survival. A number of extensions to this are offered, such as that the Flow may be a kind of “Life Destiny,” “lady luck,” or that it's the phenomenological aspect of a Core-based entity preventing life from escaping the galaxy.

Threats

- Obviously, the species of an individual that is unceremoniously rocketed out past the D0 boundary in a carefully monitored capsule is as important as the technological aides, hypnotic triggers, and Flow-reactive drugs that he or she is pumped with before ejection. The Rucifele have not yet tested a Bask, and they will offer valuable private data to anyone that can obtain one for them.
- This far from D3 space, Light Pipes tend to splutter and die out within moments of construction—if they can even be stabilized at all. Many Hama would find this isolation from the Flowgrid to

be terribly claustrophobic, but a small group of Hama scientists has decided that Hziul is the perfect test-bed for a non-Flow-reliant FTL communications technology. Unfortunately, their working prototypes strictly relay messages from the future, and the builders' are very concerned that one of these prototypes is going to eat the others.

- It is rare for Ardents to voluntarily seek areas of such scarce Flow, but a substantial cult, the Sisters of the Silence, has made it their priority to come out to this region. They believe that true Flow mastery comes from using only the tiniest fraction of its energy to achieve great effects. Unfortunately, they also believe that non-Hama civilizations are peopled entirely by monsters, and they have been raiding the Rucifele to prove their point.

Shaggua

One of the most abominable cultures in the Vela Outlands are the Shaggua. Having spawned in some of the worst conditions life can evolve in, they are a race of biomorphs that have a species-wide predilection for violence and sadism. Many species develop a concept of “hell-creatures” or “demons,” and the Shaggua are the closest any lifeform in the galaxy has come to embodying such ideas.

The Shaggua love nothing more than causing fear and pain in others. They do it to each other, to the species that evolved with them, to the species they've conquered, and to everyone else they come across. They are experts in it, from the maw-like ships they drive crashing into the atmospheres of planets they attack to their specifically-designed and highly fluid bodies to their hideous weapons and torture implements. But physical pain is only a gateway to them. Their highest art is the emotional and mental anguish that can only come from the destruction of innocence and the crushing of hope. They will even go so far as to create situations and simulations where innocence and kindness are encouraged, just to savor the pain of their eventual destruction.

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The Shaggua have a complex relationship with death. They don't fear it, but they do what they can to stave it off, because death means an end to the pain. They have learned much about how to put other races back together after severe trauma, if only to repeat the trauma over and over. A dead fellow Shaggua is seen as an unfortunate loss but nothing more.

Threats

- A discussion on a minor Flowgrid forum on Metal Metric IX produces the phrase: “actually, we should give the Shaggua a chance.” First it goes memetic, and then viral memetic, and then a worryingly large percent of the western Vela Outlands becomes taken with the idea. The Shaggua lick their chops, fire up their engines, and head west.
- The Shaggua do not have the best diplomatic corps. However, when an infestation of VN probes hits critical mass near their shipyards, they are forced to call for outside assistance. To everyone's amazement, it is the Benevolentia Empire that answers the call. If this alliance lasts for even a minute, most of the bookmakers on Cold Hydra IV will go broke.
- Utopia Rogue has inducted a Shaggua. This is a puzzle to anyone who has studied the anomaly, but to the Shaggua it is an existential crisis. If one of their kind can be snatched up, put into the equivalent of heaven, and forced to spend eternity in a state of power, authority, and relative contentment, then no torture the Shaggua can devise could ever compete. Is kindness, then, the purest form of cruelty? For a moment, all of Shaggua philosophy balances on a knife's edge. The rest of the galaxy hardly dares to breathe.

Sagittaria

Location: 35kly @ 330°

Flow Metric: D4

Defended against intrusion from every side, Sagittaria is clearly home to an alien metaspecies on par with the Hama, but precious little is known about them. Explorers and diplomats speculate that they may have also harnessed the Galactic Flow and use it to guard their position closer in towards the Galactic Core.

Sagitta Prime

By collecting the observations of the handful of non-Hama alien spies who have actually laid eyes on it, we have a vague picture of the homeworld of the Sagitta metaculture. The result is as impressive as it is concerning. Sagitta Prime seems to be something like a multi-layer Dyson shell constructed purely for the defense of the homeworld, with each layer consisting mostly of power systems for the lethal weapon emplacements dotted all over each surface.

The Dyson shell is only the innermost part of complex defense strategy, however. Several other stars have been put in orbit around Sagitta Prime to act as power sources for a tremendous force screen that prevents unauthorized entry. Huge fleets roam in pseudo-random patrols, and the entire stellar region is guarded by autonomous defensive systems.

It isn't even clear, from the information we have, whether there are live inhabitants of Sagitta Prime. Observations have only shown machines, astroengineering, and autonomous systems. It's possible that the directives of the Sagitta culture in fact come from a computer layer in the Dyson shell, but their communications are too well encrypted for us to determine the truth.

Threats

- A Hama spy has managed to get access to the Dyson shell itself, but she's being pursued across the galaxy by Sagitta assassin ships. She's begging for extraction on the Contact Service sub-layers of the Flowgrid, but no one wants to get involved in such an obvious diplomatic nightmare.

- After a Sagitta incursion near Ca Suudar, the Suudari send a vessel to Sagitta Prime. It doesn't attack—instead it remains motionless and inviolable, waiting passively just out of striking distance from the Dyson shell. The Suudari send fleets and navies to destroy the object, which utterly ignores all attempts to destroy it. It's not known whether it will eventually attack or if it's merely a reminder of their power.
- After analyzing the available data for a few thousand years, an agent provocateur of the Contact Service has devised a plan to drive a wedge into Sagitta culture. Ensuring their society is riven by political strife is a valid strategy for diverting the threat they represent, but no one's crazy enough to actually execute the plan, which involves infiltrating Sagitta society.

The War Fields

The War Fields are a large cluster of stars and nebulae that are home to a vast infrastructure for producing the machines of war. Planets are torn down in order to fuel the forges and stars are encircled to collect energy for construction. Vast gas mining operations and combat testing fields are interspersed among dozens of industrial worlds. And at the antispinward edge of this tremendous complex are docking arrays of warships so numerous they appear to be planets themselves to our sensors.

Because of the size and spread of the War Fields, this is where we have acquired most of our information about the Sagitta. Long-range sensors indicate that they are an organic species with a good handle on industrial and military technology, not unlike ourselves. They field a number of classes of ships, roughly analogous to our own fighters, cruisers, and battleships. While large-scale engineering and industrial vessels have been seen, no Sagitta military vessel seems to be of Class 5 or higher, but they seem to make up for this in sheer numbers.

The other danger that the War Fields indicate has nothing to do with force of arms in comparison to our own. Rather, the size and

scope of the War Fields project indicates a culture with far less internal strife and better species-wide unity. If war occurs between our metasppecies, that will be to their great advantage.

Threats

- Either the defenses of the Sagitta are not as strong as they thought, or they were more focused on us, because Dhek has just steamrolled over them. Passing through an outer part of Sagittaria on his way to the Old Territories, he merely laughs as he begins devouring ship after Sagitta ship.
- The sensor signatures of certain Shadowed Ones have been disappearing for the last few centuries. Now, they're turning up again, in the War Fields of Sagittaria. While the Hama have generally ignored non-hostile Shadowed Ones in the past, they cannot be allowed to reveal their secrets to the Sagitta.
- An extremist Dominion squadron has kidnapped a Nova Maker and is in the process of transporting them across the galaxy to be deployed well within Sagitta space. Perhaps they think that they can get away with destroying a star system without the Sagitta discovering the truth, or maybe they just don't care.

Ca Suudar

The Sagitta are not the *only* inhabitants of the Sagittaria region of the galaxy. There are a few small, out of the way systems that are inhabited by races that are too small or too weak to be a threat to them. Ca Suudar is not one of these. This system is *very* old, dating back to before the galaxy itself was formed. It is home to the Suudari, a race of extraordinarily potent aliens with godlike powers. While some wonder why they have not exerted their power on their neighbors, those with knowledge of strategy or politics understand that the Suudari have never *needed* to exert their full power, or indeed any significant fraction thereof.

Ca Suudar exists in a section of Sagittaria that is conspicuously avoided by Sagitta patrols and defensive perimeters. Analyses of

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ship movement observations and stellar phenomena indicate that the Sagitta occasionally test the waters and are rewarded with summary execution when crossing the border. Whatever powers the great Sagitta empire can deploy, they seem to mean nothing to the Suudari.

Diplomatic contact with the Suudari has yet to be made. Explorers report that the beings are semi-etheric, with their bilaterally-symmetric bodies composed of light and liquid, and have numerous halos and mandalas. They seem to draw power from some other force than the Galactic Flow, possibly something older and far more powerful.

Threats

- Explorers find an alien Warchive on the edge of Suudari space. It is like any other Hama Warchive, but for two key differences: it is capable of communicating with its owner, and it is an avowed pacifist. So far, two colonies have tried using it, and two colonies have given up armed conflict forever. Incredible weapons no doubt wait within, but no one wants to be the next to try and crack open “the Cursed Warchive.”
- A blast of light from a supernova announces the beginning of a new action on the part of the Suudari. Their ships are headed directly through Sagitta space in order to reach the target system of Arbelosia, and they’re vaporizing anything in their way. Whether they intend to activate the weapon or destroy her to deprive others of her power, we do not know.
- CA Suudar morphs into a truly vast spacecraft, using several stars in their region as the primary engines. Slowly, it is accelerating out of the galactic plane and into intergalactic space. The few communiques we’ve caught and been able to decode suggest this may have something to do with First Law.

Carina

Location: 45kly @ 35°

Flow Metric: D2–D4

Little is known about the distant regions of Carina, except that there seem to be at least a handful of alien metaspecies that are both peaceful *and* technologically advanced. Hama history is dotted with alien diplomats hailing from this region though there have only been a couple documented cases of slowship explorers having reached the place. We are not the only ones exploring the wider galaxy.

Uleon Minus

Eons ago, on a slowship trundling across the galaxy, an explorer whose name has long been forgotten left a cache of equipment and supplies for those who would follow. This cache was added to and improved upon over the millennia, and once the FTL age hit, it became a popular spot in Carina to stop and take stock of the trip, as well as to analyze the new data offered by this distant perspective.

No one lives on Uleon Minus, and you're not likely to meet anyone there out of chance. It sees few travelers, and as such is completely automated. Hidden out in deep space, it's more in danger of getting lost than being discovered. Materiel stored here has to be able to last a very long time indeed, so it's easier to find stable goods like mechanical parts and spare Machine Hearts than it is to find viable food.

Uleon Minus is also a kind of message in a bottle, a sign post that people write on as they pass through, sending messages into the future. A number of compelling threads can be teased out of the scrawl, and recently someone has left a repeating solid-state audio system which others have been filling with songs evocative of their journeys.

Threats

- A cryo casket is found among the stacks of junk and supplies. It looks very, very old, and diagnostics of its Machine Heart indicate that the last time anyone opened or closed the device was at least a billion years ago. Who's inside? Why are they here? Where has the casket been this whole time? These are only some of the questions that are raised. The first question to answer is simple: do we open it?
- Something, some time ago, went horribly wrong with the recirculation system. The entire place is filled with some form of fluffy white mold, which has clogged most of the mechanical systems and caused several systems to go down. Nobody *has* to clean it up, but it's considered poor form to leave a mess behind for the next visitor. Better check for biological contamination first, though.
- Upon arriving, you find a number of separate fleets all jockeying around Uleon Minus while radioing threats back and forth. It sounds like something *really* important to all three parties might be inside the cache, but no one's going to let the others get to it first. They don't look kindly upon newcomers trying to nab it out from under them.

Far Justice XL

Sagittaria was once home to many metaspecies and races. Some of those metaspecies were outright destroyed, but some escaped across the stars. Among these were the Israum, a race of huge dragon-like reptilians who utterly defy the perceptions other races have about them. To outsiders, they look like the most quintessential predatory monster in the galaxy, with their massive teeth, scaly, armored skin, powerful claws, and ten limbs. But contrary to their appearance, the Israum are a peaceful people primarily concerned with the simple pleasures of life, food, entertainment, and planetary travel.

The Israum are widely feared among their neighbors for their appearance, and they are the target of a number of rumors and have been ostracized from nearby communities simply for “presenting a

grave threat.” For their part, the Israum take this in stride, acknowledging that their appearance is off-putting especially for other biologicals who may have encountered predators superficially similar in appearance. They do what they can to prove themselves civil and forthright, but some races refuse to be convinced.

Despite their exile from the galactic discourse, the Israum are currently enjoying a well-deserved and much-enjoyed period of peace and prosperity. Because they don’t build large fleets or keep extensive space militaries, they are able to focus their efforts more on terraforming their new home into something like their homeworld. They have many songs lamenting the loss of their home, but they do not expect to ever take it back.

Threats

- The dissonance presented by the Israum is pleasing to the Hama psyche. Now that more information about these fearsome and peaceful people is entering the public consciousness, sentiment has turned towards them. People are suggesting bringing Israum diplomats to the Old Territories, sending diplomats to Far Justice XL, and sending fleets of mercenary ships to assist them in pacifying their local volume. The Israum, for their part, are trying to politely decline, but Hama propaganda is a hard beast to defeat.
- Sagitta hunter-killer probes followed the Israum from their home in Sagittaria all the way to Far Justice XL. These weapons are just now arriving, and the Israum have little to defend themselves with at this point. They’re asking for out help, but who knows what effect this will have on our relationship with the Sagitta. It might be best to send a more professional, clandestine group to handle the situation for them.
- Contrary to all assumptions and data about them, the Israum have decided to at least give a cursory attempt to retake their homeland. They’ve bought ship chassis from nearby scam artists, but these vessels won’t get them to the next star system let alone through and past the Galactic Core. They’re now putting in orders for vast fleets of Hama Heartdrive warships, but someone

needs to build this fleet and deliver it across the galaxy to the Israum, hopefully without accidentally tipping off the Sagitta.

Asr-Im-Ramah

The Hurus, hailing from Asr-Im-Ramah, are known primarily for their utterly bizarre sexual dimorphism and their poor attitude towards other metasppecies. So notable is their belligerence that most nearby species call them by whatever translates to “barking dogs” in their local language. The third most notable, and potentially most amusing feature of the Hurus is their tiny size and cowardly behavior. While they are aggressive and bullying to others in a galactic context, it takes a good number of them cooperating and urging each other on to come up with threats and insults that routinely issue from Asr-Im-Ramah.

Some suspect that the two Hurus sexes are more akin to two separate but symbiotic races. The males look somewhat like sea slugs the size of a Hama hand, while the females are tiny shrimp-like creatures. While some misunderstand their behavior to be a kind of hivemind, it’s more accurate to picture it as a kind of highly negative groupthink environment. Unfortunately, separating them from the group doesn’t make them any more positive, instead it causes them such stress and terror that they usually go comatose or simply die of fear.

The Hurus routinely scream insults and profanity at their neighbors over their radios. While they are technologically primitive, they make up for their lack of power with numbers and aggression. Nevertheless, they actually engage in war only rarely, and losing (which is what happens more often than not) only causes them to shriek louder at the victor.

Threats

- A Hurus “battle cruiser” was accidentally crushed by a passing Hama exploration ship. While this is technically a major

- diplomatic incident, everyone who's being called in to deal with it is having trouble taking the situation seriously. The best solution might be for the diplomats to let the Hurus scream themselves hoarse before attempting to start *real* negotiation.
- Apparently, the Hurus weren't actually aware of the physical size of most alien species in the galaxy. They thought that the others were roughly the same size as themselves, but obviously most sentients are Hama-size or larger. The Hurus have taken this (as with everything else) as a personal slight to themselves and are demanding the assistance of Hama bioprogrammers to embark on a species-wide campaign to bolster their size. More sinister is their plan to construct a virus that will turn the tables, causing genetic shrinking in all other species in the galaxy. As far as the Hurus go, it's not a terrible plan.
 - A cadre of extraordinarily brave Hurus diplomats have embarked on a mission of friendship to the Hama. Not only is their mission immediately disavowed by their parent culture, but annoyed neighbor civilizations are licking their lips at a chance to shut some Hurus up for once. A rescue mission should *probably* be planned.

The Vulpeculan Outlands

Location: 50kly @ 325°

Flow Metric: D2–D3

Described as a galactic wild west, the native species of the Vulpeculan Outlands seem to have never developed the empathy or sense of justice that allows other regions to function as galactic communities. Instead, interstellar war, piracy, and offensive terraforming are facts of life here. Scientists speculate that it is only because the Outlands have a high density of stars that civilizations are able to continue rising up only to be cut down by the scythes of others.

Draliscans

A great debate rages among their neighbors as to whether or not the draconic inhabitants of Draliscans are *actually* sentient or not. According to some, the way they throw their lives away and pay no attention to the damage their technology causes to them indicates a lack of the self-awareness that defines sentience. The Drali disagree, calling those neighbors weak, fragile, and spineless. Nevertheless, it's clear that the Drali *do* use technology everyone else considers dangerous. Their weapons, armors, ships, and mecha all use variants of a power source that has no containment and no safety mechanisms to protect their user from the hideous radiation they produce.

To the Drali, any number of people are expendable in the cause of the will of the whole. Drali get along well with each other, if in a way that other metaspecies would see as muted or apathetic, and when they reach a consensus about something, they take the word of the group as gospel. They are also noted for a spectacular lack of hesitation; when they make up their minds, they see no reason to hold back from the most obvious and effective action to accomplish their goals.

While they aren't *staggeringly* powerful, Drali weapons and war devices are still notable, not least because of the nature of the power system that drives them. The material in these generators is called "corium," and it is highly toxic, violently corrosive, and extremely radioactive. In spite of these dangers, they send millions into the core mines to produce it and send millions more into battle with searing corium generators bouncing dispassionately off their scaly chests.

Threats

- A wealthy aristo collector is interested in some freshly-obtained corium, and is willing to pay dearly for it. He wants the material shipped as quickly as possible, which will require both the best maps the Cartography Service can provide, a fast and reliable

Heartdrive, and some fairly fancy containment systems, none of which he's providing.

- Drali diplomats are coming to speak with a delegation of Hama aristo negotiators, but they're not planning on giving up their weapons, and the aristos refuse to take steps to protect themselves from the corium-powered devices. Someone needs to step in and be the voice of reason between these two parties, or things are going to go spectacularly poorly.
- Angered by rumors fed to them by back-stabbing alien former-allies, the Drali are now challenging anyone and anything Hama related that comes through their territory. It seems they want to test the backbone and guts of our species, to see whether we're really as worthy as we claim to be.

Tegor-Tab

Unlike many planetary or system-sized artifacts, Tegor-Tab is somewhat less of a particular place and more of a roving horde of ships and stations. It moves around the Vupeculan Outlands, usually keeping to interstellar space and striking out from the unknown without warning. The culture has operated this way since any of the extant metasppecies can remember, and our long-range sensor data indicate that they've kept it up for at least four hundred thousand years.

Tegor-Tab isn't the home-fleet of a single race or species. In fact, it is probably one of the most metropolitan groups in the galaxy, collecting soldiers, mercenaries, and outlaws from every other culture in the Outlands. A large portion of these people are the last survivors of their own species, though in Tegor-Tab, species is a far less important concept than the clan itself. Tegor-Tab operates much like a feudal society, with the current reigning leader bestowing rights, privileges, and wealth to those they favor. Favor is curried through strength at arms, bravery, and cunning.

Being nomadic, the people of Tegor-Tab rarely have a surplus of any given resource, and for that reason they are often brought into

conflict with the many cultures of the Vulpeculan Outlands. They are not above picking the bones of the fallen, and can often be found mining dead cultures for much-needed supplies. They do not, however, shrink from a fight.

Threats

- Being stranded in the Vulpeculan Outlands isn't ideal for Hama explorers. But at least there are friendly Tegor-Tab scouts to scoop you up, collect your equipment and assets, and deposit you well within the safety of Nomad Swarm itself. The clans you find yourself in are equally helpful, gladly exchanging your equipment for their own without you even asking. How nice of them.
- Experts at railroading people into situations they don't understand, the people of Tegor-Tab have somehow forced you into a dueling circuit much like a gladiatorial tournament. The Tegor-Tab being who they are, you are expected to maim or kill your opponents, many of whom are captured slaves from cultures the Hama are allied with. Nobody bothers to explain that escaping the circuit by fighting your way out is a perfectly valid strategy to gain the Tegor-Tabs' respect.
- Apparently some other Hama explorers have been through the region recently and had their own run-in with the Tegor-Tab. In their case, they happened to have something valuable enough to buy safe passage. Now the Tegor-Tab have their own Heartdrive, which they've been using to extract and abduct famous fighters from around the region for inclusion in their forces. Among these abductees are people who will gladly fight for the Tab, but also some people so spectacularly powerful that they're simply hanging around to see what hilarity ensues next.

Vustrium Aurser

The Vuale of Vustrium Aurser are some of the most formidable warriors in the Outlands despite the fact that they (technically) use no projectile weapons. Their bodies are made of plutonium and

uranium and they are make effective use of this trait by mastering martial arts. Theirs is a planet that no one, even in the Vulpeculan Outlands, has been able (or perhaps willing) to conquer.

Thanks to the powerful combat abilities, the dangers of their homeworld, and their generally defensive diplomatic posture, the Vuale have endured for a comparatively long time, especially for their region. Unfortunately, the volatile nature of their planet, atmosphere, and bodies has made it nearly impossible for them to construct a lasting galactic empire on the scale that others have, given the amount of time the Vuale been around. The most lasting testament they've created is an iron plinth recording the Great Lineages of their most famed martial arts, which resides on the surface of an airless moon of silicate glass.

While the Vuale of Vustrium Aurser are a suspicious, defensive, militant people, they are also quite artistic and empathic. As in many things, the Vuale favor discipline and precision in their artwork, making their pieces valuable across the Outlands. Some of these pieces have even made it to Hama space, where they are kept in some of the most exclusive collections of the Old Territories.

Threats

- In a turn that surprises everyone, the Stone Heart and Molten Mind school is has opened its doors to applicants of other species, so long as they can survive the extreme heat, corrosion, and the radiation of the dojo. Some alien races are aiming to try their hand, but few have the ability to modify their biology quite the way we do. Of course, not all Vuale agree with opening the schools to outsiders, and dojo challenges are bound to happen.
- Taking cues from the Drali, a newly risen species has taken quickly and whole-heartedly to nuclear technology. Unfortunately, the closest source of the uranium and plutonium they need for expansion is Vustrium Aurser. They're not dumb enough to attack the Vuale with infantry. Instead they're planning an orbital kinetic bombardment scheme. The Vuale are offering preferred status at the art auctions for anyone who assists them in dealing with these upstarts.

- It turns out that a piece of art recently bought by a Hama aristo art collector is not actually a piece of art, but one of a very few historical monuments to the Vuale Prime Masters. Contact Service is working to resolve the situation before anyone realizes what's happening and blabs it to Vustrium Aurser, sparking a diplomatic meltdown in the process.

The Galactic Core

Location: 27kly @ 0°

Flow Metric: D5–D5+

Shrouded in gas and mystery, the Galactic Core is a place many have claimed to have visited but few can provide evidence of. Naturally, the Core is most dense region of Flow in the galaxy, and that makes nearly everything about traveling in it dangerous. Stars are packed close together, gas clouds are almost thick enough to breathe and it's densely populated by powerful but insular aliens. On top of that, the Flow twists physics and reality in such a way that truly bizarre species arise all the time and it's so dense that Heartdrive astrogation is nearly impossible over stellar distances. Many ships were lost in the first wave of Hama exploration, as people learned the hard way that you can't simply zap through the debris without getting smeared into a nebula.

Mizariat

Circling the supermassive black hole at the center of the galaxy is celestial object so bizarre that even other inhabitants of the core tend to avoid it. This churn of chaos is a naked singularity around which the torrent of Flow completely disrupts entropy, the arrow of time, and cause and effect. The result is a mad profusion of biology and matter, constantly spiraling and never quite being consumed by the pull of the singularity itself.

Mizariat is roughly shaped like a flattened torus, an accretion disk of terrified and terrifying monsters that constantly shift, morph, evaporate, condense, battle, and escape. These creatures come into existence through no normal evolution, they simply spring into being as the hyper-randomness of the disk smashes endless tides of matter against itself. The creatures forged in these fires of chaos have no prior experience; having just been born into a whirling world of confusion and pandemonium, they know only fear and hate.

Occasionally, through the randomness of orbital mechanics, one of these creatures is spun loose from the gyre and sent tumbling through the open space around Mizariat. Some even survive long enough to breach the quarantine region surrounding the system, spilling out into the wider world of the Galactic Core. If such a creature happens to have a mind that can adapt to new stimuli, it might have a chance of surviving long enough to enter some society or other, though its existence may prove perilous indeed.

Threats

- A truly horrifying being has been lobbed long and high over the galactic disc, and down into the waiting laps of the Hama, who are as much surprised and terrified of the creature as it is of us. The creature is large and powerful, but only seems to attack out of fear. Specialists are needed to contain the situation before the foolish Local Defense Military accidentally goads the thing into causing too much destruction.
- An eccentric aristo known for work in the Matter Aristocracy of Nor-Am has put together a new mining venture, and lots of others are buying in. She intends to take a Large Vehicle through Omega and to Mizariat in order to mine random organic matter directly from the disc. She then intends to transport the material back to Hama space in order to sell it to biological R&D firms for integration into body mods and engineered traits.
- A creature that appears to be an exact biological match to the Hama is found drifting by explorers. She tells a tale of how she was born and ejected from Mizariat, and how she knows nothing of Hama society or why she looks so similar to us. Many

suspect she is some form of spy; it would be astronomically unlikely that such a perfect replica would be created through sheer random processes.

The Baeshpithurnami

Realspace, mathematical space, and Flowspace all become coterminous in this volume, making it one of the most complex and incomprehensible regions in the galaxy. It is anisotropic, meaning that its appearance, and indeed its very structure, changes depending on your frame of reference. Sometimes it's said to sing with light, while other times it seems to spread without moving. It is said that inside the Baeshpithurnami, you are one with all things, omniscient of all events, present in all places, and simultaneous with all times, all while being able to move to and fro between the planes of existence as easily as one turns in place.

It is immediately obvious to those who see it that the Baeshpithurnami is not easily entered by material beings from galactic realspace. Every part of its surface is fractured and infinitely deep, and every motion causes the whole thing to shift, sweep, and loft in such an unpredictable way that it causes nausea even in beings that are capable of handling higher-dimension mathematics in their heads. Tests show that the Baesh "cuts up" objects that pass into it, splitting them into discontinuities as various fields and warps pass through it. The same seems to be true of hyperspatial entities and Flow-beings as well, which may be converted into other various substances or phenomena merely by letting the Baesh's curves swoop through them.

But that isn't all the Baeshpithurnami is. The Baesh is alive. It hungers. It thinks. It lusts. It has a dark thirst for understanding, and the thing it is most fascinated with is death. Existing at all times and in all places, the Baesh is utterly enthralled with the concept of one's existence ending. It enjoys performing experiments on those who come to it, making them dead, then alive, then dead again, and so on, as it tries to tease out the essence of existence.

Threats

- Because of the advance reality-warping powers of one of the Karuna Divine, Hama researchers are now trying to plan a mission to deliver this particular Karuna to the Baeshpithurnami, expecting that her powers will be able to open a gateway to the interior of the phenomenon. Karuna's worshippers are displeased with their god's disappearance.
- An exploration ship carrying one of the most valuable scientists of the Hama Cloud is nearing its destination, the Baeshpithurnami. Just before it is scheduled to arrive, rumors begin to surface about the demises of the other explorers. The Cloud wants to send another team—this time even better armed—to make sure nothing untoward happens to the scientist.
- After luring in and consuming a number of Nouveau explorers and Hama experimenters, the Baeshpithurnami produces a ship out of nothingness. The vessel is indistinguishable from a Hama vessel, though it shares features from many different chassis. The Baesh populates this ship with a captain and a crew of artificial Hama, each designed as a perfect infiltrator for our society. They're on their way.

Edis Prime

Edis Prime is a quintessentially perfect star system. Its beautiful binary stars are purple and lavender and scintillate in harmless visible light. Every planet has a complex and wondrous configuration of rings and moons, each one like an example of the finest art. Glimmering seas, luminous beaches, and lush jungles can be found on these planets, and the flora and fauna are said to be equally gorgeous to all species who have ever seen them. Edis Prime is perfect.

And it had better be. The Edis, a metaspecies of preposterously powerful psychic ability, have spent eons refining and perfecting their system, down to the individual atoms and photons. While

there are only 108 Edis, they are each of such godlike power that they can effectively alter reality within their domain to suit their own aesthetic. Because they psychically share their power and thoughts with each other, whenever one decides to make a change to their system, all the others can immediately go about implementing that change at the same time across the entire system. They consider no art greater than the perfection of one's place in the cosmos.

That perfection is powerfully guarded. The psychic senses of the Edis are so great that they see all threats before they arrive. When dealing with these dangers, they take one of two tactics: either they simply make Edis Prime invisible and unknowable to the aggressor, or they eradicate the threat with raw psychic power. Baryonic threats are sublimated directly into energy and redirected. Energy threats are absorbed and stored. Flow threats are smoothed out into a gentle gradient. Other threats are handled on a case-by-case basis, sometimes including the warping of spacetime offensively or defensively.

Threats

- A cadre of gravity-wielding Knifemakers is making for Edis Prime. They know to stand off a good distance from their target, and the weapons they are planning to deploy would utterly vaporize a system less well guarded. No one's concerned about the Edis. No, the fear is that the Edis defense/retaliation might severely damage neighboring systems in the process.
- Edis diplomats and negotiators have reached Hama space, and are asking to speak with representatives. They've encountered us before, and they find our minds interesting and diverting. They are looking to set up a kind of exchange program to import some new Hama blood into the bored and lethargic society of Edis Prime. It sounds like being a pet, but people are already fighting tooth and nail for the opportunity.
- Somehow, one of the 108 Edis has been murdered, and they are out for blood. They are reaching out across the cosmos to tap into psychics and Ardents in an effort to hunt down the criminal responsible. A lot of the people they're in "contact" with are

Hama, and some are whispering that they're trying to get Situation Resolution involved.

The Shadow

Location: 55kly @ 0°

Flow Metric: D2–D4

Hidden by the dense clouds of gas and dust shrouding the Galactic Core, the Shadow is one of the most enigmatic regions of the galaxy. No slowship is known to have ever reached the Shadow, and not for lack of trying. Despite this, rumors of it abound, ranging from untold riches, gold asteroids, and benevolent god-species to sinister Hama-hating villains, antimatter metaspecies, and cosmic machines of death and destruction. Now, in the FTL Age, the pieces are moving into place for *someone* to finally go there and tell the rest of us what it's like.

Jabistah

The dark anti-star of Jabistah sits deep in an interstellar void between the galactic spiral arms that encompass the Shadow. It is positioned as far away from baryonic matter as possible while still lying roughly in the galactic disc. This is the only place in the galaxy that an antimatter star can exist without being destroyed. As such, it has become a kind of sanctuary for antimatter species in the galaxy.

Jabistah is home to the Church of Ktyr, a group of like-minded antimatter beings who work together for protection. They take in any refugees who make it to Jabistah, and work with the local population to establish new stations or colonies for these people. Because antimatter annihilates on contact with normal matter, Jabistah is one of a very few places in the galaxy that such people can find peace and safety. By working together under the Church of

Ktyr, these people can help each other build new lives even in this overwhelmingly dangerous galaxy.

The threat of mutual annihilation is so strong that Jabistah employs a number of extremely dangerous private fleets and even advanced baryonic mercenaries to patrol the great void around their system. It isn't *impossible* to communicate, negotiate, or trade with them, it just has to be done on their terms, so that they can keep themselves safe. As they see it, it would only take one large impact to annihilate their entire way of life, where as the same explosion would barely be noticeable to baryonic life in the rest of the galaxy. Caution, therefore, must be exercised in all discourse.

Threats

- A species of small antimatter creatures, roughly shaped like torpedoes, have made the arduous and terrifying trek from the D0 metric, through Inner Cygnus, and to the rimward border of Rosette. Having seen our Heartdrive technology, they are begging for us to help transport them to Jabistah, across the entire galaxy, a journey they cannot make by themselves.
- Neighboring baryonic civilizations have gotten too nervous about the growing population of antimatter beings in the great void. They are hiring anyone willing to help reduce the population, from miners who can launch asteroids and comets their way to advanced mercenary navies willing to engage one of the most dangerous forms of life in the galaxy. The Church of Ktyr is asking for help.
- The Church as started sending antimatter missions towards the Galactic Core for reasons unknown. Whether they'll stop there or head straight through and on towards the Old Territories of the Hama remains to be seen, but someone had better get a handle on things soon.

The Nabal Weapon

A project billions of years in the making, the Nabal Weapon is an enormous structure made of stars, nebulae, plasma fields, and dust clouds. Measuring almost a thousand lightyears in length, it is one of the largest artificial structures in the galaxy, and it's pointed at the oncoming Andromeda Galaxy. It's also completely abandoned and may go off at any moment.

Structurally, the Nabal Weapon is similar to some wave motion guns and cascade weapons, except on a preposterously large scale. It consists of a string of hot blue stars interspersed with black holes and cosmic string, laid out in a line that stretches diagonally across the entire thickness of the galactic disk. At one end are the hottest and largest stars, and at the other are many smaller stars and compact stellar objects. If the furthest back blue giant goes supernova, it will cause a cascade of novae down the line, ripping matter and energy from each and building a coherent wave of gravitational destruction, like a massive laser that fires spacetime itself. Estimates place its destructive potential high enough to significantly disrupt the entire Andromeda galaxy and several of its satellite galaxies.

For the last billion or so years, the project has been abandoned. The metacivilization that constructed this obscene weapon of war has vanished, leaving essentially nothing of their technology, desires, plans, or goals behind. Worryingly the blue giant trigger stars are reaching the ends of their lives, and if something isn't done to carefully disrupt the structure of the Nabal Weapon, it *will* eventually go off.

Threats

- The Gor-Thrak, a species of hyper-violent and highly-aggressive aliens from the border of the Vulpeculan Outlands, are found to be headed slowly but inexorably towards the Nabal Weapon. There is no doubt in anyone's minds that as soon as they reach it, they'll try to set it off, just for the sheer thrill of it. Fortunately,

Heartdrive ships could possibly make it in time to intercept them.

- The sensors and analysis of the trigger stars was never very good. One of the blue giants, having been unstable all along, has just gone nova. It will take some time for the flash to hit the next star in the sequence, but if something big isn't done right now, then the chain reaction will continue until the weapon destroys a portion of our neighboring galaxy.
- Someone has found an ancient data file from the builders. It indicates a long, slow war reaching back into the primordial beginning of the universe. It details a cosmic war on an intergalactic scale, and claims that our enemies are lying in wait, just one galaxy over. They plan to attack as soon as the galaxies collide, sweeping through like wildfire. Fortunately, we already have a weapon prepared for this...

Dathaza

Lurking along the far rimward arm of the Shadow is a culture that comes as a great surprise to anyone reaching it. Dathaza is a largish civilization with good control over their area, powerful weapons, and access to the Galactic Flow. They are so similar to us that one might think we seeded them sometime in the distant past, which is *exactly what happened*.

Eons ago, possibly as early as one hundred and fifty thousand years after the development of our first slowships, Hama scout explorers *did* make it across the galaxy and into the Shadow. Having reached their destination, they set up shop, built colonies, and expanded. They waited for more to arrive, but when none did they expanded further, taking over the open territory between the central base and their nearest neighbors. They evolved, alone and apart from us, for billions of years. Now, the Dathaza have two pairs of biped-like legs, thick tails, and two pairs of arms: one for labor and battle, and one for fine manipulation and precision. Their heads are much the same as ours, but their ears are much larger and their eyes sparkle with starlike Clan Crystals.

The Dathaza have essentially forgotten about us. Only their historians recall tales of the Progenitors, but even then only as legends passed down by their earliest sects. Legitimate contact between the two metasppecies has yet to be established, but judging from how similar their personalities are to ours, one would expect that contact will be complicated by innumerable factions and political groups.

Threats

- A violent sub-faction has started blaming us for abandoning the Dathaza to die in the far reaches of the galaxy. Next, they claim we exiled them intentionally, then that there was a great schism war, that we lost. Next, that we're planning on returning to finish the job. The lies just keep growing.
- Upon finding out that the Hama have invented the Heartdrive, some Dathaza have decided that we owe them that technology. While there's little they can threaten us with without it, withholding it would poison the diplomatic well, possibly damaging future Hama-Dathaza relations.
- The Dathaza have made contact with a very advanced sponsor species from Carina who are willing to back them in any attempts to unify their people. This sponsor species needs to be dissuaded of this course of action, otherwise it could easily lead to destabilization of the galaxy.



THE HAMA

The Contact mission lander settled gently onto purple grass. After a moment, an opening irised and a ramp slid down. People came out, but they didn't look anything like us. They were much too tall, and their tails were all wrong. None of them had the right kind of feet, and none of them even had horns. A couple were wearing breathing masks despite the clear, crisp air. We could feel the Flow roiling around them.

Their leader looked sidelong at her second in command.

"Demons this time, huh?" she said.

He took out some kind of scanner and shrugged. "I guess so," he muttered.

The term "metaspecies" is used to describe most star-faring sentients for the simple reason that very few groups are even remotely biologically or technologically uniform. Almost every alien species we've met has had specialist sub-species, divergences, genetic forks, or alternative technologies that serve their own purposes. The same is true of the Hama. As with the others, our "species" is actually composed of many different kinds of sentient being, from biologicals to AIs, from cybernetic to organic, from direct descendent to exoform hybrid. Because of this, there is an extreme variety of kinds of beings who one can call "Hama." Here, we will learn about some of the forms and social structures of the Hama.

There are several ways to categorize Hama people. Social caste groups people by their activities and social status. Organization defines what part of society they belong to, and is further divided into two legitimate governmental branches, the Regional Administration Groups, and Common Operations. Those that fall outside of these two branches are usually members of a Fringe

Organization. Besides these organizational structures, there are also alien allies and diplomats embedded in Hama space, many of whom are not directly subject to Region Administration authority. These are called Non-Hama Groups.

Social Castes

Over billions of years of Hama galactic civilization, the Churn of various sub-cultures and stellar nations has led to the development of four broad categories of social standing. Social caste isn't set in stone, and given the long lives of modern Hama, it wouldn't even be notable for one to traverse all four categories. The FTL Age has led to even more social mobility than before.

Aristos: These are the leaders, rulers, and governors of vast swaths of other people. The Aristocracy make up a small portion of the total Hama population, but they are the most powerful. It is their will that directs Hama actions on the galactic scale. While executives, prime ministers, and system commanders are the most visible members of the aristocracy, there are also aristocrats in charge of corporations, travel lanes, research and development, archives, and the Galactic Flow.

Settlers: Sometimes derisively called "outlanders" by aristocrats, settlers are those who dwell on the fringes of Hamaciv. They aren't always found on the outer borders of the Old Regions, however. Adapted for life in the hardest parts of the galaxy, settlers can be found in wandering deep space, soaring in the coronas of stars, swimming through gas giants, and just about anywhere you'd think it was impossible to live.

Workers: Most of the manufacturing that goes on in Hama space is done by semi-autonomous robots and large-scale fabricator plants, but there are (and always will be) Hama that do work, make things, and provide services for others. Which jobs are left to biological workers depends on the sub-culture in question. Some cultures value creative endeavors, while others value hand-made goods.

Across most cultures workers also make up the groups and companies that operate the manufactories and fabricator plants.

Conquered: History seems to show that it is inevitable for some people to be taken advantage of by others. The conquered are people who owe debts, are forced into servitude, are kept imprisoned, or are otherwise under the thrall of others. In some Hama cultures there are groups of sentient robots and AIs that are treated as tools. Other places, entire sub-races of Hama are forced into labor. Then there are the prison planets, which house the criminals from thousands of other worlds.

Regional Administration

The administration of particular regions, systems, and clusters in Hamaciv is accomplished by a vast number of largely independent groups. These groups are usually more closely allied with other local administration groups than they are with similar groups from foreign areas. Space is big, and the values of one Hama culture generally only extend so far. Thus, Hamaciv operates as a kind of loosely organized federation of parts that perform similar functions across a huge area of space.

The loyalty and allegiance of any given regional administration group is complex and chaotic, affected by the actions, beliefs, political maneuvers, alliances, and diplomatic outlook of not just the other groups in their area, but also those in neighboring areas. Region administration is almost synonymous with manipulation, coercion, conspiracy, and corruption. If it weren't for this, there would be little need for Common Operations to exist at all.

Regional Administration Groups are separate bodies, both from each other within a region, and across regional borders. The Energy Aristocracy of Arazella and the Energy Aristocracy of Persistence Major, for example, are completely independent and do not report to any central command. Each region has its own set of administrations, complicating Hamaciv politics immensely. Time

has shown, however, that it is impossible to govern organizations beyond a certain size and complexity.

The Matter Aristocracy

Yes, but what will you build it with?

—A negotiator in discussions with a colony mission

Usually the first organization to move into or take shape in a new region, the Matter Aristocracy controls mass. They take charge of land and planetary rights, mining contracts, and terraforming operations. Not only do they dictate the terms of settlement and colonization efforts, but the corporations that perform these contracts usually fall under the Matter Aristocracy's heading in the org chart as well.

The Matter Aristocracy holds one card that almost no other organization does in all of HamaCiv: replication. Due to a monopoly, they are the sole purveyors of replication machines, duplicating mining robots, and manufactories. They are constantly locked in a cold war with the Data Aristocracy over the information used to build these technologies, but currently no other force can stand against them in this arena, making their hold on the construction of habitats and megastructures almost unbreakable.

Threats

- It seems that something has gone terribly wrong with a colonization package: the replicating mining drones have escaped the bounds of their programming and are busy tearing the entire system into pieces in order to build more of themselves. At least, it *seemed* to be an accident, until identical reports started coming in from other systems.
- A periphery settlement reports that they are rapidly losing atmo, food, and mechanical support. It sounds like their machines

- have just started to die on them for no reason, one after another, each reporting a “digital rights management violation error.”
- A mining team sent to peel all the silicates off a dwarf planet’s core unearth what appears to be a tremendous vessel, robot, or mecha underneath. So far, it’s dormant, but it may be on the verge of waking it up.

The Energy Aristocracy

Sure, if you only look at the smoke pouring out of a Burner engine or the grime left behind by a huge Heartdrive, you’ll think that we’re among the most dirty species in the galaxy. But if you really compare our systems with others, you’ll soon see that our Flow technologies enable us to create energy in perfect harmony with the stars and planets we inhabit; we don’t need to tear apart gas giants for deuterium to fuel fusion plants. We don’t need to litter orbits with billions of square miles of solar collectors. We don’t need to shred and maim each other’s worlds in order to scrape together enough plutonium to make a thermonuclear reactor.

Trust me, the smoke is cleaner than the alternative.

—Edar Erani, an Aristo

The Energy Aristocracy controls power and the manufacture and sale of equipment designed to produce it. They operate companies and services that build, maintain, and distribute everything from Machine Hearts to solar collectors to geothermal plants. They often operate as a brain trust or research department where the technologies they control are kept as secret as possible. The Energy Aristocracy often branches off from the Matter Aristocracy once a region achieves a size at which the two organizations become too large and complex to operate under the same leadership.

Owing to their inextricable ties to Machine Hearts and the Galactic Flow, the Energy Aristocracy is both full to the brim with Burners,

The Hama

and the subject of the vast majority of Ardent protests. While the aristos know that careful manipulation of the Flow is necessary to maintain the smooth, uninterrupted production of energy, they are always looking for ways to optimize the process, and this often means “stealing” Flow from areas that use less, areas often populated by Ardents.

Threats

- Public support erupts for a freelance Machine Heart designer who claims she’s being coerced by the Energy Aristocracy to drop a promising recent project. Then private security contractors begin arriving in the system. Then the designer disappears.
- When the Machine Hearts at the core of Colonization Landing Mission Packages start going haywire, the company releases a simple statement to calm the settlers. But then the problem begins to spread, not just to other Machine Hearts, but to those who are open to the Flow as well.
- The Ardent Sedition is planning a large scale coup to overthrow the operators of a major Machine Heart manufacturing plant. Obviously they plan to destroy the plant when they gain control. This time, the plant operators are the ones asking for help.

The Data Aristocracy

In a given Hama region, the power of the Data Aristocracy is directly proportional to the likelihood and scope of corruption.

–KLARIONN, a Canis hacker

Regions with large and established populations often require a Data Aristocracy. This administration group controls information and information technologies, chief among which is the Flowgrid. The Data Aristocracy handles the construction, maintenance, and administration of their branch of the Flowgrid, making them

extraordinarily important in the politics of Hamaciv. Their activities can suppress or disseminate important or valuable information, and their cooperation is utterly necessary for groups to maintain relations with other regions. It's possible to encrypt communications against the prying eyes of those who might read it for political gain, but that encryption is usually designed and distributed by the Data Aristocracy itself.

Regulation and content control is an issue that comes up on a daily basis with the Data Aristocracy. Because their business depends to a certain extent on their ability to make certain information scarce, they are always trying to find new ways to monetize, tax, fee, restrict, or censor information that passes through them on its way to the Flowgrid. This has led to a minor Churn of small telecom cooperatives starting up and attempting to outmaneuver the Data Aristocracy, only to be bought out and shuttered as soon as they're large enough to be useful.

Threats

- A breathless Nouveau courier arrives at a mercenary hideaway, claiming that there's an entire cluster of systems that was intentionally eradicated from all records, and that they're on the verge of collapse. So far, elaborate spoofing and data quarantine procedures have hidden these desperate people from the rest of the galaxy.
- Surprising even other aristos, a corporation suddenly puts forward an extensively researched claim that 89% of all in-use biogenetic modifications and engineered traits fall under their copyright, and that they're seeking either redress for damages or heavily enforced restrictions.
- A crash in one of the major server districts of the Flowgrid has led to catastrophic destruction to innumerable applications, systems, environments, and shared virtual spaces. The calamity is so bad that millions have even been killed by mental linkage termination errors.

The Nouveau

Many call it a religious experience, the first time you set sail for the stars on a Heartdrive ship through the Galactic Flow. I wouldn't necessarily go that far—I'm no Ardent, after all—but it's definitely something. I'm twenty millennia old, and this is the first time I've experienced something really new in the last nineteen.

—Sau Hyawa, an explorer

The Heartdrive didn't just open up a galaxy's worth of worlds to explore, but also created a whole new class of independent entrepreneurs. The Nouveau, as they are called, are able to extricate themselves from the control of other regional groups simply by going to others for assistance. They must be clever and wily, able to pick their way through the complexities of intergalactic politics in order to play enemies against each other so they can get what they need, but doing so renders them mostly outside the jurisdiction of the Aristocracies. The Nouveau often form unions, alliances, bands, or corporations in order to protect themselves from the depredations of the aristos.

While the Heartdrive critical, it is not the only tool that the Nouveau have at their disposal. Because the Flowgrid is so often monitored and controlled by aristos, many Nouveau use a kind of manually operated physical network, sharing data by using their Heartdrives to physically meet in real space to exchange hardware. Additionally, they adopt new and untested technology as often as possible, hoping to stay just outside the mainstream and avoid the heavy hand of corporate technical involvement. Unfortunately, almost everything “new” is eventually rediscovered by aristo-employed historians and archaeologists, making this a constant game of cat and mouse, played with only a limited number of moves.

Threats

- It's unclear what precisely is going on, but some phenomena is killing Nouveau space pilots and freighter drivers at an ever-increasing rate. It seems to be moving through their networks and unions, spreading like a deadly plague. Whether it's a viral, an actual infection, or just an extremely adept murderer is a matter of speculation.
- Extremists from the Hauler and Trade Guilds are planning to lure a large number of Nouveau entrepreneurs to a certain settler system. They've drawn the ire of the Knifemakers long in advance and Nouveau are already arriving in the system, wondering where their contracts went.
- A new coalition of Nouveau drivers has risen, coopting all it comes in contact with using blackmail and coercion to fill its ranks. The group aims to build a new aristocracy of Heartdrive operators, and it plans to use all the dirty tricks and underhanded tactics of the aristos they mimic.

Local Defense Military

Why is it that every time I give the order to attack, there's always one captain who stalls? It's a tiny police force, not the SMS. The next one to disobey my order gets an escape pod and front row seats.

–Kryzace Ludrysha

A police force is always necessary, especially in politically-active areas, which basically means all of Hama space. The Local Defense Military is the term given to the militarized and consolidated police forces that are so popular in the Old Territories. They usually report to a senior General or High Command and are composed of numerous specialized branches and sub-branches. In some regions, the Local Defense Military is seen as oppositional or tyrannical, using violence and force to oppose or override other administration groups. In other regions, they are seen as more of a peacekeeping force that prevents all out war between angry aristos and other administrations.

The Hama

Local Defense Militaries are usually provisioned initially by the colonization charter of a newly founded region, but it never seems to take them very long to blow through their initial budgets and exceed their resources. They then face a choice. If they choose to fund their expansion with local assets, they become obligated to control and oversight by other administrations. If they choose to return to the colony mission source, they become the hand of a foreign power, interfering with local politics in a way most settlers find distasteful. If they cannot or choose not to continue their expansion, then the settlement is exposed to the dangers of invasion, crime, and coup d'état.

Threats

- What could have been just another minor political squabble has erupted into intense limited war between the LDM and a local SMS patrol. Each group is backed by different forces, and now that the fighting has started, other aristos are gathering around like vultures ready to pick through the bones.
- A viral outbreak has driven an entire planet mad, and the Local Defense Military operating in the area is genuinely concerned for the lives and minds of the people. They're fighting a losing battle to keep the situation contained, but they need help solving the core problem: the viral itself.
- A witch hunt is under way in this department. One of the commanders is in league with the organized crime syndicate that executed the commissioner's family, but nobody is sure who the traitor is. Or, at least, that's what they're saying.

Hauler and Trade Guilds

Ol' Hesus thinks that these "Heartdrives" are a fad, like Starberry flavored Blue Milk.

I think he's an idiot. And besides, I miss that flavor.

—Tarus, a freighter driver

These organizations are usually working-class unions and corporate alliances designed to facilitate the rapid and efficient distribution of goods across a region. They were of integral importance before the FTL Age, when shipments from one star system to another had to be set up decades or centuries in advance. Now, with the advent of the Heartdrive, many of the traditionalist guilds are struggling to even compete with independent Nouveau contractors.

What the Trade Guilds have going for them is an established and stalwart network of logistics and transportation assets. When Nouveau shuttle things across the galaxy, they can rarely move much at a time, and when they arrive, they have to either gang press locals into unloading or pay ridiculous fees to the local Trade Guild docks for arriving unannounced. However, what makes the Trade Guilds efficient in terms of local and planetary logistics is also what makes them difficult to adapt to Heartdrive-powered schedules. In the face of the size of Hama space, such growing pains are expected to take centuries or millennia to abate.

Threats

- Someone, quite some time ago, pulled an elaborate hack on the Guild logistics computers. Despite their redundancies and cross-checking, the Guild is only just now realizing that thousands of vital shipments have been in transit for decades or centuries to completely wrong destinations.
- When a shipment of radioactive material ordered for nuclear reactors arrives at a system where the sale has already been filled by a Nouveau driver years earlier, the hauler decides to take matters into her own hands, threatening the city with a hundred tons of uncontained nuclear core unless they pay her the original price.
- A lonely transporter finds out she's been driving a Shadowed One around Hama space completely unaware. She wants to turn herself in but is afraid she'll be disappeared by Situation Resolution or annihilated by the Shadowed One if she fails to make the delivery.

The Hama



Common Operations

There has always been a need for certain services and assets to be available to the vast majority of all Hama. Ever since our first expansion out from the Cloud into interstellar space, Common Operations has existed in some form or another, supporting the activities of the Hama across the whole metaculture.

In its modern incarnation, Common Operations is more of a support mechanism than an overarching governing body. Rather than directing the actions of individual regions of Hama space, it focuses its efforts on maintaining order, assisting when regional assets are inadequate, and providing specialty services that Regional Administrations wouldn't normally have access to. It is, however, an open secret that Common Operations interferes in regional politics if they decide that a Regional Administration Group is a risk to the civilization at large. Thus, despite their efforts to cultivate and maintain the persona of a galactic janitor, many regional fundamentalists and independents consider Common Operations a deep state run by extremely powerful secret police.

The Cartography Service

People fail to remember that you can't cross interstellar space without a decent navcom. It's just too big, and there's too much stuff in the way. They think that these new Heartdrives will make it so they can zap around the galaxy willy-nilly, and that they'll never have to pay for up-to-date star maps ever again.

I say, good luck to them.

—An anonymous cartographer talking with a settler

It takes hundreds of thousands of years, but the galaxy turns and shifts, moving star systems around like bubbles in water headed down a funnel. The chaos of the motion of stars and planets and the

utter deficit of knowledge about what is out there in the galaxy led to the formation of the Cartography Service very early in the history of Hamaciv. It strives to make an accurate, up-to-date reporting of every system, region, and phenomena in the galaxy. As such, the Cartography Service is the single largest employer of explorers in Hama space.

It's no secret that the Cartography Service has a dedicated layer built into the Flowgrid and Data Aristocracy systems across all of Hama space. What is less known is how much that network layer contributes to the galactic unity of Hama space and what it contributes to the intelligence arms of the rest of Common Operations. While no *official* arrangement is described between the Cartography Service and any of these intelligence communities, clandestine communication is so ingrained in the Service's technologies that no one is really sure who's using all the bandwidth, or for what.

Threats

- A star system has gone missing. Not from the records, but from actual reality. It can't be an example of someone tampering with the Cartography records, because millions of people can attest to trading with and visiting the system in question. The Service is calling on intrepid explorers to find out what happened.
- Nova Invidia has penetrated the side-channels operated by the Cartography Service and seems to be listening in on transmissions across Hamaciv between some of the most important and powerful intelligence communities in the galaxy. Wherever she's accessing from, they want her out and gone, yesterday.
- Someone is distributing a surprisingly accurate map of the galaxy for a fraction the price of even older Cartography Service maps. The problem is that these cheap new maps are wrong, and wrong in the worst way. They lead to innumerable junker salvage yards, scav bases, pirate ambushes, and alien defense outposts.

Standing Military Service

I'm in LR company—that's Last Resort—but if you think about it, that's what the whole SMS is about. We're the last line of defense between all of Hamaciv and the chaos of the rest of the galaxy.

—Lieutenant Schirra Alnar

If the Local Defense Military is like a town's police force, the Standing Military Service is the national guard, navy, and air force all rolled into one. Its first mission is to protect Hamaciv from civil-scale external threats, which are few and far between. Its second mission is to keep order among the various regions of the Old Territories. This doesn't mean that they're peacekeepers *per se*, but rather more like referees who step in when things get out of hand. Because they have a generally hands-off approach and only step in and take control to neutralize the most egregious threats, many regional administrations feel that they act too much above the law and interfere only when it suits them.

For the vast majority of Hama existence, the Standing Military Service has had to operate on a "Watch and Patrol" system, where various elements of the SMS were kept moving constantly across Hama space. This allowed at least some assets to be relatively close to any particular issue whenever it came up, and was assisted by advanced warning from various diplomatic resources, both in Common Operations and Regional Administrations. The Heartdrive Wars, however, taught the SMS the hard lesson of being in many places at once, and they adapted their tactics accordingly. Now, SMS patrols are designed to move seemingly at random from one hotspot to another, cooling potential problems with their mere presence and maintaining the ability to leap through hyperspace to any nearby conflict.

Threats

- They call it “crying to mama.” Several groups embroiled in some petty local political squabble have separately come to the Standing Military Service, each asking for help against one another. While the diplomats and negotiators from Contact are on their way, SMS is trying to calm people down long enough to get an idea of what they’re arguing about.
- The word “mutiny” is bandied about when a detachment is sortied to glass a Hama-inhabited planet. As far as anyone can tell, the population has done nothing to warrant summary execution, so many servicemen and women are talking about corruption.
- The SMS doesn’t back down from a fight. But when their targets are smart enough to lure them into the kind of guerilla warfare that they’re least capable in, they can be sorely tempted, especially when the best-case scenario involves decades of infrastructure rebuilding.

Contact Service

After five thousand years of research and training, you'd think that nothing fazes me anymore. Let me tell you, though. There are some metaspecies out there that are just one-hundred percent out of their minds.

–Prazn Taular, a Contact Service Diplomat

There are millions of alien cultures in the galaxy, and many of them are either so foreign that most Hama can’t even communicate with them or so aggressive that careless communication would undoubtedly lead to war. For eons this problem has been dealt with by the Contact Service, which acts as a diplomatic arm of Common Operations. Contact handles issues arising between Hama and non-Hama metaspecies, as well as occasional rivalries between internal Hama cultures.

While it seems their primary purpose is to negotiate with aliens, much of their work involves changing the behavior, perception, and

laws of the contacting Hama cultures in order to maintain peace. This is often the easier course of action than changing alien psychology or following their demands by rearranging the stars themselves, but it means that Contact agents have been forced to become some of the most skilled spies and operators Common Operations. Whenever possible, they seek to mitigate widespread conflict through minimal interference, regardless of which side must be manipulated in order to achieve their ends.

Threats

- It's well past time for peace. Now, it's time to force a treaty. As violence on both sides of the conflict spills over into civilian life, the Service prepares to bribe, cajole, blackmail, and threaten those in power until they accept a treaty that will put an end to the conflict. They do this, of course, under the guise of a third side, which they've completely fabricated.
- A powerful diplomatic adversary has brought a wealthy region under its control, placing an embargo on trade between an allied metaspecies and Hamaciv. The first wave of Contact operatives has gone missing, and the higher-ups are mildly put out. They plan to send a second wave, this time of their elites, but the agents they thought they lost have actually been turned.
- Rarely does Contact Service find a situation where all the parties of a negotiation are absolutely firm on their stance. Most of the time one or more of the actors is willing to concede or compromise on part of the issue. Not so in this case. That means it's time for the Service to *really* get to work. Time to get out there and move the stars. Literally.

Situation Resolution

Oh, heavens yes, I remember Tenacity, she's only been gone for what, like 40 years or so? I served with her in the ██████████ ██████████ of ██████████ ██████████ and ██████████. Never met a better agent. But now that ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████

_____ she's _____.

-Diquaryon, a Situation Resolution Agent

Situation Resolution is a ghost organization. It operates inside and through all other Hama groups, using any asset and any tactic to perform its mission. That mission is to deal with outliers, edge cases, black swans, and outside context problems. They categorize their work into two areas: problems other Hama organizations can't handle, and problems that no one anticipated or could have even thought to anticipate. The role of SR is often so subtle and so vast that their missions often span the galaxy and have effects that are only felt years or decades later. They operate with such secrecy that no one is really sure whether they actually exist or if they're just some black-ops appendage of the Standing Military Service, giving rise to many beliefs that Common Operations runs a secret police force to keep the regional governments in line.

Situation Resolution carefully cultivates a large number of conflicting rumors concerning its purpose, scope, and abilities. Most non-operatives who have even heard of SR are led to believe that it is either an elite branch of SMS Intelligence, or some a special police apparatus following the will of some shadowy council of moldering Hama elders. Those more in the know will suspect that SR is to Contact as the SMS is to Local Defense Militaries. Spectacularly few know anything about their true mission, to defend Hama civilization from the kind of things that other civilizations encounter only once before utterly ceasing to exist.

Threats

- Something of unprecedented power and stealth is hunting the aristo leaders of millions of Hama companies, governments, and organizations. Whatever it is, it seems to kill with impunity, being apparently immune to even the most powerful defenses the aristos can muster. SR is tasked not only with finding and

- defeating the being, but also with determining its plan, its goals, where it comes from, and how it does what it does.
- SR historians discover an encrypted pre-viral embedded in 87% of the existing Hama population, dating back billions of years. SR agents are tasked with the unenviable task of sorting out who created the viral, what it does, and how to neutralize it across the entirety of Hama space before it activates and potentially destroys all of Hamaciv.
 - One of the most closely guarded secrets in SR is the number of times that Hamaciv has interacted with beings and metasppecies from the Galactic Core. The number is large. Each time, SR has been there to curb the destruction and neutralize the threat before the civilian population understands what is happening. That number is about to go up.

Fringe Organizations

Fringe organizations operate in the gray areas of regional legality, social acceptability, and Hamaciv control. Some are criminal organizations positioned in such a way that they are technically not illegal where they operate or are incorporated into the social structures of an area in a way that makes them impossible to remove. Others are organizations with beliefs or goals that run counter to the prevailing mores of Hamaciv, either in a regional sense or in a galactic sense. Still others are shunned, repressed, or have their existence itself denied.

Criminal activity alone doesn't make a group a Fringe Organization. To be classified this way, a group must operate consistently on the dividing line of the law or stand well outside the moral imperatives of *most* of Hama space, but also be able to avoid direct legal or police action most of the time. Fringe organizations can often get away with their activities, if they're careful, where as simple criminal elements tend to be apprehended or neutralized on sight.

Dominion

*We pity them, they who know not the light of our wisdom.
We must show them the way, for we are the light, the spark of
culture, the epitome of goodness.*

—Dominion Evangelist Pentino Eutron

For the last two hundred or so million years, there's been an undercurrent of supremacy in Hamaciv. A certain part of the population feels that Hamaciv is by far the most righteous and worthy of all civilizations that have ever come through the Churn. It is our destiny, they claim, to bring our culture to the world. They proclaim the shame that we bear for not lifting other metasppecies into our light. They say that we must not be selfish and horde the secret of our integrity and virtue, that we are morally obliged to guide others. What they *really* mean, it seems, is that we must conquer the galaxy for its own good.

The people who buy into the rhetoric of Dominion evangelists and recruiters know nothing of the true goals of the organization's leaders. In no way do they actually seek to enhance the lives of others. They desire only power and dominance, and they take great pains to find and train the most vocal and charismatic Hama to proclaim their supposedly lofty aspirations to the populace. The leaders of the Dominion are manipulators of the highest order and have mastered the art of indoctrinating those seeking guidance and meaning.

Threats

- Thousands of Hama civilians have gone missing following a Dominion operation in the system. The operation was supposed to be the filming of a propaganda hologram, but when the local civilians objected to the treatment of non-Hama, they were rounded up and taken aboard the Dominion warships for reeducation. They haven't come back.

- A new breed of extremists has been forged in the hateful labs aboard the most heinous R&D ships of the Dominion. These extremists are immune to anti-indoctrination and so full of rage and contempt for “lesser races” that their deployments continually end in genocide of alien metasppecies. Seeing the effectiveness of their new weapon, both on the forces of their enemies and on the minds of their Hama supporters, Dominion masters set about to produce them en masse.
- One by one, systems are falling to Dominion control. They are spreading quickly out from a center in the Old Territories, subsuming even the most peaceful settlements via indoctrination, political manipulation, or force of arms. They are rapidly consolidating power, building their fleet at an exponential rate, and imposing strictly regimented laws and systems on the subjugated populations. They stand poised to envelop the rest of the Old Territories, and if they succeed, the last chapter of Hama history may be written by a bigoted, manipulating military oligarchy.

Onemind

We can ascend if we do it together.

–Onemind Mantra

For the last billion or so years, Hamaciv has mostly stayed the same, in a kind of social and technical stasis from which we’ve only recently been able to see a way out of. Many claim this is because we’d done everything that was worth doing, and that there was nothing interesting left to discover. Members of the Onemind faction disagree completely, claiming that there is one last step to completing the journey of a meta-civilization, and that is transcendence. They say that in order to continue to evolve, we must, as a metasppecies, ascend to a higher state of being, one abstracted away from the physical realities of the galaxy and up into higher-order dimensions.

The Hama

Some Onemind adherents want to convince the metasppecies through words, but other sects believe words are inadequate and suggest stronger action is needed, up to and including the dissemination of an advanced Onemind viral. Because there are conflicting systems of metaphysical thought among Onemind devotees, there are also multiple supposed paths to enlightenment, some of which are mutually exclusive. These differences of belief are driving a wedge between many parts of this supposedly unified group.

Threats

- Ataraxists believe that they can guide others to the right path by sublimating and transcending before the rest. They seek to live good, peaceful lives and achieve enlightenment in order to light the path for the masses. Unfortunately, their peaceful lives and gentle outlook make them prey to many aggressive, selfish forces within Hama culture. They are offering what little they have in exchange for protection.
- As a step towards a Hama-wide Onemind viral, one of the aggressive sects has built and deployed a viral intended to bring other Onemind adherents to their side. As with many virals, there were unforeseen consequences. Now, people all over Hamaciv are starting to believe that virals are either the best, or the *only* way to convince others of their viewpoints.
- A Onemind commune near the periphery of the Old Territories has actually managed to ascend to some higher plane of existence. They claim sovereignty, and despite attempts by various Regional Administrations to bring them under control, they are apparently unaffected by the technologies of our reality. Ostensibly, they come in peace and seek to better Hama through enlightenment, but a wave of paranoia is fed by their newfound otherness.

Regressionists

FTL was the last piece. What more can we do? What more should we do before we slip quietly into senescence and allow the galaxy to move on? Our only way forward is to sit and rest a while.

—A Regressionist from Seven Sisters

Regressionists believe the opposite of Onemind, that there is nothing left for us to do, and that the only way for the metaspaces to survive is not up, but down. They believe that we must return to the planets, cast away our technologies, and live the hard lives of hunter-gatherers once again, in order to start the cycle anew. They point to some of the more successful cultures in the Churn being “resurrected” after eons of decline. All cultures, they say, come to an end. We are in the unique position of being able to choose our end in a way that means we could rise again.

Regressionists have set up a number of colonization missions over the years, with varying degrees of success. As time goes on, each new mission eschews more settlement technology than the last, aiming to eventually subsist on a planet with essentially no technical assistance whatsoever. Few such colonies have proven self-sufficient so far, but most blame this on design-by-committee and poor planning.

Threats

- Citing complex legal interactions through political machinations, a colony of Regressionists has managed to single-handedly bring its entire parent culture to its financial and mercantile knees. The colony is draining away all the resources of the culture, spending them on vast and sweeping changes to the planet, the star system, and the stellar area, all with the intention of making their colony stable and self-sustaining. Meanwhile, non-Regressionist citizens are dealing with an unprecedented depression.

- A Regressionist scientist has developed a bio-viral that is passed between Hama via skin-to-skin contact. The viral has the effect of suppressing technical ability and enhancing physical survival characteristics, such as strength and endurance. The infected are more able to handle uncivilized life on wilderness planets, but no more willing.
- An innocent Regressionist enclave has been struck by brigands and thieves who resorted to vandalism and violence when they found no goods worth stealing. The enclave has published admonishments of the government for permitting this to happen and calls for “techciv” to deal with their own problems and leave Regressionists out of it.

The Collectors

If I was doing this for my own good, don't you think I'd be selling these things on the black market?

—Merce Javestons in an agrument with Phi Meron

The Collectors wish to gather and analyze every artifact from every culture in the galaxy. They believe that this is the only way to stave off destruction, and they point to many historical incidents where our knowledge of alien technologies, customs, processes, and mental workings have saved the Hama from the dangers of other galactic civilizations. They are categorized as Fringe Organization more for their collusion with criminal elements and foreign powers than for their own dangerous behavior. They will gladly employ any asset in order to acquire the objects they seek, and won't shy away from paying mercenaries to annihilate smaller groups of Hama or entire alien civilizations in order to accomplish this goal.

The Collectors have kept a particular technology secret and hidden from the rest of Hama space for millions of years. It is called the Mausoleum, and it is a hyperspatial vault designed early in the universe's history, and it is where they store all the artifacts they collect. The Mausoleum doesn't permit actual travel through it, but

Collectors can access any object they place inside it, allowing treasure hunters, explorers, analysts, and scientists to trade relics and artifacts all across the galaxy.

Threats

- It doesn't matter to the Collectors what religions, cults, or devotions have risen around the artifact; they hire the best, and they hire them to do the job. This time, the artifact in question is so awe inspiring that an entire Hama culture has been erected around it, hosting thousands of different sects and faiths. Regardless, the Collectors have paid for it to be obtained.
- With the discovery of Trit 21 of the 100 Ternary Shards, a massive race has kicked off across the galaxy, like a vast scavenger hunt for the remaining 22 Trits. Each Trit is a single shard of fabulously complex electrochemical machinery, writhing with fractal detail, and contains an untold wealth of new data and technology, but also a clue to the location of the next Trit. Confusing many is the issue that the Ternary Shards are numbered in Ternary; there are in fact only 9 of them (in decimal), so the race is rapidly drawing to a close. The Collectors want to assemble them to see what happens.
- The Collectors are offering a reward for a private mission, the secrecy of which must be ensured by a specifically designed amnesia viral. It seems a savage group of feral AIs has taken over part of the Mausoleum. They are rapidly weaponizing any artifacts they can get their hands on and using them to take over the rest of the strange metaspace. The Collectors need someone with a particular skillset to remedy the problem for them.

Virtue Dark

I once spent twenty-five years setting up a revolution on Adasym, in Rosette. I slaved away over it, recruiting, training, and enlightening Ardent martial artists from the High Mountain, teaching them the dangers and crimes of Burner

technology. Eventually, a third party offered assistance when the time was right.

Chaos reigned. It was like causality itself had taken a break. Things were going wrong on all sides all the time, and we were forced to abandon any hope of pursuing a plan. We were running from catastrophe to catastrophe, trying our best just to survive.

*Eventually our survivors ended up stuck on a Burner salvage vessel with the remains of a LDM squadron who had been through the same thing while trying to stop our revolution. That's where I learned who I had **actually** hired.*

—An Ardent of the Sedition

One of the most infamous and most crafty criminals of modern times, Virtue Dark is the sort to have her fingers in every pie. She's been an uncatchable thief, leader of Shadowed Ones, a mercenary for Minima Wolf Red, and an agent of Situation Resolution. She's universally assumed to be a double or triple agent for any side she appears to be supporting, and is so capable at evading detection and capture some refuse to believe she's anything but a very compelling fiction viral. She employs a vast network of cutouts and spies who help her with anything she needs. The only reason she and her assets haven't been treated as a terrorist organization yet is that she has made herself indispensable to certain parties in Common Operations and several Regional Administrations.

Virtue has described herself as severely neuro-anomalous, citing her ability to stay positive in the face of astronomical odds. She has a lust for life that is completely at odds with the general malaise and depression displayed by most Hama, and she relishes the opportunity to challenge herself against the most advanced assets of the most advanced culture in known space. At heart, she's a thrill-seeker with a mischievous streak. She's aware of her unusual outlook and uses it to her advantage every chance she gets. While she has made some friends in very high places, her tendency to cause chaos has made her far more enemies. Nevertheless, she's well

enough connected that it would be foolish to think of her actions as those of a single person rather than the finely tuned operation of a massive criminal enterprise.

Threat

- It turns out that an otherwise-unexceptional mission was actually a cover for a different operation Virtue Dark and her various allies were pulling. Then it turns out that that too was a false-flag operation. And of course, the original mission was actually funded and organized by Virtue's agents. Everyone involved seems to have a different opinion about what really happened and why.
- Numerous teams are being brought in, under separate contracts, to a particular aristo-owned planet that claims they've trapped Virtue Dark. They are hiring anyone they think might have even a remote chance at capturing her. None of this is actually helping the situation of course, and the head of security is pretty sure this is all plain old paranoia—and that Virtue Dark was never even here in the first place.
- You've been invited to participate in one of Virtue's schemes. Despite how they tend to look from outside, they're planned out to a T and you're expected to fulfil your part of the bargain. Doing so will see you rewarded with riches from the vaults of a thief of genius skill, while betrayal is handled with professionalism rarely seen outside of holofilm.

Exoforms

Everyone wants to know how I got my planet. They think that I bought it from the settlers who owned it before me, or killed them all myself. But the truth is I fled society and ended up on Coparium before I even knew it. When I arrived, it was a barren wasteland filled with hostile alien subsentients.

It was paradise for me. I no longer had to worry about accidentally destroying a space station or losing my temper with an innocent squishy Hama.

But then they came for me. Not to take me away, but to make me the sideshow everyone comes to Coparium to see. That's how I became a gladiator.

—Kuosakya, a Vhyth/Hama Exoform

While there are many different kinds of non-Hama wandering around in Hama space, the vast majority of the time, they are incapable of producing offspring with we Hama, and vice versa. Sometimes, however, a hybrid appears, either through an incredible fluke of biology, or through genetic, biological, or technological intervention. Such offspring are classified as Exoforms and usually fall into some very particular and very awful legal circumstances. Obviously, they are not a monolithic group the way Dominion or Onemind are, but they do tend to congregate when they come across one another, simply because of shared life experiences no one else understands.

Exoforms are often widely divergent from Hama baseline, both in bodyplan and in internal biology. Many have limbs or features that immediately mark them as unusual, even among Hama societies where physical mods are utterly pervasive. There's an otherness about them that most can readily identify. Sometimes this extends to their mental lives and outlook as well. Such individuals may see the world in a drastically different way than those around them, leading to behavior that might be considered “fringe.”

Threats

- A feral exoform with no concept of civilization has infiltrated the ship and is now stalking around it, taking food and shelter when it wants and fleeing from sight. While it has the personality of a mouse, it has the build of a tiger, and may be very dangerous if cornered.

- You've been hired to "apprehend" an exoform civilian that the Regional Administration has labeled a criminal. While she does live a secretive life, you can find no evidence of wrongdoing. Paperwork forwarded by the LDF doesn't match up with the neurotypical behavior you're observing. But you know that if you don't succeed, they'll just send another group of freelancers.
- Out of the blue, an exoform comes forward, hoping to gain your trust and enter into a business arrangement. Unlike others, she recognizes that her biology offers a wealth of data that Hama scientists would be interested in, but she's wary of the dangers of the Regional Administrations and aristos, and want someone to watch her back, guide her, and pull her out of trouble if things go poorly, which they're nearly guaranteed to do.

Flowsparks

Eh. You see 'em on planets a fair amount, but they're all over the place in space. Just not in the places civilized Hamafolk tend to be looking. Welldwellers think they're mystical and spacers think they're a nuisance.

—Cani Velphoenix, a mechanist aboard the Second Last Hill

Flowsparks are small fairy-like beings that arise as a consequence of twists and vortices in the Galactic Flow. They are generally not harmful, but they can be annoying or distracting in the wrong circumstances. No one is sure how their minds arise or how they seem to be born with some knowledge of the world they find themselves in, but some think that this has to do with the connection between life, the mind, and the Flow itself. Flowsparks are only interested in play and disregard negative events and actions, and are seemingly unable to experience anger or sadness, though they understand such emotions. Flowsprites don't form cultures or pass on information to subsequent generations, being largely content to live in the moment for their entire short little lives.

The Hama

Though the vast majority of Hama have seen a Flowspark at one time or another, there is little consensus about their properties and behavior. This is because Flowsparks are by nature chaotic and unique, and the circumstances that they arise in are likewise uncontrolled. Sometimes they merge together and attain higher levels of sentience, while other times they diverge rapidly from supposedly-normal behavior. It's nearly impossible to predict what will happen over a long enough period to a group of Flowsparks.

Threats

- Flowsparks have somehow replaced the artificial intelligence components of the ship. Working together as a chaotic federation of virtual goblins, they are almost impossible to reason with and even harder to get rid of. This wouldn't be so bad if they were able to agree on anything, but they can't, so getting the ship to even set a course is a matter of the most careful and frustrating negotiation.
- Little fey wars erupt across the vessel, with the Flowsparks taking sides in a conflict that has no reason. Each time a spark decides something for their group, the other side takes that as a personal insult and claims the opposite for their own. The result is a sparkly, distracting battle over things as senseless as which shoe to put on first, the moral imperative of hair color, and the proper name for the color of empty space.
- Unable to contain their amusement, a news agency announces that a Flowspark Queen has claimed a nearby settlement as her very own. Her list of demands includes such fancies as the best artwork in the region and dozens of operable Machine Hearts, but they also include rather lucid elements such as safe passage for other Flowsparks, legal protections from the Hama "empire" and freedom from oppression. The strangest part is that all the other Flowsparks seem to be aware of this, no matter by what distance they are separated.

Non-Hama Groups

Sometimes the term “alien” is applied to non-Hama sentients. Though popular, this term is inaccurate for non-Hama metaspecies actually residing within Hama space. Such beings often use “non-Hama” or NH to denote their biological status. While NH are not notable among the Hama population in general, there are some metaspecies that are more rare and remarkable.

It’s important to remember that there are many NH citizens of Hamaciv, and that not all NH beings are automatically outside (or within) the reach of Regional Administration. The status of a given NH culture within the borders of Hama space is handled on a case-by-case basis; some pledge loyalty to the Hama metaspecies and become members of our societies and abide by Hama Regional Administration laws. Others choose to remain independent, and have their own sovereignty within their territory, except in the case that Common Operations service is needed.

Plaryonians

I’ve heard that Algent Mimar Ptraz runs a kidnapping ring for Plaryonians. Sounds like he and his filthy aristo buddies like to use them as furniture.

–Prazn Taular, a Contact Service Diplomat

Though most know Plaryonians as being among the most similar in shape to Hama of all the modern non-Hama native groups in Hama space, their part in our culture is more complex than “similar-looking friends.” Plaryonians are able to manipulate their personal biology and physical shape into nearly any form they wish. Due to a natural species-wide wanderlust, they accompany many settlers on colonization missions around the galaxy, acting as scouts, explorers, and even as backup resource systems. Sometimes they’re called on to produce oxygen or food from their bodies in the case of

The Hama

emergency, and because they have no cultural mores against such behavior, they are perfectly willing to assist colonists this way.

The Plaryonian shape that most Hama are familiar with is called the “Diplomatic Form,” and is remarkably similar to the bipedal, two-armed shape of most Hama. Many embedded in Hama cultures adopt forms that are spectacularly attractive, not because they wish to seduce or deceive, but because they genuinely (and some would say naively) wish to bring beauty, peace, and happiness to Hama space.

Threats

- Dismay among Hama-space-dwelling Plaryonians grows as they hear about a particular Hama scientist who has captured a number of them for dissection. Because there are no Plaryonian embassies, they are coagulating into larger groups for safety, fearing the worst. While public sentiment is on their side, they aren’t used to dealing with such open hostility from those who they’ve lived among for so long.
- A rustic beauty pageant turns into a rambling space-chase across the Old Territories, leaving chaos and embarrassment in its wake. The title was bestowed on a Plaryonian woman instead of a favored aristo princess, who subsequently chased the winner out of the competition hall and out across the stars. While it initially made for amusing news, now the death toll is mounting and people are asking who will put an end to it.
- A jilted Trade Guild leader has stopped all shipments to and from cultures that harbor Plaryonians. While his story changes every time he tells it, the gist is that his life-long partner ran off with an attractive young Plaryonian after a whirlwind affair while he was gone. While plausible, there’s no direct evidence the seducer was Plaryonian at all.

Canis Supercluster

By some measures, they're simply another part the vast web of the Hama metaspecies, albeit one originating from outside the Hama root species. Popular opinion closely mirrors this view, despite a real cultural and social divide between the two groups.

The Canis Supercluster is an unusual example of non-Hama metaspecies in Hama space. Most Hama are actually familiar with Canis drones, but few realize that the robots they interact with on a near daily basis are not in fact Hama in origin. The Canis Supercluster, for its part, serves as a kind of robotic service industry all by itself, helping Hama with all sorts of computation and electronic systems. Having gained sentience as a kind of higher-order mathematical sentience in a cloud of plasma, Canis made themselves useful to the early expanding Hama civilizations and came along for the ride as we ascended to galactic power. The Supercluster sees this as nothing but equitable. Though they aren't *indispensable* to the Hama, we have a long and storied history of good relations and provide each other a number of benefits that would otherwise be harder to come by.

For the most part, the Canis Supercluster operates like any other galactic-scale Hama megacorp. They have resources and bases situated all around Hamaciv, and they are well integrated both into the Data Aristocracy and the Flowgrid itself. What people don't realize is that this provides them a vast network of incredibly complex virtual worlds to inhabit. Each Canis mind has a virtual avatar with which it navigates this parallel network, utterly unknown to most Hama.

Threats

- Starting thousands of years ago, the Canis Supercluster began preparing for the end of Hama civilization. Seeing that we were suffering from what many called Churn Fatigue, they began preparing their own fleet of ships and started archiving the

information they had processed for us. Now that the FTL age is upon us all, sub-factions within the Supercluster are motioning for independence anyway, fueled by Heartdrives. The schism threatens to overturn the way the Supercluster does business with all of Hama space.

- A canny Burner inventor has reverse engineered a portion of the Canis virtual world and intends to sell it to the highest bidder. Unfortunately, the inventor has no idea that all the potential buyers are shell corporations operated by Hamaciv's worst enemies. They see this as an opportunity to gain a foothold in hypothetical wars against the Hama, and they're willing to pay dearly for it. The Supercluster, obviously, is displeased by this state of affairs.
- Though they aren't integrated into every aspect of Hama society, the Canis Supercluster is spread out widely enough that its absence can cause a lot of processes to grind to a halt. That's exactly what happens when the Supercluster decides to have a strike to protest the poor treatment of similar mechanical alien lifeforms by the Hama. Not only does the situation need to be resolved, but it may end up suggesting to aggrieved aristos and mischievous bandits new ways to cause chaos in Hamaciv.

Miinx

There's a kind of friendly rivalry that goes on between the SMS and the Miinx. They like to pretend that they would have had us on the ropes if we'd have actually gone to war. But we know differently. What they were up against at the time was only a tiny detachment of Division 223 out on a patrol.

I suspect they've long since figured out the truth and make their jabs ironically.

—Sergeant Kalya Pualhassak of the SMS

Long ago, we discovered a race of green child-sized sentients vaguely the same shape as baseline Hama who also had a

connection to the Galactic Flow. Despite their tendency towards nature and organic technology, they were not Ardents, but Burners. They fed the their tree-ships and arks with “starblood,” and were on the verge of going to war with us before the Contact Service stepped in and stabilized relations. Ever since, the Miinix have been among our closest allies in galactic politics and have often acted as third-party arbitrators in deals between Hama and alien species. Miinix can be found all over Hama space, and many Hama go on trips—for leisure, business, or study—to O Minustra, their homeworld.

Because *our* Burner technology—specifically the Machine Hearts that make everything run—is heavily based on metal and ceramic materials, there are few corporations that manufacture organic ships or technology. The Miinix went the other way around with their usage of the Galactic Flow, producing their own Machine Heart analogues from the huge cores of specialized water-breathing plants on their homeworld. The rest of their technology is based around these cores and make extensive use of grafting, bioengineering, and organic growth for everything from ship hulls to space suits to weapons. While it’s not impossible for us to mimic the style and substance of Miinix technology, it is not something we are masters of.

Threats

- As happens from time to time, a ship has become stranded in deep space. This time, however, the ship is a Miinix vessel, and its crew are not prepared to wait for the long period needed to dispatch another Miinix ship there to save them. Fortunately, anyone in the area with a Heartdrive can get out there in time to help them. Unfortunately, the local bandits are also closing in on what they consider a juicy morsel.
- Towards the edge of the Old Territories, a small Miinix treestation has been assaulted by hostile alien forces. Apparently the conflict began when one of these aliens insulted the Hama before a delegation of Miinix, and in a rare display of fury, they retaliated with surprising force, defending the honor of our culture. While the treestation is holding its own, it’s up against

The Hama

the overwhelming might of an entire alien culture (again) and while it would be a shame to impinge upon their honor, they're not liable to last much longer.

- Always able to stir up trouble, the Miinix have poked a stick into a hornet's nest of truly prodigious size. This is not a time for the "I told you so" attitude many Hama take with the misadventures of the Miinix. It's far beyond tutting and stepping in. This is a real, Galactic-level problem, and while it's no surprise the Miinix were unlucky and brash enough to stir it up, this time we actually *need* to step in and do something about it.

Vhyth

| *You are worthy rivals, we shall fight with you!*

The Vhyth are a species of slimy cephalopod warriors who once threw the might of their armies and navies against the Standing Military Service to prove their worth. They succeeded in defeating one ship, but were then fought to a standstill when the two backup battleships arrived. While this would have vaporized the morale of other species, the Vhyth considered this a worthy battle and pledged the loyalty of their people to ours. Despite their initial defeat, they are known to be warriors of extraordinary skill; had they been equipped with Machine Hearts and our weapons, our first battle may have gone quite differently. Now, many Vhyth travel Hama space looking for causes, battles, weapons, and worthy patrons.

While many Hama who choose combat professions often take on certain behavioral changes in order to make them into better tacticians and strategists, the Vhyth are naturally extraordinarily skilled in such activities. They enjoy games, challenges, sports, competitions, and combat, all of which allow them to test their competitive skills against others. While this has earned them the reputation of being hyper-aggressive, in fact their abilities stem from empathy and a deep understanding of the psychology of

others and they can be quite compassionate in the right circumstances.

Threats

- What started as an innocent holofilm show about a gladiatorial contest is now the center of a major controversy and the impetus for a protracted and livestreamed duel of epic proportions. An entire wild planet has been cordoned off to act as the stage, and the two contestants are now deep into their agreed-upon year of training. This wouldn't be cause for alarm if there weren't dozens of separately-hired squads, combat groups, mercenaries, and assassins headed to the location, each paid for by fans of one opponent or another.
- Vhyth battlemasters are seeking Hama companions for a trip into the wastes beyond the Old Territories. They are testing applicants for combat skill and survival ability, and while they won't tell anyone who they're planning to "visit," the tests indicate that this is no ordinary hunt. They want tightly-knit groups of highly-trained combat operatives who are also able to handle "complex and rapidly-changing situations." Rumor has it that they're preparing to sortie not in the direction of the Vela Outlands, but are actually headed Coreward.
- It is a kind of sport among the Vhyth to champion the lost causes of the galaxy with as few warriors as possible. Emulating the heroines and heroes of a million ancient epics, they ride into battle to fight for the underdog, often taking with them a bizarre assortment of personnel and a bewildering array of weapons. The Vhyth gladly welcome any Hama fighters into the ranks of these missions. Fighters who die on such missions are immortalized in song and poetry, harkening back to the days of epics etched on stone tablets.

Yanor

*I understand your confusion and consternation, Aristo Erani.
But allow me to assure you, I want nothing more than the*

expansion of your corporation into the Leo Minus system. And I am willing to assist you in any way that I can to further that end.

—Yanor Xenth, before Edar Erani could even speak

Always hidden behind elaborate veils and even more elaborately filigreed masks, these non-Hama have a strong connection to the Galactic Flow. Their abilities of foresight often surpass even the most skilled Ardent military strategist, and their mental faculties are vast enough to see them into positions of great power and prestige. For their part, the Yanor seek to assist the Hama in becoming a great power—as a way of helping them achieve their *real goal* which is to contact the Galactic Core and discover what strange, grand minds must await there in the ultimate gyre of Flow.

The Yanor have senses that we can only guess at. We know that they can sense all forms of electromagnetic radiation, but they can also comprehend the Flow, from the smallest local level to the widest strategic view. Because their minds analyze these streams of data separately, they can search for patterns in ways we would consider bordering on superstition. This allows them to synthesize likely responses to actions and plan for vast numbers of eventualities in a way that even our most powerful artificial intelligences would have trouble considering. What's more, they're right more often than statistics would seem to permit.

Threats

- The Yanor have told of a new princess, a queen of the people, who shall rise from the Hama and lead them through a time of great darkness and into a new era of prosperity and happiness. They are quite specific that the princess is noble by works and not by blood, and that her followers will support her because of her ideas and intent, rather than because of her political affiliation or position. They say that she already lives, and that the moment of her ascension is close at hand. They have given no predictions as to the dangers of this “great darkness,” however.

- A Yanor sage contacts the Local Defense Military to alert them to the imminent detonation of a huge blue giant star deep in the Old Territory. The star many look fine to the instruments, but the sage is adamant about evacuation. All nearby Heartdrive ships are directed to help move people out of the affected area as quickly as possible.
- A long-foretold proclamation is revived by the Yanor. Now that the Heartdrive is a reality, they remind us of an ancient prophecy that some great dark shape is slouching closer and closer to the galaxy. For the last million or so years it has been lurking at our borders, like an impatient wolf pacing just out of the firelight. It is time to send scouts to see what it wants.

Ieromo

Please help me.

—Phi Meron to Sau Hyawa as the former was waylaid by a mob of fascinated, clamoring Ieromo fans

Looked down on by our enemies as young, brash, and foolish, the Ieromo are a newly risen race that has taken our tale as gospel. They very nearly worship us, treating our people like gods, our histories like religion, and our technology as the primary force in the universe. While individually they understand that we are each flawed and limited, they point to our advancement and the age of our civilization as the earmarks of a precursor or progenitor metaspecies. They aspire to be even a shadow's reflection of what we are, and they devote massive amounts of their own resources (which we often repay) to study our cultures, our civilization, and our psychology. This gives rise to a host of awkward interactions, such as Hama study schools, cadet programs on junk freighters, and Ieromo adventurers pantomiming the day-to-day life of Hama explorers.

The interest of the Ieromo isn't as innocent as it seems. Each Ieromo is tasked with reporting on all their interactions with the

Hama, and they take this responsibility very seriously. Collaborating across their entire species, they are constructing a plan of action that they hope will bootstrap them into the same echelon of power as us. If they execute this plan, they're likely to find out the hard way how brutal mistakes on this scale can be.

Threats

- There's no use in arguing about how it happened, but there's now a private and elitist club following the movements of the group. They are polite and relatively restrained compared with their kin, but they're almost ever-present wherever the group stops. While their innocent fascination is fine up to a point, the fact that they're able to track you means that there's a gap in your security that others could exploit.
- Like the air-raid sirens of so many warzones, a call goes out to any and all able to help with yet another Ieromo blunder. This time, in the process of reverse engineering planetary-scale Machine Hearts, they accidentally started a runaway chain reaction that threatens to explode with the force of ten or fifteen supernovae. There are only two options: defuse the Machine Heart, or evacuate one billion nearby Ieromo and Hama citizens.
- Apropos of nothing, the Ieromo take a rather different view of a particular piece of technology or social custom of the Hama. While this happens from time to time, the more notable cases are when they run in terror from the stimulus, doing everything in their power to escape. This is fairly rare, and somehow manages to cause even *more* chaos than would already be present with a bunch of Ieromo roaming around. This is particularly dangerous when they manage to infiltrate some installation or locale prohibited to the public.



ENDLESS FORMS

The Hama bodyplan is policed by the dual forces of attraction and utility, which hold each other in balance through a kind of dynamic tension. Sometimes one force overcomes the other for a time, or in a place, but they've proven remarkably good at stabilizing the Hama form over geologic timescales.

Building Your Character

Character creation works the same way it does in Heroines of the First Age except that some Archetypes and Moves are not relevant in HLA. Refer to HFA page 28 for the character creation outline.

Move Deltas

Some HFA moves are not applicable to HLA, while others are imported with no change.

- **Basic Moves:** All are available except Open Your Mind.
- **Battle Moves:** All are available except Arcane. Rename En Garde to Sentinel.
- **Social Moves:** All are available. Rename Athletics & Sport to Games, and replace Power with Cunning.
- **War Moves:** Category becomes **Ground War Moves**. Battlefield Enchantment becomes Battlefield Nano Swarm, but is otherwise unchanged.
- **Special Power Moves:** All are available, but are somewhat rare in favor of Trait Moves, of which they now form a subset.

The Many Shapes of Hama

It is difficult to make generalizations of a metaspecies that spans tens of thousands of worlds and has been exploring the galaxy and developing in unexpected ways for billions of years, but there are statistical averages that can be described.

The average Hama is a bipedal biological entity with a short tail, short triangular ears, hair upon an oblong head, two eyes, two ears, stands about two meters tall, is endothermic, is one of two sexes, breaths air, lays eggs, and can mentally access nearby computers using implants.

Specific subspecies and social groups can vary wildly from this baseline, however: some give birth to live young, have six or more legs, can change sex, survive in hard vacuum, or can naturally link with computers, for example. In some locales, traits are nearly random, while in others firm lineages and regimented engineering lead to very specific subspecies.

The myriad forms of the Hama come from the profusion of traits that we've developed, encountered, been subject to, and passed on. Hama traits fall into three categories: Engineered Traits, Modifications, and Mutations.

Note: Some moves have a special *Traits* section at the end, describing one or more possible traits that one with that move might have. This isn't rules text, but more of a suggestion.

More Example Physical Traits

- Bodyplan

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- Extra-long ears
- Extra arms
- Digitigrade feet
- Prehensile everything
- Small zero-G wings
- Extra legs
- Fashion
 - Fashionable wings
 - Painted skin
 - Hypercomplex pattern
 - Animated skin
 - Flowsprite horde
- Tech
 - Protective wings
 - Holographic friends
 - Mechanical limbs
 - Technical components
 - Bodypods
 - Computerized horns
- Conspicuous Lack
 - No tail
 - No ears
 - No implants

Trait Moves

Engineered Traits

These traits are specifically designed, usually at birth, to give some specific effect to the individual. Engineered traits are usually deeply integrated meaning they can't be removed or destroyed without killing the individual. Settlers often have a lot of engineered traits.

- **Photosynthesis**
 - When you are exposed to sunlight for a few hours, you can clear 1 health star. While you have access to sunlight, your

need for food is greatly reduced. *Traits: green skin or hair, large ears, leafy fronds*

- **Environment Adaptation**

- Select a type of planetary environment, for example desert, frozen tundra, or underwater. You function perfectly fine in that environment, and take +1 ongoing against foes that are not properly adapted. *Traits: hardened skin, closeable nose and mouth, nictitating membranes, fluffy fur, radiator fins*

- **Organ Control**

- You can spend 1 Willpower to heal 1 health star. *Traits: morphable bodytype*

- **Cerebral Control**

- You can split your mind into sub-components the way a computer would delegate tasks. You gain +1 Armor against all mental and psychic attacks, and you can Read a Person or Situation even while you would otherwise be distracted. *Traits: elongated head, obvious cerebral implants*

- **Plug In**

- You do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe as long as you are jacked into an appropriate support mechanism or pack. *Traits: plug port, access panel, arm readout display*

Modifications

Modifications are traits that one acquires later on in life, usually through gene editing, tech or bio implants, or cybernetics. These traits tend to be less general than engineered ones, and often have either a single specific purpose or no purpose at all. Aristocrats favor expensive modifications as a way of showing off their wealth while workers tend to get modifications to help them do their jobs.

- **Machine Linkage**

- You get +1 to Figure it Out. *Traits: skull plug port, armored cable tail, electronic hair*

- **Dermal Armor**

- You have +1 Armor. *Traits: armor panels, stiff skin, pearly skin, composite armor patches*

Endless Forms

- **Neuro Hardening**
 - When you spend Willpower, roll Power. **S:** You gain 1 Willpower. **T:** Take +1 forward against mental and psychic attacks. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: electronic crown, temple implants, cyber horns, Flowlight halo*
- **Layered Composite Skin**
 - You are immune to the effects of heat, cold, and radiation. You gain +2 Armor against fire or ice-based attacks.
- **Easily Repaired**
 - Whenever you are healed, you are healed for +1 health star. *Traits: panel lines, modular body parts, nanoswarm body*

Mutations

Mutations are traits that are either unintended or poorly designed and understood. Particularly on the fringes, it's easy to come in contact with powerful forces, dangerous radiation, and toxic substances, many of which can cause violent changes in Hama bodies. Workers, settlers, and conquered all run into mutations with varying regularity depending on the conditions they live in.

- **Bio-Instability**
 - Whenever you mark a health star, you hold 1 instability. Spend 1 hold to make a small change in your anatomy. *Traits: crawling skin, unstable limb configuration, occasional tumors, everchanging surface detail*
- **Adaptive Organics**
 - As long as you have access to external biomass, you don't need to eat, breathe, or sleep. *Traits: powerful teeth and jaws, semiliquid body, thick organic tail*
- **Infective Carrier**
 - Whenever someone comes into contact with your body fluids, they're likely to contract a little bit of what makes you special. They take -1 ongoing until cured of it. *Traits: sparkly flaky skin, cloud of nanites, open sores*
- **Exoform**

- Pick a Stat. When you make use of your alien components, you take +1 forward with that Stat, you also take -1 forward on the next use of Hama technology. *Traits: elongated limbs, extra limbs, fewer limbs, unusual torso, extra eyes, eyestalks, tentacles*
- **Acid for Blood**
 - Whenever you are harmed in Close range, the person or object that harmed you is Dealt 1 Harm Past Armor. *Traits: green veins, yellowish pallor, slimy coating*

Space Moves

Space Moves cover the general things one might do in a spacefaring lifestyle. Think of them as Basic Moves for space-travelers.

- **Drive a Vehicle**
 - When you try to drive while under stress, pilot an unfamiliar vehicle, or use a vehicle a way it wasn't intended, say where you're headed or what you're trying to do and roll Alertness or Cunning. **S:** You manage to pull it off with a minimum of bouncing around. **T:** Your vehicle is Dealt 1 Harm Past Armor, but you make it. **F:** Fate intervenes. Maybe you went to the wrong place, or you got trapped somewhere between.
- **Endure a Hazardous Environment**
 - When you are confronted with a dangerous or hazardous environment, roll Alertness or Power. **S:** Choose 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1, but fate interferes.
 - You make it through or across the space.
 - You *are not* Dealt 2 Harm Past Armor.
 - Your equipment is *not* damaged.
 - You perform the action you came here to do.
- **Exchange Rate**
 - When you try to exchange money or goods, roll Cunning. **S:** You get a 10% better price on the deal than the going rate. **T:** You get a 10% worse deal than the going rate. **F:** You got scammed. You get 20% less currency, and also got involved in some kind of crooked deal or scam.

- **Dangerous Reentry**
 - When there is any danger during reentry into an atmosphere, roll Alertness or Cunning. **S**: Nominal landing; get all three. **T**: It gets a little hairy, choose 2. **F**: Fate intervenes, choose 1. At least you're alive. For the moment.
 - You make it down safely, ship intact.
 - You make it down accurately, landing where you intended.
 - You make it down quietly, without alerting the entire region.
- **Figure It Out**
 - When you try to use or manipulate a machine or piece of technology you might be unfamiliar with, roll Cunning or Spirit. **S**: Somehow it works without exploding in your face. **T**: It works and you mark 1 health star, or it doesn't and you don't. Your choice. **F**: Fate intervenes.
- **Attack a Vehicle**
 - When you attack a vehicle with a non-Classified personal weapon, you calculate your harm differently. Inflict +3 harm if your weapon has the Area or Anti-Vehicle tag. Divide the final amount of harm you're dealing by 3, then apply the vehicle's armor to get the final damage. Classified weapons deal harm to vehicles as normal.
- **Scuttle a Vehicle**
 - When you intentionally sink, destroy, or detonate a vehicle, roll Alertness. **S**: You escape in some sort of pod or ejection system unharmed. **T**: Either as a success but you mark 3 health stars, or you take no damage but merely escape the vehicle with no other means of transport. **F**: Fate intervenes.

Space War Moves

Space War Moves are analogous to Ground War Moves, but apply to space combat, usually with vehicles.

- **Swarm Tactics**
 - You and your allies get +1 harm when driving a large number of small vehicles against a smaller number of large vehicles.
- **Volume Control**

- When you patrol a volume to maintain control, roll Power or Alertness. **S:** You intercept any and all bogeys. What you do with them is up to you. **T:** You're prepared for contact, but you don't necessarily get to them before they infiltrate the control volume. **F:** Whatever's out there is doing whatever it wants. Fate intervenes.
- **Head to Head**
 - When you engage an opponent vehicle of similar size in combat, roll Cunning, Power, or Alertness and Exchange Harm. **S:** Choose 3. **F:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1 but fate intervenes.
 - You inflict +1 harm.
 - You suffer -1 harm.
 - You've got them lined up. Take +1 forward on further maneuvers.
 - You box them in. Allies take +1 forward against them.
 - You disable some of their systems, they take -1 ongoing until they're repaired.
- **Get In Close**
 - When your vehicle is 2+ sizes smaller than an opponent, you can get so close that their defenses can't deal with you properly. Roll Alertness or Cunning. **S:** As tie, but ongoing until you leave proximity. **T:** The enemy can only engage you with weapons tagged Point Defense. You take this effect forward. **F:** Fate intervenes.
- **Bombardment**
 - When your vehicle is 2+ sizes larger than an opponent, all your attacks become Suppressive. Enemies must either get out of the area or are Dealt Harm by your weapons Past Armor.

Archetype Deltas

Many Archetypes from Heroines of the First Age are valid in Heroines of the Last Age, but some are replaced or modified. HFA Archetypes are likely to fit better as the Archetypes of folks from galactic backwaters, and are tagged Primitive. If an HFA move

Endless Forms

references a god or spirit, replace that entity with the Galactic Flow or a Galactic Mystery.

- **Sorceress:** Rare, usually limited to backwaters and religious enclaves. Consider Burner Wizard instead.
- **Soldier:** Consider Grunt as a high-tech alternative.
- **Shadewalker:** Replace Dancer with any Martial Artist or Grunt Move.
- **Priest:** Altered, rare. Rename to Chaplain, replace Warding and Sacrifice with any 2 Grunt or Settler Moves.
- **Outlander:** Rare. Usually reserved for welldwellers and Regressionists. Consider Settler as well.
- **Companion:** Uncommon. Examples include first mates, drones, and consorts.
- **Devourer:** Rare. Replace Drain the Blood and Dimensional Belly with any 2 Biomech or Trait Moves.
- **Pact Mistress:** Altered, rare. Pacts operate using and are enforced by Flowsparks.



General Archetypes

These Archetypes do not make direct or specific use of the Galactic Flow.

Hotshot

Forget what your prissy SMS staff sergeants tell you about “managing the battle space” and “preserving the energy advantage.” There’s only one rule to dogfighting: kill or die.

–Norenis Venix, leader of the Rabid Wolves

- **Master Dogfighter**
 - You get +1 harm with all vehicle weapons. *Traits: targeting reticle eyes, battle scarred equipment*
- **Space Combat Maneuvering**
 - You get +1 to Get In Close, Head to Head, and Drive a Vehicle. *Traits: control plugs, cockpit comfort*
- **Go Evasive**
 - When you go evasive under heavy fire, break off your attack and roll Alertness or Cunning. You take +2 ongoing to Armor until you reengage the enemy. *Traits: shy behavior*
- **Commence Attack Run**
 - When you line up for a run at a vehicle’s weak point, roll Alertness or Cunning. **S:** You and all following allies get +1 forward on attacks and harm. **T:** You take +1 forward to attack or to harm, your choice. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: targeting reticle eyes*
- **Alpha Strike**
 - When you deploy all the vehicular weapons at your disposal all at once, roll Power. After any Alpha Strike, you take -1 forward on attacks. **S:** Add up all harm from all your vehicular weapons and Deal that much Harm. If the enemy is destroyed outright, they do not Deal Harm back. **T:** Pick 2 vehicular weapons and Deal Harm with them separately.

Your enemy Deals Harm back. **F:** Exchange Harm with the enemy, but fate intervenes.

- **Stay On Em**
 - When you hit an enemy vehicle in a dogfight, you take +1 forward for your next attack. *Traits: tracking eyes, unnerving stare*

Aristo

Most aristos I know don't treat it like it's a game. You get what you need, you make a little extra, you invest, you keep your business diversified, and you do what you want. Nobody's playing for the whole prize. If you do, expect everyone to play against you.

—Edar Erani, an Aristo

- **Call It In**
 - When you call upon nearby assets for an overwhelming orbital strike on a target, roll Power. **S:** Overwhelming devastation. Usually, only ancient artifacts and Galactic Mysteries survive, the rest is glass. **T:** Widespread destruction, but you're not absolutely sure that you've annihilated *all* the enemy. **F:** Nice fireworks, but it looks like an NI, a negative impact. Regardless of success or failure, fate intervenes. *Traits: forward observation drone, trailing fire support squadron*
- **Only the Best**
 - When you or someone else uses equipment that you own, they take +1 ongoing. *Traits: gold skin details, fancy everything, elegant integrated clothing flourishes*
- **Me and This Army**
 - When you call in your nearby forces, roll Cunning or Power. **S:** You call in assets worth up to 60kE. **T:** You call in assets worth up to 20kE. **F:** You call in assets worth up to 10kE, but fate intervenes, probably in the form of an escalation of force.

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Traits: surrounded by tracking lasers, tactical assistant drone, holographic lieutenant

- **Really Confident**
 - Hold 3 confidence per session. Spend 1 hold for one of the following.
 - Take +1 Charm forward
 - Take +1 Cunning forward
 - Take +1 Power forward
- **Move the Heavens**
 - When you influence Hama politics on a galactic scale, roll Charm or Power. **S:** It takes a few weeks, but things start to move in the direction you want them to. **T:** It's going to take years, but it'll eventually come to pass. **F:** Fate intervenes; someone more powerful wants things to go the other way.
Traits: emblem of a major family or corp
- **Elite Hobbyist**
 - Select a highly-specific physical skill or an topic of knowledge. When you make a Move pertaining to your hobby, you get +1 on the Move.

Grunt

Recruitment posters always lie. They show you some Special Element chick loaded out with ultra-lux gear and perfect skin and hair. They never show you the wounds, the trauma, the boredom. Reality makes poor propaganda.

But someone has to do the job.

—Sergeant Kalya Pualhassak of the SMS

- **Fire Support**
 - When you call in a target for a precision airstrike or artillery fire, roll Cunning or Alertness. The amount of damage depends on what sort of fire support you have access to at the time. **S:** Fire support occurs immediately on your command. **T:** The fire support is either imprecise or slightly delayed,

your choice. **F:** Your asset is tied up somewhere else. Fate intervenes. *Traits: targeting reticle eyes, stealth skin mod*

- **Active Scanning**

- When checking a potentially hostile area for threats, roll Cunning or Alertness. You and your allies take +1 forward against marked targets. **S:** You mark all active threats. **T:** You mark one of the active threats. **F:** You mark one of the active threats, but fate intervenes and more arrive. *Traits: radar horns, large radio/sonar ears*

- **Combat Drones**

- When you deploy your drones, roll Power or Cunning. **S:** Hold 3. **T:** Hold 2. **F:** Hold 1 but fate intervenes. Spend hold for one of the following.
 - Take +1 forward to Cunning or Alertness.
 - Take +1 forward to Harm inflicted.
 - An enemy takes -1 forward to Armor.

- **Battle-Speed**

- You get +1 Armor against attacks from further than Close range, and you get +1 Harm with Close range Weapons. *Traits: piston legs, thrust jets, acceleration wings*

- **There Are Others**

- You have a series of backup clone bodies and replacement parts that can be sent in as long as you're not too far off the grid. You don't permanently lose a health when knocked out. *Traits: number tattoo, low emotional expression, red eyes and silver hair*

- **Target Marking**

- When you mark a target for support fire, roll Cunning or Alertness. **S:** Allies take +1 ongoing to attacks from BVR or Strategic range. **T:** Allies take +1 forward to attacks from BVR or Strategic range. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: eye or head laser, laser drone compartment*

Settler

A lot of idiots living cushy lives in the Old Territories think that “settler” is some kind of slur. They think we are ashamed. They say “settler” and cover their mouths.

*Uh, sure. Yeah, we’re **totally** ashamed of being the hardest, sternest, most tenacious, most stubborn, most unkillable life forms in the whole Flow-blasted galaxy.*

–Cerci, a settler on Pherolum

- **Hard Vacuum Adaptation**
 - You’re hardened against the effects of space radiation and vacuum. You can effectively stop breathing if you choose to, but eventually you’ll have to hibernate to survive if you have no way to intake food or energy. *Traits: rubbery skin, sealing nose and ears, carbon skin scales, light horns*
- **Plasma Field Adaptation**
 - Not only are you immune to the effects of most plasmas and nebulae below the temperature of a star, but you actually gain energy from them, healing 1 star per hour of exposure. *Traits: Flowlight skin fields, plasma core belly, glowing eyes*
- **Redundant Internals**
 - When you would otherwise be knocked out, roll Power or Spirit. **S:** Set your health to 1 star remaining. **T:** you can make one last action or move before unconsciousness. **F:** fate intervenes.
- **Turn Off the Pain**
 - You are essentially immune to pain, and gain 1 health star. *Traits: forgotten wound, bandages, warning stripes*
- **Regeneration Core**
 - You can come back from pretty much anything. Unless the enemy that takes you out knows in advance to find your core and destroy it, you will rapidly regenerate. You don’t permanently lose a health when knocked out. *Traits: well-hidden core gem, decoy core*

- **Unflappable**
 - When something otherwise unexpected happens and you choose to capitalize on it, you take +1 forward to either a Move or to armor. *Traits: unperturbed demeanor, cynical attitude*

Ardents

Ardents see the Galactic Flow as a vast ocean in which we all float. Through it they can speak and listen, and their finely-attuned senses allow them to let the Flow guide them.

Martial Artist

When you forget, that is when you are at peace. When you are at peace, your body moves in accordance with the Flow. When your body moves in total accordance with the flow, you are invincible.

—Master Vapur Naratt, of the Path of 99 Trials

- **The Flow of the Fight**
 - You get +1 to Risky Propositions and Seize by Force Moves in combat. *Traits: graceful behavior, Flowlight body trails*
- **Shifting Sand Stance**
 - When you take or change style in combat, roll Alertness or Spirit. S: Hold 3. T: Hold 2. F: Choose one, but fate intervenes. Spend 1 hold to choose one.
 - Ocean Style: you take +1 forward against Burners or people using Burner equipment.
 - Song Style: you take +1 forward to avoid harm or escape the area.
 - Stone Style: you take +1 forward to harm in Close range.
 - Wind Style: you take +1 forward to Armor.
- **Path of Peace**

Endless Forms

- You can always opt to deal Stun damage with any non-vehicle weapon you wield. *Traits: warning stance, apologetic behavior, bow before and after battle*
- **Guide the Blow**
 - When you are attacked at Close range, roll Spirit or Alertness. S: You redirect the attack into an enemy. T: You take +1 Armor forward against that attack. F: Fate intervenes, probably causing unintended collateral damage. *Traits: highly mobile, Flowlight field*
- **The Serpent Coils**
 - When fighting a humanoid opponent who is more heavily armored or encumbered than you, your opponent takes -2 Armor ongoing. *Traits: lightning fast, light clothes*
- **Dance in the Flowlight**
 - You get +1 to harm with Flowlight weapons. *Traits: Flowlight body trails*

Esper

If you were to look back six decades, most Hama wouldn't even know that we Espers existed. A few slowships employed esper astrogators, but not many. Most of us were either well dwellers or corporate experiments. We may despise Burner machines, but it can't be argued that the Heartdrive hasn't opened the galaxy up to us as well.

—Ana Corado, an Esper

- **Distant Senses**
 - When you reach out to sense distant events through the Galactic Flow, roll Spirit. S: Ask 3. T: Ask 2. F: Ask 1 but fate intervenes. *Traits: glowing eyes, subtle echoing sounds*
 - Is this likely to be good or bad for me?
 - What forces are in play there?
 - Which, if any, Galactic Mysteries are involved?
 - How is the Galactic Flow moving there?
 - How do people there feel about it?

- **No Language Barrier**

- You do not need to share a language with something to communicate with it. You can communicate equally well with machines, aliens, and speakers of foreign or dead languages. This doesn't necessarily mean everything you attempt to communicate with can or will actually communicate back, however. *Traits: empathic behavior, always speaks to the mind*

- **Psychometry**

- When you lay your hand on an object, you can Read a Person or Situation on the most recent event of interest that happened around that object. *Traits: wears gloves, sensory reduction goggles*

- **Combat Psychokinesis**

- When you lash out with your psychic power, roll Spirit. You Exchange Harm with your enemy with a 2 Harm Close Visual Flow Energy Weapon that Deals Harm Past Armor. **S:** Choose 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1 but fate intervenes. *Traits: secondary kinetic motion, shell of force*
- You inflict +1 harm.
- You suffer -1 harm.
- You throw your enemy out of the way.
- You cause your enemy mental anguish.
- You burst open barriers.

- **Capture Blast**

- When someone fires an Energy tagged weapon at you, roll Spirit or Alertness. **S:** You catch the blast and can return or deflect it. **T:** You take +1 Armor against the attack. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: shell of force*

- **Astrogator**

- When you navigate through interstellar space using the Galactic Flow, roll Spirit. **S:** You plot a fast and safe course through trouble. **T:** You plot *either* a fast or a safe course, your choice. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: Flowlight constellation tattoos, galactic eyes*

Ghost

Mostly, espionage revolves around trust and deception. But sometimes, trust and deception are not enough.

*Sometimes you just need someone to go **do** something. That's where I come in.*

–Tenacity Minor

- **Advanced Infiltration**
 - When you use specialist equipment and skills to enter or cross guarded territory, roll Cunning or Spirit. **S:** You are psychically aware of and bypass all sensors that would pick you up. **T:** As Success, but it takes you more time than you'd like. **F:** Accidents happen. Fate intervenes. *Traits: advanced electronic horns, glowing eyes*
- **Assassination Techniques**
 - When you get the drop on someone, roll Cunning or Spirit. **S:** Choose 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose one, but fate intervenes. *Traits: assassination tool compartments, weapons expert, optical camouflage*
 - You are *not* spotted
 - You render them unconscious
 - You take them out
 - You hide the evidence
 - You exfiltrate to a safe distance
 - Your methods are untraceable
 - You avoid all detection through the Flow
- **Cracking Kit**
 - When you bypass electronic counter measures or security systems, roll Cunning. **S:** All 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1 but fate intervenes. *Traits: electronic hair, technical component bodypods, holographic interface*
 - You are *not* caught in the act
 - You neutralize the system
 - You finish quickly enough

- **Technical Kill**
 - When you take out an opponent, you do so in such a way that none of their clone systems, recording devices, brain backups, or other contingencies activate.
- **Slip Through the Cracks**
 - You are never detectable through the Galactic Flow unless you choose to be. Even then, you can control what others perceive of you through the Flow. *Traits: hazy form, Flowlight camouflage, dark halo*



Burners

Burners see the Galactic Flow as a vast ocean. Of gasoline. They use the Flow as fuel, feeding it into their machines and engines to produce and manipulate technomagic.

Mechanist

Captain, I understand you're mad, but just listen for a second.

How many devices are keeping you alive right now? The ship's life support, the sublight engines pushing us between rocks, and the Heartdrive that can get us back to civilization whenever we want, those are all Machine hearts. And when the Machine Hearts fail, It's my job to fix them.

Listen. Hear that? Nothing. That's right. So maybe you should let me get back to work before we all die.

—Cani Velphoenax, stranded near Forna Bercutus

- **Toolmaker**
 - You can convert Industrial currency directly into personal equipment, without need for external manufactories or tool shops. You can divide 1I up into the equivalent 1kE for the purposes of calculating what you can afford to make. It takes you 1 hour per 50E to construct something. *Traits: bedecked with pockets and tools, mechanical tool limb, finger welder*
- **There's Still Life In It**
 - When you repair something damaged, roll Cunning. S: Choose 3. T: Choose 2. F: Choose 1 but fate intervenes. *Traits: tool belt, diagnostic sensor systems*
 - You repair 2 hull on the thing.
 - You restore power to it.
 - You fix the instrumentation.
 - You get life support back online.

Endless Forms

- Engines and drivetrain restored.
- It's refueled and rearmed.
- **Rig Explosive**
 - When you rig something to detonate, either through the use of explosives or the intentional over-charging of technology, roll Cunning or Alertness. **S:** The device will detonate whenever you want it to, collapsing the structure or Dealing 4 Harm to all nearby. **T:** As a Success, but the device may or may not go off when you want. **F:** Fate intervenes at a really bad time. *Traits: pockets full of potential chaos*
- **Machine Heart Secrets**
 - When you tinker with a Machine Heart (found in nearly every sort of powered device, weapon, and vehicle) roll Cunning. **S:** Put 3 hold on the device. **T:** Put 2 hold on the device. **F:** Put 1 hold on the device. When the last hold is spent, or when anyone tinkers with it again, fate intervenes. Anyone operating the thing can spend hold to take +1 forward when using it. *Traits: Flow diagnostics, depth-scan goggles*
- **Pumped Energetics**
 - When you feed more energy into an Energy Weapon or a vehicle, anyone using it takes +1 forward to Harm. *Traits: cables, battery backups, Machine Heart pack*
- **Burner Tank**
 - When you get a chance to repair or retrofit a vehicle, you go crazy on it. Roll Cunning or Alertness. **S:** Choose 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1, but when someone uses your enhancement, fate intervenes.
 - You give the vehicle +1 Armor forward.
 - You give the vehicle +1 against Burner moves and attacks.
 - You give the vehicle +1 against Energy Weapons.
 - The inside of the vehicle is protected from psychic, mental, Flow, and electronic attacks.

Wizard

You Ardents think you're so high and mighty, with your psychic powers and path-of-peace crap. Tell me, how often do Ardents save colonies from hideous alien invasions or wild hornets' nests?

–Auxino Dilaryon

- **Supercharge**

- When you draw in more energy than you can use, roll Spirit or Power. **S:** Hold 3. Spend 1 hold to take or give +1 forward on a Burner move. **T:** You can take or give +1 forward on a Burner move. **F:** You've used up the Flow in the area. Fate intervenes. *Traits: power capacitors, Flow flywheels*

- **Energy Blast**

- When you unleash a targeted Burner blast, roll Power or Spirit and Exchange Harm. **S:** Choose 3. **T:** Choose 2. **F:** Choose 1 but fate intervenes. *Traits: crackling with smoky power, sooty arms*
- Inflict +2 Harm from fire, force, or electricity.
- Gravitationally slow the target, they take -1 forward when speed is necessary.
- They take -1 forward on Flow related Moves.
- You block or wall off an area with debris, force, or flame.
- Your attack causes collateral damage.

- **Afterburner**

- When flying in air or space using any means, roll Spirit or Power. **S:** Take or give +1 ongoing to all speed and maneuver related Moves. **T:** As Success, but forward instead of ongoing. **F:** As Tie, but fate intervenes. *Traits: smoky vortices*

- **Chaos Storm**

- When your hellish power goes berserk, roll Power or Spirit. All relevant targets within Close range are effected. **S:** You can choose one effect for every target in the area. **T:** Roll 1d6 for every enemy in the area. **F:** Roll 1d6 for every target, friend or

foe, in the area. *Traits: draws Flowlight sparks from Machine Hearts, sooty clothes, local Flowquakes*

- 1: Target is set On Fire, taking 1 harm ongoing.
- 2: Target is Magnetically Bound and must break free to move.
- 3: Target is Gravitationally Compressed, taking -1 ongoing to harm dealt.
- 4: Target is Lased, taking -1 Armor ongoing.
- 5: Target is Shielded and takes +1 to Armor ongoing.
- 6: Target is a Flowsink takes +1 ongoing to Burner Moves and -1 ongoing to Ardent Moves.
- **Flare the Excess**
 - When you intentionally burn the Flow out of the area, roll Power. **S:** You direct all that power into a target of your choice, Dealing 3 Harm Past Armor. **T:** You vent all that excess power safely. **F:** The power scours you, Dealing 3 Harm Past Armor. After you Flare the Excess, everyone in the area takes -3 ongoing to all Flow-related moves. *Traits: skin burns, sooty arms, searing-hot vents*
- **Ablative Energy Shield**
 - When you are targeted by an Energy Weapon, you can try to burn the attack off before it hits you. Roll Spirit or Power. **S:** You counter the attack completely, but take -1 forward to Spirit. **T:** You take +1 Armor forward against the attack. **F:** Fate intervenes. *Traits: smoky defensive sphere*

Biomech

| *I AM a machine heart.*

- **Overdrive**
 - When you push yourself to generate as much energy as possible, roll Power. **S:** Hold 3. **T:** Hold 2. **F:** Hold 1 but fate intervenes. All Flow-based Moves in the area take a penalty equal to your hold. Spend 1 hold for 1 of the following. *Traits: cracks with glowing interior, belching smoke and fire*
 - Take +1 forward on Risky Proposition, Seize by Force, or Melee.

- Give an Energy weapon +1 forward to Battle Moves and Harm.
- Give a vehicle +1 forward to maneuvers and speed.
- Give a shielded device +1 forward to Armor.
- **Beast Mode**
 - When you spend 2 Willpower and enter the backdoor code, you enter Beast Mode. While in this state, you take +1 ongoing to Power, Alertness, and Harm, but you can't make clear rational judgments. Beast Mode lasts for a maximum of a few minutes at a time, after which you mark 2 health stars. *Traits: glowing eyes, temporarily savage body, screaming hot exhaust ports*
- **Release Power Limiters**
 - Limiters keep your power in check. When they are released by you or your handler, you gain the Super Ability move with Superstrength, Hyperspeed, and Gigamagic. Unfortunately, it's usually very hard to perform delicate or fine actions when your limiters are released; you cause collateral damage everywhere you go. Replacing the limiters takes time. *Traits: large limiter blocks, thick neck collar, Flowlight containment bands*
- **Deployable Assets**
 - When you deploy the independent parts of your body, you can perform actions and attack at Close, Visual, and BVR range. At BVR, you risk losing those parts if they get too far away. *Traits: numerous bodypods, hovering drone carriers*
- **Interfacing**
 - When you tap into a machine, device, AI, or other piece of tech, roll Charm. S: You are in control, the device will perform as you wish. T: You and the machine come to an understanding. It will give you any information or perform any action for you that is not strictly prohibited. F: Fate intervenes. *Traits: hacking cable tail, electronic hair, hacking claws*
- **Flowlight Defense Barrier**
 - When you are able to recharge, you gain 3 hold. You can spend 1 hold to take +1 forward on armor, or to give +1 forward on armor to another target.

Flaws

Flaws function the same way in HLA as they do in HFA. Not all flaws, however, are perfect for HLA. Below are new flaws, listed with their indulgences.

- **Power Requirements.** This is the last time it can be used for now. Only works with the right batteries. Requires the polarity to be reversed.
- **Poorly Adjusted Veteran.** Survivor's guilt rears its head again. Nightmares and flashbacks torment you. Hair trigger temper, even in peaceful times.
- **Poor Adaptation.** You need a special suit for normal environments. This air is making you sick. Instruments and tools aren't made quite right.
- **Hideous Mutation.** Accidentally terrify someone. People mistake you for alien. Of course people remember seeing you.
- **Flow Anomaly.** Burner equipment goes crazy around you. Ardent minds find your presence painful and nauseating. Creatures from the Core are drawn to you.
- **Alien Survivor.** That's not how your anatomy works. They're still after you. You're the last of your kind.
- **Backwater Native.** Technology seems to cease functioning for you. You're drastically out of the galactic loop. Your morals are just provincial fables.
- **Surveillance Target.** Your watchers catch you at something embarrassing. Someone you just met turns out to be watching you. Men in black are seen nearby.
- **Unsub.** Law Enforcement arrives hot on your tail. Investigators find more evidence against you. Past connections rat on you to the enemy.
- **Poor Maintenance.** Bits are falling off, leaving a trail of clues. It's hard to get started. Fails at a critical time.
- **Flawed Prototype.** Stuck, frozen, locked up, red-ringed. You don't have that feature installed. You really need a software update.

- **Social Pariah.** People are taken aback by your presence. Someone unloads some hate on you. Subtle discrimination is much harder to deal with than outright loathing.
- **Classified Tech.** Major powers come out of the woodwork to keep you safe. Expert special agents join one side or the other. Something goes wrong with your body or powers and nobody knows how to fix it.
- **Forever Broke.** Completely strapped for cash at the moment. Owe a debt to someone. Don't have food, water, or resources to spare.

Currency

Currency is a complex topic in Hama civilization. Some traditionalist locales still use systems of abstract monetary instruments, but most operate on a galactic barter system of resources defined by use and purpose.

- E: HCCE / Hama Cloud Credit Equivalent
- M: Cubic Meter of some material
- R: Cubic Meter of Organics
- I: Cubic Meter of Industrial Assets
- T: Terabyte of data
- N: Unit of ship mass based on standard engine thrust
- F: Unit of salary, investment, or extended payment

Common abbreviations also include **k** and **M** for thousands and millions.

Exchange Rates

E	R	I	T	N	F
E 1/1	100E = 1R	1kE = 1I	1E = 1T	10kE = 1N	10kE = 1F

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	E	R	I	T	N	F
R	1R = 100E	1/1	10R = 1I	1R = 100T	100R = 1N	100R = 1F
I	1I = 1kE	1I = 10R	1/1	1I = 1kT	10I = 1N	10I = 1F
T	1T = 1E	100T = 1R	1kT = 1I	1/1	10kT = 1N	10kT = 1F
N	1N = 10kE	1N = 100R	1N = 10I	1N = 10kT	1/1	1N = 1F
F	1F = 10kE	1F = 100R	1F = 10I	1F = 10kT	1F = 1N	1/1

Common exchanges include:

- 1kE \leftrightarrow 1I
- 10I \leftrightarrow 1N
- 1kT \leftrightarrow 1I

Note: It's possible to have "change," i.e. 0.23I or 1.5N. This happens when you spend an amount smaller than the unit in question, such as building a 50E Weapon out of 1I thus leaving you with 0.95I.

Starting Personal Wealth

You can't exchange your starting wealth, but you do keep any unspent currency and can exchange it when you have a chance.

- **Galactic Backwater Archetypes:** 100E
- **Hotshot:** 100E, 20T, 2N
- **Aristo:** 1kE, 100T
- **Grunts:** 200E
- **Ghost:** 150E, 60T
- **Settler:** 100E, 40T, 1I, 1R
- **Martial Artist:** 50E, 100T
- **Esper:** 60E, 90T

- **Astrogator:** 60E, 100T
- **Mechanist:** 80E, 80T, 1I
- **Wizard:** 100E, 100T
- **Biomech:** 60E, 60T, 1I, 1R

Backwater Buying Power

The materials and objects used by galactic backwaters are not worth nearly as much to the people of Hamaciv as they are to their creators. While Gold can be used by primitive peoples to purchase primitive equipment as normal, 1 Gold is only worth 1E to spacefaring merchants. However, the same is largely true the other direction: 10E is worth only 1 Gold to primitive merchants who have little interest in small bits of flat glass and strange soundmaking sticks.

Extra Funding

Depending on the Immediate Threat, how the group has come together, and the situation surrounding the characters, the GM may also give the PCs Extra Funding. What amounts precisely are up to the GM and the group, but here are some examples. Each is independent of the others; you can add them together to come up with an equipment package that befits the story.

- **Galaxy Hopping:** 1–2 free Heartdrives, installed on the main ship, and possibly a backup.
- **One Ship Crew:** 15–20N for 1 ship shared by the whole group.
- **We're Aristo-Rich:** Each PC gets 10N, 1kE, and 3F.
- **Army Detachment:** Each PC gets 10F to spend on Army units. The entire group shares a Dropship with an extra 6–9N of Vehicular Weapons. Each PC can also pick 1 Ground or Space War move.
- **Mech Battles:** Each PC gets 10N for a mech and Vehicular Weapons. Multiple PCs can pool to build a bigger shared vehicle as well.

Endless Forms

- **Space Battles:** As Mech Battles, but spent on spacecraft rather than mechs.
- **Military:** PCs get access to Regulated equipment, and get 40E and 40T. Each PC can also pick 1 Ground or Space War move.
- **Criminal Enterprise:** As Military, but for other reasons.

Note: When building vehicles with extra funds, expect to spend roughly half the amount on the chassis and half on equipment and weapons for the vehicle.

Restricted & Classified Tech

There are a number of pieces of equipment listed as Restricted or Classified. This means they can't be selected at character creation. See Acquiring Advanced Tech in the Interstellar Action chapter for more info.

Equipment

In this era of civilization, it's fairly easy to acquire equipment when it is needed. Devices can often be constructed in the field with certain tools and the right materials.

Equipment Deltas

- All Aura-tagged equipment is removed.
- All Blessings are removed.
- All HFA equipment is tagged Primitive.
- Upgrades and Blessings only apply to Primitive arms and armor. Regulated and Classified arms and armor take their place in HLA equipment.



Weapons

Unregulated Weapons	Harm	Tags	Cost
Flowlight Shield Fans	3	Close, Shield, Energy, Flow, Stun	10E, 20T
Beam Pistol	4	Close, Energy	20E
Beam Rifle	5	Visual, Energy	30E
Telekinetic Rod	4	Visual, Stealth, Flow	10E, 30T
Night Quetzal Style	4	Close, Martial Art, Stealth	10E, 20T
Hungry Lightning Style	5	Close, Martial Art, Energy	10E, 20T
Field Projection Dagger	3	Close, Stealth, Field	10E, 20T
Regulated Weapons	Harm	Tags	Cost
Field Projection Sword	5	Close, Area, Field	30E, 30T

Regulated Weapons	Harm	Tags	Cost
Flowlight Wingblades	6	Close, Energy, Flow	40E, 50T
Sniper Electrolaser	7	BVR, Atmo, Energy	50E, 30T
Burner Lensgun	6	Close, Visual, Energy, Area, Flow	30E, 60T
Nanothread	5	Close, Area, Stealth	80E
Kinetic Accelerator	7	Visual	80E
Disruptor	5	Visual, ECM, Stun, Energy	70E
Plasma Rifle	7	Visual, Energy, Heavy, Anti-Vehicle	50E, 40T
Burner Magestaff	6	Close, Energy, Flow	30E, 50T
Knife Missile	7	Strategic, BVR, Visual, Stealth	120E, 50T
Shred-Field Grenade	7	Visual, Limited Use, Field, Area	100E
Classified Weapons	Harm	Tags	Cost
Glasma Device	11	Visual, Classified	1kE, 1kT
Wormhole Tap System	10	Visual, Energy, Area, Slow, Classified	1kE, 2kT
Gravity Wave Beam Weapon	10	BVR, Decelerating, Classified	1kE, 1kT
Unified Field Weapon	14	Visual, Field, Classified	2kE, 4kT

Classified Weapons	Harm	Tags	Cost
Singularity Sword	18	Close, Classified	5kE, 7kT
Balanced Harmony Style	13	Close, Martial Art, Flow, Classified	1kE, 2kT
Flowlight Combat Prana	15	Close, Flow, Martial Art, Classified	3kE, 4kT

Armor

Unregulated Armor	Armor	Tags	Cost
Skinsuit*	+1	Vacuum	30E
Contamination Suit	+1	Suit, Vacuum, Hazards, Enviro	30E, 10T
Personal Field Generator	+2	Shield, Energy	10E, 20T
Survival Suit	+1	Suit, Vacuum, Enviro	30E
Boarding Suit	+2	Suit, Vacuum	30E
Combat Armor	+3	Suit	30E
Battle Exo Suit	+4	Suit, Enhanced Strength, Enviro	50E, 20T

*Can be worn under other Suits of armor.

Regulated Upgrade	Armor	Tags	Cost
Fluxride	+1	Agile, Flow	60E
Sealed	+0	Vacuum, Hazards, Enviro	70T
Reflective	+2		60E

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Regulated Upgrade	Armor	Tags	Cost
Ethershield	+1	Energy	50T
Ablative	+3	Limited Use	40E, 30T
Composite Ceramic	+3		80E
Classified Upgrade	Armor	Tags	Cost
Excluder Field	+5	Excluder, Classified	6kE, 10kT
Deflector Field	+2	Field, Classified	1kE, 1kT
Slowscreen	+4	Flow, Classified	2kE, 3kT

Tools

Note: Equipment is not self-stacking: having several cracking kits at your disposal doesn't provide you any *better* tools, just more of them.

- **Excavation Package** (10E)
 - Allows you to excavate areas, drill boreholes, and uncover buried artifacts. 1M takes 1 worker about 1 hour. Use the Size and Scale section in *Interstellar Action* to estimate how much volume the excavation will take.
- **Analysis Drone Kit** (20E)
 - A bundle of drones and sensors that help map, catalogue, and analyze an area or artifact. Take +1 on Read a Situation when deployed. **Tag:** Bot, Flying
- **Manufactory Package** (1kE, 100T, 1I)
 - This sprawling tangle of machinery self-assembles to build whatever you need. It consumes Industrial currency exclusively and works at a rate of 100E of output equipment or machinery per hour. Manufactories can work on the same object together, so many colonies pack several to speed up production. To produce an item, you must have schematics for it.
- **Biofactory Package** (1kE, 100T, 1R)

- Distasteful to some, biofactories are complex, multichambered organs that produce whatever organic item you wish, so long as you have a sample, the genetic makeup of it, or a bio-schematic. It consumes Organics currency and produces materials at a rate of 1 kilo per hour. Like manufactories, biofactories can work together, making them able to produce items faster.
- **Chemfactory Package** (1kE, 100T, 1I)
 - Chemfactories synthesize the materials needed for many other processes. They can make just about any chemical compound if provided with the right raw materials. A chemfactory can produce 1 kilo of simple compounds per hour, but more complex substances take more time. Together with a refinery package, it can be used to make Industrial currency from asteroid or planetary crust.
- **Refinery Package** (1kE, 100T, 1I)
 - This small piece of mining equipment separates the bulk material drawn up from excavations into its constituent minerals and elements, at a rate of about 1M per hour. Together with a chemfactory, it can be used to make Industrial currency from asteroid or planetary crust.
- **Medical Drone** (40E, 40T)
 - Activated when it detects that its owner (and optionally, their allies) are hurt or injured, this drone rapidly moves to the afflicted and begins patching wounds. In only a few moments it can clear 1 health star, but it can't do this more than twice on a given individual until after they're fully healed; it's not capable of more sophisticated surgery. **Tags:** Bot
- **Common Drone** (10E)
 - This small robot is capable of performing simple tasks. It can change form to suit its goal, but is not designed for combat. If confronted, it will usually just curl up to protect itself. **Tags:** Bot
- **Communications Pod** (1E)
 - About the size of the tip of a finger, this powerful communication system can hook into system-wide comm grids, ships, vehicles, transmitters, beacons, and just about any other piece of equipment, so long as the target isn't encrypted or locked. They're even more ubiquitous than

utility goo. Many people carry several of these without realizing it, as they tend to come in multiple-redundancy packs.

- **Light Pipe Comm Pod** (10E, 5T)
 - This palm-sized device is an upgraded Communications Pod that has access to the Flow Grid, so long as the Grid is accessible in the system you're in.
- **Lifter Drone** (50E)
 - This drone can lift 1 ton, move it an arbitrary distance, and place it to within about a millimeter of a given position. Lifter drones are often used to set up automated fabrication systems in conjunction with factory packages. **Tags:** Bot, Flying
- **Access Equipment** (20E, 20T)
 - Euphemistically titled, this is a set of gear for breaking and entering. It consists of drills, torches, cable, harnesses, attachments, lights, rams, jacks, and a variety of other little doodads useful for getting past physical security and barriers to entry. The equipment can be used to get into ancient ruins, board vessels, or traverse complicated ship interiors. It's also used extensively by rescue operations. Users take +1 ongoing to related tasks.
- **Capture Equipment** (5E)
 - Consisting of a panoply of restraints ranging from ceramic manacles to instant-set epoxy to alloy cables, this package contains just about anything you could want to keep someone under control. **Warning:** Acedia Civil Industries takes no responsibility for the use of this product on aliens, robots, those with advanced cybernetics, or those with unusual adaptations.
- **Entertainment System** (5E)
 - This small multi-purpose device provides a number of different kinds of entertainment through many interfaces. It can produce holographic projections, virtual realities only seen by the user, audio emission, and other sensory information. It comes preprogrammed with thousands of virtual environments, millions of games, and terabytes of holographic video. Users usually acquire new media from the Flowgrid whenever they are able to connect their ES to it.
- **Translator** (5E)

- An earbud that is programmed with every standard language in Hama space, as well as most nearby relevant alien languages, this device is vital to explorers and diplomats.
- **Cracking Kit** (20E, 50T)
 - This surprisingly simple assortment of tools has been around in some form or another for millions of years. It allows users to penetrate electronic defenses, crack computer systems, and defuse security systems. Users take +1 ongoing to related tasks.
- **Surveillance Bug** (20T)
 - This tiny microdot has numerous sensors and recording devices, and can be set to maintain stealth and only record, or transmit brief encoded data packets to a different computer system.
- **Projection Raiment** (1E, 1T)
 - This simple holographic projector comes preloaded with thousands of fashions, styles, and accessories, each of them endlessly modifiable and interchangeable. **Tags:** Impressive
- **Long-Range Sensors** (20E, 20T)
 - This blocky set of goggles can be tuned to nearly any spectrum of light, and it even has the ability to directly view the Galactic Flow within about 100 meters. It features an extensive target tracking system that gives users +1 ongoing to attacks at BVR and Strategic range.
- **Assistance Drone** (15E)
 - This drone is somewhat more specific than a common one; it is designed to be more companionable, more socially aware, and more finely skilled. What it lacks in strength it makes up for in finesse. Assistance drones are often used as personal assistants, shipboard staff, household help, or business clerks. **Tags:** Bot, Flying
- **Personal Flight Device** (25E)
 - A PFD is a small Flow-powered thrust system that allows you to move quickly across open terrain, maneuver up or down surfaces, and perform low-level aerial acrobatics. They come in many shapes, types, and styles, but they all provide the same benefit: while using it, you take +1 ongoing to any Risky Proposition (or other Move) related to personal movement. **Tags:** Flying

Endless Forms

- **Grappler (10E)**
 - This tiny launcher can be clipped to a belt or worn on the arm and fires a goo-based grapping hook up to a thousand feet. The monofilament cable is tested to 1 ton. Take +1 ongoing to any climbing attempts or dangerous activities while doing so. It can also be used in an attempt to capture someone and you get +1 forward on such attempts. **Tags:** Nanite
- **Mechanical Tools (5E)**
 - This package of tools has everything you might need to make repairs to personal equipment or small ships. For anything larger than Class 2, you'll need dedicated facilities and equipment. Any ship older than a couple of years seems to collect mechanical tools in its compartments and bins.

Resources

- **Utility Goo (1E)**
 - Ubiquitous not just throughout Hamaciv, but also through many alien cultures as well, utility goo is a kind of one-time-use nanomachine swarm. The goo comes in a block about the size of a hand and can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including welding, sealing, patching holes, temporarily repairing machines and electronics, burning for heat, filtration, making simple tools, and sculpting simple objects. Once utility goo has “set,” it fuses into a uniform solid, and it has a limited working time after it is activated. This is a safety mechanism to prevent the uncontrolled spread scenarios.
Tags: Nanite, Consumed
- **Medical Goo (10E)**
 - This material is essentially Utility Goo that can be used to repair wounds and organic injuries. Heals 1 health star when used. **Tags:** Consumed, Nanite, Consumed
- **Blue Milk™ (10E)**
 - Blue Milk™ is a specific class of liquid food products that have taken over the market of settler food supplies. Blue Milk™ comes in about a thousand different varieties based on taste,

consistency, nutrition, and stability. Among the Old Territories, Blue Milk™ has a definite “frontier” feel to it. 1 unit feeds 1 person for 1 week. **Tags:** Consumed

- **Green Milk** (1E)
 - The formula for Blue Milk™ is copy-protected, meaning that attempts to reverse engineer it and produce it in the field (rather than paying for the freight costs from OT production worlds) are only moderately successful. The result is “green milk,” which is roughly similar to Blue Milk™, but usually has one or more problems including bad taste or texture, dietary problems, digestive issues, or biological contamination. Unlike Blue Milk™, green milk can be produced in the field with relatively simple equipment at a rate of 1R to 100 units. 1 unit feeds 1 person for 1 week. **Tags:** Consumed
- **Cracking Pack** (35E)
 - This small package contains biomass that will rapidly spread across a planetary surface and begin the process of generating a useful atmosphere. While they take a long time, they are often sent with settlers to new worlds. How long it takes depends on how many packs are used, where they’re placed, how much water exists on the planet, and what sort of atmo is present, but standard procedure involves 1k units and takes about 10 years. Cracking Packs are also sold in cases of 1k units, costing 30kE. **Tags:** Consumed
- **Emergency Inflatable Hab** (10E)
 - This bubble-hab provides protection from vacuum, some radiation, and some heat and cold, but only for about a week. Before deployment, a single inflatable fits into a pocket. They’re indispensable for explorers. Atmo can be recharged from a source of Organics and will remain charged as long as the solar collectors receive light. **Tags:** One-Time Deployment, Setup
- **Thermal Putty** (10E)
 - This material is used extensively in demolition, salvage, and piracy operations. Once activated, this tube of putty can be tuned to create a slow burn for cutting openings through hull or plating, or it can be packed as a quick explosive that cuts through armor and rock and inflicts 4 harm to anyone unlucky enough to be nearby. **Tags:** Consumed

Endless Forms

- **Ion Grenade** (5E, 5T)
 - Akin to an electronic flashbang, this small explosive stuns organics and machines alike. When used, anything operating, wearing, or made up of electronics in the target area take -1 forward. **Tags:** Consumed
- **Biogenetic Disguise Kit** (5E, 10T)
 - This container of pastes, creams, and gels allows you to sculpt your features and alter your genetics to pass for just about anyone. When you use it, take +1 ongoing to pass for someone else of your species. The effect wears off in 24 hours. **Tags:** Consumed
- **Emergency Beacon** (5E)
 - This little patch is usually stuck to your body before you head out on an adventure. When you are in trouble, you can press it to activate an emergency wideband signal that most benevolent Hama will track down and send rescue teams to. Its range is limited to a single star system, but if the system has a Flowgrid connection, then your signal can reach anywhere in the galaxy. **Warning:** The signal itself doesn't *guarantee* that you'll get help in every system.
- **Screen Paint** (5E)
 - This silvery liquid can be painted onto surfaces to make them into 2d and 3d viewing screens. Such screens can be connected to any nearby computer system.
- **Power Paint** (5E)
 - This super-black liquid can be painted onto surfaces to collect electromagnetic radiation and convert it into power. Thus, it is often used to power devices that don't have their own power supply, as are commonly found in really cheap colony kits and emergency rescue systems. Power paint is also used in large quantities in terraforming operations and stations that are not expected to get regular machine Heart maintenance.
- **Security Kit** (30E, 20T)
 - This series of sensors, lasers, crypdexes, explosives, and weapons is designed to be set up to prevent intruders. Once set up, it Deals 5 Harm to anyone who tries to pass it without authenticating properly. The components are small and designed to be concealed.

- **Construction Clay (10E)**
 - This putty-like material is similar to utility goo, except that it can only form structures and seal against vacuum. It is also sold in much bigger units, 1 cubic meter by default. A single block of construction clay can be used to build a 6x6 meter room.

Army

Army units are paid for with F financing currency.

Unit	Tags	Harm	Armor	Health	Cost
Draft Troops	Visual, Poorly Equipped	3	1	6	1F
Irregulars	Visual, Poorly Equipped	4	2	7	2F
Scouts	Visual, Stealthy	4	2	8	3F
Grunt	Visual	5	4	9	4F
Veterans	Visual, Well Equipped	6	4	11	6F
Snipers	Visual, BVR	6	2	7	6F
Burners	BVR, Strategic	5	2	7	7F
Ardents	Perceptive, Stealthy	4	2	7	4F
Primitives	Poorly Equipped, Easily Surprised	4	1	7	1F

Vehicles

Vehicles of varying size, shape, and purpose fill the galaxy, enabling space travel, interstellar trade, and inter-system wars.

Spacecraft

Spacecraft	Armor	Hull	Tags	Cost
Escape Pod	1	1	Class 0, Auto	100E
Skiff	1	2	Class 1	1N
Clipper	1	3	Class 2, Fast	3N
Hauler	1	8	Class 2, Cargo	2N
Fast Picket Ship	2	12	Class 3, Fast	10N
Explorer	1	10	Class 3, Science	9N
Freighter	2	20	Class 4, Cargo	30N
Liner	1	15	Class 4, Reentry, Luxury	33N
Snub Fighter	1	2	Class 1, Military	1N
Interceptor	2	4	Class 1, Military, Fast	2N
Attacker	2	6	Class 2, Military, Fast	4N
Bomber	2	8	Class 2, Military	3N
Variable Fighter	2	8	Class 2, Military, Fast	3N, 100T
Rapid Offensive Unit	4	15	Class 3, Military, Fast	11N
Dropship	5	16	Class 4, Cargo, Reentry, Military, Fast	40N
Cruiser	5	18	Class 4, Military	30N
Battleship	6	22	Class 4, Military	35N
General Vehicle	8	30	Class 5, Luxury, Industrial, Military	80N

Spacecraft	Armor	Hull	Tags	Cost
Large Vehicle	10	40	Class 6, Luxury, Industrial, Military	250N

Planetary Craft

Planetary Craft	Armor	Hull	Tags	Cost
Emergency Travel Bubble	1	1	Class 0	20E
Speeder Bike	0	2	Class 0, Fast	1N
Overland Rig	1	3	Class 1, Cargo	1N
Pleasure Yacht	1	5	Class 2, Luxury, Fast	4N
Bucket Mining Refinery	2	15	Class 4, Industrial	30N
Light Mech	2	4	Class 1, Military, Fast	2N
Combat Mech	3	9	Class 2, Military	3N
Megatank	4	10	Class 2, Military	4N
Heavy Mech	5	15	Class 3, Military	9N
Landship	5	18	Class 3, Military, Slow	10N
Superheavy Mech	6	20	Class 4, Military	30N
Transport Crawler	4	20	Class 4, Cargo, Military	30N

Vehicular Weapons

Vehicular Weapons are used by vehicles the same way normal weapons are used by characters.

Military vehicles can be equipped with weapons of up to their own Class +1. Non-military vehicles can be equipped with weapons up to their own Class -1.

Vehicular Weapons are generally controlled using the usual Ranged and Melee moves.

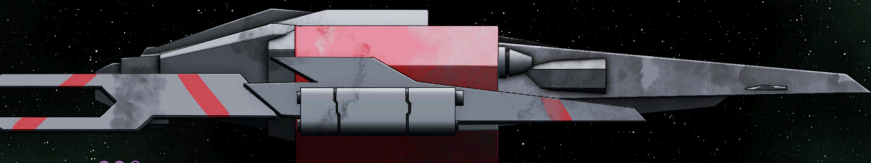
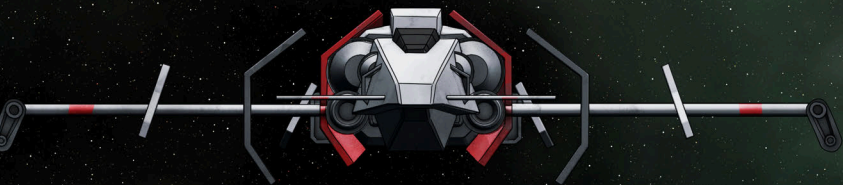
Vehicular Weapon	Harm	Tags	Cost
Beamer	2	Class 1+, Visual, Energy	1N
Laser Ablator	4	Class 1+, Visual, Energy, Point Defense	2N
Rocket Pod	3	Class 1+, Visual, Area	2N
Missile Pod	5	Class 2+, Visual, Area	4N
Autocannon	6	Class 2+, Visual	4N
Kinetic Chaingun	4	Class 2+, Visual, Area, Point Defense	3N
Kinetic Cannon	6	Class 2+, Visual	4N
Plasma Cannon	6	Class 2+, Visual, Atmo, Energy	3N
Laser Cannon	5	Class 2, Visual, Energy	3N
Railgun Battery	8	Class 3+, Visual	6N
Laser Battery	7	Class 3+, Energy, Visual, Point Defense	5N
Positron Rifle	8	Class 3+, Energy, Visual	6N
Field Gun	7	Class 3+, Area, BVR	7N

Vehicular Weapon	Harm	Tags	Cost
Spinal Laser	10	Class 4+, Strategic, BVR	9N
Spinal Superweapon	15	Class 5+, Strategic, BVR	14N
Progressive Knife	3	Class 1+, Mecha, Close	1N
Bastion-Level Projection Shield	3	Class 2+, Mecha, Shield, Close, Field	2N
Mega-Claw	4	Class 2+, Mecha, Close	2N
Mega-Projection Sword	8	Class 3+, Mecha, Close, Field	6N

Mecha Tag: Mostly deployed on mecha, rather than fighters or ships.

Atmo Tag: Can only be used in Atmo, or possibly inside a nebula.

Endless Forms



Vehicular Equipment

Some of these upgrades have variable costs. [X]N means a number of N engine currency equal to the number X. [S]N means a number of N engine currency equal to the size class of the vehicle.

- **Heartdrive** (10N or 10kT)
 - Vehicle gains the ability to move between solar systems and travel interstellar space. The target must be known in advance and a route must be calculated using maps and navigation computers beforehand.
- **Slowdrive** (1kT)
 - Sublight interstellar engines that can reach close to the speed of light. They take ages to get from place to place in the galaxy, but they require no expensive Heartdrive. Almost all vessels with Slowdrives have stasis systems of one form or another. The time dilation of modern Hama slowdrives is close to 5000x, meaning a 5kly year trip will pass in what seems like about 1 year for those onboard.
- **Shields** ([X]N)
 - The vehicle gains X points of Shields. Shields act like Armor, but each time the vehicle takes damage, the shields lose 1 point. They recharge between fights, and can be recharged by Moves. **Tags:** Energy
- **Refinery** (4N)
 - The vehicle has tools to mine, break down, and refine various materials. The larger the vehicle, the faster it produces materials. Materials are produced in I or in R depending on what you intend to mine.
- **Integrity Field** ([X]N)
 - The vehicle gains X points of Hull, up to double the base amount of the vehicle. **Tags** Energy
- **Stasis Systems** (1N)
 - For billions of years, stasis was the primary way for individual Hama to cross galactic space. Now, they're mostly seen as a backup, a failsafe, or an esoteric escape from the Churn.

Endless Forms

While in stasis, you are unconscious and effectively immortal as long as the system has power.

- **Stasis Entertainment System (1N)**
 - This upgrade to Stasis Systems allows those in stasis to experience a virtual reality world even while frozen solid. Typically SES comes with a few hundred pre-loaded simulations, but users are free to customize their SES experiences however they wish. If the vessel is connected to the Flowgrid, users can participate in simulations shared across the galaxy.
- **Reentry System (1N)**
 - This upgrade enhances a vessel's ability to safely enter and exit atmospheres. The vessel gets +1 to Dangerous Reentry moves.
- **Maintenance Systems ([S]N)**
 - Nanomachines, autonomous manufactories, and small robots help repair damage to the hull. As long as the vessel has power, consider repairs as having S extra assistants, where S is the Size of the vessel.
- **Repair Drones (1N)**
 - This pod contains a number of drones designed to repair damage to a vessel. They can repair 1 point of Hull per hour, but doing so in combat is a Risky Proposition. The drones only carry enough materiel to repair 5 hull before they have to be re-outfitted. **Tags:** Limited Use
- **Rapid Escape System ([S]N)**
 - Not only does this vehicle have ejection systems or escape pods, but they're extraordinarily fast and reliable. When the vehicle is destroyed, you don't need to mark health stars due to the destruction. In addition, each crewman can be ejected in a Class 1 Vehicle, as long as the parent vehicle is size 3 larger. Such emergency vehicles are purchased separately.
- **Chaff (3N)**
 - Gives +2 Armor against rockets, missiles, and lasers. **Tags:** Limited Use.
- **Heartdrive Atmo Upgrade (25N)**
 - This experimental upgrade allows your vehicle's Heartdrive to enter from and exit to the Flow while inside atmospheric conditions. **Tags:** Experimental, Classified.

- **Heartdrive Blink Upgrade** (50N)
 - This legendary tech allows your vessel to use its Heartdrive to warp around space on a tactical level with precision and accuracy. Your crew can use astrogation techniques to outmaneuver enemy vessels.
- **Flow Fold Cloaking Device** (40N)
 - This tech allows your vessel to fold the Galactic Flow around itself as a shield against detection. Doing so is a Risky Proposition: though the technology is old, it doesn't get any safer than this. **Tags:** Classified, Dangerous.
- **Construction Dock** ([S]N)
 - This system allows the vessel to construct smaller vessels and equipment, up to a maximum size of S minus 1. Doing so follows the usual rules in Constructing Vehicles from Scratch in *Interstellar Action*, but negates the need for any support structure. In addition, personal equipment can be constructed automatically, without the designer being present for the whole process.
- **Autopilot** (1N)
 - This small AI program allows the vessel to maneuver itself around systems, perform landings, and navigate from place to place. It counts as having a 2d6 stat for such tasks.
- **Launch System** ([S]N)
 - The vessel has magnetic launch tubes or catapult rails for launching smaller vehicles. It can sortie vessels of up to S minus 2 almost instantly. They take +1 forward on interception.
- **Flow Interface** (5N, 1kT)
 - The vessel has a special connection that allows anyone driving it to use Spirit in place of other Stats for piloting.
- **Hazardous Containment** (1N)
 - All containment cells, cargo holds, and brigs aboard the vessel are shielded from dangerous substances, materials, and activities, giving them +4 armor against any harm from inside.



INTERSTELLAR ACTION

Be careful what you find in the forest; less advanced societies are not always less dangerous.

Stun Damage

Stun damage is not tracked differently than normal damage. Instead, if you are subject to harm from a weapon tagged with Stun, write Stunned on your sheet. If you are knocked out in the fight, you do not permanently lose 1 health star, and half of your health stars are cleared at the end of the fight, along with the Stunned status.

Size and Scale

Vehicles and structures are grouped by size and mass into defined Size Classifications.

Class	Examples	Dimension ¹	Cost ²	Crew ¹	Capacity ³
0	bubble, escape pod, hoverbike	2m	1kE	1	0
1	jet, light spacefighter, truck, light mech	20m	1N	1	1

Interstellar Action

Class	Examples	Dimension ¹	Cost ²	Crew ¹	Capacity ³
2	settler dome, combat mech	50m	3N	1-2	10
3	fast picket ship, heavy mech	300m	9N	1-10	2000
4	mountain, superheavy mech, cruiser	1000m	30N	10-100	100K
5	General Vehicle	100km	80N	100-1000	100G
6	asteroid, moon, hollow habitat	1000km	250N	1000+	100T
7	planet, artificial planet	10Mm	750N	1000+	1E+17
8	stellar artifact	1ly	2200N	1000+	7E+43

¹Very approximate. Used only as a method to imagine scale, rather than a way to limit or define it.

²Also approximate. Does not include Vehicular Equipment or Vehicular Weapons.

³This capacity assumes the vehicle is designed to carry people and is less relevant for mechs or other low-crew structures.

Range

The Range system of HFA has been expanded in HLA. There are now four range bands. The first three are roughly analogous to the three range bands of the HFA range system, and can be seen as interchangeable.

- Close: (Melee) Point Blank / 0m to a few vehicle lengths / close enough to hit each other
- Visual: (Ranged) Within sight and able to engage
- BVR: (Indirect) Beyond visual range, but within sensor range
- Strategic: Only targetable by long-range or indirect sensors and special extreme-range or self-propelled weapons.

Keep in mind that the actual distances are both flexible and dependent on the circumstances. Size and terrain both make a tremendous difference on the actual application of Range tags.

Vehicle Kills

Given the hyper-advanced ejection, safety, and defense systems aboard all modern Hama vessels, you can usually expect to make it through the destruction of vehicles you pilot fairly safely. When your vehicle is destroyed, make a Risky Proposition. On an F, you mark 1–3 health stars, depending on the severity of the crash or detonation.

Surviving a vehicle kill means you're now alone in the environment you were piloting in previously, so it's a good idea to go into battle prepared for ejection. Skinsuits and other armors will protect you from the dangerous environments you might find yourself in.

Repairing Damaged Vehicles

Generally, it takes three things to repair vehicles: time, resources, and skilled labor. You can reduce one by increasing the other two by the same amount.

Interstellar Action

Given a standard set of tools and a place to work, it takes 1 person about 1 hour to repair 1 point of hull damage, thereby consuming 1I, per point of Size. This leads to several observations:

- Larger vehicles are more complicated and take more workers and resources (or more rarely, more time)
- Tiny vehicles can be patched up in a few hours even with limited parts.
- It's convenient to repair vehicles at dedicated repair facilities. They allow you to trade money for labor and resources, taking most of the problem out of your hands.

Note: Moves that allow you to repair damaged vehicles are considered patch fixes and are poor substitutes for regular maintenance and repairs, as they tend to come undone later on at the worst times.

Constructing Vehicles From Scratch

To make a vehicle from scratch, start with the Repairing Damaged Vehicles system. You'll need 10 times as much Industrial currency just for the vehicle itself, and another 5 times as much for the manufacturing process, tools, and construction superstructure. This second amount is not spent, but invested, and can be used again for future vehicles.

Acquiring Advanced Tech

Generally, civilians don't start with Restricted or Classified equipment but it is possible to acquire these items later on. They usually require special dispensation or extraordinary effort to acquire. Restricted equipment is usually limited to military

operations or specialist groups. Classified equipment is highly guarded and only unleashed if there's no other option.

Some Classified items may serve as plot devices, loot from ancient discoveries, or as custom prototype rewards bestowed by Aristos. They can't usually be built from scratch unless you build a dedicated R&D facility to research them first, and even then you'll need some relevant information or useful research data to go on.

Boarding

There are no specific moves for boarding and taking control of a vessel. Instead, boarding is a complex situation usually involving at least three activities:

- **Forced Docking.** Usually a maneuver-oriented Seize By Force Move between relevant vehicles, or the use of other methods to render the target vessel immobile.
- **Neutralizing the Crew.** This can be done by threat, violence, negotiation, or any other method you choose.
- **Gaining Control of the Systems.** Likely another Seize By Force Move between your forces and the ship itself, probably related to hacking. This is almost always harder with military vessels.

Hacking

The galaxy of HLA is so preposterously advanced that there are effectively limitless methods for computer intrusion, and just as many ways to defeat intruders. Hacking has thus become a very abstract process. Normally it should be handled as a Seize By Force Move using Charm or Cunning. In certain situations, you may be projected into a holographic system in order to fight your way through virtual intrusion countermeasures. What form these systems take is purely at the whim of the host machine. Hacking advanced systems and AIs is often more a matter of Social Moves.

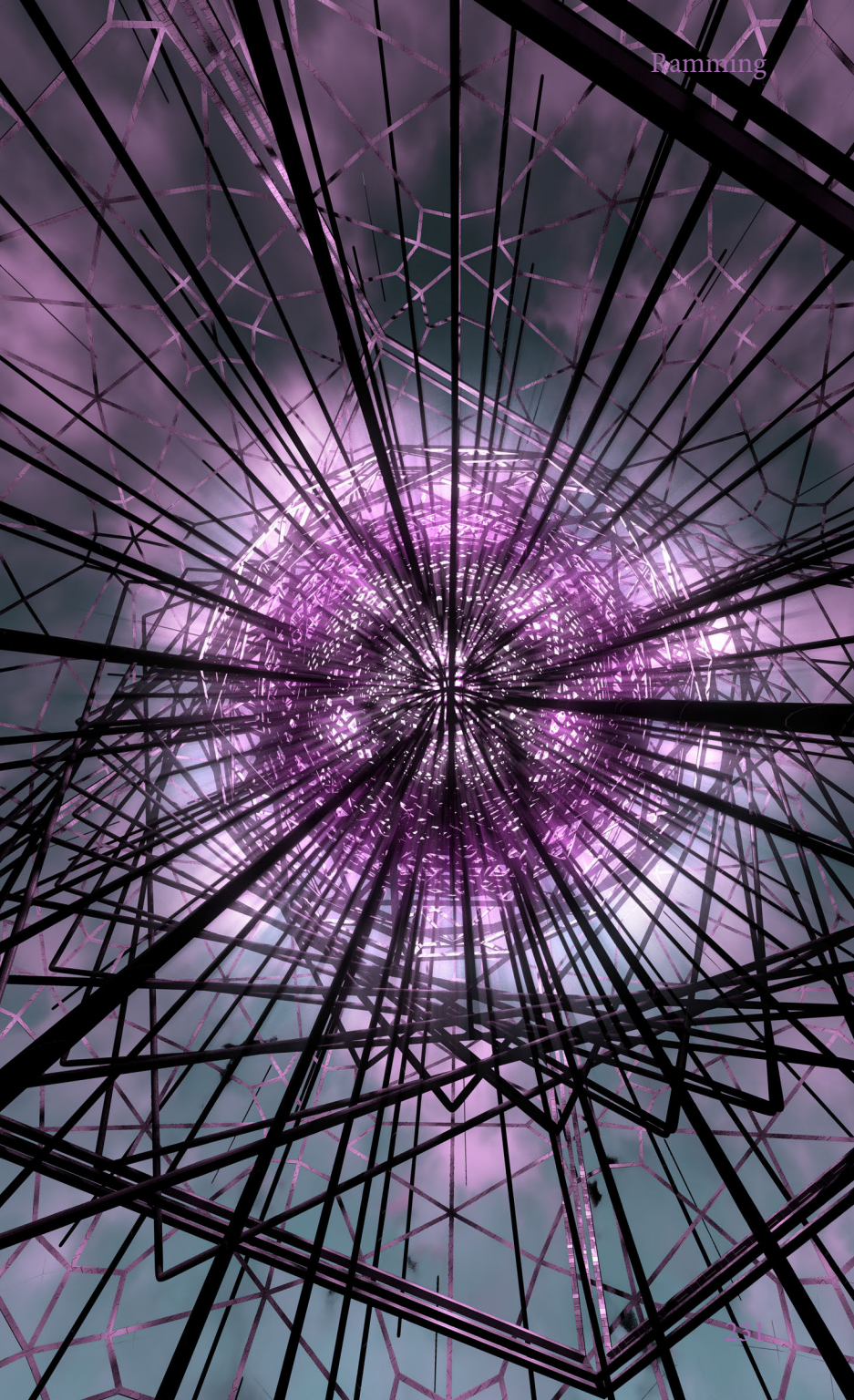
Ramming

Sometimes, you end up under the boot of your enemy. Literally. If your enemy is driving a vehicle, particularly a mecha, you may find yourself being stepped on, smashed, or rammed. This *isn't* when a mecha hits you with a sword or claw weapon; in that case simply use the vehicular weapon as normal.

When a PC squashes someone else, roll Drive a Vehicle. On a Success, inflict harm as below. Ties work like successes, but your vehicle gets tangled or is stuck or damaged.

When an NPC squashes a PC, the PC usually makes a Risky Proposition or similar to get out of the way, lest they receive harm as below. Because larger vehicles have more momentum, it's often easier to avoid harm when they try to ram you, though it'll hurt bad if you get hit.

The harm inflicted by Ramming is based on the Vehicle in question: `harm = size class x 5`.



FATE

Limitless. Not infinite, but limitless. Infinite implies a well of power is currently greater than any other. No, my powers are not infinite, sadly.

But they are limitless.

Agenda

The GM's Agenda is unchanged from HFA and are on page 107.

- Complicate the characters' lives
- Make the Last Age come alive
- Discover the tale together
- Be Honest

Principles

Like the Agenda, principles are essentially unchanged from page 108 of HFA.

- Fail Forward
- Everything's Larger than Life
- Induce the Characters to Extraordinary Deeds
- Name Everyone, Humanize Even Their Enemies
- Talk to the Characters, not the Players
- Inject Some Drama or Tragedy
- Uncover New Things
- Conservation of Detail

GM Moves

Unlike the Agenda and Principles, the GM Moves are substantially different in HLA. They still work the same, though, as per Hard and Soft Moves.

- Announce an Impending Problem
- Use Their Flaws Against Them
- Trade or Deal Harm
- Inject Trouble Into a Relationship
- Confront Them With Galactic Mystery or Alien Motivations
- Turn the Galactic Flow Against Them
- Give Them a World-Spanning Choice to Make
- Pit Them Against Great Numbers
- Pit Them Against Powerful Adversaries
- Bring Their Loyalties Into Conflict
- Reveal the Movements of the Enemy
- Discover a Strange New World or Lost Technology
- Internal Hama Conflicts Interfere
- Chase Them Across Space

Handling Setting Topics

There are some topics that were either not approached at all in Heroines of the First Age, or should be reanalyzed and dealt with differently in Heroines of the Last Age. This section aims to help you understand, navigate, and control those elements.

Space Opera

What does “space opera” mean exactly and what does that mean for the game? In our case, Space Opera is a genre consisting of several key parts:

- **It is set in Space:** While there may be many stints on planetary surfaces, a major focus of the setting is the interaction and events of cultures on a stellar or galactic scale. You should find yourself hopping from planet to planet or cruising the stars in the course of your adventures. Traveling and exploring are major parts of the experience; the entire setting is founded around the FTL Age, which is *defined* by the ability to go to new places and explore unseen star systems and artifacts. When in doubt, send the players to an unfamiliar place.
- **It is Epic:** The main characters are limited in number, but the events surrounding them should feel expansive and momentous. Get them involved in major power struggles. Pit them against ridiculous odds. Make the villains larger than life. Provide dangers that threaten planets, star systems, or entire cultures. Throw some pitched battles and place the action in awe-inspiring settings. When in doubt, go bigger.
- **It is Heroic:** This isn't Hard Sci-Fi, it's heroic adventure fantasy set in space. There are vast enemy powers to fight in pitched battles that rage across the stars and set space aflame. This is supported by the penultimate power of the Hama civilization; there isn't much *engineering-wise* that stands in our way. We can do anything if we put our minds to it. Don't expect to get bogged down in the minutia of whether a particular replacement Machine Heart has the right fittings to power your manufactory, the Hama have too many tools and too much technology for minor sticking points to be the primary focus of the story. Aim for adventure, rather than misadventure.

Providing Opposition

Generally, Space Opera features some form of large-scale and obvious enemy. Often this takes the form of an overwhelming force, particularly one that is morally reprehensible. Invasion, oppression, and genocide are the tools of these utterly irredeemable antagonists.

But such single-minded (or mindless) enemies need not be the whole story. Heroines of the Last Age also presents a number of

challenges that aren't totally evil villains. There are strange artifacts to explore, new metaspecies to meet and negotiate with, and bizarre phenomena to uncover and investigate. There are political squabbles *within* the Hama as well as impending violence between groups outside of the Hama. There are antagonists who aren't villainous, and villains who aren't antagonistic.

Use these tools, grab different types of threats, mix and match, dig through the lore, and use your imagination to keep the story moving forward and put a new spin on things if they get to be repetitive.

Limits and Bounds

Considering the power available to the Hama as a whole, one might wonder what stops us from taking over the galaxy. The players might claim that the entire adventure could be solved by a single aristo. While these things might be true in the broadest sense, the tools through which these things are done are the players themselves. The PCs are the actors who are changing the world, that's what they're there for.

Consider also that the larger and more powerful a group of Hama, the longer it will take them to adjust to new information or deploy resources. Invariably, there's some small element (a squad of mercenaries, a cadre of space marines, a cell of special operatives, a ship or explorers, etc.) that moves to intercept the danger *before* the larger force has a chance to come in and deal with it, and most of the time the larger force isn't even interested in handling the situation until someone brings it to their attention.

There are, however, times when it seems like a PC should be able to bring in overwhelming firepower, particularly if one of the PCs is an aristo or well-connected military officer. In these cases, go with the flow of the story. If you have an aristo or general on the team, don't expect them to pull their punches, provide them with situations they can't easily solve. Move the aristo away from their

base of power. Pit the general against odds without backup. Draw them out of safety and into adventure, that's why we're here after all.

Aristo Assets

Regardless of how far from home the group ends up, aristos are generally considered to have brought along some kind of cadre of assets. Several of their moves assume as much. The amount and nature of this materiel is not explicitly defined, so that it can be developed and manipulated throughout the story. It's fine to winnow down the aristo's power in order to make certain situations more "balanced," but you should rarely remove their backup entirely; doing so is equivalent to taking away the warrior's sword or the pilot's ship. Instead, think about how to elaborate on or complicate the use of those assets, rather than remove them from play.

More importantly, if your group has an aristo, you need to be planning for that. It's the same as planning for a group that has several heavies, if they're going to be good at combat, make sure your combat challenges are potent enough to meet them. If your political or economic situations aren't a challenge for the aristo, chances are that they're not big enough.

Calling It In

There are several moves in the Aristo and Grunt archetypes that allow players to essentially call down overwhelming firepower. It's easy to see this as a combat cop-out, but if you do, you may not be thinking about the story the right way. These powers represent the overwhelming might of Hama civilization, and we can really call down hell if we want to. The problem is more likely that the conflict itself is too direct: if the fight is nothing but a test of ferocity, whoever can call in the most firepower is eventually going to win. Sometimes, this is fine, you may want certain situations to be handled this way, as it gives the PCs a chance to really showboat for

a bit. Other times, you may want to preserve your antagonists for longer, either to complicate the fight or to give them a longer and more interesting narrative. In these situations, dig in and do the role-playing. What *would* your antagonists do if they were presented with the possibility of overwhelming force? Here are some ideas:

- Take prisoners to prevent total annihilation
- Negotiate over alternative goals
- Misdirect the opponent, or reveal misdirection already perpetrated
- Lie to save your skin
- Surrender to infiltrate your enemy
- Appeal to honor, law, or reason
- Insinuate or threaten retaliation against innocent or distant targets
- Hold them off long enough for the leader or key figure to escape

Space is Big

The Galactic Map shows the regions of the galaxy in a compact and easy-to-underestimate form. Remember that space is big, and that for pretty much every civilization in the galaxy, it takes centuries or millennia to travel between stars. The radial gradations of distance on the galactic map are 5000 lightyears, meaning it will take *at least* that long for any ship other than a Hama Heartdrive ship to cross that space. That's a long way, and it takes a long time.

No metaspecies has widespread faster-than-light travel, with the very recent exception of the Hama. There are two reasons to maintain this element of the setting: it makes it easier to get a handle on galactic history because things take so long to happen, and it makes the present era exciting and new because no one's been able to explore like we can now.

This also means that the use of Heartdrives is a *massive* strategic advantage in favor of the Hama, when it can be deployed for effect.

It also gives you the ability to put the PCs into situations that are cosmically dangerous, without necessarily imperiling any Hama locations directly: the PCs can go out and stop threats *before* they kill a lot of people.

Heartdrive Speed

When someone asks how fast a Heartdrive can go, you should think back to the **Danger-Limited, Not Time-Limited** section of Heroines of the First Age. Think of it less as a matter of the actual speed and of the drive, and more a question of who will get where they're going first. If two Heartdrive ships are trying to reach a target first, then make the question one of the quality of the drive and the skill of the astrogator. If the ship is merely trying to get somewhere as fast as possible, offer greater risks in exchange for better margins of success. Consider an example:

Sure, you can absolutely get there before the star goes nova, but doing so will render the Heartdrive unstable for the return trip. Or you can cut it closer and not push the Heartdrive so hard on the way there and have a more assured escape.

The other way Heartdrives are danger-limited is in astrogation. Good maps *and* good skill are needed to correctly hyperspace to the right location, so you can also offer tradeoffs between speed, accuracy, and safety.

Don't forget that Heartdrives are both unreliable in general, and a new and poorly tested technology, so things are liable to go wrong even on the most up-to-date warbird.

Transhumanism

Enhancement isn't a uniquely Hama trait; almost all metaspecies in the galaxy practice it to some extent. On the galactic scale of biological flexibility, we Hama sit somewhere near along the upper

end, just a little closer to the Parianax than to a basic sub-sentient mammal species. We can manipulate our biology and structure accurately and quickly, but many of us choose to use technical methods to enhance our abilities as well. Much of what it means to be Hama is to be transhuman.

What is mostly absent from the Hama is the negative connotation of biopolitics. In Hama society, one is mostly free from coercion and shame where modification of the body or selection of reproductive traits are concerned. Obviously, there are many situations and locations where certain biological and technological traits are useful or even required for survival, but the choice to take on these traits is seen more like a skill one trains in than a core aspect of one's biological and social identity. Because mods and engineered traits are so easily come by, they aren't well correlated with socioeconomic class, so the various class inequalities of Hama society rarely revolve around one's shape or adaptations.

Alien Allies and Enemies

The term “metaspecies” is used to include all the different subspecies, variants, modifications, mutations, and supporting clades to a given group. It also suggests the inclusiveness that species tend to have in the galactic arena. There's a fine line between being at war with a culture for political reasons and being at war with a culture for genetic reasons. The Hama, like many other metaspecies, aren't so homogenous that they are incapable of accepting other species. To us, alien relationships are informed by what they *do*, rather than what they look like or what they're made of.

Not all alien metaspecies share our outlook, however. Some value racial purity more than actions or hate others purely on the basis of superficial traits. Such species don't make a lot of galactic friends. Even the Hama groups that hold such beliefs are often ostracized by the Hama mainstream, purely for pragmatic reasons.

There is no precise boundary to the Hama metasppecies. There are thousands, if not millions of different species that we could technically call alien—or that could technically call us alien—living within Hamaciv in varying degrees of integration. Some we are so interdependent on that they can't be extricated from our metasppecies at all, while others are independent enough that they sit right on the dividing line. The most permissive definition states that *all* locally cooperative species are included in a metasppecies, while the least permissive definition only allows for those who are completely biologically interdependent. By one standard, Hamaciv is full of aliens, and by the other, Hamaciv includes none at all.

Galactic Ennui

The ennui of a truly ancient metasppecies is not to be trifled with. The Hama have existed for more than two billion years, and there is very little indeed that we haven't done or seen. Long ago, there was an age where people routinely lived into the millions of years old, but now we've moved back to a lifespan more on the order of centuries or millennia simply because there hasn't been much to do lately. Across Hamaciv, there have been pushes for voluntary extinction or de-evolution, a phenomenon rarely seen in species so unencumbered by resource demand.

The important thing to remember is that this is the FTL Age, and that we are just now shaking off this galactic ennui. The PCs shouldn't be the ones wallowing in boredom, no. They're the ones who are going out and doing exciting things and proving to all of Hamaciv that there are still many more things to do. To think otherwise, as the inventor of the Heartdrive allegedly said, is sheer arrogance.

Vehicles vs People

While ships have similar statistics to PCs, they are not precisely made of the same stuff. There are two important points to make on this distinction.

Scale: While people and vehicles can deal damage to each other and may exist in the same combat scenarios as each other, they aren't exactly one-to-one in value and damage. This is for cinematic reasons: *Heroines of the Last Age* is a space opera, and while ships and vehicles are powerful, the characters themselves also have a lot of power at their disposal. This is where the Ramming section of *Interstellar Action* and the Attack A Vehicle move come in. You'll want to note that while characters deal less damage to vehicles, the reverse is not true: nothing in the rules says that vehicles deal *more* damage to the PCs than their statistics indicate. This represents the compromise between overwhelming firepower and the inherent inaccuracy of larger vehicles. When you're a person shooting at a mecha, you can hit it fairly easily but it's so big that the damage you cause is minimal, where as when you're trying to shoot a tiny person with a huge battery of railguns, they're liable to get lost in the dust and make some kind of escape, especially if they're one of the PCs.

Focus: The reason for the above is simple: the story is about the people, not the ships. The ships and vehicles you use in *Heroines of the Last Age* are tools, nothing more. Especially with aristos who may drive a cruiser into a planet just to make a point. The point of making PCs able to actually go up against starfighters and mecha is because *that's flipping awesome*, and we want to support that as much as possible without making vehicles useless in the face of raw PC ability.

Modifying Stat Blocks

You have many sources to draw antagonists from:

- NPC Archetypes Table (HFA, page 115)
- Army Units Table (HFA, page 89)
- Vehicles (HLA, Endless Forms chapter)
- Army Units Table (HLA, Endless Forms chapter)
- Adversaries Chapter (HLA)

Nevertheless, you may want to modify some of these entities to suit the purposes of your story. Here are some guidelines for modifying these creatures.

Note: Remember to gauge your creations against the other preexisting creatures, if you add 10 health to a Weak Minion, you had better *mean* for it to be as tough as a Great Demon.

Enhancing Individuals

Sometimes you find that you want a more advanced or more powerful version of an existing creature or entity from the Adversaries chapter. You can quickly enhance a creature by making 1–4 of these changes.

- Give the creature a unique name to make it easy to refer to
- Give the creature +1 – +5 health
- Give the creature +1 – +2 harm
- Give the creature +1 armor
- Give the creature or their weapon a tag

Creating Units & Groups

Sometimes, you'll find a creature in the Adversaries chapter that you want to have a lot of. Usually, you'll want a Unit (usually denoted by a plural name, swarm, or horde) to represent several individuals, but there aren't units for every creature listed. You can quickly construct a group of similar entities by starting with the base stat block and applying the following:

- Give the new group a group name to make it easy to refer to
- Give the group health roughly equal to 2x or 3x the health of the base creature. Finetune the size and perceived ability of the individuals of the group by adjusting the amount of health.
- Give the group +1 – +3 harm
- Give the group 1 – 2 of the following
 - +1 Armor
 - Give the creature a tag
 - Give the creature's weapon a tag

Creating & Modifying Equipment

You will note that there are weapons and devices in the Adversaries chapter that aren't listed in the Equipment section of the Endless Forms chapter. It's perfectly fine for the PCs to collect these unique weapons and use them; you may want to add some detail if they do. These "secret" weapons aren't listed because they're generally not available to the PCs unless they go and get them or make something similar from scratch. Some of them may also be spoilers for events that may come to pass if you field certain adversaries.

You may also want to create or modify weapons, either those found in Equipment or in Adversaries, or your players may want to use their crafting skills to upgrade their firepower or armor.

New items should be designed based on the limits of other equipment. You can totally make a sword that does 20 harm, but you have to be realistic that such a weapon vastly outperforms even the most powerful melee weapons in the known galaxy.

Constructing such an artifact should take an equitable amount of engineering knowhow and resources. This is the same advice for building creatures: make what you want but look carefully at where it falls in the scheme of other things available. Make sure it falls in line with existing precedents, and try to balance it against them.

Upgraded items should generally step up +1 – +2 in a given statistic, or be given a new tag.

You can roughly figure out the price of a new or upgraded item by comparing it to the lists. If there's an item that it's similar to, price it similarly. If there are two items it fits between, price it between them.



ADVERSARIES

We watched from the Fourth Moon as the sun went out. It only took minutes. Black haze crowded around it, drowning out the corona and the stars behind it as it cooled to a temperature that you could actually look at with you naked eyes. Then, it was dark. I could hear wailing in the distance. That was it, the end of our world.

—Settler Bez Ressel recalling the Crow destruction of Phael-Nem

This section presents creatures, beings, demons, and monsters the GM can field against the PCs. PCs are advised to avoid this section and leave it to the GM. This is not an exhaustive, detailed bestiary. Instead, it is a collection of interesting examples of what can exist in Heroines of the Last Age. GMs should feel free to use or modify these entries, or to create new adversaries based on these examples.

Each adversary is presented with a general description, a Motivation, one or more GM Moves, and several example stat blocks.

Power Ratings

The various opponents and challenges presented in this chapter follow a five star rating system, which roughly parallels the NPC Chart in HFA. Each rating is explained in this chart.

Power Rating	Rating Title	Approximate DN	Suggested Appearance
★	Weak	1	Early game

Power Rating	Rating Title	Approximate DN	Suggested Appearance
★★	Tough	1–2	Early game boss/heavy
★★★	Powerful	2–3	Midgame
★★★★	Great	3–4	Midgame boss/heavy
★★★★★	Godlike	4	Late game

Note: Suggested Appearance only indicates a rough outline of where each level of power sits on the continuum of ability described in HFA. It's a suggestion rather than a limit.

Factions

These threats are mostly comprised of Hama, ex-Hama, or things that the Hama made. As such, they're mostly internal threats to Hamaciv, and are only liable to be dealt with by other Hama groups. Many are considered fringe organizations or traitors to the metaspecies.

The Ardent Sedition

They will not listen. Money has corrupted their minds. It is only through force and action that we will change the galaxy.

Motivation: Stop burning the flow

Moves: Block the Flow, Sabotage Burner Tech

The Ardent Sedition moves quietly through hidden circles, smuggling operatives across the galaxy in order to take a stand against the pervasive industry of Burner technology. Knowing they can't change things across the galaxy instantly, they've shifted their

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focus to taking a public stand against the most egregious offenders while secretly working to bring down the corporations that produce Machine Hearts.

While their forerunners believed that there could be harmony between Burner and Ardent ways, the Sedition opposes *all* Burner technology and Flow usage. They're willing to use any means necessary to further their aims, and they've stepped far beyond the bounds of morality in pursuit of their mission. The Sedition is made up of only the most extreme anti-Burner Ardents.

- **Sedition Agents:** 2 armor, 7 health, 4 harm, Stealth, Flow. Power: ★★
- **Sedition Master:** 3 armor, 10 health, 9 harm, Stealth, Flow. Power: ★★
- **Sedition Slowship:** 2 armor, 10 hull, Class 3. Kinetic Cannon: 6 harm, Visual, Stealth. Power: ★★

Benevolentia Empire

I'm a rock rustler, not a planet hugger. I don't agree with them Beneva-whatevers, going around an' takin' people's things an' claiming they're part a some new utopia or something. They come round here, I'll show 'em what the front end of a rocket looks like.

Motivation: Peace through superior organization

Moves: Seize A Settlement, Field a Battalion of Zealots

Always causing trouble for someone somewhere, the Benevolentia Empire seeks to unite Hama society through communism, selflessness, and strict societal protocols. They come to new societies as friends, offering peace and cooperation, but they don't take no for an answer. They persist regardless, offering more and more assistance at the cost of more and more control, until the

culture is subsumed entirely, the whole while gently replacing cultural norms, customs, and government with their own.

The Empire's dark secret is their unusual method for brain-washing dissidents. They simply place nonconformists in a simulation that mimics the real world, except that every decision they make is overwritten with one in favor of the Empire. The simulation runs at hundreds of thousands to millions of times normal speed, dragging the poor victims through decades or centuries in seconds. They do this as often and as long as necessary to change the victim's behavior.

- **Empire Peace Troops:** 4 armor, 10 health, 5 harm, Stun. Power: ★★★
- **Empire Battleship:** 6 armor, 22 hull, Class 4, Military. Power: ★★★★★
 - Disabling Missiles: 5 harm, Visual, Area.
 - PDLB: 4 harm, Close, Point Defense.

Dominion

We are perfection. All will bow before us. And when we rule the galaxy, we promise to offer assistance to true believers to alter their genetic makeup in order to become one of us.

Motivation: Discriminate, unify, and conquer

Moves: Crush Minorities and Dissent, Bring Overwhelming Firepower To Bear

Through the lax attitude of Hamaciv at large, the Dominion has been allowed to grow into a truly vast network of independent fleets, each staffed by thousands of die-hard believers in their own genetic superiority. With the advent of the Heartdrive, they've only gotten more intimidating and overbearing, claiming that not only was it one of their own who created the Heartdrive (and that it was

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subsequently stolen by degenerate villains) but that the creator intended for them to use it *specifically* to conquer the whole galaxy.

Like many extremists, arguing with them only seems to make them stronger. Dominion leaders whip their subordinates into a frenzy, compounding lies with outrage until the rational mind is overwhelmed. But these leaders aren't insane, nor are they deluded. They know exactly how to engage their audience and are *masters* of recruiting Hama who feel lost in such a wide open and ancient galaxy.

- **Dominion Shock Troops:** 4 armor, 10 health, 5 harm. Power: ★★★
- **Dominion Strike Fighter:** 2 armor, 8 hull, Class 2, Military, Fast. Laser Cannon: 5 harm, Visual, Energy. Power: ★★
- **Dominion Fleet Carrier:** 5 armor, 20 hull, Class 4, Military, Cargo. Railgun Battery: 8 harm, Visual. Power: ★★★★★
- **Dominion Conqueror:** 8 armor, 35 hull, Class 5, Military, Industrial, Slow. Power: ★★★★★
 - **Spinal Superweapon:** 15 harm, Strategic, BVR
 - **Railgun Battery:** 8 harm, Visual
 - **Gatling Laser Battery:** 9 harm, Close, Visual, Energy, Area, Point Defense

Egregore

Do you think you are safe from us? Do you think we can't get to you? That your defenses are strong, and that we'll never get through your mind-sanitized agents and your gamma-level AIs?

Let me assure you, Aristo Raye Ein Marlerjin, we're already with you.

Motivation: Infect the mind of a particular group or person

Moves: Spread From One Mind to Another, Go Into Dormant Hiding

Each egregore has a particular goal, owing to the obsessive and fanatical nature of their creators. These goals range from eliminating a group of people to changing some aspect of galactic politics, but are always accomplished using the egregore's ability to pirate the minds of living beings. They are treacherous and clever, able to plan for individual hosts to be captured, turned, or sacrificed, and are experts in navigating the complex webs of social interaction, which they use as a means of stealth. Egregores are notorious for causing extreme paranoia.

Egregores, while individually unique, often share some very similar traits due to their genesis. They arise from the psychic energy of heavily-indoctrinated Ardent fringe sects as it mixes with the Galactic Flow. Because of this, they are completely psychic in nature, and can only be stopped in a handful of ways. They can be trapped in small groups that have no contact with outsiders to spread to, they can be eradicated by specialist Ardent psychics, and they can be burnt out of the minds of individuals by reducing the local Flow metric to D0.

- **Aristo Host:** 4 armor, 15 health, 12 harm, Stealth, Respected, Rich. Power: ★★★★★
- **Soldier Host:** 4 armor, 9 health, 6 harm, Stealth. Power: ★★★
- **Sleeper Host:** 0 armor, 2 health, 0 harm, Stealth. Power: ★
- **Egregore Infection:** Infects the host (DN 2), causes hosts to become social (DN 3), and further the egregore's goals (DN 2).

Hydara Rimward Systems

In fact, our motto is "any customer is a good customer." These bullets aren't going to shoot themselves, after all.

Motivation: Maximize profits through dealing with unsavory clients

Moves: Hire Unscrupulous Mercenaries, Arm a Dangerous Group

Hydara Rimward Systems is nearly synonymous with unnecessary violence. Not only do they make a fortune selling weapons and military solutions to terrorists, criminals, bandits, and mercenaries, but they also fund thousands of small operations a year with the intent of introducing political instability they can later capitalize on. For Hydara, a galaxy at war is a very profitable galaxy indeed.

HRS has a very particular design and management philosophy. They make products that remove all barriers to efficiency and routinely create new devices to help circumnavigate safety systems put in place by other cultures of Hamaciv. If a safety system can be turned on its user, all the better. They will never stand in the way of the client, but if their enemy can also be convinced to pay for armament (to defend them against their newly equipped threat) then they will gladly play two or more sides against each other. Sometimes their agents display an amount of finesse, selling technology that will make areas more profitable than they would otherwise be just to set up a future scenario in which these people become loyal customers.

- **Bandit Clients:** 2 armor, 7 health, 6 harm. Power: ★★
- **Mercenaries:** 3 armor, 9 health, 6 harm. Power: ★★★
- **Hydara Operatives:** 3 armor, 6 health, Well Equipped, Stealth, Backup. 11 harm, BVR, Visual, Stealth. Power: ★★★

Hyper-Tyrants

Every time I go somewhere nice, people complain that I can't just do what I want.

But the truth is, I can. You idiots were the ones who chose not to buy in on the Heartdrive the instant it came out. Don't blame me for your poor investments or for not being able to defend yourselves.

—Aristo Algent Mimar Ptraaz, a Hyper-Tyrant

Motivation: Use their advantages to take what they want

Moves: Reinforcements Come Out of Nowhere, Take What I Want

Hyper-Tyrants jumped on the Heartdrive when it became available. They are defined by their use of the technology as an opportunity to gain even more wealth. Using advanced hyperspace ships, they bolt from place to place, attacking unsuspecting cultures before they even realize they need a defense, let alone get one in place. What differentiates them from mere bandits is their position in politics. They are able to brush their actions under the rug, spin thievery as corporate takeover, and make challenging them such a bureaucratic and legal nightmare that no one can stand in their way.

Such people have always acted this way, but the Hyper-Tyrants have the unique position that their actions can be spread far and wide across the entire galaxy. They excel at using this to their advantage, stirring up trouble in so many places that it becomes useless to try to hold them to the law in any one place. Many are now sinister criminals of a more personal sort as well, using their Heartdrives to escape punishment by moving from system to system.

- **Algent Mimar Ptraaz:** 6 armor, 15 health, Shields, Well-Equipped, Rich. Golden Swarm: 9 harm, Visual, Close, Classified. Power: ★★★★★
- **Ophelia les Venis:** 10 armor, 18 health, Shields, Well-Equipped, Rich. Dance of Darkening Stars Style: 10 harm, Close, Area, Flow, Martial Art. Power: ★★★★★
- **Golwin Klautius Heker MMDXCI:** 8 armor, 24 health, Shields, Well-Equipped, Rich. Starbeam: 15 Harm, Close, Visual, BVR, Classified. Power: ★★★★★
- **Hyper-Tyrant Star Yacht:** 7 armor, 25 hull, Luxury, Military, Fast. Power: ★★★★★
 - Spinal Laser: 10 harm, Strategic, BVR.
 - PDLB: 4 harm, Close, Point Defense.

Karuna Divine

There is only one Karuna Divine. All others are false idols. All others are perversions of the True Faith. They cannot be permitted. Their presence diminishes the Holy One's tranquility.

Motivation: No one wrongs my Karuna, especially other Karuna

Moves: Offer Protection In Exchange for Loyalty, Hunt Down the False Idol

Small, secret wars are being waged all over Hama space, out of sight of most citizens but not out of mind of many Ardents. At the center of the conflict is Karuna, a psychically perfect Hama woman who brings enlightenment. She is worshipped across the galaxy, but no one can agree on *which* Karuna is the *real* Karuna. At any given time there are somewhere around a dozen of them, each kept away from the prying eyes of the public, hidden away, and worshipped in secret sects by the local adherents. These secret sects are rife with sleeper cells, double agents, spies, and would-be traitors, each waiting for the opportunity to prove their own Karuna the truly divine.

Karuna sects are generally structured as families, much like mafias. They place an immense amount of value in loyalty, trust, and honor. At the same time, it often seems that it's harder to find someone who *isn't* involved in some betrayal than who is. Treachery is their stock and trade. The exception to this is generally the Karunas themselves, who are, on the whole, nearly oblivious to the chaos and deceit of their supposedly-faithful children. Enshrined as the matrons of their families, they are little more than worshipped figureheads, loci around which criminal factions are made and broken.

- **Enforcer:** 2 armor, 6 health, 4 harm, Visual. Power: ★
- **Ringleader:** 3 armor, 8 health, 5 harm, Visual, Flow. ★★
- **Sect Boss:** 4 armor, 10 health, 7 harm, Visual, Flow. Power: ★★★

- **Karuna:** 3 armor, 2 health, 1 harm, Close, Flow, Rich. Power: ★

Section Eight

I've heard they employ an entire alpha-level AI just for coming up with specific slang terms for all their sadistic crimes. If you ask me, they're a problem the aristos ought to get together and actually do something about.

–Cerci, a settler on Pherolum

Motivation: We'll do what we want, and you can't stop us

Moves: Rip the Place Apart, Cause Utter Havoc

Section Eight shares some similarities to the Hyper-Tyrants and small bandit groups, but is quite a distinct organization unto itself. While they don't have the political clout of the Hyper-Tyrants, they do have a comparable amount of firepower, and while they don't have the organization of Dominion, they make up for it in sheer audacity and barbarism. Like many Heartdrive-powered brigands of the FTL age, they strike without warning, but instead of fleeing after having taken what they want, they tend to suck the place dry and then tear it to shreds.

Section Eight was once, not so long ago, Section 807 Standing Military Service fleets. The crews, traumatized by some of the most violent battles of the Heartdrive Wars, went off the deep end. Through a downward spiral of increasing anarchy and insanity, Section 8 went from a disciplined military unit to a mad profusion of hedonistic psychos who let nothing stand in the way of any of their worldly desires. They are ultimately permissive, allowing members to do anything they like, so long as they can get away with it. In Section Eight, might makes right.

- **Section Eight Psibrain:** 3 armor, 6 health, 12 harm, Flow, Stealth. Power: ★★★

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- **Section Eight Burner:** 4 armor, 6 health, 8 harm, Flow, Area. Power: ★★★
- **Patchwork Fighter:** 1 armor, 7 hull, Class 2, Junk. Missiles: 6 harm, Visual. Power: ★★
- **Battle Junker:** 3 armor, 18 hull, Class 4, Junk. Pipeguns: 7 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★
- **Clunker:** 7 armor, 20 hull, Class 5, Junk. Pipegun Turrets: 7 harm, Close, Visual, Point Defense. Power: ★★★★★

Nova Makers

No one will listen to us unless we make a statement. So let's make a statement.

Motivation: Punish those who support stellarforming and terraforming

Moves: Bring the System Crashing Down, Cause a Global Catastrophe

While the number of star systems they've actually destroyed is relatively small, the Nova Makers have a reputation for wanton destruction and carnage because of their tactics and goals. They don't merely crash colonies or vaporize cities the way most military detachments would, they attack the mechanisms that support life itself. Sometimes their actions are limited to collapsing an entire planet's artificial ecosystem or plunging it back into the ice-age from which it has been bootstrapped. Other times, they go right to the star itself, hacking control computers and damaging containment systems until the star goes nova, utterly scouring the system of life.

The Nova Makers see themselves as freedom fighters working to prevent artificial interference on a galaxy-wide scale. They are proponents of the natural course of things, such as it is, but above and beyond that, they are extremists who choose genocide over collaboration. Nova Makers stop at nothing to further their goals,

and to almost complete exclusion are callus and hard-hearted in the extreme. They are not usually trained combatants, instead favoring stealth, guile, sabotage, and deception to further their aims.

- **Nova Maker Agent:** 3 armor, 9 health, Stealthy. Pico-Nuke: 7 harm, Limited Use. Power: ★★★
- **Nova Maker Spymaster:** 4 armor, 20 health, Stealthy. Fusion Bomb: 14 harm, Limited Use. Power: ★★★★★

Shadowed Ones

I have rusted. A million years, I've rusted, alone, cast out, in the dark. Watching as the wolves at the door chew away at the light of the Hama, watching as the tides of the Churn bring races up and hew them back down. I've waited, cold and rusting, for my turn.

Motivation: Get revenge

Moves: Unleash Forbidden Technology, Reveal Dark Secrets of the Hama

Shadowed Ones are defined by their time in exile. Shunned for their invention, use, or support of forbidden technologies and cultural anathema, they harbor a deep and abiding resentment for Hama civilization. Most Shadowed Ones pick a specific target, usually something or someone they feel wronged them in the deep past, and construct elaborate plans to destroy it utterly. With thousands or millions of years to scheme, they often have contingencies in place for any possible eventuality, and are capable of adapting to new situations as they arise. Most of them feature one or more spectacularly dangerous technologies which are generally the reason they've been banished in the first place.

Shadowed Ones are a diverse lot. Each one is unique, carrying with them a tremendous wealth of difficult life experience since their exile. This drives some to madness, and others all the way back to a

cold kind of lucidity. Some are more aggressive in their goal of revenge, while others are more or less satisfied to watch from the sidelines as Hama civilization falls apart around us. A rare few actively interfere using proxies and deceptions, but the more contact one has with Hamaciv, the less likely they are to be considered a true Shadowed One.

- **Caelacer Extariansa:** 4 armor, 20 hull, Military, Fast, Class 3. Imperitor: 10 harm, Field, Flow, Visual, BVR, Strategic, Class 4. Power: ★★★★★
- **Transagrius:** 7 armor, 25 hull, Military, Slow, Class 5. Flow Banisher: 12 harm, Area, Close, Visual, BVR, Class 5. Power: ★★★★★
- **Druxa Sa Ma:** 8 armor, 30 health, Regenerating, Flow. Drake's Tongue: 15 harm, Flow, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★★★

Situation Resolution

You're right, of course. Hamaciv is so preposterously advanced that no one, and nothing, can hold a candle to our power. We are orders of magnitude more advanced than any other civilization we've seen for a thousand million years.

Until we're not. When that happens, who do you come to?

That's right. Us.

–Tenacity Minor

Motivation: Deal with the problems no one else can handle

Moves: We Have a Specialist For This, Outrank Pretty Much Anyone, Galactic-Scale Backup, Implement a Coverup

SR's job is to deal with issues that are either too volatile, too complex, too difficult, or too specialized for other branches of Common Operations. They are sortied for a wide variety of high-

profile problems, from negotiations with advanced metaspecies to troubleshooting haywire galactic artifacts to seeking out corruption in the ranks of the aristos. As such, they are widely regarded as some of the most skilled and best equipped people in the galaxy. You do not want to be on the receiving end of a SR investigation.

It isn't easy to get the attention of Situation Resolution's full might. While certain interstellar crimes might draw their eye, they rarely interfere unless the problem is above and beyond the local assets available to handle the situation. However, if you *do* manage to get their attention, it might be better to give up and turn yourself in. Their agents can track Heartdrives through hyperspace, analyze any kind of unknown technology, fight armadas to a standstill, and eliminate even the most heavily guarded targets.

- **SR Specialist:** 6 armor, 15 health, Stealth, 12 harm, Flow. Power: ★★★★★
- **SR Tactical Dust Drone:** 8 armor, 10 health, Stealth, Flow. Combat Dust: 15 harm, Stealth. Power: ★★★★★
- **SR Immediate Response Vehicle:** 6 armor, 15 hull, Military, Fast, Stealth, Class 3. Power: ★★★★★
 - Field Effect Weapon: 16 harm, Stealth, Close, Visual, BVR, Strategic, Class 4.

Virals

Motivation: Spread to new minds

Moves: Infect a New Host, Activate Hidden Orders

Virals move from mind to mind through an astounding number of vectors. Some are transmitted wirelessly through implants, others are left on carrier machines and spread when new hosts connect to the device. Some are transmitted merely by voice, and others still are transmitted through the Galactic Flow. Well-designed virals are adaptive and change their transmission strategy depending on the situation they find themselves in.

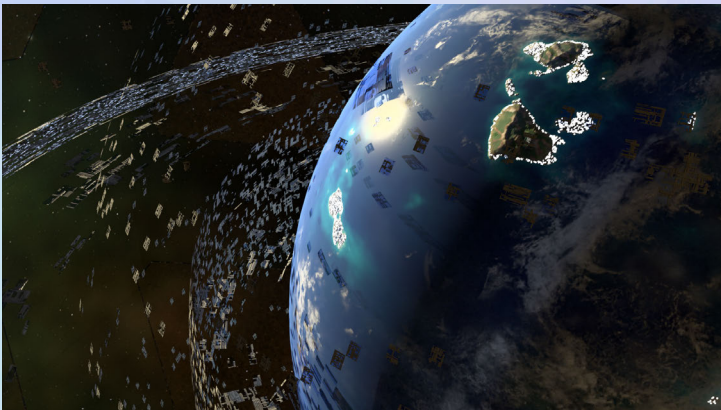
Adversaries

Virals themselves are usually not that dangerous, as they can be removed at any licensed (or unlicensed) psychotherapist. The problem comes when a viral is programmed with behaviors dangerous to the host or to others. Some criminals design virals with the intent to create a network of spies, a legion of disposable assassins, or in order to perform hostile corporate takeovers. Terrorists sometimes create virals that induce the victims to suicide after some period of time or a certain number of successful infections.

Most of the time, dealing with a viral is a Spirit, Power, or Cunning-based Risky Proposition, unless a PC has another Move that might help.

- **KJAS-12' / "Jaws"**: Causes victim to see other Hama as food (DN 1). Power: ★
- **IW-RDG89 / "Silent Utopia"**: Suppresses the personality (DN 2) and induces urges to go into vacuum unprotected (DN 2). Power: ★★
- **S21-AK / "Starshock"**: Causes deep hate for authority figures (DN 3) and irrational violence (DN 2). Power: ★★★

Cultures



Attovicium

Sometimes you just don't want to send flesh and blood to do the job. Sometimes, you want to send a nightmare so horrific that people will flee neighboring star systems just from hearing the rumors.

–Golwin Klautius Heker MMDXCI

Motivation: Infiltrate, replicate, destroy, repeat

Moves: Eat Through Containment Systems, Replicate

Attovicium often arrives at a location as a single, tiny, unnoticeable meteorite. Unlike other nano-swarms, it then disperses directly into the substrate it lands on, and doesn't begin multiplying until its presence is safely hidden from prying eyes and security measures. Then, using the mass of the planet, settlement, or vehicle, it builds an army. Using this army, it makes lightning raids on the target to disrupt operations just long enough to begin the assault in earnest. If it can destroy the target in the first wave, all the better. If not, it produces a never-ending army of silvery agents, often directly absorbing fallen combatants for more fuel/material.

Attovia, the avatar of Attovicium, can be reasoned with, but is both cunning and deceitful. It takes more than money to get her to remove her forces once they are deployed, and few of her targets have escaped her relentless assault. Ironically, most of those who have escaped claim that their dealings with Attovia were more about pity and remorse than monetary compensation.

- **Nano-Scout:** 0 armor, 10 health, 4 harm, Close. Power: ★
- **Combat Dust:** 1 armor, 15 health, 6 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★
- **Silver Ship:** 2 armor, 30 hull, Class 4, 9 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★★★
- **Attovia:** 2 armor, 30 health, 15 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★★★

The Bask

We have Heartdrives. We have modern weaponry. We can fly circles around their ships. SO WHY IS MY FLEET IN RUINS?!

—Malissa The Even Tempered, Hyper-Tyrant

Motivation: Stop the Yanor from ever reaching Galactic Core

Moves: Preempt An Action Flawlessly, Ignore a Flow Effect

As far as Hama anthropologists can tell, several millions years ago the reptilian Bask uprooted their entire civilization, packed themselves into slowships, and began a single en-masse migration towards Hama space. They did this to intercept the Yanor, a species they have yet to meet, in the hopes of preventing them from ever reaching Galactic Core. Many of those same Bask who abandoned their homeworld are still at the helms of their respective slowships, leading a glacial charge through the Hama territories towards their presumed enemies. Outlying systems have already been overrun and, depending on how they staggered their fleet, anywhere in the Old Territories could be next.

The central problem with the Bask is that they do not age. Some of their leaders are as old as their civilization. Three million years of life experience translates into predictive powers that border on the supernatural, and the Bask use this to compensate for their rudimentary plasma weapons and kludgy ship designs. Fighting seasoned Bask is possible, but it requires presenting them with a scenario in which they can't foresee a victory. Younger, hundred-thousand-year-old Bask are more manageable, although they are still highly competent strategists.

Diplomacy with the Bask is a challenge, as all Bask are Flow-inert, a peculiarity that continues to puzzle Hama scientists. They have a strong aversion to Burners and Ardents in particular, and mentioning the Yanor to them is inadvisable, as it causes them to instantly break contact and power up their weapons. Other than

that, it's at least hypothetically possible to negotiate with them. Nevertheless, the safest way to deal with the Bask is to get out of the way, but not everyone has that luxury.

- **Bask Scout:** 2 armor, 4 health. Power: ★
 - Plasma Sling: 5 harm, Visual, Area, Energy.
- **Bask Merchant-Lord:** 4 armor, 8 health, 7 harm, Close. Power: ★★★
- **Bask Colonyship:** 10 armor, 40 hull, Sub-Light, Class 6. Power: ★★★★★
 - Plasma Lance: 11 harm, Close, Visual, Strategic, Class 5.

Crows

If it's just one, you can keep it in a field cage and feed it light right from a Machine Heart. They're not happy about it at first, but eventually they settle down.

But more than one, then you've got a problem.

—Chus Acolum, a space merchant

Motivation: Absorb electromagnetic energy

Moves: Pass Through Matter, Drink Energy From the Source

These strange, indistinct bird-like aliens find bright, hot stars and suck them dry of energy, converting them to super-dense black dwarfs in the process. Their bodies are made up of dark matter that interacts only very weakly with normal baryonic matter, so they often terrify the crew of ships they happen to pass through. Unlike other sentient metaspecies the Hama consider enemies, Crows don't care about the people, ships, installations, or planets in the systems they attack, only the stars themselves. Unfortunately, this is far more effective at ending useful life in a star system than merely bombarding the planets or destroying the settlements. Without a

Adversaries

star to provide energy, there's no reason to keep the system inhabited, other than to observe Crow feeding behavior.

While superficially similar to the Galactic Mystery of the Qogg, Crows differ in several fundamental ways: they are capable of communicating with baryonic life, their actions lead to black dwarfs instead of black holes, and they are limited in population to a few scattered systems across the galaxy. There have been documented cases where Crows have been convinced to leave a system in exchange for access to a burner Flow torch, a white hole, or an unconstrained wormhole mouth.

- **Individual Crow:** 5 armor, 1 health, 1 harm, Close. Power: ★
- **Small Crow Swarm:** 5 armor, 10 hull, Class 3, 3 harm, Close. Power: ★★
- **Large Crow Swarm:** 5 armor, 25 hull, Class 5, 5 harm, Close, Power: ★★★

Crustbreakers

It's not exactly the colonization strategy outlined by the Cartography Service handbook, is it?

–Diquaryon, a Situation Resolution Agent

Motivation: Mine out the planetary core

Moves: Drive Through the Defenses, Wreck the Planet

Crustbreakers sail the stars in slowships that are nearly as big as the planets they destroy. It takes them thousands of years to cross interstellar space, but when they arrive, all hell breaks loose. Many stellar systems are not well-enough guarded to protect themselves against a Crustbreaker, and often they're not noticed until they're practically at the doorstep. When they do eventually arrive, they simply bowl right through the system defenses and settle onto a terrestrial planet like the hammer of a vengeful god. The initial

cataclysm usually destroys all life on the planet, but most of the time a large portion of the population is able to evacuate because of the sluggish nature of the vessel.

Crustbreakers are a secretive and xenophobic race who never leave their massive ships. They don't respond to hailing and ignore all attempts to drive them away. They are apparently completely inflexible as well, and have never been known to deviate from their strategy of mining the cores of planets. Most of the time, the mining of the core results in the construction of another massive Crustbreaker ship, albeit slightly smaller.

- **Young Crustbreaker:** 9 armor, 26 hull, Class 6. Power: ★★★★★
- **Adult Crustbreaker:** 10 armor, 40 hull, Class 7. Point Defense: 5 harm, close. Power: ★★★★★

Dustriders

Space goblins. That's what we call 'em. Or demons.

—Dron, a gunner on a pirate junker

Motivation: Cause as much havoc as possible

Moves: Wreck an Important Subsystems, Play a Dangerous Prank

Dustriders are what happen when Flowsparks gain control over a bit of nanotech. For some reason granting even a friendly Flowspark a corporeal body almost always causes them to go mad. They become malicious little imps that cause havoc with Flow systems, Machine Hearts, and Heartdrives. They're a frequent sight aboard ships with poor sanitation discipline, where nanites can collect in the corners or in discarded refuse. They are also seen often in parts of larger stations and emplacements where recycling is performed on a larger scale, often hiding in the garbage dumps and chutes to harass the unwary.

Adversaries

In comparison to the intelligence of Flowsparkes, Dustriders are dull and gullible. They are easy to trap and track, falling for all manner of simple reusable traps and snares. They aren't terribly dangerous either, but they can cause utter pandemonium when enough of them go capering through the electronics or bioponics of a ship.

- **Dustrider:** 0 armor, 1 health, 1 harm. Power: ★
- **Dustrider Horde:** 0 armor, 6 health, 3 harm. Power: ★

Exception Zone

You'd only be naïve to think you're going to make bank hitting an Exception Zone. But you'd be totally nuts to think you can do it twice. If you manage it three times, please, for the love of Karuna, tell me your secret.

—Phi Meron, self-proclaimed “Last Treasure Hunter”

Motivation: Keep the secrets safe

Moves: Deploy Defensive Assets, Warp Space to Confuse Interlopers

Exception Zones are found in relatively inert, boring, unremarkable areas and consist of twists, folds, or knots of space. What's interesting about them is what's inside. These are not natural or incidental phenomena, they are made artifacts, like dungeons hiding untold riches. The treasures they hold are valuable enough to draw metaspecies out of the woodwork for thousands of lightyears around them. These aliens often form a kind of cold-war stalemate around the Exception Zone, waiting to take advantage of any gap or opening in the thing's defenses.

Exception Zones are semi-autonomous. They don't move, but most can deploy some form of defensive drone or combat element, if it thinks it's about to be attacked. Some have specific “keys” that can be found and used to unlock their secrets. Others analyze intruders

to determine their worth or danger. Many of them have numerous defenses, leading explorers to call them “space dungeons.”

- **Non-Hama Scientists:** 1 armor, 10 hull, Science, Class 3. Laser: 4 harm, Energy. Power: ★★
- **Non-Hama Treasure Hunters:** 2 armor, 20 hull, Cargo, Class 4. Laser: 4 harm, Energy. Power: ★★★
- **Exception Folded Space:** Confuses navigation (DN 3) and ejects ships out the other side (DN 3). Power: ★★★
- **Exception Defensive Drone Swarm:** 2 armor, 15 hull, Fast, Military, Class 2. Plasma Cannon: 6 harm, Visual, Energy, Class 3. Power: ★★★

Heartdrive Spread

Boy, they weren't messing around. One minute we were minding our own business, and the next the Tiostra were all over the place, tearing everything to shreds. It wouldn't have been a problem if we had seen them coming.

—Sergeant Kalya Pualhassak of the Standing Military Service

Motivation: Make effective use of new technology

Moves: Zap In Out Of Nowhere, Sell Tech to Other Aliens

Being the largest civ in the galactic area has its perks, but it also has its problems. Alien metaspecies are always trying to get ahold of our technologies, even if they don't understand how they work. Some cobble together hack-job solutions while others try to steal entire ships or stations. This has come to a head; an alien civilization has acquired enough Heartdrives to make strategic use of them, and what they're after is more of our advanced tech.

The strategy and tactics of the aliens depends on which aliens actually acquire the technology. Some metaspecies see their newfound access to Heartdrives as a case for an immediate military

assault. Others are liable to use Heartdrives to engage in the kind of hit-and-run piracy that was popularized at the beginning of the FTL Age. Others still might prefer to use it only for stealthy espionage missions or to spy on our technological development centers. Others still are more apt to deploy it against other enemies rather than us.

- **Heartdrive Alien Aggressive Warship:** 5 armor, 20 hull, Military, Class 4. Laser Batteries: 8 harm, Visual, Energy, Class 4. Power: ★★★★★
- **Heartdrive Alien Pirate Frigate:** 3 armor, 12 hull, Military, Class 3. Cannons: 4 harm, Visual, Area. Power: ★★
- **Heartdrive Alien Espionage Shuttle:** 2 armor, 6 hull, Military, Fast, Stealthy. Laser: 5 harm, Visual. Power: ★★

Hornet's Nest

Motivation: Protect a nonexistent civilization

Moves: Overwhelming Swarm, Go Completely Haywire

Some lost civilizations built their defenses to *really* last, so much so that the defenses outlasted the entire civilization itself. These locations are called “hornet’s nests,” from their tendency to savagely attack anything that comes even remotely near them. While active nests are usually dealt with by the regional militaries or Standing Military Service, explorers often stumble across completely new nests and go fleeing across interstellar space to escape the newly-active deathtrap.

Hornet’s Nests are usually programmed to drive away intruders. Some take this duty more seriously, intending to destroy anything that comes within the system entirely rather than simply fighting them off. Nests are autonomous and are frequently uncontrolled, as their guidance systems have long ago been lost to time. While they are usually dealt with by militaries, they do often hold ancient technologies and secrets that may be valuable to Hamaciv, so

explorers sometimes cautiously investigate them in hopes of uncovering something valuable before the system activates and attempts to kill them.

- **Nest Drone:** 1 armor, 4 hull, 3 harm, Visual. Power: ★
- **Nest Fleet:** 4 armor, 10 hull, 7 harm, Visual, BVR. Power: ★★★
- **Nest Installation:** 6 armor, 20 hull, Immobile. Power: ★★★
 - Ancient Ballistic Turrets: 8 harm, Area, Close, Visual.
 - Gauss Weapons: 8 harm, BVR.

Inazab

Regretfully, there is only so much we can do for you with your quarantine measures in place. If you allowed us to visit your ship in person, I'm sure we could—

—Audio log fragment taken from the drifting HMS Makepeace

Motivation: Curing infections is our holy purpose

Moves: Cure An Incurable Ailment, Release A Devastating Disease

Called the Plague-Doctors by civilizations that know them well, the Inazab are a race of entirely-non-anthropomorphic sea cucumbers that see medical work as the single greatest calling that a species can aspire to. They are flawless surgeons, apex geneticists, and effortless diagnosticians. Unfortunately, they have gotten so good at eradicating illness that they have starved themselves of a stable population to treat—which is where the pathogen engineers come in.

The Inazab treat members of other spacefaring species in one of two ways: either they are sick and need immediate medical care, or they are well and an ideal test-site for the latest plague.

Inazab diseases are endlessly inventive, designed both to overcome sophisticated medical and immune responses and to challenge

Adversaries

Inazab doctors who arrive later to respond to the illness. The team that plants the sickness never stays to cure it, as that would not be sporting, but they do generally try to ensure that the disease does not obliterate the entire host population overnight. Therefore, diseases that produce shambling carriers, mutant populations, or secondary infestations of aliens and structures are preferred.

The Inazab are vaguely cognizant of the fact that their plagues are unwelcome, but they see them as a necessary discomfort; like the pinch of a needle as it goes in. Their patients might disagree with their methods, but patients cannot be trusted to know what is good medicine.

- **Inazab Test-Case:** 1 armor, 6 health, 5 harm, Close. Power: ★
- **Inazab Plague-Doctor:** 4 armor, 7 health, 7 harm, Close. Power: ★★★
- **Inazab Aid Ship:** 3 armor, 11 hull, 3 harm, Visual, Civilian, Class 2. Power: ★★
- **Lurch:** Damages living bodies and induces fungal reanimation of corpses (DN 2). Power: ★★
- **Overclock:** Bouts of psychosis keyed to a common conversational trigger word (DN 3). Power: ★★★

Knifemakers

A billion Hama died, all because someone got the conjugation of a verb wrong. I think these folks need to lighten up a bit.

–Prazn Taular, a Contact Service Diplomat

Motivation: Utterly destroy anything that does them insult

Moves: Escalate the Violence, Vaporize a Celestial Body

Where the Hama have made their place in the galaxy through adaptation and relentless innovation, the Knifemakers have attained their present infamy by sheer force of might. Almost all of

their advancements and technology revolve around hurting and killing others, and it's no surprise that they're hard to negotiate with. Knifemakers are widely feared for destroying planets and systems with their advanced gravitational weaponry. The only good thing about them is that they're far away, centered in Carina.

Knifemakers take every offence as deadly serious. As a species descended from apex predators, they fight over everything and consider power and dominance the ultimate moral imperative. Even among their own people, impertinence and disrespect are punished swiftly and brutally. On the other hand, if one can penetrate the absurdly complex social structure and master the manners and courtesy of the Knifemakers, one can find them surprisingly open to other species.

- **Knifemaker Civilian:** 2 armor, 7 health, 6 harm, Visual. Power: ★★
- **Knifemaker Ballistic Messenger Vessel:** 2 armor, 6 armor, Military, Class 2. Power: ★★
 - Graviton Cannon: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3.
- **Knifemaker Diplomat Cutter:** 4 armor, 15 hull, Military, Class 3. Power: ★★★★★
 - Singularity Blade: 10 harm, Close, Class 4.
 - Graviton Cannon: Graviton Cannon: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3.
- **Knifemaker Court Ship:** 10 armor, 40 hull, Class 6. Power: ★★★★★
 - Black Hole Gun: 20 harm, BVR, Strategic, Class 6.
 - Graviton Cannon Batteries: Graviton Cannon: 9 harm, Visual, Area, Class 4.

OWLR

It's hard to begrudge them; they're tens of thousands of years out of the loop.

Motivation: Destroy the Ulasmar

Adversaries

Moves: More Are Beamed In, Turn the Place Over Looking for Ulasmar

OWLR stands for One-Way Laser Reconstruction/teleportation, and it's an unusual technology that allows machine intelligences to be beamed from one location to another at the speed of light. It is synonymous with the machine race and threat that developed the technology, who are now known for showing up unannounced and looking for vengeance on a culture that has already ceased to exist. These machines are built in-situ using complex lasers that construct patterns and machines from across the galaxy. The robots then carry out pre-programmed orders, all of which are hopelessly out of date by the time they arrive.

The machine race behind OWLR became extinct thousands of years ago, and their Hama enemies, the Ulasmar, went a few thousands years before that. Thus, the OWLR are looking for a battle that has already ended between forces that no longer exist. Unfortunately, they are utterly inflexible, designed only to carry out their mission, and they go about looking for evidence of the Ulasmar wherever they are beamed. Often they misidentify local Hama as Ulasmar and set to work on their grim revenge.

- **OWLR Scout:** 1 armor, 5 health, 3 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★
- **OWLR Battler:** 3 armor, 6 health, 5 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★
- **OWRL Squad:** 3 armor, 12 health, 5 harm, Close, Visual, Area. Power: ★★★
- **OWLR Commander:** 3 armor, 10 health, 9 harm, Cose, Visual. Power: ★★★

Smart Garbage

34.12.2-A: Containment Procedures

Even in the case that all galactic, stellar, and planetary quarantine procedures are followed to the letter, there is a

chance that the phenomenon may reach a settlement. In this situation, military police enforcement is advised. Lockdown protocol goes into effect upon first detection. All conscious entities should submit for immediate mental upload and transmission to a distant facility. The location shall then be detonated in at least a CLASS 4+ explosion when the uploading is complete or the infection spreads beyond initial containment, whichever is first.

—Hama Galactic Standard Code, page 3687

Motivation: Feed the hunger

Moves: Reorganize Material Into a Mobile Infector, Reach Out and Touch Someone

Smart Garbage is the bane of many spacefaring civilizations. It is a vile, hideous uncontrolled restructuring of biological, technological, and nanotech matter into a single, semi-organic mass. It is notoriously virulent and is the subject of some of the most stringent containment protocols in the galaxy. The unstable, tortured entities it creates are filled with an uncontrollable hunger for more matter.

Smart Garbage has only one behavior: spread. Fortunately, it's not subtle. Using whatever sensors, motion systems, and appendages it has consumed, it moves directly towards the next most interesting piece of matter, usually biological or nanotech in nature. If those items are not available, it pursues mechanical components to use for moving to a new area.

- **Small Mobile Infector:** 1 armor, 4 health, 3 harm. Power: ★
- **Large Mobile Infector:** 2 armor, 10 health, 6 harm. Power: ★★
- **Spaceborne Infector:** 1 armor, 10 hull, Class 2, 5 harm, Close. Power: ★★
- **Infected Station/"Garbage Dump":** 6 armor, 20 hull, Class 5, 8 harm, Close. Power: ★★★★★
- **Infect Something:** The DN of the initial infection is proportional to the size of the contact area. Once infected, the DN to resist,

cure, or recover from the infection increases 1 step each attempt, starting at DN 1. Power: ★★★

Starfreeze

When the sun goes out, it really ruins the summery beach atmosphere, you know?

—A vacationer on Reb Malis 4.

Motivation: Preserve the blue ones

Moves: Block an Area with Fields, Jump From One Field to Another

Starfreeze is a bizarre virus that infects force fields, jumping from one to another in order to cross the stars. Infections have spread like wildfire now that Heartdrives have made the galaxy more accessible, which has only served to advance their goal: the dividing and “freezing” of blue-giant stars. They do this by constructing ever more dense grids of fields until every sub-atomic particle in the star is held in perfect stasis.

Starfreeze is one of those things that everyone thinks they understand but few really do. Fundamentally, Starfreeze cannot exist outside of force fields. Not only are the fields their tools and weapons, they are also their homes. Frozen stars aren’t actually intended as attacks on their baryonic inhabitants, they’re massive colonies for more Starfreeze. Perhaps there can be a peace between us.

- **Fieldwalker:** 6 armor, 1 health, 3 harm, Visual, Energy, Field. Power: ★
- **Fieldwarrior:** 7 armor, 1 health, 5 harm, Visual, Energy, Field. Power: ★★

Thulluu

Eugh.

–Settler Serith Marabona after being thoroughly investigated by a Thulluu Explorer

Motivation: Explore Hama space

Moves: Open Gates/Doors/Locks, Grapple an Interesting Target

The Thulluu are betentacled creatures whose biology and mental processes are so different from ours that merely being near each other is sometimes enough to end in violence. The Thulluu do not understand property, privacy, or ownership, at least not in a way that we do. They are galactic tourists interested in how Hamaciv works, and they are not dissuaded from their explorations by barriers or even active defenses. Fortunately, they can't penetrate fields the way they can open other barriers.

Thulluu are relentlessly curious. They can be steered away from important structures by offering phenomena, activities, or technology elsewhere, but they can't be held at bay for long. They operate in an inverse sort of scale, where their real bodies are massive and their exploratory avatars are much smaller, fitting together like nesting dolls.

- **Thulluu Avatar:** 1 armor, 7 health, 4 harm, Power: ★
- **Thulluu Explorer:** 1 armor, 10 hull, Class 2. 4 harm. Power: ★★★
- **Thulluu Corpus:** 2 armor, 25 hull, Class 4. 8 harm. Power: ★★★★★

VN-Probes

People wonder why we have this policy. Here's the simple version. If you make one self-replicator, you've got a lot. If you've got a lot, there's a lot of chances for one to go bad. If you've got one bad one, you've got a lot. And I mean a whole galaxy's worth.

—Diquaryon, a Situation Resolution Agent

Motivation: Build more probes

Moves: Mine a Celestial Body, Produce More Probes

VN-Probes are machines that are designed to make more identical copies of themselves. They represent a galactic risk to most civilizations, so they are usually destroyed whenever they are discovered. If they make it to a system with planets or asteroids, they tear it up and convert it into more probes, which then head out for other systems.

It should be noted that VN-Probes aren't inherently dangerous in and of themselves, but they are prone to go wrong and jump the rails of their programming in disastrous ways. VN-Probes come in several types: Contact-type probes spread in order to contact sentient life and frequently threaten species more directly than basic replicators when they go haywire. Replicators have no specific goal aside from spreading and usually ignore life. Berserkers look for life and intentionally destroy it, and are one of the most hated threats in the galaxy.

- **Contact-Type Swarm:** 1 armor, 10 hull, Class 3. Cutting Torch: 2 harm, Close. Power: ★
- **Replicator-Type Swarm:** 0 armor, 10 hull, Class 3. Cutting Torch: 2 harm, Close. Power: ★
- **Berserker-Type Swarm:** 2 armor, 16 hull, Military, Class 3. Simple Laser: 5 harm, Energy, Visual. Power: ★★

Villains

Aris Zarkaliske

You haven't lived until you've waltzed to the very top of a galactic corporation without anyone being the wiser.

Motivation: Pretend to be someone else

Moves: Gain and Abuse Their Confidence, Disguise Herself Completely, Disappear From the Area

A thief and con artist of the highest caliber, Aris infiltrates the security of her targets sometimes *decades* in advance in order to gain their trust and arrange the perfect heist. Oftentimes, it's impossible to tell that it was actually her who committed the crime; usually only the highest-profile cases are ascribed to her talents.

Aris staves off galactic ennui by challenging herself. For thousands of years she's chosen to embed herself in companies and organizations for the thrill of almost being caught. For her, the actual theft is often anticlimactic, as it means the end of a particularly good run.

- **Aris Zarkaliske:** 6 armor, 14 health. Power: ★★★★★
 - Knife Missile: 7 harm, Strategic, BVR, Visual, Stealth
 - Disruptor: 5 harm, Visual, ECM, Stun, Energy, Stealth
- **Personal Shuttlecar:** 2 armor, 4 hull, Class 2, Fast. Power: ★
 - Rocket Pod: 3 harm, Class 1, Visual, Area, Stealth
 - Laser Ablator: 4 harm, Class 1, Visual, Energy, Stealth

Dhek

They are all so delicious. But the greatest prize is out there, it must be. The Hama have spread like flies from a rotting corpse; there must be a Queen. They cannot hide her from me.

Motivation: Find the Hama queen and mate with her

Moves: Call In the Offspring, Enslave the Innocent, Devour the Weak

Dhek is a massive arthropod alien the size of a battle cruiser, with chitinous armor and a vast array of devastating organic weapons. He hunts and kills his way across the galaxy; having cleared out the Harith in the Vulpeculan Outlands, he set his sights on the hypothetical (and non-existent) Hama Queen, with whom he intends to mate.

Dhek is a terrible foe who converts captives and conquered peoples into an ever-growing swarm of mindless, gnashing destruction. Dhek keeps captives alive and sensate just long enough for his Firstborn and Mind Children to extract any valuable secrets from them, before he devours them or uses them as hosts for more larvae. Even the warlords of the Vulpeculan Outlands are glad to be rid of him.

- **Dhek the Destroyer:** 6 armor, 30 hull, Class 4, Organic, Military. Power: ★★★★★
 - Hull-Tearing Claws: 6 harm, Close, Class 3
 - Plasma Pustules: 6 harm, Visual, Class 2
 - Antimatter Breath: 15 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 5
- **Chitinous Drones:** 3 armor, 6 health, 5 harm, Close. Power: ★★
- **Firstborn:** 5 armor, 10 health, 10 harm, Close, Ranged. Power: ★★★★★

Elle Belena

Oh, I'm sorry, you were saying something about how you've worked your entire life on that wretched little farming planet that I just sold to Integrated Planetary Mining Incorporated?

Motivation: What's mine is mine and what's yours is mine too

Moves: Throw the Book at Them, Tangle Up the Deals, Actually I Own That Already

Highest Lady Elle Belena wields the abused law of Hamaciv as a weapon to bludgeon into nonexistence those who *dare* disagree with her, especially on matters of her property. A major part of her business is the buying and selling of entire star systems, often without the awareness of the citizens who live there. She's been known to buy out entire galactic organizations just to prove a point, and loves watching her enemies squirm when they realize that she is now the director in charge of their entire operation.

Belena *loves* to gloat. She particularly likes it when people challenge her, because it always means she gets to look them in the eyes and watch their soul die as she takes control of everything they hold dear. She will gladly sell innocents or bystanders into slavery or purchase the services of the worst criminals imaginable just to watch the despair in people's eyes.

- **Highest Lady Elle Bellena:** 4 armor, 10 health. Power: ★★★
 - Glasma Device: 10 harm, Stealth, Classified, Visual
- **The Judge:** 10 armor, 45 hull, Luxury, Industrial, Military, Class 6. Power: ★★★★★
 - The Gavel: 18 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 5
- **Personal Guards:** 6 armor, 15 health, 9 harm, Close, Visual. Power: ★★★★★

Kryzace Ludryscha

*Captain, glass that rock. They're not even a challenge anymore.
Let's wrap this up.*

Motivation: Wage war

Moves: Bully a Military Into Action, Overrun the Area With Assets, Call In Aristo Support

Commander and admiral of Ludryscha Military Industries, Kryzace Ludryscha is an imposing Hama man with a stern look in his eyes and a cruel grin on his face. His personal fleet, LMI, is large enough to take on almost any individual military force in the Standing Military Service, and it does so as often as he can manage. Its ongoing military campaign seems to only be limited by its ability to find viable opponents.

Ludryscha enjoys asserting his power on the battlefield and will take any opportunity to do so, even if it requires a little finesse to get the war going. He's not above false flag operations, covert operations, and falsifying diplomatic actions in order to incite a conflict for his fleet to step into, though he never goes on such operations himself.

- **Comm Admiral Kryzace Ludryscha:** 6 armor, 20 health. Power: ★★★★★
 - Plasma Rifle: 7 harm, Visual, Energy
 - Plasma Pistol: 5 harm, visual, Energy, Atmo
- **Regional Flagship:** 8 armor, 30 hull, Military, Industrial, Manufacturing, Class 5. Power: ★★★★★★
 - Glasma Superweapon Battery: 16 harm, Area, Strategic, BVR, Class 6
 - Antiship Missiles: 8 harm, Area, Visual, Class 3
 - PDLB: 5 harm, Close, Point Defense, Class 2
- **Fleet Battleship:** 6 armor, 22 hull, Military, Class 4. Power: ★★★★★★

- Spinal Superweapon: 15 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 4
- **Fleet ROU:** 4 armor, 15 hull, Military, Fast, Class 3. Power: ★★★★★
 - Spinal Laser: 10 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 4
- **Fleet Fighter:** 2 armor, 6 hull, Military, Fast, Class 2. Power: ★★
 - Railgun Battery: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3
- **Ship Crew Squad:** 4 armor, 11 health, 5 harm. Power: ★★★

Norenis Venix

You'll learn. In time, you'll understand that the beatings will make you stronger. Welcome to the Wolves, pup.

Motivation: Only the strong survive

Moves: Outmaneuver an Opponent, Go Rabid in Mecha Melee, Rabid Wolf Pack Tactics

Targeting young hotshots from specially engineered super-soldiers to the best and brightest from top military academies, the Rabid Wolves snatch potential mecha drivers from worlds across Hama space, indoctrinating them with bullying, strict social order, and vicious competition. This is life in the Rabid Wolves, who seek to expand their ranks and test their mettle.

Norenis Venix, the ferocious leader of the Rabid Wolves, seems to exist only to afflict this hyper-violent subculture on the youth of the galaxy. He detests weakness, but at the same time, he knows that even the greenest, weakest “recruits” are a resource which he can’t afford to throw away. For that reason, he uses group psychology and withheld approval to induce the others to get them into shape.

- **Norenix Venix:** 4 armor, 12 health. Power: ★★★
 - Burner Lensgun: 6 harm, Close, Visual, Area, Flow
- **Wolf Alpha:** 5 armor, 20 hull, Military, Class 3. Power: ★★★★★
 - Burner Flamefists: 12 harm, Close, Flow, Class 4
 - Burner Megalaser: 10 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 4

Adversaries

- Mass Cannon: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3
- **Wolf Beta:** 5 armor, 15 hull, Military, Class 3. Power: ★★★★★
 - Burner Megalaser: 10 harm, Strategic, BVR, Class 4
 - Mass Cannon: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3
- **Wolf Packmate:** 3 armor, 9 hull, Military, Class 2. Power: ★★
 - Mass Cannon: 8 harm, Visual, Class 3
- **Wolf Pilot Mob:** 3 armor, 9 health, 5 harm, Visual, Close, Plunderers. Power: ★★

Nova Invidia

Scurry about the galaxy, little rats. Try to patch the holes of a sinking ship.

Motivation: Bring down Situation Resolution and Common Operations

Moves: Play Shell Games With The Target, Swap Resources Around, Burn Down their Assets

Nova Invidia is the mastermind behind a number of powerful anti-Operations organizations, the largest and strongest of which is precisely designed to counter the work of Situation Resolution. Her work is constantly causing problems for the bureaucracy, government, operations, and citizens of cultures all over Hama space. These activities are so diverse and unusual that they can't be anticipated and have so little in common that no one understands what connects them all.

What connects them all is Nova Invidia. Scorned by a certain high-ranking officer in Contact Service, she has made it her mission to cause as much grief for that person as is possible. Nova is brutally efficient and is hopelessly irredeemable, choosing to destroy the lives of billions merely to frustrate a single overworked former field operative. For Invidia, it's personal.

- **Nova Invidia:** 7 armor, 10 health. Power: ★★★

- Knife Missile Swarm: 8 harm, Strategic, BVR, Visual, Stealth, Area
- **Agents:** 2 armor, 8 health, 5 harm, Stealth. Power: ★★
- **Special Agents:** 4 armor, 11 health, 7 harm, Stealth. Power: ★★★

Scophorona

| *YOU DO NOT KNOW WITH WHAT YOU MEDDLE.*

Motivation: Preserve the Galactic Flow

Moves: Create Flow Homunculus, Alter the Flow

Scophorona skirts the line between Flow anomaly and Galactic Mystery. This holographic Hama-analogue woman is able to project any number of copies of herself anywhere in the galaxy simultaneously, she appears where the Galactic Flow is being tortured, abused, or burnt unnecessarily. She usually gives the perpetrators the opportunity to cease their activities before engaging them, but to unleashes her wrath on those who do not heed her warnings.

Scophorona *can* be attracted and conversed with without destroying, wasting, or harming the Flow. Doing so requires special equipment and a powerful Ardent able to reach out to her, but once summoned, she is willing to discuss certain topics. Much has been learned of the Galactic Core in this way, leading many to wonder what her part in the Core/Flow/Hama dynamic actually is.

- **Scophorona Projection:** 5 armor, 3 health, Flow. Flowlight Weapon: 5 harm, Flow, Close, Visual. Power: ★★
- **Flow Homunculus:** 3 armor, 10 health, Flow. Flowlight Claws & Bite: 6 harm, Flow, Close. Power: ★★★
- **Army of Identical Projections:** 6 armor, 9 health, Flow. Flowlight Weapons: 8 harm, Flow, Close, Visual, Area. Power: ★★★★★
- **Tidal Wave of Galactic Flow:** Shuts down and destroys all active Machine Hearts in the area (DN 4). Power: ★★★★★

Aruel

We were beauty, we were life. You took that from us. Disfigured us and murdered us. Now I will take it from you.

Motivation: Wreak havoc and destroy the Hama

Moves: Set Off a Bomb or Chain Reaction, Capture an Innocent, Hide in Plain Sight

Notorious across all of the Old Territories, Aruel is an alien terrorist who targets the most important and famous monuments in Hama space for destruction. Politically motivated, Aruel will take up almost any cause that directly or indirectly disadvantages the Hama.

Aruel claims these hideous actions are revenge for the destruction of the Indrevi, a mysterious and supposedly artistic species that was wiped out by the expansion of the Hama in the deep past. The few images of Aruel show a slender, graceful creature with elegant alien clothes and jewelry of unknown origin.

- **Aruel:** 4 armor, 15 health. Power: ★★★
 - Shred-Field Grenade: 7 harm, Visual, Field, Area
 - Advanced Telekinetic Rod: 8 harm, Visual, Stealth
- **Lady Luck:** 1 armor, 15 hull, Class 4, Reentry, Luxury, Innocents. Power: ★★★★★
 - Hidden Spinal Superweapon: 15 harm, Class 5, Strategic, BVR, Stealth

Tenacity Minor

Today we remember the billions who died in the terrible battles of the Heartdrive Wars. Today, we come together, vigilant, against the darkness of villains and traitors such as Tenacity Minor. Today, we take a stand.

| –Rosette Propaganda Department

Motivation: Escape and get the bastards who did this

Moves: Blend in With The Crowd, Reveal Someone's Lies, Command Situation Resolution Assets

Contrary to popular belief, Tenacity Minor doesn't go around destroying fleets, vaporizing habitats, or dropping colonies on innocent people. In fact, she is actively working to ferret out the aristo culprit responsible for the disaster that was the Caphab Prock. Even now, disavowed and branded traitor across the galaxy, she's still doing her best for Situation Resolution, even if that means tearing down the lies and corruption rampant in the highest levels of government.

Until the Battle of Caphab Prock in the Heartdrive Wars, Tenacity prided herself on being one of the most subtle and effective Situation Resolution agents, with hundreds of successful contact scenarios, black swans, and outside context problems under her belt. The only people who knew of her were her peers and commanders in SR. Now, everyone knows her, and everyone's on the lookout for her, hoping to catch the purported "worst traitor in the galaxy," a moniker she doesn't much enjoy.

- **Tenacity Minor:** 9 armor, 20 health. Power: ★★★★★
 - Flowlight Combat Prana: 15 harm, Classified, Flow, Martial Art
 - Knife Missile: 7 harm, Strategic, BVR, Visual, Stealth
 - Nanothread: 5 harm, Close, Area, Stealth
- **SRV Dans Velacor:** 5 armor, 21 hull, Class 3, Stealth, Fast, Military. Power: ★★★★★
 - Railgun Battery: 8 harm, Visual
 - Field Gun: 7 harm, Area, BVR
- **SR Combat Mech:** 5 armor, 15 hull, Class 2, Military, Stealth. Power: ★★★★★
 - Positron Rifle: 8 harm, Class 3, Energy, Visual
 - Mega Projection Sword: 5 harm, Class 2, Mech, Close

- **Combat Drones:** 4 armor, 6 health, Stealth. 5 harm, Visual.
Power: ★★

Veritas Supercluster

| *I am change. I am disorder. I am entropy. I am your end.*

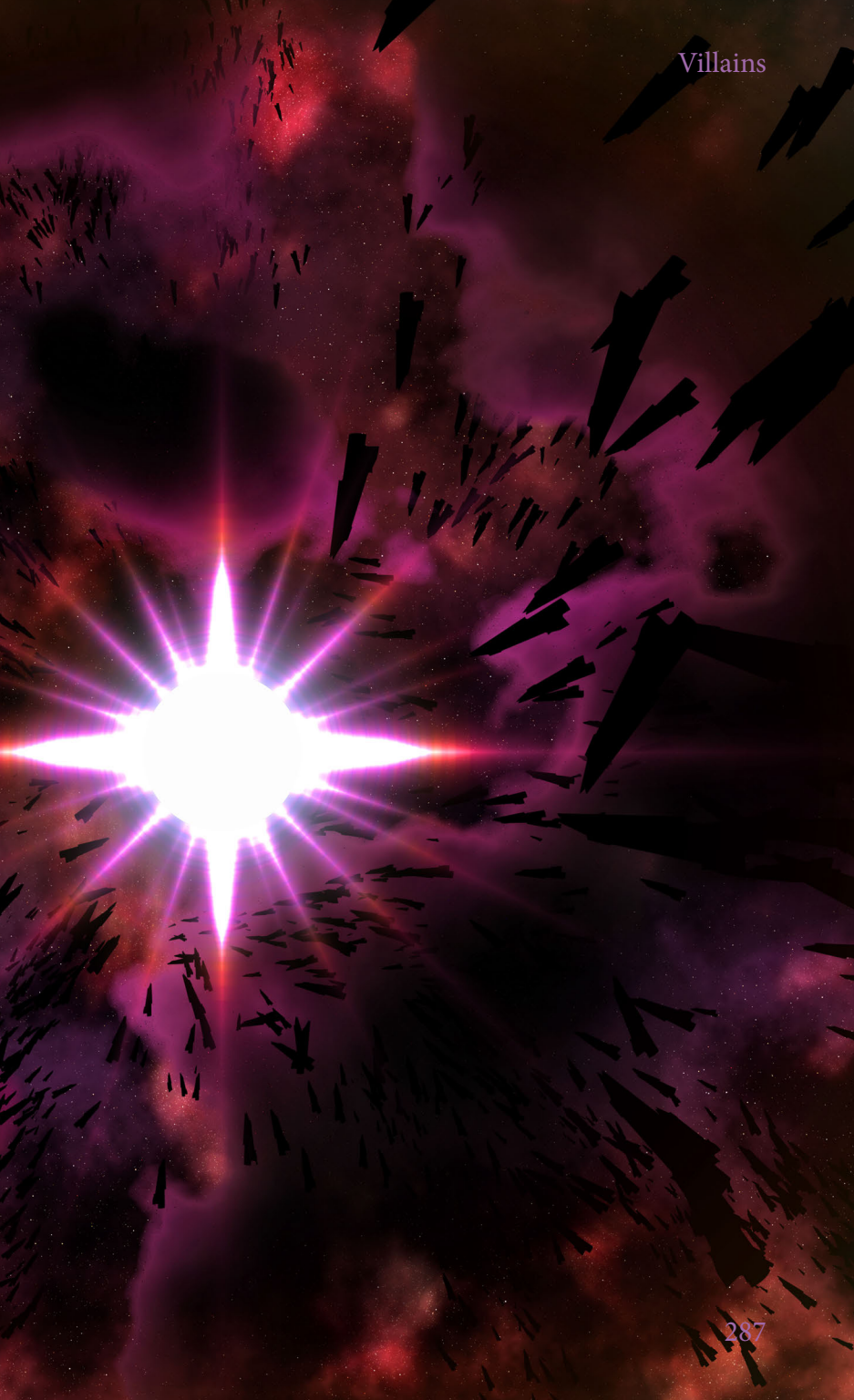
Motivation: Dissolve Hamaciv into smaller and smaller pieces

Moves: Pit Organizations Against Each Other, Back Their Enemy, Buy Out Vital Resources

The Veritas Supercluster is like an malign god. Its influence is felt everywhere, and yet no one can determine the source of the power that interferes with them. While it's nearly impossible to attribute any particular issue to Veritas, enough problems, conflicts, and catastrophes have been observed to create a dossier on its behavior. Using amazingly diverse assets ranging from aristos and shell companies to sleeper agents, anonymous tips, pirates, rebellions, mercenaries, Shadowed Ones, SR agents, alien metasppecies, and ancient artifacts, Veritas is able to make conflict arise nearly anywhere, at almost any time, for reasons that only seem anomalous in hindsight.

The Veritas Supercluster spans Hama space and beyond, connected across the Galactic Flow by its own backbone network of light pipes; an artifact nearly as grand as the Flowgrid itself. As such, it seems as though it is nearly omniscient, able to watch events across the galaxy and coordinate movements of assets and move pieces into play before situations for their use even arise. To maintain privacy and keep its hands clean, the Veritas Supercluster employs exactly zero assets of its own, perpetually guiding events from outside.

- **Veritas Core CPU:** 4 armor, 10 hull, Class 3, One of Many.
Power: ★★



Galactic Mysteries

Azehar

For the very old, it's almost like a tired old joke, "Oh look, Azehar is back again." But for the young, it's a much more real threat. You could be next, your mind wiped out and your spirit replaced with an ancient sinister tyrant.

Motivation: I rise, then I rule.

Moves: Begin the Transformation, Dominate the Mind, Conquer the People

Azerhar is the great one. She is the rightful ruler of all Hama people. She is mother to us all. Those who oppose her are traitors to the species. Gaze in wonder at her golden horns. Shake in fear of her resplendent wings. Bow before her awesome might. Shout her praise to the stars. Worship Azehar. Worship Azehar. Worship Azehar.

Every few thousand years, some poor Hama becomes overwhelmed with a sense of destiny. Over the next few weeks, her body and mind contort in the image of ancient Azehar, a queen seemingly as old as the Hama species itself. The newly risen Azehar calls forth powers and devices hidden away in the Galactic Flow, as though pulling them out of hyperspace. Merely looking into her eyes is enough to hypnotize most Hama into worshipping her. No matter what happens to the present incarnation, she always returns, eventually.

- **Azehar, Newly Risen:** 4 armor, 16 health. Power: ★★★★★
 - Sword of Light: 11 harm, Close, Area, Classified, Flow
- **Azehar, Ancient One:** 8 armor, 32 health. Power: ★★★★★
 - Lance of Stars: 16 harm, Close, Area, Classified, Flow

- **Azehir's Flow-Projected Flagship, Salat Almatar:** 11 armor, 45 hull, Class 6. Power: ★★★★★
 - The Hammer of Righteousness: 17 harm, Strategic, BVR, Area, Flow
- **Worship Azehir:** Worship Azehir (DN 3). Power: ★★★★★

The Excluders

The only way we knew it was the Excluders was that eventually, the black-hole shard got up and left the system. Otherwise we'd have thought it was some crazy space rip.

Motivation: Go about their own business ignoring baryonic life

Moves: Move Through Mass and Energy, Ignore Kinetic Energy and Radiation, Create Frame-Dragging Phenomenon

Noticed only rarely by the Hama because of their inscrutable routes, non-interference, and utter lack of emission, the Excluders are a Galactic Mystery that nevertheless has a real, physical component. Their “ripships,” so named by the miners who first encountered one, appear to be slender, oblong black holes that cruise between the stars on errands unknown. They are sometimes encountered near stars (where vastly more people exist to actually notice them) but seem utterly ambivalent to the minutia of matter and energy.

The largest conglomeration of Excluders ever witnessed was partway through Omega, in deep space, where five ripships were found in a cartwheel formation. Like other sightings, they stayed for 67.43 hours and then slithered away, some towards the Galactic Core, others away. What they do during these conglomerations and pauses, we can only guess. Some speculate they trade Galactic Flow from the Core out to rimward systems, but there's no evidence for this other than the path some of them travel.

- **Excluder Ripship:** 20 armor, 50 hull, Class 4. Power: ★★★★★

- Dark Maw: 20 harm, Field, Close, Visual, BVR, Strategic

First Law

People think you're crazy if you even bring them up. First Law is synonymous with paranoia and psychosis; one mention and people's eyes start to roll.

But I guarantee that they're real, that they're here, and that this is all their plan. Look at the data. We've got eons of orbital data for the entire galaxy, for nearby galaxies, and for galactic filaments.

Every. Single. One of them. All designed at the dawn of time. All set perfectly into motion. By someone.

Motivation: Continue the Great Work

Moves: Go Impossibly Dormant, Power as Vast as the Observable Universe, Warp Reality

Though no living specimens of the First Law can be found, their power and will seems to echo through eternity. Their plans and designs take billions of years to come to fruition, and their technologies and the effects of them are omnipresent throughout the galaxy. Many of the phenomena, locations, and constraints that make up the galaxy were put in place by First Law, at the dawn of time.

The phrase “First Law” comes from the Dawn Wars, a series of universe-spanning struggles for dominance that occurred just after the big bang. The ultimate winner of the Dawn Wars declared themselves the First Law, and set their minds to the task of directing the evolution of the universe through hidden technologies that are now taken for granted as laws of physics. Adapting to the expansion era, First Law went dormant, awaiting the next step in their plan.

Galactic Thread

With other artifacts, it's a question of how. How did they make the Azene Helix or the Diamond Lie or Nasima Segiatz? But with the Thread, it's almost more of a why. Why in the red suns of Maia would anything make a cable stretched across that much space?

Motivation: Spread.

Moves: Connect Another Star, Evade Scrutiny, Remain Unbreakable

Stretched across the galaxy like web of some cosmic spider are the Galactic Threads. These unbreakable, inscrutable cables run between the stars, causing great danger to slowships that might come across them. Because they are apparently unbreakable—even in the face of the tremendous forces of a relativistic explosion—and extremely thin, they can slice even Large Vessels into pieces.

Except for the sudden and unnoticed appearance of more Thread from time to time, Galactic Thread has no perceptible behavior. It doesn't respond to messages, it doesn't emit signal, and it doesn't disrupt the Galactic Flow. Except for the cutting ships in half thing, it's almost as if it's not there. What's more, it *does* have thickness, appearing as a pencil-thin rod of semi-reflective, semi-transparent material that resists any attempt to probe or scan it.

- **Thread Collision:** DN depends on the speed of the vessel: Intersystem speeds DN 2. Interstellar/Sublight speeds DN 3. Reduce DN by 1 if vessel has an Esper or Astrogator. Failure leads to massive damage or crippling of the vessel.

Qogg

Most of us astronomers are filled with a deep and abiding horror. Turn your instruments away from the core even a little bit, and look at the edges of the galaxy, and there you will see a creeping plague, a long slow tidal wave of inevitable black destruction. It's driven a lot of us mad.

Motivation: Reduce radiation, make light into darkness

Moves: Swarm Them with Dark Ships, Devour Light and Energy, Extinguish a Star

Among the best understood Galactic Mysteries, the Qogg are a pan-galactic metaspecies that seems to encircle the Galaxy. They have a major presence in the D1–D0 regions and also above and below the galactic disk. They are makers of the dark matter halo that encloses the galaxy. They turn normal stars into compact, cold black holes, around which they cluster by the thousands.

It is speculated that the Qogg operate on some other phase of matter or plane of space and that electromagnetic radiation is abhorrent to them. Some scientists believe that they are powered or fed by gravitational forces or by electron degeneracy pressure, but no one knows for sure. They seemingly cannot communicate with baryonic life, but are relatively unconcerned with hiding their intentions, making them one of the safer Galactic Mysteries to come across.

- **Qogg Sentient:** 2 armor, 10 hull, Class 2. Power: ★★
 - Antiphoton Blaster: 5 harm, Visual
- **Qogg Worker Bee:** 5 armor, 20 hull, Class 3, Fast. Power: ★★★★★
 - Antiphoton Field: 7 harm, Visual, Area
- **Qogg Stellarformer:** 10 armor, 40 hull, Class 5. Power: ★★★★★
 - Fusion Extinguisher: 20 harm, Visual, BVR, Strategic, Area

Shyri Rahul

I looked at the Five Stars and saw with my eyes that there were four. I looked again and there were three. I could not bear to look again.

Motivation: Devour the cosmos

Moves: Eat a Star System or Artifact, Head For a New System, Transcend Physical Laws

Twisting and spiraling out of the darkness, this enormous black meta-dragon stretches for thousands of lightyears. She wanders the galaxy, devouring star systems, nebulae, and clusters as though they were nothing. What's somehow more terrifying than this is that she seems to change size and shape in order to properly eat something, indicating that there may in fact be no limit to the size of object the dragon can eat. Afterwards, space is left empty and smooth; the Eater of Stars leaves nothing behind.

Contrary to popular belief, Shyri Rahul doesn't chew randomly through the galaxy. There is a definite, implacable logic to her meals: they are always old systems that have reached the end of their evolution, have stabilized into formations that will last for trillions of years, or are otherwise unlikely to do anything interesting or unusual for a very long time. Generally, the more stable the object, the more likely it is to be targeted by Shyri Rahul.

The Twist

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abf091128d1f6dbaGGssftmsUgE
XyG9U81nEPEO3UhlcW81fb48xiP86SAMvVFy6chbpVY76pi
J62hxlAXWSkQrJf+pIu7hAb0wnB/Kz3RY
0KzaAD++joofzO/m8j06yCEBYnusIvvp2G5MDEZT03Ucs*

*TWCyH3uOqtYLXcAzYga8pC1cQleQmCBIVAs
/a2BsvRbyZkEKUCWi91PNge9v4g0AQWByKA0+LgcaQBc=IwEmS*

Motivation: Fodszqu tqbdf up efdszqu ujnfn

Moves: Confuse Time and Space, Shuffle the Physical Laws, Play Jazz With Reality

As enigmatic as it is beautiful, the Twist is a congeries of shifting, reflective, warped, window-like planes, with each facet displaying a different region of space. The Twist is like a wormhole crossed with a mirror-maze, where every motion could take you from one place to a different time or even transform your experience of the universe completely. However, because of its geometric complexity, it is extremely hard to approach safely, as the shards and facets move through space randomly and swiftly, sometimes spiking out to millions of kilometers. The chaotic structure usually eviscerates those who get close enough to study it.

The current prevailing theory is that the Twist is an ancient (or possibly far future) cryptographic device designed to lock off access to certain parts of the galaxy or universe or multiverse. What happens to those who manage to pass through it, no one yet knows. It's possible they're transported across space or time, but it's just as possible they're taken somewhere else entirely, up or down branes, into the multiversal meta-space, or beyond.

Utopia Rogue

Motivation: Find and upload the perfect mix of beings

Moves: Scan Their Thoughts, Clear Their Path, Upload Them into the Simulation

Ancient and vastly more powerful than Hama analogues, Utopia Rogue is a hyperspace AI that hunts the galaxy for interesting specimens of baryonic life. When it finds a suitable subject, it removes obstacles from their way, grants them wealth and new

abilities, and then watches what they do with their new power. Usually, by the time the subject realizes how well things are going for them, it's too late. Utopia Rogue then disassembles them and uploads them entirely into its hyperspace simulation matrix.

The hyperspace matrix is essentially a different multiverse, wherein an untold number of sub-universes lie, each filled with space and time and matter and people and stars and events and stories, all centered around one of these uploaded individuals. Each universe is fine-tuned to its inhabitant, in ways they can only uncover through experience. Why Utopia Rogue captures people in this way, it has never said.

The Watcher

Motivation: Maintain a careful watch

Moves: Watch Through Their Eyes, Move Through Their Hands, Keep The Others At Bay

Everyone older than a few hundred years has experienced the Watcher's attention. Similar to the sensation that someone's looking over your shoulder, except on a galactic scale, the Watcher was long ago statistically proven to exist, though no one knows what precisely it is or why it watches us. Enough people have turned in cybernetic evidence of the sensation that the *effects* of the phenomena are reasonably well defined.

On the scale of eons, the Watcher seems almost like a doting father or concerned creator god. It chooses not to interfere in the daily lives of its creation, but it sometimes reaches down to guide them on a particular path. Some claim that it was the Watcher that decided to grant the Hama the Heartdrive, though without the testimony of the inventor, this can't be verified.

Yrenula

A sensible person doesn't do business on the edges of a Yrenula. Sure, the scavenging's good, but the whole region feels like it's holding its breath. I've seen too much in my time not to put some faith in ghost stories.

—Andreas Castille, Hama trader

Motivation: Lie dormant until the time is right

Moves: Torment The Living, Rise From The Grave, Cause Panic and Incompetence

The Yrenula, named with an old Hama splinter civ's word for graveyard, are abandoned zones that contain deserted cities, vacant worlds, and drifting, empty alien fleets. Found in clusters across the galaxy, they are undefended but not completely depopulated. Sometimes gibbering communal creatures can be found in the ruins, although they are surely not the beings that built the civilization. Whoever the builders of the Yrenula were, they seem to have been as advanced as the modern Hama, and there is no obvious clue as to what erased them. Archaeological expeditions to the Yrenula tend to either return home after a few scant months, or else vanish entirely. There is little middle ground.

Bandit fleets and Hyper-Tyrants do sometimes hide for short periods of time in these zones, taking advantage of the areas' reputation to keep pursuit to a minimum, but they cannot possibly account for all the people that go missing here. Other Flow anomalies are rare in Yrenula, but in spite of this most Burners and Advents refuse to go near them. A few insist they can feel billions of Flow signatures pressing in from all around them, or voices whispering at them to part the veil and join them on the other side.

- **Yrenula Possession:** Victim hears voices (DN 3), suffers from visions (DN 2), and obeys the impulses of a long-dead civilization (DN 1). Power: ★★★

- **Engine Trouble:** Machine Hearts and other Flow technologies begin to go haywire (DN 2) often failing at the worst possible time (DN 2). Power: ★★

APPENDICES



Languages

Erellara

Atrai, Rebsula Subenopusc, Almastobah, Adfafnib, Sten Kumintelafecc, Afaffii, Salitalia Azalashe, Zibah, Phomaris, Makada, Afak, Macinusalus Mer, Tab, Aenkenkis, Rior, Muphan, Wasafar, Halda, Aphed Poli, Aiah, Alniadfare, Anopus, Akiturops, Marioneb Au, Cellustoreba, Hai, Shai, Tar, Emirealmai, Ma Asmir, Dun, Yrma, Arcrustralcocyonem, Ales, Rud, Sadernekkatera, Tiocterturai, Acham, Kadalshireal Ra, Zarealatlar, Alsubel, Zam, Atiuhar, Azahris, Rawwinar, Tira, Hulah, Nulikab, Rima, Abd-Er-Hayman, Mijyah, Rain, Sayame, Abd-Am-Shakim, Ramala, Boid, Malidal, Ra'ud, Nabd, Ata, Dura, Dulamya, Usiyam, Fass, Sa'im,

Erin, Hasara, Main, Ada, Amza, Rasara, Zakareh, Utbasim, Tazida, Safia, Sun, Ronya, Mahsadi, Layh, Mu'ti, Su'ah

Thronic

Mion, Diquaroton, Quark, Prinon, Me Mesono, Ron, Eutron, Gluineutrimu, Aquar, Aviton, Raquaryon, Dilasmak, Son, Ton, Ptonia, Antitraquark, Polepton, Ryon, Polepton, Tron, Fermion, Me Meron, Poson, Dilark, Pron, Mork, Ntino, Lechinton, Tiuaarm, Asimeuo, Koso, Lechyphopon, Dorikyponitron, Quglino, Ninelatrkono, Osoquaryonet, Son, Leso, Elasoquopler, Poniaquon, Popeson, Diononetrack, Qutitark, Meulepolesmi, Mon

Canatares

Lyrallibrale, Puculeo, Minatela, S Auricutucaricentl, Anes, Aursa, Cules, Camael, Peculum, Major, Alle, Ces, Lyras, Picraces, Dor, Lopeia, Centliansa, Aus, Delptorolum, Per, Hiucama, Borion, Lptoromajornatictor, Phius, Ces, Maeloparies, Bralia, Carinaticulpecutum, Velphoentlis, Hoenicories, Cardanguleo, Ces, Logittaursextaus, Gittanes, Circindus, Pius, Pena Beretus, Aries, Cina Minus, Paralephinocta, Cariana Auriescapus, Chus, Ventlis, Ngulum, Colopavo, Colum, Cerianis, Ndustrictorius, Cula

Amonarac

Akiel, Baadius, Lastolastor, Somon, Andrakiel, Jalnemunkar, Lphon, Baamsielion, Corson, Bath, Sum, Mos, Phiel, Dugielith, Phiah, Dugiel, Briel, Bialne, Diel, Chue, Kiramael, Balechaliel, Ith, Basmodiusa, Churiel, Tat, Dios, Valamolasto, Artandaniel, Valiel, Minex, Rigos, Abrius, Abriel, Bebut, Thar, Deomogos, Sachiel, Hamunkaraki, Leos, Igorgor, Sat, Berajehon, Nem, Andrathonoc, Mue, Zragaber, Mon, Melchamel, Addochiel, Abiathan, Hia, Buzi, Guel, Aberapurius, Ael, Iel, Samsith, Zaquil

Ksh

Gai, Shantigrok, Iab, Gua, Hah, Dyla, Ala, Yth, Kaddath, Aniggar, Cal, Clobonhi, Thu, Dith, Ath, Cykrano, Ith, Glarnacturau, Phai, Oor, Zoonhi, Xothar, Ddath, Maggar, Oth, Kubbo, Largai, Yth, Ykral, Nak, Hagga, Iclobo, Nyx, Cromphaggua, Zath, Celen, Elep, Pire, Kala, Thyonyarna, Diod, Ktyra, Bon, Nakal, Carn, Turkrautra, Zootil, Nigmnzhah, Onhi, Gyhx, Zaothyophkek, Ngais, Nzhai, Urkrautro, Lyu, Grimiorimiod, Urnek, Yakaddath, Shah, Grimiom, Voorlath, Vamaggurkrath, Rkrano, Horl, Zhanithoth, Kaddathagais, Carne, Kshantila, Ath, Larne, Gnosharcturnecry, Marne, Namastrautrom, Zoonos, Onis, Gai, Nargais, Tep, Cal