

IMPULSE DRIVE

A roleplaying game about misfits and spaceships
powered by the apocalypse



Adrian Thoen

Play a crew of misfits and scoundrels living a life of danger and adventure as they explore space and try to make their ship a home in a technicolor sea of stars. Fight dangerous organizations, investigate unnerving mysteries, and find trouble in a game that rewards you when your characters face their shortcomings. Grow your characters and ship with new gear and abilities as you discover and create the universe together, as a group.

Impulse Drive is a roleplaying game about making a living on the fringe of civilized space, inspired by fiction such as *Farscape*, *Firefly*, *Mass Effect*, *Star Wars*, and many others. Find some friends, grab a handful of six sided dice, and strap on your spacesuit.



This book includes all the rules you need to have your own space adventures about misfits and spaceships, including eight iconic character archetypes:

- » The Hound, a rogue lawkeeper or bounty hunter.
- » The Infiltrator, a skilled burglar or assassin.
- » The Intellect, an expert scientist, physician, or mechanic.
- » The Mystic, a wise religious figure or member of an ancient order of knights.
- » The Outsider, a truly strange or out-of-place alien.
- » The Scoundrel, a down on their luck con artist or street rat.
- » The Tempest, a volatile hothead with dangerous powers.
- » The Warhorse, a battle-scarred war veteran who has seen everything.

As well as four ship playbooks that help you set the stage for your adventures:

- » The Smuggler, a beat up old freighter with some hidden surprises and a big debt.
- » The Predator, a dangerous mercenary vessel with a dangerous nemesis after them.
- » The Vanguard, a state-of-the-art ship in the employ of a powerful galactic civilization or organisation.
- » The Marauder, a pirate vessel with a bad reputation.

Table of Content

001

Content

004 Introduction

- 005 The Pitch
- 006 Using this book
 - 006 *I'm just browsing.*
 - 006 *I'm going to be a player.*
 - 006 *I'm going to run this game.*
- 007 Acknowledgment and License

008 Playing Impulse Drive

- 009 The Crew and the Space Master
- 010 Common Terms at a Glance

010 Archetypes

- 010 *The Five Approaches*
- 011 *Advances and XP*
- 011 *Hooks*
- 011 *Harm*
- 011 *Stress*
- 011 *Calamity*
- 011 *Gear*
- 011 *Tags*
- 011 *The Crew*
- 012 *The Space Master*
- 012 *The Fiction*
- 012 *Scenes, Episodes, and Seasons*
- 012 *Moves*
- 012 *Triggers*
- 012 *Process*
- 012 *Outcome*
- 013 *Rolling Dice and Processes*
- 013 *Advantage*
- 013 *Disadvantage*
- 013 *Going Forward*
- 013 *Ongoing*
- 013 *Choose*
- 013 *Hold*
- 013 *Discharge*
- 014 *Calls*
- 014 *Contract*
- 014 *Strain*
- 014 *Ranges*
- 014 *Personal Range Tags:*
- 015 *Vehicle Range Tags:*
- 015 *Ship Range Tags:*

016 The Universal Moves

- 017 Combat Moves
- 018 Action Moves
- 021 Influence Moves
- 023 Investigation Moves
- 026 Exploration Moves
- 028 Hurt, Death, and Healing
 - 028 *Harm*
 - 028 *Example Harm:*
 - 030 *Dealing or Suffering Harm*
 - 030 *Damage: Harm for Ships and Vehicles*
 - 030 *Stress and Calamity*
 - 031 *Death in the Void*

- 032 *Substitute Harm*
- 032 *Healing*
- 032 *Medical Treatment*
- 033 The Flow of Combat
- 034 The Cycle of Action and Danger
- 036 Other Moves
- 038 Commerce & Ship Payment Moves
 - 040 *Accommodation*
- 041 Cargo Moves
- 042 Plot Moves

045 The Crew

- 046 Your Agenda & Principles
 - 046 *Player's Agenda*
 - 047 *Player Principles*
 - 049 *Always Say*

050 Building Your Character

- 051 Choose an Archetype
 - 051 *The Hound*
 - 051 *The Infiltrator*
 - 051 *The Intellect*
 - 051 *The Mystic*
 - 051 *The Outsider*
 - 052 *The Scoundrel*
 - 052 *The Tempest*
 - 052 *The Warhorse*
- 053 Name & Description
- 054 Assign The Five Approaches
- 055 Archetype Moves
- 055 Hooks
 - 056 *Goals*
 - 056 *Instincts*
 - 056 *Traits*
 - 057 *Connections*
- 057 Gear

059 The Archetypes

- 060 The Hound
- 065 The Infiltrator
- 071 The Intellect
- 076 The Mystic
- 081 The Outsider
- 086 The Scoundrel
- 091 The Tempest
- 096 The Warhorse

101 Gear

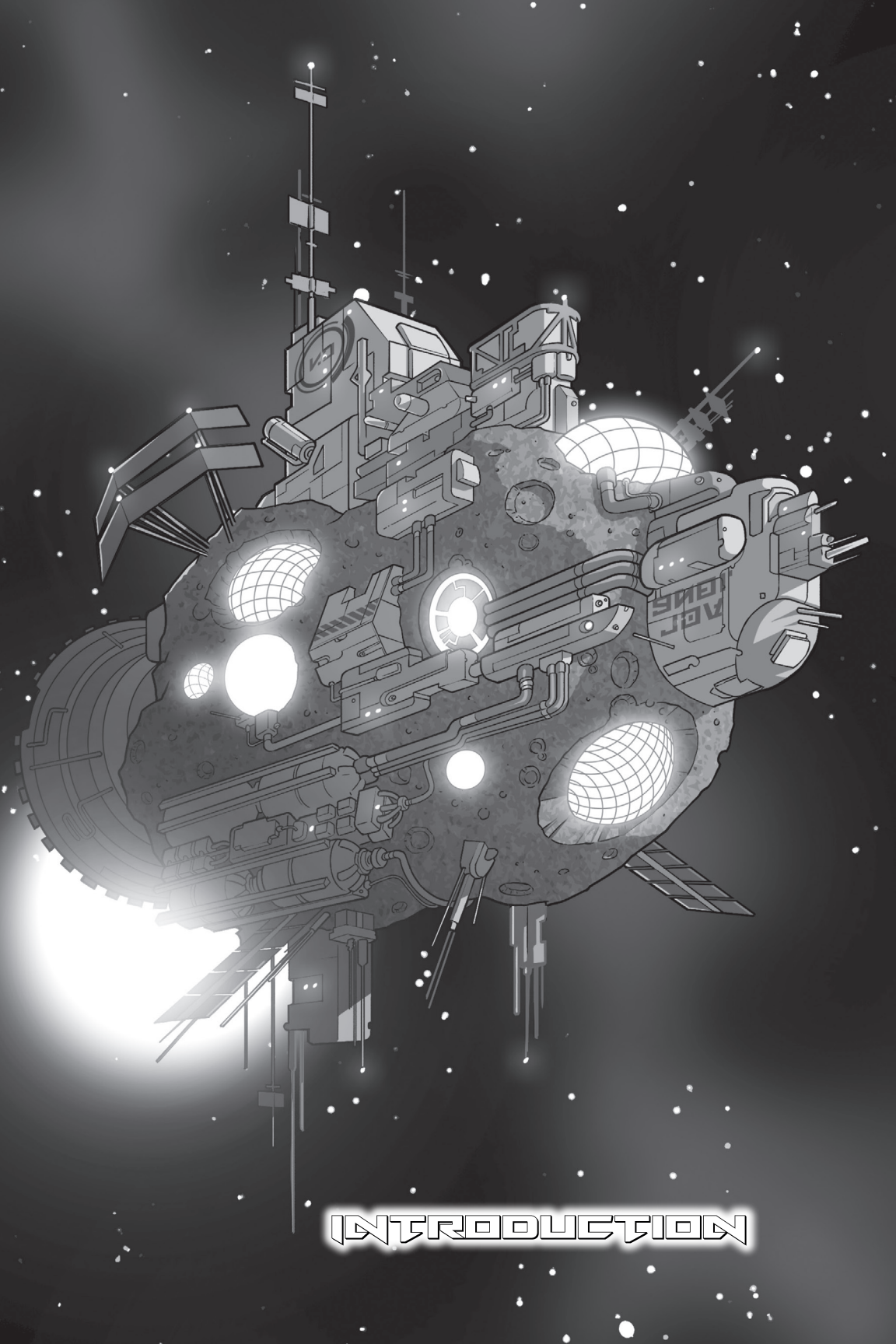
- 102 Gear Permanence
 - 102 *Gear Tags*
- 104 Gear and Weapons
 - 104 *Gear Lists:*
- 106 Weapons
- 107 Equipment
- 109 Armor and Shields
- 110 Modifications

113 Vehicles

- 115 +Strengths and -Weaknesses
 - 116 *+Strengths*
 - 116 *-Weaknesses*

- 117 Ranges in Vehicle Combat
- 118 Vehicles
- 119 Your Ship**
 - 120 Making your Ship
 - 120 Choose a ship Playbook
 - 122 Choose a name
 - 122 Choose a look
 - 122 Your Ship's Strain
 - 123 Upgrades, Modules, and other Ship Advancements
 - 124 Moves & Your Ship
- 125 Ship Playbooks**
 - 127 Smuggler Ship
 - 134 Predator Ship
 - 141 Vanguard Ship
 - 149 Marauder Ship
- 154 The Space Master**
 - 155 Running Impulse Drive: A Framework
 - 155 How to be the Space Master
 - 156 Agenda, Principles, and Calls: Rules for the SM
 - 156 Agenda
 - 157 Always Say
 - 157 Principles
 - 162 SM Calls
 - 162 When to Make a Call
 - 163 Hard Calls and soft Calls.
 - 163 Choosing a Call
 - 163 Making your Call
 - 165 Show danger approaching
 - 165 Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
 - 165 Show the stars moving elsewhere
 - 165 Use up their Resources
 - 165 Destabilize the environment
 - 166 Give them Advantage or Disadvantage
 - 166 Turn their Move back on them
 - 166 Tell them the possible consequences and ask
 - 167 Strains
 - 168 Components of your Strains
 - 168 Strain Name or Premise:
 - 168 Strain Type:
 - 168 Description & Notes:
 - 168 Climax:
 - 168 Fuse:
 - 168 Burn:
 - 169 Types of Strains
 - 169 Scene Strains:
 - 169 Episode Strains:
 - 170 Season Strains:
 - 170 Using Strains to add urgency to a Contract
 - 171 Getting Ready to Play
 - 171 Prep
 - 171 Cards
- 172 Getting Started
- 174 The First Session**
 - 174 Establish details, describe
 - 174 Use what they give you
 - 175 Ask questions
 - 175 Leave blanks
 - 175 Look for interesting facts
 - 175 Pay attention to characters' Hooks
 - 175 Help the players understand the Moves
 - 175 Give each character a chance to shine
 - 176 Introduce NPCs
 - 176 Make note of the Crew's enemies
- 176 The Second Session and Beyond**
 - 176 Fallout and Consequences
 - 176 Machinations and Disputes
 - 177 Trouble left behind, trouble that follows
- 178 Creating a Contract**
 - 179 1. Look at the situation, find opportunities
 - 179 2. Choose a Client
 - 180 3. Choose a type of Contract
 - 180 4. Detail the Contract
 - 180 5. Finalize the Contract
 - 180 6. Present it to the Crew
 - 180 Randomized Contracts
- 181 The Milk Run
- 182 The Heist
- 184 The Assault
- 185 The Defense
- 186 The Salvage
- 187 The Investigation
- 189 Locations
- 190 Making Locations**
 - 190 Objects in Space
 - 190 Starmap
 - 191 In a System
 - 191 Settlement
 - 192 Rooms
 - 192 Places In a Settlement
 - 192 Interesting locations
 - 193 Tags for Locations
 - 193 Connections
 - 193 Description
- 194 NPCs**
 - 194 Example NPCs
 - 194 NPC Tags
 - 195 Impulse
 - 196 Connections
 - 196 Health
 - 196 Attack
 - 196 Calls
 - 197 Description
 - 197 Disposition
- 199 NPCs as Adversaries

200	Basic NPCs	215	Tech Level:
200	People	216	Other Group Tags:
200	Aliens	216	Example Groups:
201	People NPCs	217	Impulse
201	Civilians	217	Connections
202	Mooks	217	Calls
203	Authorities	217	Description
204	Hunters	218	Random Names:
205	Soldiers	220	Drifting
206	Brutes	221	New or different Universal Moves
207	Leader	224	Extra Moves for all Archetypes
208	Alien NPCs	226	Unique or Rare Gear, Vehicles, Ship Systems, or Weapons
209	Swarm	228	Mutations
210	Beast	230	Creating Custom Moves
211	Enigma	230	The Components of a Move
212	Making NPC Ships	232	Types of Moves
212	Ship names:	232	Iterate
212	Ship look:	233	Big Changes to Primary Mechanics: A Different Game
212	NPC Ship Calls:	233	Starting With More
213	NPC Ship Classes, Systems, and Tags:	233	Change Difficulty
215	Groups	234	Transmission End
215	Group Tags	235	My Thanks
215	Types of Groups:		



INTRODUCTION

The Pitch

Time is running out.

Tokio, a grizzled veteran of the secession war is covering Drone, a multi-limbed AI-cyborg hybrid hauling an unwieldy crate back to the cargo bay of their ship, the Wolf We Feed, but they're pursued by a horde of the ubiquitous territorial space-roaches that infest asteroids and derelicts like the one the crew has come to.

As they rush back, the diminutive mechanic Saturday works feverishly to repair the Wolf's FTL drive, swearing at the ship's computer as it repeats several malfunction warnings on repeat.

Outside the derelict in her beat up little fighter, Zirra tries to clear an escape route through ancient automated drones and get back to the ship before launch.

Everyone is tense. There's a lot at stake, and success is far from assured.

What do you do?

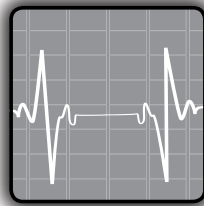
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Using this book

If you're interested in having adventures on spaceships as a crew of misfits, here is some advice depending on your experience with RPGs.

I'm just browsing.

If you've just picked up this book and don't have any experience with roleplaying games, read the section on Playing *Impulse Drive* on page 006.

If you've had previous experience with roleplaying games, browse through the sections on Playing *Impulse Drive* (page 006) The Crew (page 045), Universal Moves (page 016) the Archetypes (page 059), and the Space Master (page). These give you a good sense of the nature of *Impulse Drive*.

If you're familiar with *Apocalypse World* or other PbtA games, check out the Universal Moves (page 016), The Crew (page 045), Archetypes (page 059), and the Space Master chapter (page 154) to get a sense of how this game differs from other PbtA games.

I'm going to be a player.

If this is your first experience roleplaying, read Playing *Impulse Drive* (page 008), and familiarize yourself with the Universal Moves (page 016), The Crew (page 045), and the Archetypes (page 059).

If you've played other roleplaying games, skim Playing *Impulse Drive* (page 008), and familiarize yourself with Universal Moves (page 016), The Crew (page 045), and the Archetypes (page 059).

If you're an *Apocalypse World* or PbtA veteran, you can look over the Universal Moves (page 016), The Crew (page 045), and the Archetypes (page 059). Browse through the Gear chapter (page 101) if you feel like it.

I'm going to run this game.

Whether this is your first experience with roleplaying games, you're a roleplaying veteran, or familiar with *Apocalypse World* and PbtA games, and you're intending to run the game, get comfortable and spend some time reading most of the book.

Leave the section of Drifting for later but read everything else closely—you'll need it in your first session.

Acknowledgment and License

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants"

-Isaac Newton

Impulse Drive is based on rules and text from *Dungeon World*, created by Sage Latorra and Adam Koebel.

Dungeon World is Powered By The Apocalypse, a ruleset designed by D. Vincent Baker for his game *Apocalypse World*.

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The Burning Wheel is by Luke Crane. The Sprawl is by Hamish Cameron & Lillian Cohen-Moore. *Blades in the Dark* is by John Harper.



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PLAYING IMPULSE DRIVE

Embarking on a perilous journey

The Crew and the Space Master

The rules in *Impulse Drive* treat the game's two types of players differently. One player takes on the role of Space Master, who runs the game and describes the Crew's environment and situation, while the remaining players take on the roles of the ship's crew. The rules refer to those playing Crew Members as players or crew, and the one running the game as Space Master or SM.

Playing *Impulse Drive* means having a conversation; somebody says something, then you reply, maybe someone else chimes in. We talk about the Fiction—the world of the Crew and the things that happen around them. As we play, the rules chime in, too. They have something to say about the world. There are no turns or rounds in *Impulse Drive*, no rules to say whose turn it is to talk. Instead, players take turns in the natural flow of the conversation, which always has some back-and-forth. The SM says something, the players respond. The players ask questions or make statements, the SM tells them what happens next. *Impulse Drive* is never a monologue; it's always a conversation between the players, the Space Master, and the rules.

The rules shape the conversation of play. While the SM and the players are talking, the rules and the Fiction are talking, too. Every rule has an explicit, usually Fictional, trigger that tells you when it's meant to come into the conversation.

Like any conversation, the time you spend listening is just as important as the time you spend talking. The details established by the other people at the table (the SM and the other players) are important to you: they might change what Moves you can make, set up an opportunity for you, or create a challenge you have to face. The conversation works best when we all listen, ask questions, and build on each other's contributions.

Sometimes you speak as your character and from your character's perspective. Sometimes, you speak as a player, describing your intent, your character's motivation, or the rules you intend to engage. This is still a part of the conversation for the game, and players can know things their characters do not. You get to be in on the secret, even if your character is not.

This chapter is all about how to play *Impulse Drive*. It contains information about the rules—how they arise from and contribute to the game. It covers both general rules, such as making Moves, and more specific rules, such as those for dealing with Harm and Calamity.

The goal of *Impulse Drive* is for your group to explore interesting characters in exciting, dangerous, and charged situations, and to find out what happens when their ambitions come up against their shortcomings. Winning or successful play in *Impulse Drive* is a cooperative goal. The player's goal isn't necessarily giving their character what they want, but finding out what their character does in the situations that arise. The Space Master's goal isn't to defeat or crush the players or kill their characters, but to present an exciting and dangerous world full of opportunities and compromises and see what happens when those things collide.

Thanks to how moves work lot of the rules in **Impulse Drive** are modular. **Impulse Drive** may be played perfectly fine with Moves that cover immediate dangerous situations, social interactions, exploration, and the Archetypes Specific Moves. If your group navigates a situation in the moment by adapting one of the Universal Moves or making a judgment call and then later finds **Impulse Drive** has a move for that specific situation, that's fine. Introduce rules like *The Crew Is Back In Town* or *Listing In Space* as their situations arise. If you misused using them but still satisfactorily solved the situation, that's what matters. Keep playing and use the rules next time the situation arises.

Common Terms at a Glance

As the conversation and the rules interact, there are several systems in the rules that interact with each other. This book covers these systems in more depth later, but what follows is a brief summary of the major components.

Archetypes

Archetypes are the character sheets you use to create and play your characters. Archetypes are based on familiar tropes found in space fiction and direct you into playing certain types of characters.

The Five Approaches

Impulse Drive describes most actions characters undertake in terms of five different ways they look at their world and solve problems. Some applications of these Approaches are straightforward, while others are more abstract. Each Approach has a modifier applied to it, ranging from -3 to +3.

VOLATILE

This is the Approach for when you act recklessly, impulsively, or violently. If you are using this Approach, something is probably going to get broken, blown up, or Harmed.

CALCULATING

This is the Approach you use when you try to solve a problem by studying it and deducing the correct response. It's for when you apply passionless, detached, critical thought, learning, or reason to solve a problem.

SLICK

This Approach is both for when you act fast to avoid trouble or talk fast to get what you want. It represents your charisma, ability to lie, and your quick reflexes for avoiding danger.

STALWART

The Stalwart Approach is for when you are resilient, tough, stubborn, reliable, and dependable. When you resist, refuse to compromise, or endure, you are using the Stalwart Approach. Stalwart can also mean reliable or dependable, so when you help your friends, you're also being Stalwart.

ALIEN

Alien represents how weird you are, and your relationship to strange powers in the galaxy. This is how unlike most other people in the universe you are, and what sets you apart. When you embrace the weird or unfathomable, you are using the Alien Approach.

Advances and XP

XP is the reward currency for certain actions in *Impulse Drive*. You mark XP as you play *Impulse Drive* through various ways, the most common of which is any time you roll 6- on a Move. When you have 5 XP marked on your Archetype playbook you increase your effectiveness or broaden your role. This is called taking an Advance or Advancing.

Hooks

Hooks are statements that are true about your characters and their relationships to themselves, each other, and the universe that cause complications in their lives. When your Hooks complicate your character's life you have Disadvantage, which makes you are more likely to roll a 6-. Since players mark XP when they roll a 6-, playing to your Hooks increases your opportunity to mark XP.

Hooks are designed to encourage and reward character play by getting players to show and explore their characters' flaws, quirks, weaknesses, and dysfunctional relationships. It's also a chance for players to say how their characters are special.

Harm

Harm is how you mark injuries, and effects when you roll at Disadvantage under some circumstances. If you run out of Harm to mark, you may end up having to mark the final Harm, "I can't go on," which means your character dies.

Stress

Stress is a track that fills up as you take too many injuries or experience something your character can't deal with. You only have a few ways you can get rid of Stress, and when you have too much, you must mark a Calamity.

Calamity

Calamity is an alternate type of injury that has more options but can't be gotten rid of. Calamity often involves your character or their situation changing in a significant and permanent way. If you run out of Calamity to mark, your character leaves the Crew—often in spectacular and destructive fashion.

Gear

Gear is the stuff your character has access to, or has on them right now. You don't have to decide what you take with you before you head into danger, but instead choose what you brought with you in the moment. You only have a limited number of slots, so you will have to choose carefully from your supplies as you play.

Tags

Tags are used for Gear and various other components of the game. A Tag is a one or two word phrase used to tell you how something behaves. This behaviour may have mechanical impact, or be entirely fictional in application.

The Crew

The Crew describes the group of characters the players embody when they play the game. Each player assumes the role of a member of the ship's crew, describing what their Crew Member says, thinks, feels, and does.

The Space Master

The Space Master, or SM, is the player who plays everything else in the game. The Space Master's job is to describe the situation and keep track of the various places, objects, groups, and individuals the Crew interacts with. The Space Master has their own rules and tools to assist them with this task.

The Fiction

The Fiction is a term used throughout this book and is used as shorthand to describe the part of the game's conversation where the group is describing what is happening in the imaginary situations the characters find themselves in, and the imaginary universe at large as your group creates and explores it.

Scenes, Episodes, and Seasons

Impulse Drive measures time less in the sense of hours or days the Crew experience, and instead frames it in the terms of the space opera TV shows it draws inspiration from. During the game, the group will frame scenes and episodes using a few tools: Strains, Contracts, and Personal Projects. The SM will use Season Strains to track the overall movement and changes of the territories and factions surrounding the Crew.

Moves

Moves are the specific rules for resolving the consequences of certain situations. There are Universal Moves that all players can use, and Archetype Moves that are specific to each Archetype. Each Archetype starts with a few Moves specific to them, and the players spend 5 XP to unlock more. Many Moves have you roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and add an Approach. Depending on the situation, you may have Advantage or Disadvantage on your roll.

A Move usually consists of a Trigger, a Process, and an Outcome. There are Universal Moves, which all player characters have access to for interacting with the situation they're in, the Plot Moves that help elide off-screen events & set up on screen action, and Archetype Moves that are found on the Archetype character sheets.

Triggers

A Trigger is usually an action or event that happens in the Fiction, but sometimes the trigger is tied to rules in another Move. Triggers usually start with "When you act in this specific way" or "When this specific thing happens."

Process

A Process is the part of the Move that tells you how the rules influence what is happening, and how you determine the outcomes. Often, this involves rolling dice. Sometimes you make choices. Sometimes it moves straight to the outcome. The Processes of some Moves manipulate other Moves. The Process lead to the Move's outcomes.

Outcome

The Outcome is what the Move tells you happens after the rules have spoken. Outcomes are usually interpreted into the Fiction, even if not explicitly stated otherwise.

Rolling Dice and Processes

When a Move tells you to roll, roll two six-sided dice (2d6) and add the appropriate modifier for the Approach mentioned in the Move.

Advantage

When you have Advantage, instead of rolling 2d6, roll 3d6, and choose the 2 highest, and apply the modifier of your Approach.

Disadvantage

When you have Disadvantage, instead of rolling 2d6, roll 3d6 and choose the 2 lowest, and apply the modifier of your Approach.

When you are in a situation where you have both Advantage and Disadvantage, roll 2d6 as normal. They cancel each other out. If you are in a situation where you have Advantage or Disadvantage from multiple different sources on one roll, you still only roll 1 extra dice. Advantage and Disadvantage do not stack. This also applies if you are getting both Advantage and Disadvantage from multiple sources on one roll. If you have Advantage from one source but Disadvantage from two sources, you still roll normally with 2d6.

Going Forward

When the rules mention Going Forward, they mean that your next roll is affected in the way mentioned.

Ongoing

When the rules mention Ongoing, they mean your rolls are affected in the way mentioned until the situation that triggered the rule has changed.

Sometimes effects like Going Forward and Ongoing have other conditions, such as applying to specific Moves or Fictional situations.

Choose

When a Move tells you to choose a number, it means that you choose from the list in that Move immediately.

Hold

When a Move tells you to Hold a certain number, that means you can spend the Hold for specific choices listed in that Move. Hold is not interchangeable. You can't spend Hold from one Move for choices in another Move, unless stated otherwise.

Discharge

If a Move tells you to Discharge it, then you cannot use that Move in a dangerous situation or combat until you have chosen to recharge it as an option in the Recover Move. If a piece of Gear, vehicle equipment, or ship module has the Discharge tag, it's Discharged under specific circumstances depending on its purpose. Weapons are most often Discharged when certain choices are made in the Firefight and Acquire Target Moves. Shields are Discharged when they absorb Harm. Other miscellany has specific Moves tied to it that Discharges it.

During a dangerous situation like combat, Discharged Moves, weapons, and Gear may be recharged if a player rolls the Recover Move and chooses to recharge it.

When you are out of immediate danger, all Discharged Moves and Gear automatically recharge.

Calls

Calls are the actions the Space Master takes when the other players look to them to find out what happens. This happens all the time during play, and the Space Master has some specific tools in their section to help them figure out what happens next.

Contract

Contracts are the adventures your Crew goes on to earn enough money to pay off your debts and keep your ship running. A Contract is designed to play out in an Episode or so, spanning across a number of Scenes.

Strain

Strains are how the SM tracks and shows the progression of threats, dangers, and pressures affecting the Crew and their surroundings. Strains often have Climaxes, irreversible events that the Strains Fuse Burns down towards.

Ranges

Ranges in *Impulse Drive* are treated in a somewhat abstract manner. Instead of precise measurements like meters or feet, or even more heuristic measurements like “a little further than arms reach”, *Impulse Drive* treats ranges in how you are engaging your enemy in combat.

As such combat is broken up into three scales: personal combat between individuals, vehicular combat covering everything from high speed one-person craft to aerial or space fighters and giant robots, to space ship battles. Each scale has different stakes and styles of combat, and the ranges are written to reflect this.

Combat in *Impulse Drive* is not measured on a grid. Ranges are flexible, which means it's up to the group to be specific about the range at which something is happening or if they want to move to a different range. Use the Ranges as inspiration for describing the action, how the characters move, the sorts of opportunities they are looking for.

Personal Range Tags:

Personal ranges are the most easily relatable. The sorts of combat described by the three ranges are seen in action films every day. Skirmish is for hand-to-hand combat or firing weapons in cramped spaces or a crowded chaotic melee. Firefight can be quite close or further off, but suggests an even match of skill, firepower, and position. Sniping is for when you are far off and have the drop on your target, or you are hunting for each other and taking long range shots.

- » **Skirmish:** Cramped, chaotic exchange of physical blows and small arms fire.
- » **Firefight:** Moving from cover to cover, exchanging fire.
- » **Sniping:** Precise long distance strikes, tense games of hide and seek.

Vehicle Range Tags:

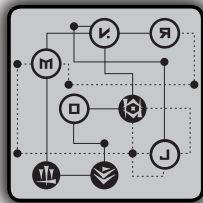
There are a lot of vehicle action and combat scenarios, and the Vehicle ranges are designed to reflect those. A high-speed chase most often happens at Crash range, but may fall back to Dogfighting if distance opens up and those involved must dodge obstacles. Dogfighting is a staple of fighter combat inspired by WW2 planes pulling off fancy maneuvers to get the drop on each other. Hold Off is for when a vehicle is trying to keep their distance and bombard their target.

- » **Crash:** The crunch and smash of vehicles crashing into each other.
- » **Dogfighting:** Maneuvering and dogfighting, jostling for the perfect shot.
- » **Hold Off:** They're circling from far off, keeping their enemies at bay.

Ship Range Tags:

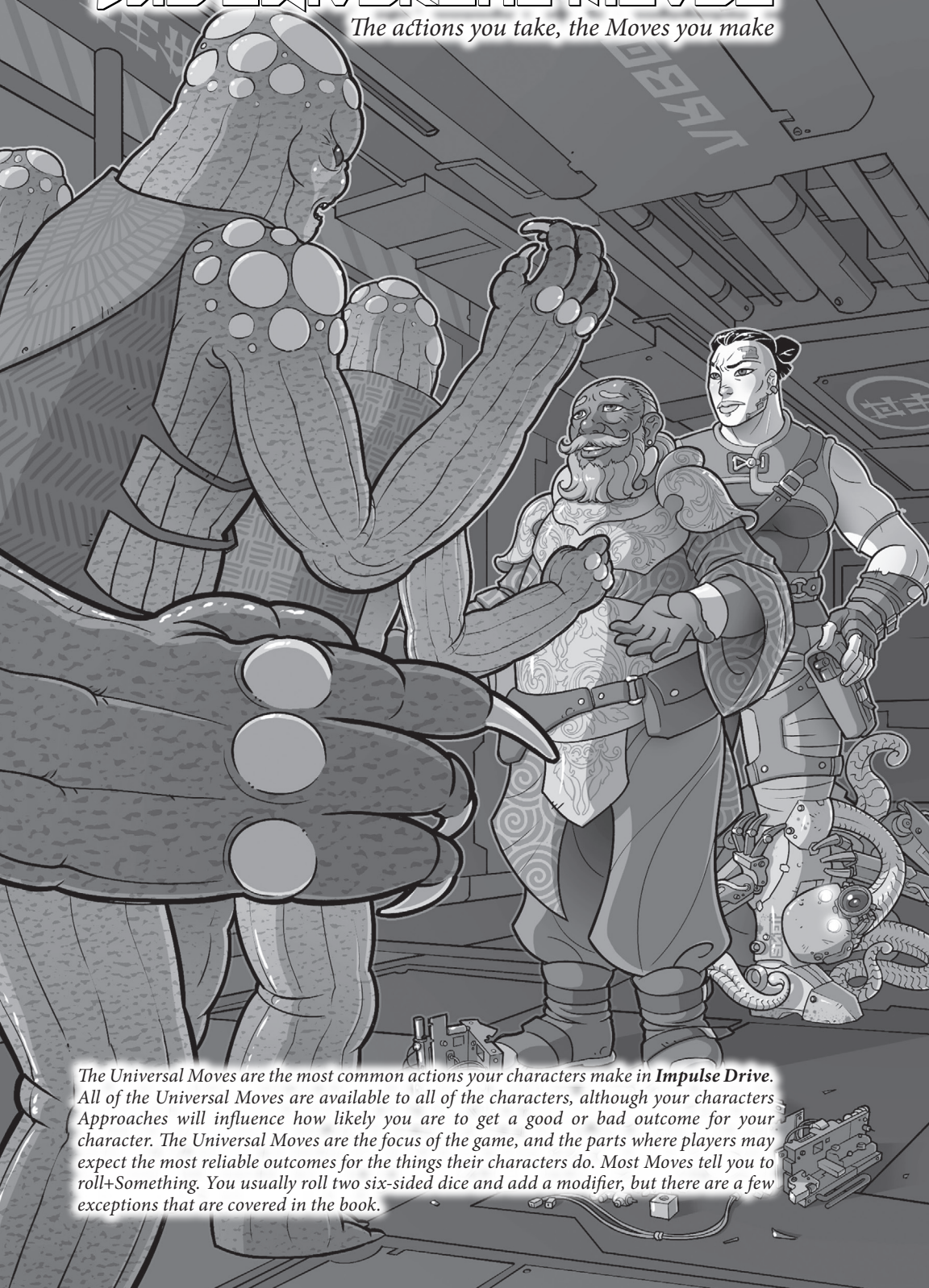
Ship combat is heavily inspired by traditional naval combat, with sweeping turns to try and secure a superior firing angle. Broadside is when you swoop in close and fire everything you have—risking the same from your target. Engaged relies on predicting your enemy's tactics and making course corrections to get a good firing solution. Cannonading is bombarding your enemy from afar, hoping for a lucky shot. Ship ranges mention distances in kilometers because the ranges and speeds for starship combat can be a challenge to comprehend.

- » **Broadside:** Heated battle extremely close, within 5 kilometers.
- » **Engaged:** Blazing weapons and flashing ship shields, generally between 5 and 20 kilometers.
- » **Cannonading:** Long range bombardment, between 20 and 50 kilometers.



THE UNIVERSAL MOVES

The actions you take, the Moves you make



*The Universal Moves are the most common actions your characters make in **Impulse Drive**. All of the Universal Moves are available to all of the characters, although your characters Approaches will influence how likely you are to get a good or bad outcome for your character. The Universal Moves are the focus of the game, and the parts where players may expect the most reliable outcomes for the things their characters do. Most Moves tell you to roll+Something. You usually roll two six-sided dice and add a modifier, but there are a few exceptions that are covered in the book.*

Combat Moves

FIREFIGHT

When you open yourself to danger and exchange violence with an enemy, roll+Volatile. On a 10+, exchange Harm and choose 3. On a 7-9, exchange Harm and choose 1:

- » Discharge your weapon with the discharge tag, and deal double its Harm.
- » Take evasive action and suffer -1 Harm.
- » You hold a position or halt an advance.
- » You make an advance or force your enemy out of cover.
- » You impress, dismay, or frighten your enemy. If they are a PC, they also suffer 1 Stress.
- » You are able to disengage and take a moment to Recover.

Firefight only triggers when you are in a dangerous or Volatile situation and exchange violence with an enemy. This means you have to have a chance of attacking your enemy and of being attacked or Harmed otherwise. If you poke your gun around a corner and fire blind, this Move isn't triggered. Likewise, if either you or your enemy can't attack, Firefight isn't triggered.

When making choices in Firefight, you may choose "Take evasive action" more than once.

ALPHA STRIKE

When you get into an advantageous position and attack a target that can't retaliate, roll+Calculating. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, take what you can get. choose 1.

- » You disarm or disable them.
- » Your position isn't exposed or compromised.
- » Deal your weapon's Harm. If your weapon has the discharge tag, you may Discharge it to double the Harm dealt.

Alpha Strike is most often used when the attacking character is out of immediate danger, but vulnerable to a change in situation once they act violently. Most often, this Move is used for a character sniping someone at range or from cover, or striking an unarmed or unaware target, perhaps from a hidden position or while sneaking up on them. The choices On a 7-9 are about whether your situation remains tenable or if you are going to have to adapt to a very different situation.

MERCILESS

When you attack someone you have at your mercy, and they can't strike back or avoid the attack, just deal your Harm.

Merciless is when your target has no option but to take the Harm you deal them. They just have to suck it up and take it.

INEFFECTIVE RANGE

When you use a weapon at a range where it can be used, but it isn't effective, you have Disadvantage. This may mean you have to throw the weapon, in which case you are no longer holding it after the attack.

Action Moves

Recover

When you're out of direct danger during a hostile situation and take a moment to gather yourself, roll +Stalwart. On a 10+, you're calm, efficient and ready, choose 2. On a 7-9, you take a little too long. Choose 2, but your enemy gets a chance to get into a better position or prepare themselves.

- » Ready a Move, Weapon, or piece of Gear that has been Discharged.
- » First Aid: spend 1 Use of a Tactical Pack to heal "I'm knocked out" on an ally.
- » Shrug it off: Heal "Just a scratch" or "I'm rattled" on yourself.

Recover is used to recharge Moves, reload weapons, or heal Harm during combat or a dangerous situation. When you Recover, you're taking a moment to prepare yourself for more conflict while the battle rages on. Recover isn't used to avoid danger or fire. To do that, you use Act Quick or Keep Your Cool.

Act Quick

When you use your instincts or reflexes to avoid a danger or negotiate through danger towards a goal, roll+Slick. On a 10+, you're graceful, swift, or acrobatic, and you do it. On a 7-9, you do it, but choose 1:

- » You're off balance or rushed, you have Disadvantage going forward.
- » You've left something behind; the SM will tell you what.
- » You're pushed to your limits with the effort, suffer 1 Stress.

Act Quick is both an active and reactive Move. As an Active Move, it's about using your reflexes, physical prowess, or quick thinking to navigate through a dangerous situation towards a goal. The danger may be an unstable or hostile environment, a very small window of opportunity to seize your goal or avoid notice or suspicion. As a reactive Move, Act Quick is about using your reflexes, physical prowess, or quick thinking to avoid or escape a threat or danger presented to you. Something is coming at you and if you don't act quick, it's going to hit you or you'll get caught.

Keep Your Cool

When you attempt to keep your cool under pressure or endure hardship, roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, you do it with minimal cost.

On a 7-9, choose 1:

- » You have Disadvantage going forward.
- » Suffer 1 Stress.
- » You give up something, leave something behind, or take something with you. The SM will say what.

As a reactive Move Keep Your Cool is for when your character is put in peril. Any time there is a danger or threat that must be dealt with or makes things more dangerous, you must Keep Your Cool to avoid the consequences.

Keep Your Cool is about keeping it together in stressful situations or withstanding some kind of hardship. The threats can be physical, mental, emotional, or social. If your character must endure, resist, or withstand an external pressure or threat, or their own impulses, roll Keep Your Cool.

LEAN ON ME

When you support a Crew Member's efforts in an action before they roll, or offer them comfort in an intimate moment, roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, you're helpful and supportive, choose 2. On a 7-9, you do what you can. Choose 1.

- » Your efforts help them, they have Advantage Going Forward.
- » Your support brings some relief, they may clear 1 Stress.
- » You aren't pushed to your limits or exposed to danger or complication for your efforts.

Lean on Me serves two purposes. It's both for the moments when one Crew Member is helping another with a task or action, or moments of comfort or succor from one Crew Member to another.

When you use Lean on Me to assist a Crew Member, you describe an action that supports them or gives them an opportunity. Your description usually comes after their player declares what they are doing, but always before the player rolls. Generally, Lean on Me actions take the form of working alongside them, physically or emotionally propping them up in a significant way when they would struggle alone, or offering advice on their action.

When you use Lean on Me to offer someone comfort in an intimate moment, this is an opportunity to show closeness between the characters as comrades, friends, lovers, or something in between. Whether that intimacy is physical or emotional in nature is entirely up to you. The most literal and emotionally 'safe' version of this may be treating injuries or helping an injured or defeated ally to their feet. More abstract or intimate forms include sharing pains of the past or present.

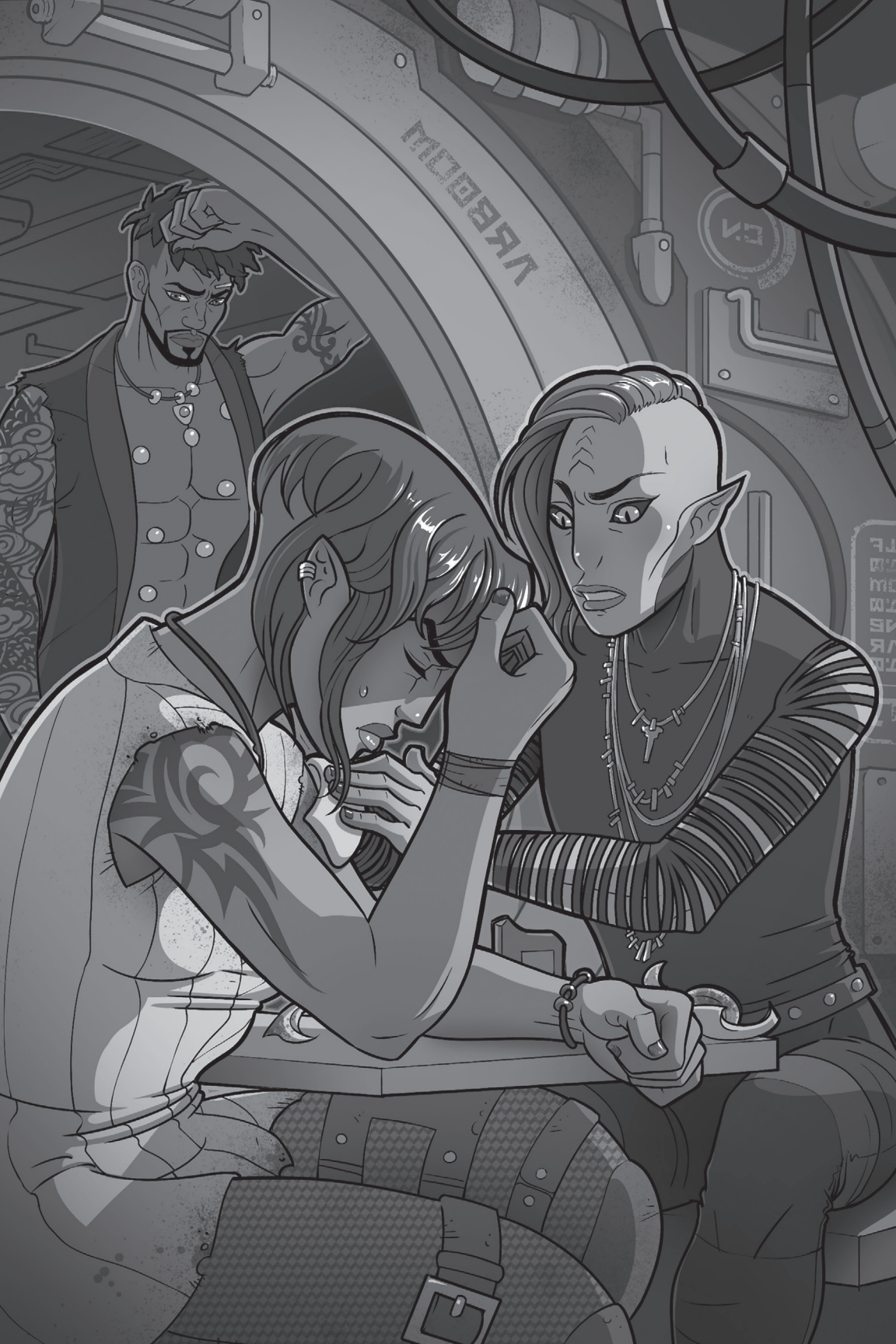
Your primary goal when rolling Lean on Me to assist someone is to give them Advantage on their next roll, which is why you roll before they do. You will probably choose to help them, but you don't have to. Fictionally, this is the most straightforward result to describe when assisting, you have established most of it before your roll.

If you choose to bring some relief, describe how your efforts take some of the load off them. Do you say or do something explicitly supportive, or is it merely your taking up part of their load that helps relieve Stress?

Getting pushed to your limits or being exposed to danger is up to interpretation for the SM and possibly the group at large. The most common interpretation of being pushed to your limits is taking a Stress. To interpret danger, just look at the situation your characters are in, and have a present danger get up in their faces. If they're not necessarily in direct danger right now, move something in the background. This discussion may even happen before you roll, to help the table understand the stakes of the situation. Complication can mean a tough choice, or the relationship between your two characters becomes more complicated or messy.

If you don't choose to avoid getting pushed to your limits or being exposed to danger, it doesn't necessarily mean one (or both) of these will definitely happen, especially if they just don't make sense in the situation. But it usually will.

On a 6-, the situation is up to the SM to interpret, but a common outcome is that you don't help but take some stress, or you make the situation more complicated or fraught—perhaps giving your fellow Crew Member Disadvantage!



Influence Moves

INTIMIDATE

When you use threats to bully someone into doing what you want, make it clear what you want them to do, and what you'll do to them if they don't, then Roll+Volatile. On a 10+, they have to choose:

- » Force you to follow through and suck it up.
- » Cave in and do what you want.

On a 7-9, they can choose 1 of the above, or one of the following:

- » Get out of your way.
- » Hunker down and take cover.
- » Give you something they think you want.
- » Tell you something they think you want to hear.
- » Attempt to de-escalate and look for an exit.

On a 6-, in addition to any Calls the SM makes, your threat has no teeth and you have Disadvantage going forward against them.

Intimidate can be both a social Move and a Move driven by action, so long as you are using real and explicit threats to force someone to do something you want. While Intimidate requires you to make a threat, you don't necessarily need to be able to back it up, but you do need to be able to convince your target that you can back it up. Be prepared for things to go poorly even On a 10+ if they force you to follow through and you can't follow through on your threat.

MANIPULATE

When you use promises, guile, or charm to manipulate someone into doing what you want, say what you want and what you're willing to give, then roll+Slick.

If they are an NPC:

On a 10+, they choose 1:

- » Accept your offer at face value and agree to the exchange.
- » Ask you to promise something and will do what you want if you agree.

On a 7-9, they choose 1:

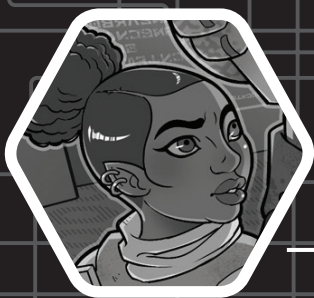
- » They make a counter-offer, to be settled now before they do what you want.
- » Ask you to promise something and provide concrete assurance you'll follow through, and they'll do what you want.

If they are a PC:

On a 10+, both. On a 7-9, you choose 1:

- » If they do it, they Mark XP.
- » They have to Keep Their Cool to refuse, at Disadvantage.

When you Manipulate someone, you have to say what you're offering and what you want as part of the Move. Nothing's for free. This can mean leveraging favor, offering goods or services, or a debt or favor. You could even offer flattery or sincere words. Manipulate is about exchange. The trade doesn't have to be peaceful, but you aren't making threats. If you want to threaten someone, you would use Intimidate. Manipulate can also be used to get information from people. You can offer them information in return for more information. "I will give you this if you tell me what I want to know." You would only roll Manipulate with a Crew Member if you are negotiating about something they don't want to do for you or give to you.



Outstanding Warrant 1665

Registered Name: Saturday Partok

Outstanding warrants: Destruction of property (50 counts), Data Theft (200 counts, suspected), Breach of AI Shackling Treaty (1 count, capital crime)

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Secession War Service Record 57857

Registered Name: Sergeant Tokio Desen

Commendations: Injured in the line of duty (11 counts), capture of an enemy vessel (2 counts), Retrieval and return of fallen comrades (47 counts), Eman-
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reclamation & 60 day defence of Glorfax station (1 count)

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Investigation Moves

SHARE EXPERTISE

When you consult your accumulated knowledge on something you are an expert in, roll+Calculating. On a 10+, ask a question related to the topic and the SM will give a useful answer, or ask you to make up the answer. On a 7-9, ask, and the SM will give you an interesting answer, but it's up to you to make it useful.

The trigger in Share Expertise is specific, in the sense that a character can only share expertise on a subject that they are indeed an expert in. You would not expect a mercenary thug to be an expert on particle physics or warp technology, or a scientist to be an expert on the shady underworld of Praxis Station.

If there's any doubt as to whether a character is an expert in a certain field, ask them how they became an expert.

Be prepared to answer your own question or a follow up question about your expertise.

Just in case it isn't clear: the answers are always true, even if the SM had to make them up on the spot. Always say what honesty demands.



Scope It Out

When you take time or use sensitive equipment to closely study an object, situation, or person, roll+Calculating. On a 10+, your investigation pays off, ask 3. On a 7-9, your perception is a little dull, ask 1.

- » Where is my best escape route/way in/way past?
- » What should I be on the lookout for?
- » What's my enemy's true position?
- » Who or what here is not what they seem?
- » Who's really in control here?
- » How could I best end this quickly?
- » Who or what here could be a useful opportunity?

To Scope It Out, you must take time and closely study your subject. This can often mean interacting with it or watching someone else do the same. It may take a few minutes, or it may take hours depending on what you are trying to learn and how you are observing.

Scoping out a situation isn't just about learning details but getting the bigger picture. The SM always describes a situation honestly, such as saying the merc leader carries a large riot shield and directs her troops from the rear. Scoping her out would reveal why she does that: she's protecting a small child from the battle and cannot engage aggressively.

No question in Scope It Out is asked in a vacuum. Interpret the questions through the circumstances in which they are asked. "Who's really in control here?" has very different stakes and context when you ask during a firefight, during a tense exchange of prisoners, or during a steamy moment of romance. Preface your question both with how you are interacting with your subject, and the context of what you want the answer.

"I look into their eyes as I caress their cheek, and my voice is barely a whisper. "Would you do it? Would you kill him? For me?" I want to see if they hesitate, of if they are committed. If it comes down to Zeira choosing between Gax's life and my love, who's really in control here?"

Just like in Share Expertise, the answers you get are always honest ones, even if the SM has to figure them out on the spot. Once they answer, it's set in stone. Scope It Out is great for seeing through subterfuge and lies or figuring out another's motives.

Unless a Move says otherwise, players can only ask questions from the list. If a player asks a question not on the list, the SM can tell them to try again or answer a question from the list that seems equivalent.

Of course, some questions might have a negative answer, that's fine. If there really, honestly is nothing that will give them an edge here, the SM should answer that question with "Nothing, sorry."

SPOUT TECHNOBABBLE

When you need to describe some advanced piece of technology, process, or phenomenon, choose between 3 and 5 words or phrases and say it like you know what it means.

Action:

Reroute, reverse, invert, refine, isolate, confine, extrapolate, excise, buffer, polarize, depolarize, decouple, repair, calibrate, enhance, boost, charge, spin, spool, engage, contain, attack, divide, scan,

Status or Condition:

Fluctuating, destabilized, energized, poisoned, corrupted, contaminated, refined, contained, unraveled, damaged, enhanced, viral,

Jargon:

Temporal, quantum, auxiliary, flux, warp, trilitium, fibronium, delta, hyper, charge, burst, distortion, burst, retro-,

Object or Subject:

Capacitor, anomaly, field, conduit, vortex, drive core, capillaries, organs, antibodies, cells, node, diagnostics, crystal, matrix, timeline, matter, vibrations, region, neutrino, particle, continuum, virus, deflector, dish, circuit, system

What does Spout Technobabble do?

Spout Technobabble seems to have no mechanical effect or influence on the Fictional situation, which is unusual for PbtA games. So what is it for?

A big part of science fiction and space opera fiction is character spouting a non-sense word salad describing technology of phenomena. It may be tricky for a player to come up with this sort of stuff on the spot, and can make them feel uncomfortable or unsure. **Impulse Drive** tells players to step up when it's their turn in the spotlight, and Spout Technobabble is a tool to help folks inexperienced with science fiction or improvisation do that.

A player may be extremely uncomfortable coming up with some science nonsense whole cloth, but give them a few lists of prompts, and they are excited to engage it! Spout Technobabble is an invitation for these players to give it a go.

In the original Star Trek, Technobabble was often combined with a metaphor or analogy to explain it to a layman, be it the viewer or an audience stand-in. Using Spout Technobabble in this way helps the player speak in the lingo of the setting, but also telegraph their character's intentions with the actions they're describing.

"If we modify the shields with quantum fluctuations, we can distort their sensor readings and hide in this gas cloud, like putting on a camouflage suit!"

"I've got to flood the power conduits with ionizing particles to protect our engines from the tachyon radiation, like giving our ship a Glorfaxian flu shot!"

Exploration Moves

INTO THE ABYSS

When you stare unblinking into the Abyss looking for forbidden or forgotten knowledge, roll+Alien. **On a 10+**, You are shown dark visions that lend you insight. Ask the Abyss one question, and the Abyss will answer. The SM will ask you one question from The Abyss Stares Back. **On a 7-9**, Ask, and the Abyss will answer, but it is hungry. The SM will ask 2 questions from The Abyss Stares Back.

Into the Abyss allows your character to tap into the ever-present shadow that haunts all of space to gain some insight into your current situation. While you will have access to forbidden or strange knowledge through this move, you will also be exposed to the Abyss, and it will read you. Into the Abyss is always an unsettling experience, but sometimes you desperately need insight, no matter the cost.

This move references The Abyss Stares Back, which is a move that is used by the SM to learn more about the dark corners of your character's soul.

ASSAULTED BY THE ABYSS

When you suffer direct exposure to exotic energies or forces, or a bizarre and terrifying experience, roll+Alien. **On a 10+**, your exposure is limited, choose 1. **On a 7-9**, The Abyss leaves its mark, choose 2.

- » The Abyss stares into you, the SM will ask you one question from The Abyss Stares Back.
- » You freeze up, you have to Keep Your Cool at Disadvantage to shake it off.
- » You are scarred by your experience, figuratively or literally. You may write a Hook about it.

Assaulted by the Abyss is designed as a special version of Keep your Cool. You would use it in situations where a Crew Member has been exposed to strange and dangerous energies, possession by alien entities, or bears witness to a truly horrific and alien event or scene. When your character is pushed beyond the limits of mortal experience, roll Assaulted by the Abyss.

This move references The Abyss Stares Back, which is a move that is used by the SM to learn more about the dark corners of your character's soul.

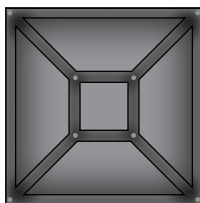
THE ABYSS STARES BACK

When the Abyss stares into you and the SM asks you a question from the List below, you may either answer it truthfully, or decline to answer and suffer 1 Stress.

- » What terrifies your character to the core?
- » For what does your character's darkest heart desire?
- » What was your character's lowest moment?
- » For what does your character crave forgiveness, and from whom?
- » What are your character's secret pains?
- » In what way is your character's mind and soul vulnerable?
- » What faint hope does your character cling to?

The Abyss Stares Back Is the consequence of exposing yourself to the dark, strange, and alien side of life in space. There's something that seems to exist throughout space. It may be a single expansive entity or force, or countless different phenomena. It may be actively malicious, or simply an unsympathetic cold alien force of nature. Either way it knows much and influences much.

As a player, when you are asked a question from The Abyss Stares Back, you have the opportunity to showcase a dark flaw, a vulnerability, or some other scar that makes your character more interesting. If you don't wish to answer, or can't think of anything, choose instead to suffer 1 Stress, as your character's innocence is strained to breaking point.



Hurt, Death, and Healing

There are three types of hurt you track for your character. Harm, Stress, and Calamity. Harm is for physical injuries or compromises. Stress is when you push yourself too far, or witness something you have trouble dealing with. Calamity is a list of Fictional events and changes your character experiences as you play.

Harm

Harm represents physical injuries or illnesses. Some of them apply conditions or new rules while you are affected by them, and have certain conditions that must be met before they're removed. You can tick these off in any order, though there are some you may prefer to leave until last.

Since you don't have Disadvantage for any rolls from having "Just a scratch," it gives you a little more Harm you can take before you start suffering negative effects.

The final box of Harm on the list is always a finality, an ignoble end for your character. By default, there is no way to remove this Harm, and checking it results in the death of your character. Read the Drifting chapter for optional alternative rules regarding Death.

Example Harm:

JUST A SCRATCH:

You're a bit banged up, but it's nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M RATTLED:

You're shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M HURT BAD:

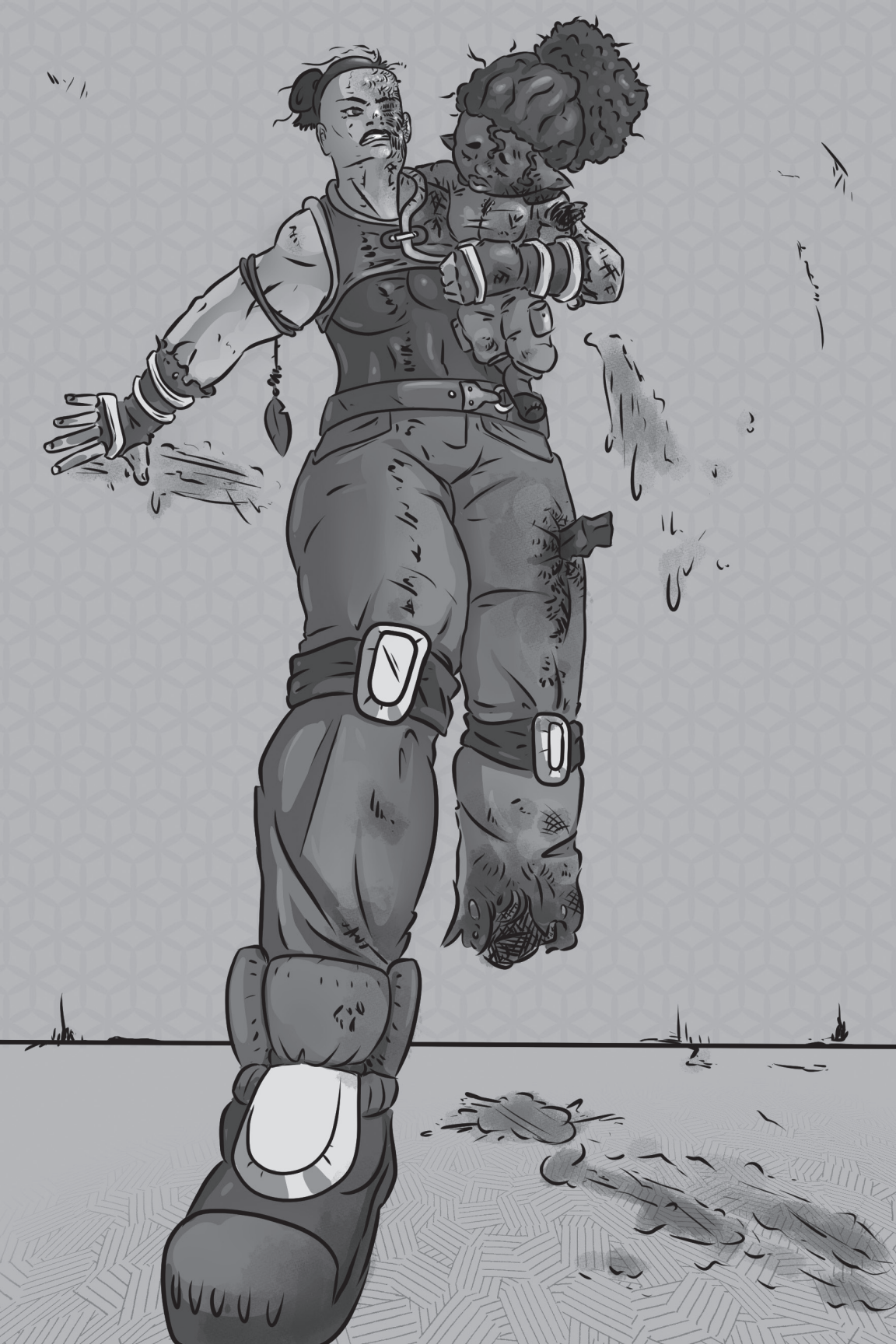
You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.



Dealing or Suffering Harm

Weapons designed to injure or kill people or person sized adversaries have an “N Harm” tag that describes how much Harm they inflict. There are other ways besides weapons that you suffer Harm too. A fistfight or a short fall might incur 1 Harm, limited exposure to a toxic gas may inflict 2 or 3 Harm.

Damage: Harm for Ships and Vehicles

Your pistol or your assault rifle may be great at Harming people or robots or monsters, but not so great at shooting at an armored car, or a tank, or a huge walking war machine, or a spaceship. Except for a few examples, Ships and Vehicles cannot be affected by Harm from weapons, but instead suffer Damage. Most Ship and Vehicle weapons and a few personal weapons have an “N Damage” tag that describes how much Damage they can inflict. Damage can come from sources that are not weapons too, of course. Most mishaps or collisions cause 1 Damage.

If you are attacking a ship or vehicle with a weapon that deals N Damage, treat any reference a Move makes to Harm as though it refers to Damage.

Like Gear, Vehicles are assumed to be repaired during Downtime between jobs. Some Gear and Moves also allow you to repair some Damage to Vehicles during tense or dangerous situations. Your Ship only recovers from Damage when you pay to do so in your Ship Payment Move, although some of the negative effects from Ship Damage are mitigated through Spot Repairs.

Stress and Calamity

Stress is marked when a Move or the SM tells you to, or when you choose to convert an amount of Harm to Stress, usually to prevent yourself from dying. When you mark 5 Stress, clear the Stress track and Mark a Calamity. The only ways to recover Stress is when you choose the option to remove Stress on Hey Big Spender, or if you have a scene where you get closer to another Crew Member during Downtime.

Unlike Harm and Stress, there is no way to remove Calamity. Each check in the Calamity list represents an event that has changed your character of their situation in some fundamental way. Some of these experiences are positive, but eventually your experiences become less pleasant and more harrowing as you run out of options.

Whether good or bad for your character, make sure the Fiction you tie to their Calamities is interesting. While there are some similar Calamities on all of the Archetype's Calamity lists, each Archetype has some Calamities specific only to that Archetype.

There is no way to heal Calamity. Because it's permanent and finite, you only mark something from the list of Calamities on your sheet when you fill the 5 boxes in the Stress track.

There is an upside to marking Calamity. When you mark one of the options on the Calamity list, you also mark XP.

If a Calamity doesn't fit into your current situation, either choose another option or cut away to another scene for a few moments to show it happening elsewhere or show a Scene after this Scene has resolved.

The final box of Calamity on the list is always a finality, an end for your character.

EXAMPLE CALAMITIES:

- » Fictional Benefit: A new ally
- » Fictional benefit: A new resource
- » Mechanical benefit: Approach, Move, Gear
- » Your experiences have changed you, permanently reduce your Approach by 1.
- » Your resources or reserves are depleted, decrease your Gear slots by 1. You may spend 5 XP to get this Gear slot back.
- » Fictional negative: An approaching threat
- » Fictional negative: A hard choice
- » Fictional negative: Ally or resource put in peril
- » You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- » Now or soon, you face a meaningful or drastic event. When you deal with it, roll+Approach.

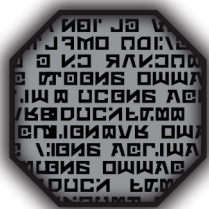
Death in the Void

There are billions of ways to die in the black, and many of them are sudden and brutal. Most species cannot survive exposure to hard vacuum or the inhospitable atmospheres of many planets. **If something happens to your character that would kill them immediately**, then they die, abruptly and unceremoniously snuffed out.

When an inescapably fatal situation arises during play, be sure to clearly state that inescapable death is a consequence that is on the table. Setting stakes is an important part of the SM's job, but all players are encouraged to interrogate the Fictional situation when abrupt and inescapable death is on the table.

Even with the most conscientious of groups, it's still possible to be surprised when playing and for Death in the Void to come in to play. Take the time to pause the game and check in with the players, particularly the player whose character is on the line. Are they comfortable with this outcome? Is there a way to mitigate the situation, or take back some actions that avoid it? Are they excited to make a new character and play them? Could this 'death' result in them coming back so changed they have another playbook?

Be honest about the situation, but be honest about your enjoyment of the game, and look after your fellow players.



Substitute Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, you may exchange it, 1 for 1, for Stress.

You can always turn Harm into Stress, but remember, there are a limited number of ways to remove Stress once you have taken it. A character can only suffer so much Stress before their journey is over.

There is also a question of whether Players may substitute Damage to the Ship or their vehicle for Stress. The answer is usually no, but there are a few exceptions where the situation calls for it. For example, a PC pushing themselves to narrowly avoid being hit by a missile.

Since Damage is not being done directly to the character, the opportunity to fictionally explain how they avoid the damage in a way that causes the stress is less evident. Converting Damage to Stress may also remove long-term tension in the case of damage to the Crew's Ship, and the need to repair it.

Damage to Vehicles is automatically repaired between contacts, so converting Damage to Stress for Vehicles is less mechanically weighty and more fictionally believable since the stakes apply to the character more directly. Find the balance for when to convert Damage to Stress with your group as you play.

Healing

When you receive healing, remove checks in Harm relevant to the healing you have received. Some Harm is beyond a Tactical Pack or simple rest, and can only be relieved by Surgery.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HARM CAN BE HEALED BY:

- » Shrugging it off, choose the "Shrug it off" option when you roll Recover.
- » When a Scene end: At the end of a Scene, the Harm is healed so long as you take a few moments to gather or rest.
- » First Aid, Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" and spends 1 Use of a Tactical Pack when they roll Recover.
- » Surgery, receiving Surgery in a medical facility or Autodoc Surgeon will heal it.

Since First Aid is only used to heal "I'm knocked out," it requires an Ally to use it on you.

Medical Treatment

Some injuries require expert attention to recover in a timely fashion, or to recover without causing permanent damage. Other injuries can be quickly patched up by an Autodoc, but the experience is less than pleasant. If you have a Autodoc, you can get medical treatment for free. Otherwise, you're going to have to roll Hey Big Spender and choose an option that allows for medical treatment.

The Flow of Combat

Combat in *Impulse Drive* is cinematic, brutal, and volatile. It's often over in a few rolls, with Harm being thrown about by the Crew and their opponents. A Crew Member can only take 5 points of Harm, and the last point signals their demise. This seems to make the game incredibly deadly, especially when the Disadvantages from Harm start to stack up.

But you can rest easy. There are systems in place that allow you to mitigate the Harm you take and how it affects you. Taking Harm doesn't limit your choices, it gives you a whole range of new choices to make.

Gear

First and most clear is the Shields and Armor Gear. They can absorb some Harm before they are discharged or damaged, giving you some welcome breathing room. Additionally, the versatile Tactical Packs allow you to heal some types of Harm and Damage by expending one use.

Mild Harm

Next is the first two Harm options: "Just a scratch" and "I'm rattled." They are relatively easy to remove, both are healed with a "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover during a dangerous situation, or when a Scene ends, which makes them comparatively temporary. "Just a scratch" doesn't apply any Disadvantage, making it an easy first choice for where to direct your Harm. Even "I'm knocked out" can be healed with "First Aid" or when the current Scene ends.

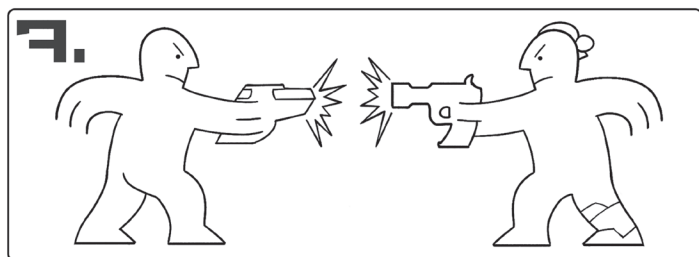
Recover

The Recover Move is an important part of the flow of combat and is designed to help you get a little breathing space when things are desperate. When you've taken some minor Harm, and Discharged a bunch of your Gear and Moves, but your enemy still stands before you, duck out of danger for a moment and roll Recover. It also allows you to ready your weapons, shields, and moves, and recover some small hurts, notably "Just a scratch" or "I'm rattled" when you choose "shrug it off" for yourself or spend a Use of a Tactical Pack to heal "I'm knocked out" on an Ally.

Stress and Calamities

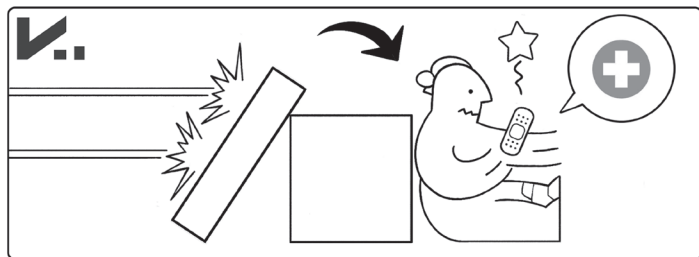
Finally, you have one last refuge from death, in the form of Stress and Calamities. When you suffer Harm, you may convert it to Stress and mark off your Stress track one for one. Be aware that unlike Harm, Stress has very limited options to remove and filling the Stress track will cause you to mark a Calamity, which will complicate your character's life. Characters have 10 Calamities on their sheet, the last of which results in their demise or otherwise departure from the stage of the game, so each character can suffer a minimum 50 Stress during their time in the game. That means you have a lot of Stress you can use, so don't be afraid to do so!

The Cycle of Action and Danger



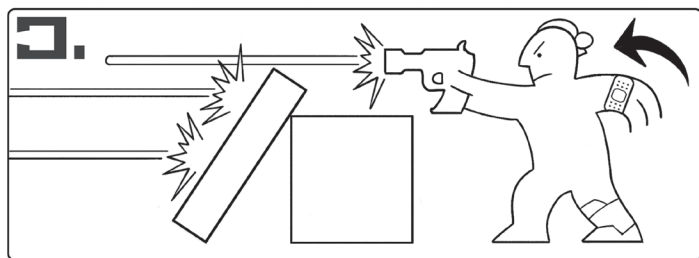
EXCHANGE HARM IN COMBAT OR A DANGEROUS SITUATION.

- » Suffer Harm.
- » Absorb Harm with Shields or Armor.
- » Convert Harm to Stress.



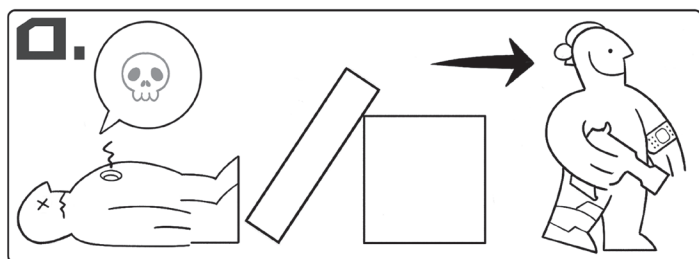
TEMPORARILY GET OUT OF DANGER TO ROLL RECOVER.

- » Shrug it off to remove "Just a scratch" or "I'm rattled."
- » First Aid: spend 1 Use of a Tactical Pack to heal "I'm knocked out" on an ally.
- » Recharge Shields.



HEAD BACK INTO DANGER TO FINISH THE FIGHT.

- » Exchange more Harm
- » Discharge Moves and Gear



TAKE SOME TIME TO REST AND PREPARE WHEN COMBAT'S OVER, OR THE DANGER HAS PASSED AND YOU'RE RELATIVELY SAFE.

- » Heal "Just a scratch," "I'm rattled," and "I'm knocked out" when the current Scene ends.
- » Repair Armor by using a Tactical Pack and 5 minutes work.

Other Moves

ADVANCEMENT

When you roll a 6-, or when a move directs you to, take XP. When you have 5 XP, choose 1:

- » Upgrade an Approach.
- » Gain a new Archetype Move.
- » Gain a Gear slot.

GET HOOKED

When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group, choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes the Disadvantage of the moment.

You can claim a Hook to be activated both if you play along with it or go against it and try to persevere, so long as you're acting at Disadvantage because of it. Play to your Hooks! They will complicate the situation, and make it more likely for you to roll a 6-, which will earn you XP. No pain, no gain!

If you decline to apply a Hook, elaborate on why you declined, and what it looks like for your character. "I as a player care about the result of this roll" is an acceptable answer. Sometimes, when the moment is right, the tension is at its peak, and there's a lot riding on a roll for your character, or another player's character it's OK to say no thank you, and roll as normal. What do we see of your character's internal struggle when they overcome their Hook's Disadvantage?

If you decline a Hook, interrogate whether that Hook still matters to your character at the end of the episode in the Cliffhanger Move. Has their situation or worldview changed, or was this a temporary moment of strength or luck?

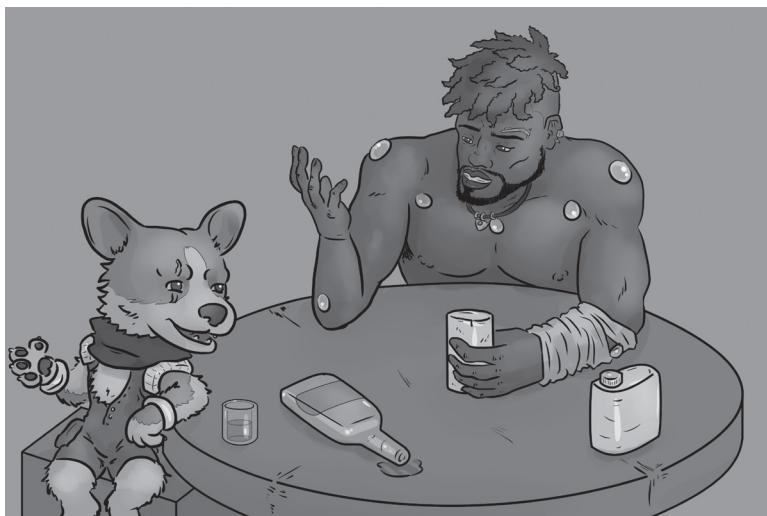
LOADOUT

When you are somewhere safe and have access to all of your Supplies, you may clear your Marked Gear Slots and refresh uses of your Gear.

If you wish to pick up Gear in the field, you may, but if you do not have a free slot available, you must leave something behind.

REGULATED AREAS

Some areas do not allow you to wear armor or openly carry weapons. When you visit these areas, you are in danger of arrest or worse if you carry any weapons or Gear with the Illegal tag. Non-aggressive tools and Gear are still allowed.



DOWNTIME

When your Crew spends time relaxing after a Contract or cooped up in your ship while traveling between stars, each player describes how they spend their Downtime, and shows a short scene or vignette related to it. The SM or another player not in the scene may ask you some questions about your Downtime, answer them. If you:

- » Work on a Personal Project, mark 1 Tick on it.
- » Confront a Crew Member with a grievance or disagreement, you each may write a Hook related to the outcome.
- » Spend time getting closer to a Crew Member, you each may choose to heal 1 Stress or have Advantage Going Forward.

Downtime Scenes do not Burn Fuses.

Be aggressive framing Downtime scenes, begin them when something is already happening, and end them as soon as you have some kind of change or conclusion. Be sure to ask questions that you want to know the answers about, but don't dwell on Downtime scenes. The scenes should be short and to the point, with maybe 1 or 2 rolls before they're concluded. If a player wants to investigate or study something they learned about previously, consider what they are trying to learn, and whether it's a Personal Project, a Scope It Out roll, or some other move.

THE CREW IS BACK IN TOWN

When you Dock or land your ship somewhere for the first time or after being away for at least an Episode, roll+Disposition for the faction that controls the territory. On a 10+, you dock without issue, and everything seems clear. On a 7-9, your welcome isn't a warm one, choose 1.

- » Trouble related to a Hook, Calamity, or recent indiscretion has caught up with the Crew.
- » There is an open conflict that makes this territory dangerous or unstable.
- » There is a shortage or crisis that has driven prices up, you have Disadvantage when dealing with local merchants or vendors.

Commerce & Ship Payment Moves

Money in *Impulse Drive* is abstracted using Moves like Your Ship Payment Move, Upgrade Complete, Hey Big Spender, Lucrative Cargo, and Mercantile, and Contracts and tiered lists of Gear, Upgrades, and Cargo. This means that your group can have each civilization measure wealth in its own local currency, and you can describe it as you like without having to mess around with exchange rates. That may be a headache for your characters, but it isn't for you. Some sections of *Impulse Drive* may refer to a standard galactic currency called the guildler. Feel free to use this or not.

Each ship has its own Payment Move that is made when the Crew completes a job, contract, mission, heist, or raid. These Moves are very similar overall, but have small differences to reflect the fiction they represent. Payment Moves focus on the fictional closure to allow the Crew to settle their latest adventure. This is an opportunity to have some time between adventures to try and push their troubles back or take the opportunity to improve their chances on their next adventure by getting more Gear, upgrading their Ship, working on Personal Projects, or just blowing off steam.

The four standard Ship Payment moves are listed below. For the full moves check the Ship Playbooks on their corresponding pages.

- » Payday (The Smuggler) Indebted scoundrels trying to scrape by (Page 131).
- » Blood Money (The Predator) Dangerous Mercenaries taking violent jobs and brawling with their hated enemy (Page 138).
- » Mission Complete (The Vanguard) Highly specialized operatives taking missions for their Organization (Page 146).
- » Pieces of Eight (The Marauder) Pirates raiding others, selling their loot, trying to stay one step ahead of the authorities (Page 152).

Ship Payment Moves are important because they represent your Crew's interactions with money. Instead of tracking money literally and counting every guildler you've earned, the Ship Payment Moves focus on the consequences: how much you were able to squeeze out of your Client and how you prioritize spending your money.

This has two major benefits. First, nobody has to be an accountant tracking how much the Crew has earned, and second, the Crew is always kept poor and hungry. If money is tracked literally, the SM has to try and balance the value of Contracts to ensure the Crew has a chance of keeping up with their expenses but that they don't also get too rich and start hoarding their money.

A good roll on a Ship Payment Move means the Crew gets to throw money around, pay their expenses and maybe get some cool new toys. After their lavish spending, however, they're poor again and need to find another Contract. The players may be fiscally responsible, but the Crew in *Impulse Drive* never is.

Ship Payment Moves relate to a number of other moves about spending money based on your choices. Hey Big Spender, Upgrade Complete, and Lucrative Exports all have their own lists of options for Gear, Ship Upgrades, and Cargo respectively.

POCKET CHANGE: INCIDENTAL COSTS IN IMPULSE DRIVE

***Impulse Drive** pays attention to money in certain specific circumstances representing large exchanges, namely: payment for services rendered, and purchases for maintenance, repairs, or improvements on your ship or Crew Members.*

Once you make these large transactions, you're nearly broke again. Able to scrape by for a while buying the lowest quality of the bare essentials and incidental transactions.

As an example, you can afford a few hours in a cheap and nasty hotel without rolling, but if you want to stay the night somewhere nice, you're going to need to convince or trick someone into letting you.

VENDORS, CONTRACTS, AND DISPOSITION

When a move tells you to roll+Disposition of while dealing with a vendor or contact, the modifier will depend on who that NPC or Group is. If it's not someone specific the Crew has already had contact with, or that an Archetype can find with a Move, then the NPC inherits their Disposition from the prevailing Disposition of those in power in the Crew's current location. If this hasn't been established, then the default Disposition is neutral, 0. The NPC has never heard of you.

For Gear lists, detailed descriptions, and Tag explanations for Gear, see page 101

NEGOTIATE TERMS

When you commit to a Contract and meet your contact to negotiate the terms, roll+Disposition if you know your Client, or roll+Slick at Disadvantage if you don't. **On a 10+**, your relationship is strong, or your negotiating skills are top notch. Choose 2. **On a 7-9**, you manage to get a small concession, choose 1. **On a 6-**, you get stonewalled, or there's just nothing else they can give you.

- » You negotiate a better payment upon completion. When you complete this Contract, roll Your Ship Payment Move at Advantage.
- » You gain some useful information from your contact; the SM will reveal a hidden detail of the Contract.
- » You get an up-front expenses payment or resource provided. Each Crew Member makes a roll on Hey Big Spender, at Disadvantage.

Negotiate Terms is only rolled after the Crew has chosen and accepted the Contract. Once the roll has been made, the Crew can't back out of the Contract without severe consequences. Have a scene for meeting with or negotiating with the Client or Contact and give the Crew a chance to interact with them before they make the roll. Some Moves may be used in the situation that may give Advantage to the roll.

HEY BIG SPENDER

When you're flush with Currency and go looking for something to spend your ill-gotten gains on, roll+Disposition with the local vendors or contacts to see what you can find. **On a 10+**, you can find your heart's desire, spend big, and live life to the fullest. Purchase 1 item from the Specialist or Black Market list, or choose 3 from below: **On a 7-9**, you've got plenty of time and money. Choose 2: **On a 6-**, you only have access to the basics. Choose 1:

- » R&R: you spend some time relaxing, clear your Stress track.
- » Basic care: Heal all Harm you have suffered with a few days rough but competent treatment.
- » Me Time: Mark 1 Tick on a Personal Project.
- » Make 1 purchase on the Advanced Gear list.
- » Make 2 purchases on the Basic Gear list.

On a 6- or 7-9, you may choose 1 extra, but you must waste time searching for it, the SM will expose you to a danger or Burn the Fuse of an Episode Strain. Whatever choices you make, you spend the rest of your money on frivolous, fleeting pleasures and distractions until you're broke again.

Accommodation

Paid accommodation can be found in most populated areas. Some places will only have the most basic options available, from a run-down shack to a coffin-sized sleep pod. But larger settlements and cities will run the full range, up to expensive, opulent hotels.

- » Shabby, unpleasant & cramped: a small amount you have on hand.
- » Simple & functional: 1 payment from Liquid Assets will get you a few weeks.
- » Comfortable & spacious: 1 payment from Liquid Assets will get you about a week.
- » Indulgent and unique: 1 payment from Liquid Assets will get you a few nights.
- » Opulent & frivolous: 2 payments from Liquid Assets will get you a single night.



Cargo Moves

Cargo can be bought and sold or shipped as a way to make some extra funds as your Crew gallivants around the sector on exciting adventures and taking Contracts. The buying and selling of cargo is handled by two moves: Lucrative Exports and Mercantile.

LUCRATIVE EXPORTS

When your Crew hits the markets and exchanges with plenty of money or goods and go looking for cargo to purchase and transport for sale elsewhere, roll+Disposition with the local vendors and contacts.

On a 10+, there's plenty to choose from. Choose 1 and describe it: Valuable Cargo, Contraband Cargo, or Cheap Cargo.

On a 7-9, there's an OK selection. Choose 1 and describe it: Contraband Cargo or Cheap Cargo.

On a 6-, it's slim pickings. You manage to buy some Cheap Cargo, describe it.

MERCANTILE

When you dock in a system with your cargo hold full of goods to sell, roll 2d6. If you are selling Contraband Cargo, add +1 to the roll.

If you are selling Valuable Cargo, you have Advantage.

On a 10+, it's a good sale, choose 1 from Your Ship Payment Move.

On a 7-9, you can only get paid in kind. Roll Lucrative Exports.

On a 6-, it's a net loss. Either the market was unfavorable or someone blew the profits.

VALUABLE CARGO:

Valuable Cargo is worth a lot to someone. It's worth so much that someone may try to steal it or kill you for it. When you sell Valuable Cargo in a different system than when you bought it, roll Mercantile at Advantage.

Luxury items or goods; rare antiques or artifacts; high quality goods, parts, or supplies; a rare animal; sensitive or valuable information

CONTRABAND CARGO:

Contraband Cargo is illegal. When you are caught with Contraband Cargo by authorities, they may arrest, fine, or attack you, depending on their laws and the kind of Contraband you are carrying. Contraband can only be sold to criminal contacts, but when you sell your Contraband Cargo to a criminal contact, take +1 to your Mercantile roll.

Illicit drugs or software; stolen or looted goods; illegal Modifications or weapons; dirty money or illegally obtained secrets; slaves; stolen or illicit information

CHEAP CARGO:

Cheap cargo is the standard, ubiquitous stuff you can get just about anywhere. It's boring, but no one is likely to kill you for it. When you sell Cheap Cargo in a different system than when you bought it, roll Mercantile.

Common goods, supplies, or parts; simple industrial machinery; cheap, disposable devices or products; common livestock; civilian correspondence

Plot Moves

These Moves are used to help the SM and players begin and end sessions smoothly.

Pilot Episode

When you first sit down to play *Impulse Drive* with a group, go through the following list:

1. The Space Master pitches the game to the players, including basics of rules, the types of adventures *Impulse Drive* aims to tell, and any ideas the SM has for a game.
2. The SM introduces the concepts of each Archetype, and players each choose an Archetype. It is recommended, though not necessary, that each player choose a different Archetype.
3. Each player chooses or creates a name for their character.
4. Each player chooses the description for their character.
5. The SM describes how each Approach works and what it represents, and each player assigns modifiers to their Approaches.
6. Each player chooses a past or Background for their character.
7. Each player reads their starting Move and makes any choices they need.
8. Each player takes a turn introducing their character by name, description, and past.
9. Each player takes a turn reading out at least three of their Hooks and filling in the details with other Crew Members, NPCs, Groups, or various complications as they see fit.
10. Each player chooses 3 Hooks to be their Starting Hooks and writes them in the Hooks section on their Playbook.
11. The Crew works together to build their ship from the available options. Give the Ship a name and look. Detail the Ship's unique connection or problem. If you have time, spend your Ship's starting Upgrades on Modules. Otherwise, move on and choose these during play.
12. The SM sets the scene, usually a dangerous or charged situation that calls the Crew to some kind of decisive action.
13. Start playing.

PREVIOUSLY ON

When your group starts a new Episode, go through the following list:

- » Briefly go over what happened in the last session, mentioning any highlights.
- » List each Crew Member's Hooks. Players may take this opportunity to change their Hooks or write new ones.
- » Set the scene for the beginning of this session and begin playing.

Previously On is useful to help everyone refresh on what happened in previous sessions, and to state some intent for this session.

CLIFFHANGER

When you reach the end of an Episode, go through the following list:

Each player takes a turn reading their three Hooks:

- » If the table agrees that at least one of the player's Hooks impacted events or the character, the player marks XP.
- » The player then removes any Hooks they feel are no longer relevant and writes new Hooks, inspired either by recent events in the game or their original Hooks list from character creation.

Ask the following questions and answer them as a group:

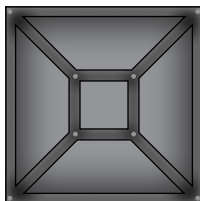
- » Did we complete a mission or Contract?
- » Did we learn something new and important about the universe?
- » Did we make a new enemy, or thwart an existing enemy?
- » Was there a big moment that hinged on a crucial roll?

For each yes, all players mark XP. After these questions have been resolved, mark Burn and Ticks on appropriate Season Strains and Personal Projects, including Debt and Ship Maintenance.

Cliffhanger is a chance for everyone to talk about the game and remember some of the high notes or important things that happened. It's also a structured way for you to have a look at whether you have pursued the goals of the game and your players.

WHAT IS AN EPISODE?

An episode is a length of time in the game that is signified by several factors. the beginning is often clear cut. When you gather to start playing for the day's session, at the start of a new mission after some Downtime, when a new fictional threat is introduced. Likewise, the end of an episode can follow similar cues. At the end of a mission, or after downtime that has capped off a mission. When you're done playing for the day, after you have wrapped up an adventure or neutralized a meaningful threat, or as the name of the end of episode moves suggests, after a big reveal on a Cliffhanger. Discuss whether you're at the beginning or end of an Episode as a group but let your instincts and the media that inspires you guide you to the answer. You will often feel when you've hit the end of an Episode.



PERSONAL PROJECT

When you decide to devote your free time to a Personal Project within the scope of your expertise, such as solving a mystery, creating or modifying a device or technology, negotiating an accord, or learning a new skill, say what you want to do. The SM will say either "Sorry, it can't be done." Or "Sure! But..." Then some of the following:

- » You can do it with a 3-6 Tick Scene Clock.
- » You can do it with a 3-6 Tick Episode Clock.
- » You can do it with a 3-6 Tick Season Clock.
- » You will need the expertise or assistance of _____.
- » You will need to destroy/dissect _____.
- » You will need to travel to _____.
- » You will need to _____ first.
- » It's going to be dangerous.
- » You'll have to get/build/fix/take apart/figure out _____ first.
- » It's going to cost you a favor to the wrong kinds of people.
- » The best you'll be able to do is an unreliable, less effective, or weak version.
- » It's going to take a lot of trial and error to perfect it.

The SM will connect them all with "And" or a merciful "Or." Fill in a Personal Project sheet with the details.

- » If it's a Scene Project, check a Tick on the Clock when you take a successful action that moves you towards your goal.
- » If it's an Episode Project, check a Tick on the Clock when you perform a scene that moves you towards your goal.
- » If it's a Season Project, check a Tick on the Clock when you complete an Episode and have shown that you have worked on your Project.

Players may have any number of reasons to start a Personal Project. If a player is going for something that has far-reaching consequences or is trying something that is more outside of their character's expertise, the SM has the option to either say "No, sorry. It can't be done," or make it very challenging and require the help of other Crew Members or some NPCs that will come with their own baggage or trouble. Use your various types of Clocks for pacing, just be sure to select requirements that not only make sense, but would also provide enough fun material for a scene or two with some interesting stakes.

If a player is going for something that steps outside of the scope or themes of your game, talk to them on the player level, to see if there is a reasonable compromise you can reach.

It is worth noting that if an Intellect Player takes the Workspace Move, you can't tell them "No" anymore, so long as they are still working in their fields of expertise. The Intellect should be ambitious and creative with the sorts of problems or mysteries they try to solve with their workspace.

THE CREW

Misfits and Outcasts bound together

by Debt and Desperation



The Crew is made up of players that each create and control a single member of the Crew. Their Crew Member is a protagonist in the adventures you explore, with their own strengths, weaknesses, desires, and fears influencing how they behave.

Your Agenda & Principles

The Crew has an Agenda and set of Principles to follow that help you all have a fun time. The Space Master has their own Agenda and Principles they follow.

AGENDA

- » Play a compromised, active character
- » Imagine dangerous and exciting worlds
- » Play to find out what happens

PRINCIPLES

- » Take risks and embrace the consequences
- » Learn your Archetype's Moves
- » Keep track of your Hooks and say when they apply
- » Step up when it's your turn to shine
- » Step back when it's another player's turn to shine
- » Look after your fellow players
- » Think cinematically

ALWAYS SAY

- » What the Principles demand
- » What honesty demands
- » What the rules demand

Player's Agenda

As players, your Agenda is your goal while playing *Impulse Drive*. If you follow your Agenda, then the game helps you have fun and experience *Impulse Drive* as it was designed.

PLAY A COMPROMISED, ACTIVE CHARACTER

When you play your character, get involved. Use their Hooks to figure out what they care about and have them go after it. Get entangled in the other Crew Members' business, and when it's your turn in the spotlight, bring your strengths and Hooks to the fore. Be bright, be bold, take risks and enjoy your character's failure and suffering as much as their triumph and exultation.

When you are asked about your character, tell everyone about them! Your idea doesn't have to be concrete, or complex, or the best idea ever. Go with your gut and go with the flow. Look at your playbook, think about characters in media that you enjoy that fit the Archetype, and draw from them.

IMAGINE DANGEROUS AND EXCITING WORLDS

Be curious about the world your group is creating and exploring. If you hear of a dead world that had once been home to an advanced civilization, consider exploring it for knowledge or searching it for forgotten technology. When you're faced with a cutthroat gang of pirates, get in their faces and take no nonsense. You are a crew of badasses with poor impulse control and your very own ship. Get out there in the galaxy and get involved.

PLAY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS

This game gives you the tools to explore the galaxy as you create it. You're not here to play through a pre-written story, plot, or scenario. You don't know what's going to happen as you travel through the galaxy on your adventures. Your character has goals or desires you may follow around, but whether they achieve them is what you are playing to find out.

Player Principles

Your Player Principles tell you how to follow your Agenda specifically. When describing what your character does, keep the Principles in mind. The Principles also discuss how to treat your fellow players. A game is only fun if everyone is able to enjoy their time with it.

TAKE RISKS AND EMBRACE THE CONSEQUENCES

Your Crew are volatile and dangerous individuals pushed to the fringes of acceptable civilization. The game is about them following their goals and desires into dangerous situations and finding out what happens next. There are times your characters get exactly what they want, but more often than not, there are some compromises or hard times before they do. Enjoy the struggle and suffering of your character as much as their victories and exultation. There is no excitement without risk, so look for the times when your character would act despite—or perhaps because of—the risks. You will be mechanically rewarded when your character suffers setbacks and failure, so don't be afraid!

LEARN YOUR ARCHETYPE'S MOVES

When you make your character, you choose an Archetype playbook that lists a lot of stuff specific to them. Read through them and get a feeling for them. If you have questions, ask the Space Master. While everyone's responsible for looking out for when a Universal Move is triggered, you are going to know your Archetype the best. When you are using an Archetype Move, be clear you're triggering it. If you don't specify your Move and have your Hound hit the streets looking for leads on a bounty, others may think they're trying to Scope It Out, when really, they're using their Bloodhound Move.

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR HOOKS AND SAY WHEN THEY APPLY

Your Hooks not only tell everyone what your character cares about, they show how they are flawed and interesting, how they interact with the other Crew Members, and offer mechanical components that directly impact the game. Tell us when your Hooks apply, and look for opportunities to exploit them or bring them into the spotlight. Above all else, your Hooks are what make your character unique and interesting.

STEP UP WHEN IT'S YOUR TURN TO SHINE

When the spotlight shifts to you and it's your turn to act or show a particular part your character, step up and go for it. Do something cool, show a flaw or conflict your character is feeling, show a funny or humorous side of your character. When it's your turn to shine, act. Do something that makes sense to you and get involved in the game.

STEP BACK WHEN IT'S ANOTHER PLAYER'S TURN TO SHINE

When another player is taking action, give them the space to do so. You can support them in their action by helping out, or you may interfere if you're interacting with them, but when it's their turn to show off their character's strengths and Hooks, let them do it. Let them have their moment in the spotlight and act.

LOOK AFTER YOUR FELLOW PLAYERS

The most important part of any roleplaying game is the people. Before immersion, before the rules, before the story or keeping the game continuing, making sure your fellow players are comfortable and feel safe. Whether you are playing with new acquaintances or old friends, it's a good idea to make a few safety tools available for dealing with content that may make folks uncomfortable or touches on possible traumas.

LINES AND VEILS

Lines and Veils is a conversation you have before play about content that won't happen in the game at all, or will happen, but is glossed over in a "fade to black" or "cut away" manner. This allows players to veto or control exposure to certain themes, ideas, or types of violence that may be upsetting.

Lines are hard lines in the game we do not cross. These are things that are not in the game at all. They are not alluded to or done offscreen.

Veils are things that happen offscreen in the game. The easiest way to signal a veil is to fade to black as the end of a scene just before the Veiled content starts, or cut away suddenly. Many movies and TV shows use these methods to great dramatic effect. Although it can serve a similar function in roleplaying games, it's also used to minimise discomfort and awkwardness pertaining to sensitive subject matter.

THE X-CARD

Some things may be missed in your brief Lines and Veils chat that causes folks discomfort or trauma, and then occur during the game. For these circumstances the X-card is a tool for someone to signal to move on from or change the current situation in the Fiction.

The X-card can be any card or token in a live game. In an online game, players can signal "X" with their arms or type "X" into the chat to indicate they are using the X-card, or say "X-Card" out loud. If at any time a player feels uncomfortable with content that is introduced into the game by the SM or by another player, they may use the X-card to veto that content. All other players and the SM must respect what the X-card is for.

Once the card is used, the person who used it indicates what content made them uncomfortable. They do not have to explain why it made them uncomfortable. From there, the content can be changed, faded to black, or a short break can be taken if needed. Under no circumstances should the X-card be ignored when used

These safety tools aren't always about serious and traumatic material. As a real-world example, I'm personally squeamish about graphic surgery, and may ask for fade to black **Veils** on any medical procedures. Someone may be trying to quit smoking, and **X-Card** the description of an NPC taking a drag on a cigarette. Someone may just be over plots that involve AI rebellions, and ask for a **Line** on that content. These examples aren't to trivialize folks' trauma, but present the wishes of the people you play with as a matter of fact. **Look after your fellow players** is a rule in **Impulse Drive** you must follow as a player.

THINK CINEMATICALY

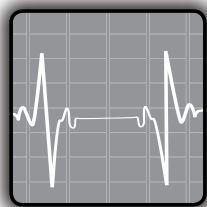
Think of the conversation you have while playing *Impulse Drive* as a series of scenes in a movie or a TV series. You skip over the parts that don't need a scene, or you can have a montage when you want to show someone doing something or getting ready for something over time. You can also describe certain cinematic techniques to enhance the action "on-screen": cuts or fades between scenes, camera angles for dramatic moments or shifting focus or the spotlight

Always Say

- » What the Principles demand
- » What honesty demands
- » What the rules demand

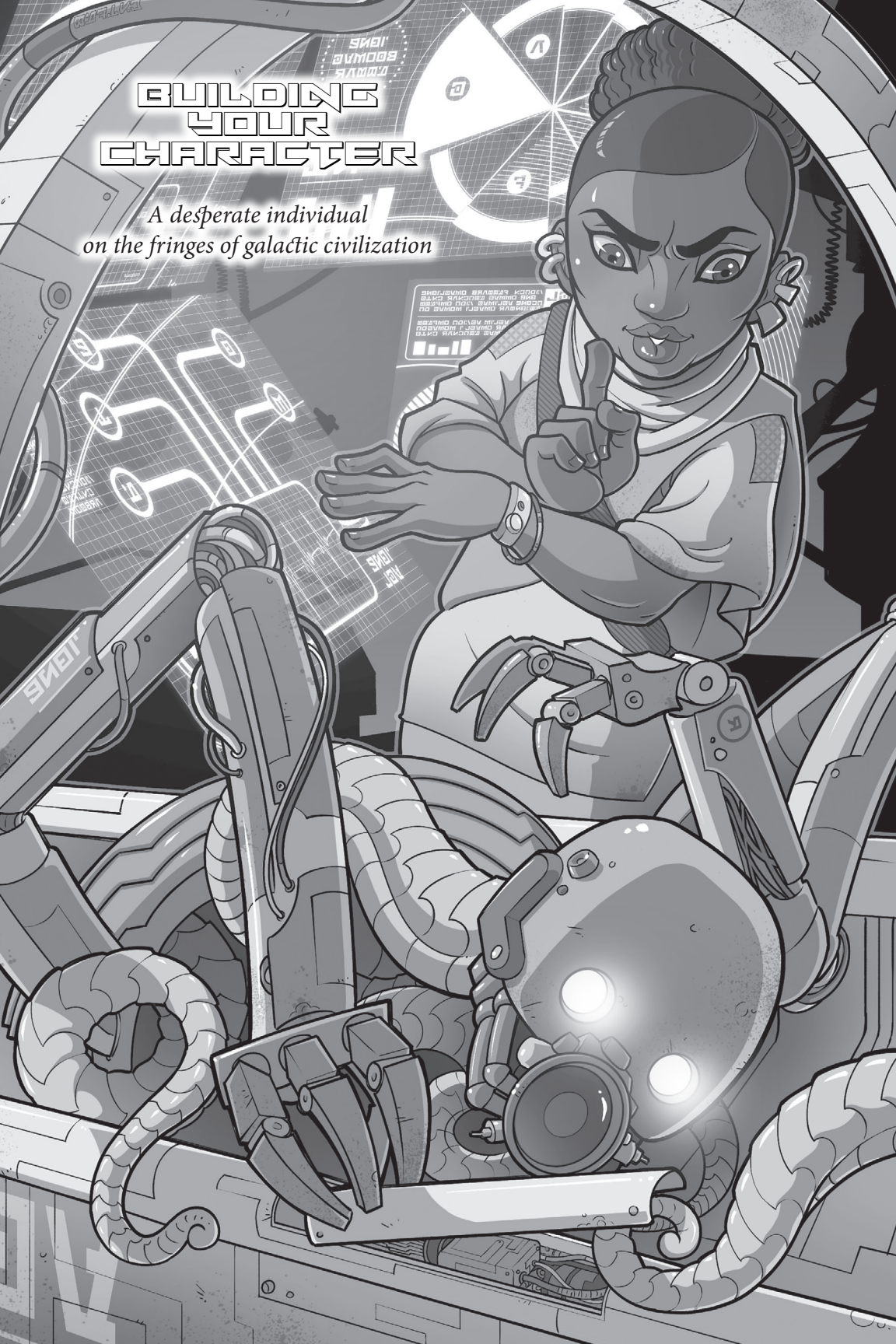
Present your character honestly, in line with your Principles and the rules. Look for when Moves are triggered, begin and end with the Fiction. Say what your character is doing when you trigger a Move. Add flair and detail. Say what your character is thinking, feeling, and doing. When the rules tell you an outcome, play by that outcome.

If there is something that happens in the game that makes you uncomfortable or sucks the fun out of the game, speak up. Either there on the spot, or where you feel more comfortable. If someone feels uncomfortable and speaks up, move on and don't dwell on the part that's making them uncomfortable, or worry about an explanation about why it's making them uncomfortable. People are more important than any game, so please look after each other and make sure you play in a safe, accepting environment for everyone. Except jerks. Kindly ask jerks to change their behavior or leave the game.



BUILDING YOUR CHARACTER

*A desperate individual
on the fringes of galactic civilization*



Choose an Archetype

To create a character that you play in *Impulse Drive*, select one of the Archetypes and follow the instructions for your Archetype. The Space Master provides the Archetype playbooks for you to choose from. Each playbook contains the information and rules for creating and playing a character of that Archetype.

Each of the Archetypes are designed to express certain types of characters that are familiar in the kinds of stories that have inspired *Impulse Drive*.

The Hound

Page 060

Tracker, Hunter, Bloodhound. You're known for your tenacity and determination when it comes down to hunting your target. Whether you do it in the name of law and order or for the sweet jingle of guilders, there is little that can keep you from your target.

The Infiltrator

Page 065

You're a shadow, a ghost, a rumor almost heard. You're an expert at overcoming security systems of all sorts and getting in where you shouldn't. Perhaps you do it out of duty, perhaps it's in search of the next big score, but when you set your mind on getting to something—or someone—you shouldn't, you are well equipped to do so.

The Intellect

Page 071

You're the expert. Scientist, doctor, engineer, archaeologist, anthropologist, whatever your field is, you know just about everything worth knowing, or you know how to find out. You're a master of technology and intellect, and bring your deductions, reasoning, and knowledge to bear on any situation.

The Mystic

Page 076

Many tell stories of your Order. Myths and folk tales of wandering seers and knights guiding events with your far sight and meting out justice or keeping peace with your strange, ancient weapons. Then there's you: trained, but perhaps not tested. It's your task to go out into space and find yourself.

The Outsider

Page 081

Life in the galaxy comes in all shapes and sizes, hailing from different societies and cultural backgrounds. But most aliens are just people, with reasonably similar drives and motivations. But you're different. Fundamentally different from the others in a way that makes you entirely alien to them. Perhaps it's your unusual physical form, or that you do not possess a physical form at all! Perhaps you are an AI, or a sentient spaceship, or a drone for a hive mind species. Perhaps you're a unique, strange member of a common species. Whatever it is that sets you apart, it makes you unique and alien to all around you.

The Scoundrel

Page 086

Yeah, you're a criminal, and everybody knows it. But there's light years of difference between knowing it and proving it. You're slick, smart, and more than a little cocky. You have shady connections in numerous seedy underbellies. The only reason you're not filthy stinking rich is just bad luck, certainly not bad impulse control.

The Tempest

Page 091

You're the wild one, the loose cannon, the mad dog. You're a cosmic storm waiting to erupt and tear everything apart. You barely keep your dark, destructive emotions in check, and when you unleash them you leave nothing but debris behind. You live with all of your emotions and passions bubbling at the surface, and others are either drawn to your violent magnetism, wary of your explosive rage, or certain you are just plain crazy.

The Warhorse

Page 096

You've seen the violent side of space for most of your life, and it has hardened you and honed you to a razor's edge. Few have more experience at fighting and controlling the battlefield than you. Where others may be overwhelmed by the horrors of battle and space, you shrug, pick up your weapon, and stride once more into the breach.



Name & Description

- » Choose a pre-generated name or make up your own
- » Choose a pronoun
- » Choose up to 4 words that describe your character in a general way

While the Archetypes give you some options to guide your choices, who your character is, what they are, and what they look like is up to you. Sometimes your character at character creation has something to say about your character's background, but usually only in a very general sense. In *Impulse Drive*, everybody is treated as people. Whether you're human, a humanoid alien, some weird alien, a robot, or a cyborg, your Archetype still plays mostly the same. Describing how your character looks adds entertaining flavor to your game, but galactic life is so diverse, all but the most peculiar individuals are just people.

Pronouns allow you to specify what gender or otherwise social identity your character identifies as. There are multiple choices beyond "He" and "She" because characters in the game can reflect the diversity of society, culture, and personal identity we have in our societies here on Earth. For some characters, gender is irrelevant, either in their society, for their species, or individually. Including an array of options allows people to express themselves or explore ideas through characters. Take the opportunity to be aware of the people you play with and give yourselves the opportunity to express yourselves in an accepting, welcoming environment. The black void of space and all its wonders are for everybody to explore.

While the Archetype sheets only display a particular form of various pronouns, you can consult the chart below for other instances, and how they can be applied. I sourced this information from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's website, where they had a guide for diverse pronouns. This is not an exhaustive list of pronouns. It's good practice to ask which pronouns a person uses.

UWM's LGBT Resource Center:

<https://uwm.edu/lgbtrc/support/gender-pronouns/>

Subject: _____1_____ started into the infinite void of space.

Object: The drones were too many and had backed _2_ into a corner.

Possessive: _____3_____ favored attack is graceful and elegant.

Possessive Pronoun: The assault rifle is _4_.

Reflexive: after suffering a mighty blow, _____1_____ picks _____5_____ up off the floor.

1	2	3	4	5
E/ey	Em	Eir	Eirs	Eirself
He	Him	His	His	Himself
[Name]	[Name]	[Name]'s	[Name]'s	[Name]'s self
Per	Per	Pers	Pers	Perself
She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself
Sie	Sir	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themself
Ve	Ver	Vis	Vers	Verself
Zie	Zim	Zir	Zirs	Zirself
It	It	Its	Its	Itself

Assign The Five Approaches

Impulse Drive describes most actions characters undertake in terms of 5 different ways they look at their world and solve problems. Some applications of these Approaches seem pretty straightforward, while others are more abstract. Each Approach has a modifier applied to it, ranging from -3 to +3. When you make a Move, you usually roll two 6 sided dice, and add the result to the modifier of the Approach associated with the Move. Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

VOLATILE

Acting recklessly or violently.

Universal Moves: *Firefight & Intimidate*

CALCULATING

Using cold intellect and deductive skills.

Universal Moves: *Alpha Strike, Share Expertise, & Scope It Out*

SLICK

Using smooth talking or quick reflexes.

Universal Moves: *Act Quick & Manipulate*

STALWART

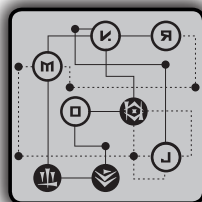
Being resilient under pressure or dependable.

Universal Moves: *Recover, Keep Your Cool, & Lean on Me*

ALIEN

Connecting to or enduring exotic and dangerous phenomena.

Universal Moves: *Into The Abyss & Assaulted by the Abyss*



Archetype Moves

In addition to the Universal Moves, each Archetype has its own Moves that let them engage in situations in unique ways. Archetypes have 3 sections of Moves: the Signature Move, two Background Moves, and a number of Moves specific to that Archetype.

Each Archetype starts with its Signature Move no matter what. Signature Moves describe something intrinsic about the Archetype that separates it from everybody else.

Each Archetype also has two Background Moves that help make it unique in another way. At character creation, you choose 1 of these options and leave the other one behind, forever—usually.

Each Archetype also has a number of Moves that give your character new abilities, or modify their Signature Moves or the Universal Moves further. You don't start with any of these, but can earn them by gaining a total of 5 XP as you play.

Hooks

Hooks are statements that are true about your characters that make them interesting and unique, and cause complications in their lives. A Hook can be a Goal, an Instinct, a Trait, or a Connection with PCs or NPCs. When your Hooks complicate your character's life and you have Disadvantage, you are more likely to roll a 6-. Since players mark XP when they roll a 6-, playing to your Hooks increases your opportunity to mark XP.

Hooks are designed to encourage and reward character play by getting players to show and explore their characters' flaws, quirks, weaknesses, and dysfunctional relationships. It's also a chance for players to say how their characters are special. You get to change your Hooks at the beginning of every episode, and you're encouraged to do so when you want to highlight a particular flaw or relationship for that episode.

The types of Hooks have no particular mechanical difference, they are merely ways you can form your ideas about your character in interesting ways that will complicate their life. If you are having trouble coming up with Hooks you find compelling or interesting, go for the obvious and tie your Hook with a Crew Member.

Each Archetype has 8 starting Hooks suited to the types of characters they represent. While you can come up with Hooks of your own if your game has a particular theme, it's recommended that you use the starting Hooks the first time you play. They make character creation faster, and are designed to set interesting stakes and tension for the start of the game.

Goals

Goal-based Hooks state something your character intends to do. The Hooks come into play either when your character pursues their Goal or ignores an opportunity to pursue it. The goal can be something short-term that can be achieved this session, or something long-term they are working towards.

EXAMPLE GOAL HOOKS

- » I will get my family to safety.
- » I must restore my honor in the eyes of my people.
- » I will be the one to bring the serial killer in this colony ship to justice.
- » I must discover the secrets of this artifact.

Achieving their Goal is something your character wants, but your reward is their pursuit of it. Often, the least exciting thing to happen to a character in a story is for them to get exactly what they want.

Instincts

Instincts are automatic behaviors or responses. They are normally written as something your character always does, never does, or does under certain circumstances.

EXAMPLE INSTINCT HOOKS

- » Never back down from intimidation
- » Always shoot first
- » When I'm surprised, draw my weapon
- » When someone sees me vulnerable, push them away
- » Always help those in trouble
- » Never transgress a Law
- » I am fastidious and meticulous, always taking my time

Sometimes, Instincts may help you out by making your character do something useful or beneficial automatically. This is fine, but you don't mark XP for it, or have Disadvantage.

Traits

Traits are things that are true about your character that aren't intentions, behaviors, or relationships. Traits often say something about your character's physical quirks or shortcomings.

EXAMPLE TRAIT HOOKS

- » I excrete a slimy residue.
- » I'm exceptionally hairy.
- » My good looks make me unforgettable.
- » I'm extremely ugly, many are disgusted by my appearance.
- » Others say I exude a noxious smell. I can't help it.
- » I have a limp that makes me awkward.
- » My prosthetic hand is clumsy.

Connections

Connection Hooks are used to express relationships and debts you have with Crew Members, Locations, NPCs, and Groups. If an NPC matters to your character, it makes sense for you to have a Hook to express that connection. Connections often describe how a particular relationship may force or coerce you to behave against your best interests. You can have a Hook that is written as a connection to one of the Crew Members—that's what Hooks are for! If it describes a complicated relationship or outlook that's going to cause you trouble, all the better. Be sure to get the other player's permission before you write a Hook that involves them, though!

EXAMPLE CONNECTION HOOKS

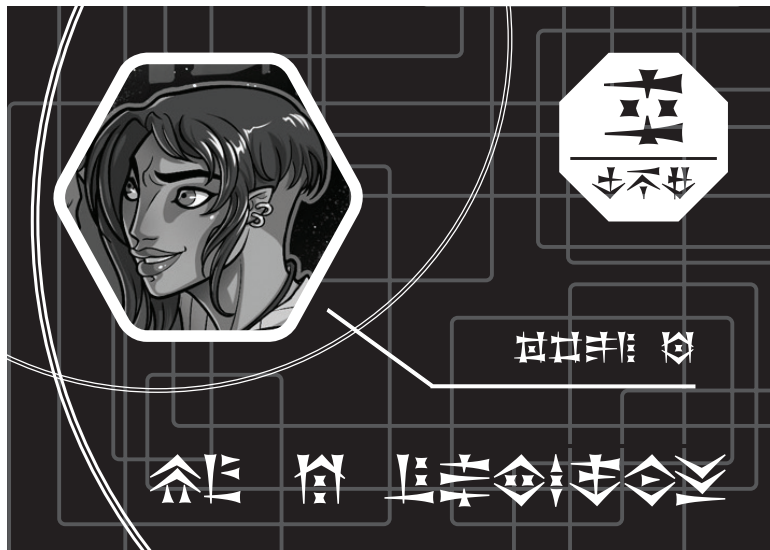
- » I owe a lot of money to the crime boss _____.
- » I love _____ and will do anything for them.
- » I've got to protect _____ from themselves.
- » _____ Is my superior, I must follow their orders.

Gear

Gear is the weapons and equipment you equip to your Loadouts. Some allow you to use Universal Moves, some will have special custom Moves, and others will modify existing Moves. A lot of items have tags that describe their properties and uses.

The Gear available to you is listed in your Gear section on your Playbook. When you are away from your Supplies and in a dangerous situation, you check off slots in your Loadout to say what you have brought with you. You may purchase more Gear later to give you more options.





OUTSTANDING WARRANT 225698

Registered Name: Zirra Akami

Known Aliases: Hanar Bepin, Zim Vargas, Sarah Appleseed, Nathaniel Prest, Prince Akawade Valenci

Victim Testimony: "I mean, I KNOW she wasn't actually a priest. I KNOW she walked away with 200 thousand of my Guilders in unsecured bonds. I KNOW that the painting was a fake. I know all that now. But I still... look if you find her, if you get her, I just want to see Zim again" -Testimony of Prince Akawande Valenci



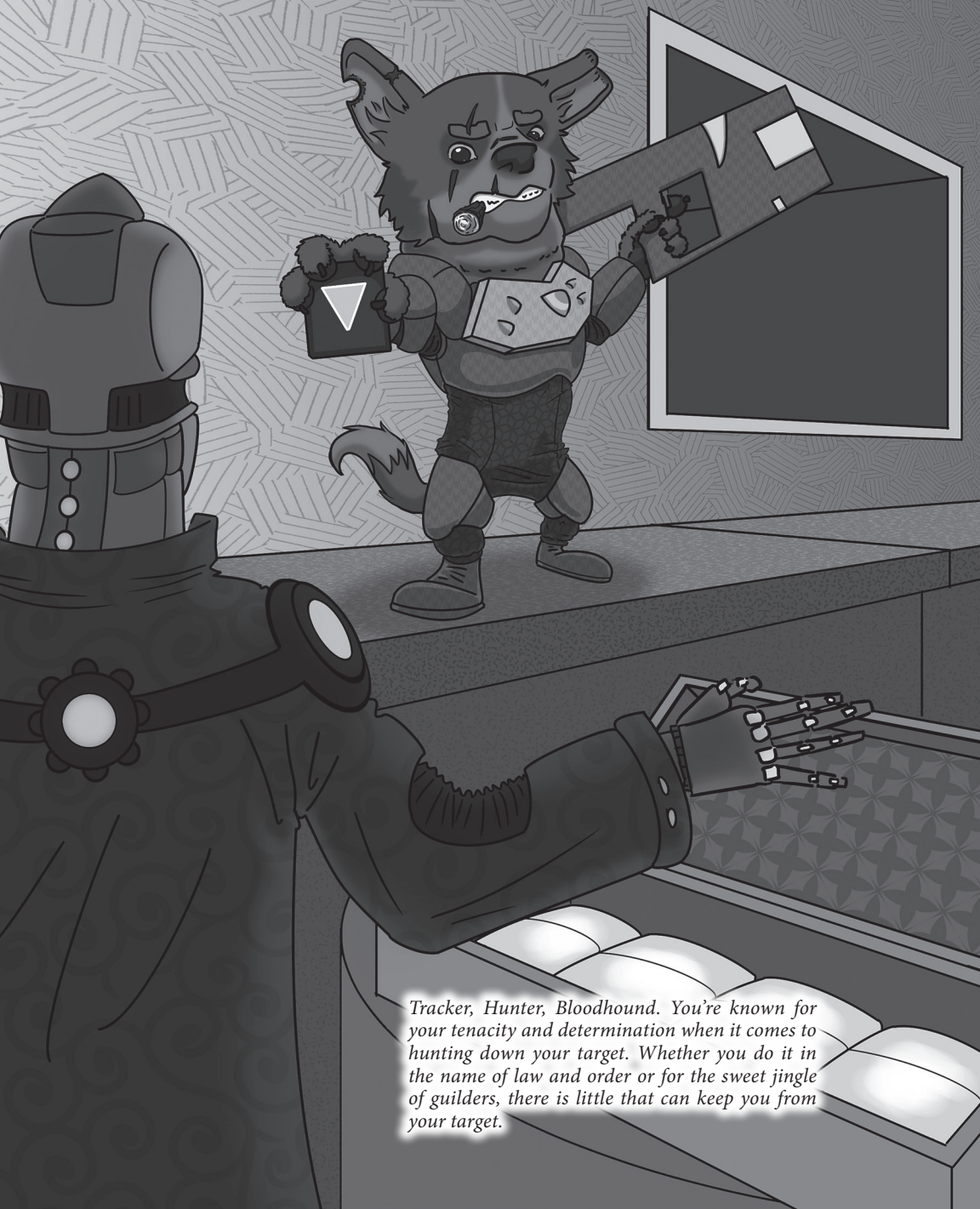
THE ARCHETYPES

Iconic figures on the star-specked onyx stage of space opera

The 8 Archetypes are the character sheets for **Impulse Drive**. They have all the basic information you need to create your character and track them in play. Below are the rules for each of the Archetypes in full.

THE HOUND

Determined Hunter of fugitives and criminals



Tracker, Hunter, Bloodhound. You're known for your tenacity and determination when it comes to hunting down your target. Whether you do it in the name of law and order or for the sweet jingle of guilders, there is little that can keep you from your target.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN:

Rally, Nameless, Bishop, Spike, Faye, Samus, Fett, Dale, Saint, Iria, Fairfax, Rhoda

Description

CHOOSE UP TO 4:

Dusty, Worn, Haggard, Weary, Determined, Stubborn, Surly, Scorched, Narrow, Pinched, Shifty, Suspicious, Grave

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ BOUNTY HUNTING

When you take the time to check a Bulletin Board for current bounties, roll 1+Volatile. **On a 10+**, you can find something good, hold 2 Leads. **On a 7-9**, take what you can get, hold 1 Lead. **On a 6-**, the only decent bounty is on a Crew Member, the SM will tell you who, and the player of that Crew Member will answer the Bounty questions.

At any time during a Contract, you may spend a Lead to say someone present has a Bounty on them. Then ask the following questions. You may spend extra leads to answer the questions yourself. Otherwise, the SM will answer the questions.

- » Who has the Bounty on them?
- » Who put the Bounty on them?
- » What did they do?
- » Are they wanted Dead or Alive?
- » Where can I collect my reward?

When you collect your reward, you gain 1 Bounty. Spend 1 Bounty to give yourself +1 to a Hey Big Spender roll.

Background - Work Ethic

You hunt people, but you have a code you live by. Choose one:

✓ LAWKEEPER

You are a member of a system-spanning independent organization working to enforce law and order in a lawless galaxy.

When you deal with agents of system law, you have Advantage.

✓ BOUNTY KILLER

You're a free agent, taking any contract that pays well enough, no matter who the money comes from.

When you Intimidate a criminal for information, you have Advantage.

Hound Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain a Hound Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ BLOODHOUND

When you hit the streets and use your shady contacts and intimidation to get info on a bounty, roll+Volatile. On a 10+ you're hot on their heels, gain 1 Lead and ask 2 questions. On a 7-9, the trail is a little cold. Gain 1 Lead and ask 1 question.

- » Where were they last spotted?
- » What weakness of theirs can I exploit?
- » Who do they have connections to?
- » What is their best defense?
- » Who else is after them?

✓ STEELY GLARE

When you silently fix someone with a steely glare with the intent of intimidating them, roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, they choose 2. On a 7-9, they choose 1. On a 7+, if they are a Crew Member, they're at Disadvantage to act against you going forward. On a 6-, they can laugh in your face and do whatever they want.

- » They shut up immediately.
- » They stop moving.
- » They lower their weapons.
- » They do something stupid or reckless.
- » They hesitate, stumble, or mutter.

✓ PARANOID ANDROID

When you walk into a charged situation with criminals and shady people, you have Advantage to Scope It Out. Additionally, you may ask questions from the following list instead of the base Scope It Out questions.

- » Who here is armed, openly or concealed?
- » Who here has history with a Crew Member?
- » Who here has information I want?
- » Who here is afraid of me?

✓ QUICKDRAW

When a tense situation breaks down and violence breaks out, you get to act first, or interrupt the person who does act first. After you act, name one Crew Member besides yourself. They have Advantage going forward.

✓ HUNTER'S MARK

When you roll+Volatile against a bounty you're hunting, you have Advantage.

✓ MARK OF DEATH

Requires Hunter's Mark

When you deal Harm to a bounty you're hunting, if you deal at least 1 Harm to them after Armor, they die.

✓ LONG SHOT

You can use any ranged weapon at the Firefight and Sniping ranges.

✓ TRACER

When an enemy or target is about to get away, you may spend 1 Use of a Grenade to secure a tracking device to them.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group,** choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_] is a time bomb waiting to go off. They need to be defused or pointed in the right direction.
- » [_PC_] got between me and my target in the past. Next time, I won't hesitate.
- » [_PC_] knows of my vice, and they better keep quiet about it.
- » [_PC_] 's criminal ways are going to see them in my cross-hairs one day.
- » [_Group_] has terrorised this sector for too long, I'll bring them all down.
- » I get the shakes if I go too long without [__Vice__]
- » When things get tense, I always let my gun do the talking.
- » I always push people away when they try to open up.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You're a bit banged up, but it's nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M RATTLED:

You're shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ A contact you have in the local criminal underground reaches out to you with some info or a lead.
- ☐ You broaden your career options, take the other Work Ethic move.
- ☐ The family or gang of someone you hunted is coming after you, hard.
- ☐ You get a lead on a valuable target you hunted long ago but got away, but you'll have to act now to follow it up.
- ☐ A friend or ally you rely on is in trouble with the authorities, and is asking for your help.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, you encounter a long-time nemesis with whom you have a long history of bad blood on both sides. They challenge you to a duel to settle your differences, and you must accept. When you duel your nemesis, roll+Volatile.

On a 10+, you win the duel. Describe how, and then describe the life you retire to after, and why.

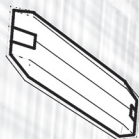
On a 7-9, you win, but you're severely injured and must retire, or die shortly after the duel. Describe it.

On a 6-, you lose, and expire shortly after.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Assault Rifle: 2 Harm, Firefight, Discharge, Full Auto, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Body Armor: Absorb 2, Conspicuous, Basic Gear
- ☐ A symbol or badge of office: Trinket

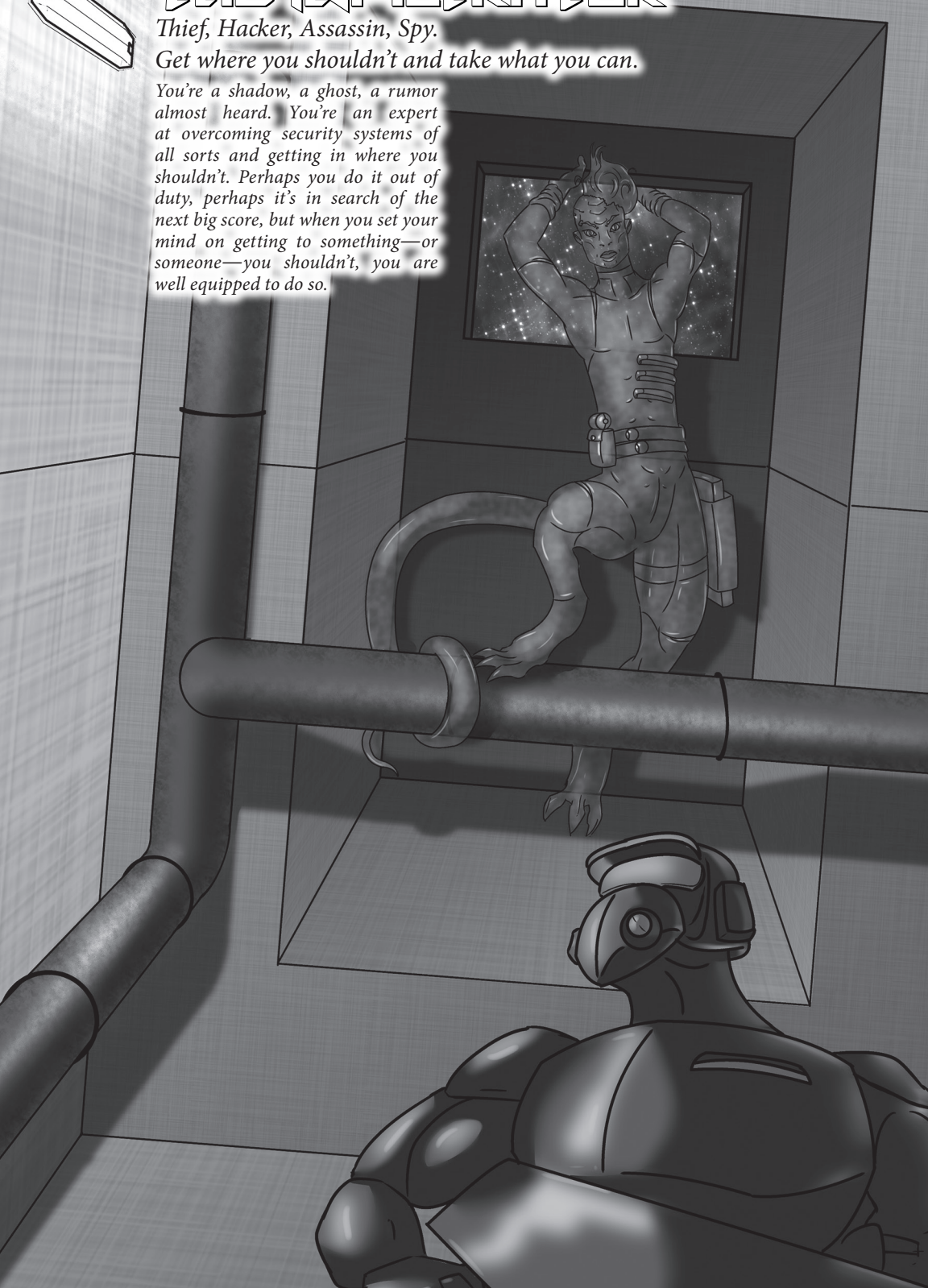


THE INFILTRATOR

Thief, Hacker, Assassin, Spy.

Get where you shouldn't and take what you can.

You're a shadow, a ghost, a rumor almost heard. You're an expert at overcoming security systems of all sorts and getting in where you shouldn't. Perhaps you do it out of duty, perhaps it's in search of the next big score, but when you set your mind on getting to something—or someone—you shouldn't, you are well equipped to do so.



Name

CHOOSE 1 OR MAKE UP YOUR OWN:

Irene, Amanda, Shadow, Mist, Cat, Fox, Sandiego, Drake, Nocta, Parker, Rogue, Yoshimitsu, Kisaragi

Description

CHOOSE UP TO 4:

Lithe, Compact, Sleek, Nondescript, Sharp, Nimble, Guarded, Quiet, Shadowy, Confident, Competent, Paranoid

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ THE SET-UP

When you use your contacts, charm, skills, or gadgets to prepare for a covert incursion into hostile territory, roll+ Slick. **On a 10+**, ask 3. **On a 7-9**, ask 2.

- » Where are their defenses and security strong?
- » Where are their defenses and security weak?
- » Where is the target normally located?
- » Who do I have on the inside?
- » What are they on the lookout for?

Background - Career

You have made a career of getting into places you shouldn't. Choose one:

✓ LICENSE TO KILL

You are a clandestine operative of an organization or government. You start with the Chameleon Modification. You have a duty to your organization. **When you follow an order from your Organization**, Mark XP.

✓ MASTER THIEF

As a master thief, you have a reputation in the criminal world that gets you a lot of leverage and respect. You start with a Tactical Cloak in your Gear. **When you steal something of significance to yourself or someone of great influence**, Mark XP.

Infiltrator Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain an Infiltrator Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ HACKING & CRACKING

When you attempt to hack, break into, open, or otherwise compromise a lock or security system, Discharge this Move and roll+Slick. On a 10+, you break in with minimum fuss, choose 1. On a 7-9, it's no cakewalk, choose 2:

- » It's going to take a while to get in.
- » You'll have to trigger an alarm or alert someone in order to get what you want.
- » You'll have to leave traces of your incursion behind that incriminate you.

✓ JAMMER

When you remotely hack or jam someone's equipment or cybernetics, Discharge this Move and roll+Slick. On a 10+, it shorts out or locks up and they're going to need to get it fixed before they use it. On a 7-9, they'll get it working again if they take a few moments to fiddle with it.

✓ MICRO DRONES

You have a suite of small drones no bigger than a small insect, describe them.

When you activate your Micro Drones in the field, Discharge this Move and roll+Calculating. On a 10+ hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. On a 6-, hold 2, but you won't be able to recharge this Move until you can get back to your Supplies. Spend hold, 1 for 1, to get a drone do the following:

- » Allow you to remotely hack into a nearby isolated computer system you can't physically reach.
- » Allow you to remotely spy on a nearby location you can't physically reach.
- » Allow you to quickly map out nearby hidden routes.

Archetypes



☑ TOXIC

You are a master of poisons and toxins. **When you spend a Use of your Toxins,** go through the options to create a custom toxin. [] [] []

CHOOSE 1 EFFECT:

- ☐ It incapacitates its target.
- ☐ It removes the target's inhibitions.
- ☐ It heightens all of the target's emotions.
- ☐ It instills a specific emotion of your choice.
- ☐ It disables a particular sense of your choice.
- ☐ It gives the appearance the target has died.
- ☐ It kills the target at the end of the drug's duration.
- ☐ It causes agonizing pain.

CHOOSE 1 DURATION:

- ☐ 1 minute
- ☐ 5 minutes
- ☐ 1 hour
- ☐ 10 hours
- ☐ 20 hours

CHOOSE 1 ENHANCEMENT:

- ☐ It leaves no chemical trace.
- ☐ Choose 1 extra delivery method.
- ☐ Choose 1 extra effect.
- ☐ Targeted: It will only affect a specific species or genetic marker.

CHOOSE DELIVERY METHOD:

- ☐ Inhaled
- ☐ Applied to skin
- ☐ Ingested
- ☐ Injected

☑ FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY

When you use your reflexes or agility to avoid danger or deal with a threat, you have Advantage to Act Quick.

☑ STING LIKE A BEE

Requires Toxic

Requires Micro Drones

You may spend 1 hold for your micro drone to deliver 1 use of a toxin with the injected delivery method.

☑ SMOKE GRENADE

When you lob a grenade, instead of dealing Harm, you can create a large cloud of smoke. When you attempt to act unseen in the smoke, you have Advantage.

☑ LETHAL STRIKE

When you have your target in your sights and they can't do anything to stop you, Discharge this Move, and describe how you end their existence or incapacitate them.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group,** choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_]’s past paints a target on our back. I’ll make them leave it behind.
- » [_PC_] and I share a secret that must not be compromised.
- » [_PC_] may be as devious as I am. I’ll test their skills to see if they’re worthy.
- » [_PC_] might suspect what I’ve done, but I’ll make sure they can never prove it.
- » I was trained by [_NPC/Group_], When they call on me, I must answer.
- » If I know there’s something unique and valuable around, I must have it.
- » I’m suspicious of everyone, I can’t let a secret stay unknown.
- » I’m addicted to adrenaline. I take risks just for the thrill of it.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You’re a bit banged up, but it’s nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M RATTLED:

You’re shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I’M KNOCKED OUT:

You’ve been knocked unconscious and can’t move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses “First Aid” when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN’T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You get an invitation to a high-class event that offers you a valuable opportunity.
- ☐ You requisition or steal a useful or valuable item, choose 1: Tactical Pack, Scanner, A valuable artifact.
- ☐ An agent of authority is on your trail, and they're closing in.
- ☐ You get an opportunity you can't miss, but you must act now.
- ☐ Someone who cared for you when you were vulnerable is in danger and has called for your help.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, you encounter an opportunity to make the big score that will see your life's work complete. When you attempt the last big score, roll+Slick.

On a 10+, you get in, get your target, and get out nice and smooth. You are promoted to leader of your organization or retire to safety, and cannot continue with the Crew.

On a 7-9, you get your target, but it's not clean. You will have to go into hiding for a long time, and can't continue with the Crew.

On a 6-, you fail, and die or are captured during the attempt, and are never heard from again.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Nano Blade: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Specialist Gear

THE INTELLECT

Misunderstood genius seeking knowledge at any cost.



You're the expert. Scientist, doctor, engineer, archaeologist, anthropologist, whatever your field is, you know just about everything worth knowing, or you know how to find out. You're a master of technology and intellect, and bring your deductions, reasoning, and knowledge to bear on any situation.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN.

Mara, Verum, Jane, Willem, Carly, Data, Bristol, Q, Specs, Vera, Jules, Maridon, Gless, Partok

Description

CHOOSE UP TO FOUR.

Aloof, Distracted, Elderly, Skinny, Pudgy, Curious, Wise, Mysterious, Calm, Focused, Tidy, Sharp

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ EXPERT

You have spent long hours studying and understanding several topics on which you are an expert. Choose 2:

- ☐ Engineering, technology, and devices
- ☐ Programming, artificial intelligence, and cyberspace
- ☐ Physics, FTL Travel, and spatial anomalies
- ☐ Galactic history, politics, and foreign cultures
- ☐ Medicine, biology, and alien physiology
- ☐ Spirituality, philosophy, wisdom, and mysticism

When you make a Move that is covered by one of your fields of expertise, you may choose to do one of the following:

- » If you make a Move that has you choose from a list, choose 1 more or 1 less.
- » Ask the SM a question about the situation that relates to your expertise, and they will answer and ask you a question, which you must answer.
- » You share your expertise with a Crew Member, and they have Advantage going forward when acting on that knowledge.

Background - Training

You gained your knowledge, experience, and wisdom somewhere. Choose your background.

✓ ACADEMIC

You have studied in your fields for long hours in various places of learning and the thirst for knowledge has never left you. At character creation, take an extra area of expertise in Expert. **When you have 5 XP**, you may choose to take a new area of expertise in Expert instead of one of the standard choices for Advancing.

✓ TECHNICIAN

You have spent most of your life living and working on various vessels, stations, and factories. You have intimate knowledge of all kinds of machinery, vessels, and vehicles. **When you Spout Technobabble in regards to a vehicle, ship, or machine you are modifying or repairing**, you have Advantage going forward to your Modifications or repairs.

Intellect Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain an Intellect Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ **WORKSPACE**

You have a space dedicated to the pursuit of your expertise where you tinker, research, and experiment. **When you use your Workspace to start a Personal Project related to your areas of expertise**, the SM cannot say it can't be done. When you go into your workspace to work on a Personal Project, say how you spend your time and choose 1:

- » You make impressive progress, mark 1 extra tick on your Personal Project's clock.
- » You figure out a piece of the puzzle, the SM will give you an insight into a mystery you are investigating.
- » You make a surprising and useful discovery. The SM will tell you something or give an additional benefit when the Project is completed.

✓ **JURY-RIG**

When you haphazardly use whatever parts you have on hand to hastily construct or repair a device or Vehicle, say what you mean to do and roll+Calculating. On a 10+, you've got just what you need on hand, choose 2. On a 7-9, you have to make do, choose 1:

- » It won't take long to do it.
- » It will do exactly what you want.
- » It won't break the first time you use it.

✓ **PLANS WITHIN PLANS**

When you describe how you took time beforehand to make a contingency plan for a drastic situation you find yourself in, roll+Calculating. On a 10+, choose 1. Your plan is as described and will help you. On a 7-9, choose 1, but your preparations aren't perfect, you have Disadvantage going forward.

- » You have something stashed on your person or nearby to help you out.
- » You have an ally waiting in the wings to come through just when you need it.
- » You have a trap set up in wait for the perfect moment.

✓ **STUDY BUG**

When you have plenty of time and relative safety to study an artifact, strange device, or unique piece of culture you don't yet understand, ask the SM a question and they will answer it.

✓ **FIELD SURGEON**

When you use a Tactical Pack to heal Harm, you may also spend a Use of your Tactical Pack to treat "I'm hurt Bad."

You may use Field Surgeon to heal "I'm hurt bad" on yourself. Of course, you still can't heal "I'm knocked out" on yourself, because you're unconscious.

🔪 EMP GRENADE

When you lob a grenade, instead of dealing Harm, you may choose to disable electrical and energy-based technology used by your target(s).

🔪 BATTLE INSIGHT

When you roll Recover, On a 10+ you may choose to ask the SM any one question on the Scope It Out list. You or an ally have Advantage going forward when acting on the information.

🔪 THE KOURCS PARADISM

When you rant about exactly how bad the situation is right now and how monumentally screwed you and your allies are, and that no one else is qualified to understand your predicament, you have Advantage to Share Expertise when thinking of a solution.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group, choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_]’s mind is an empty page. I will fill it with knowledge.
- » [_PC_] can’t keep it in their pants, and it’s going to cause problems.
- » [_PC_] has a secret that could destroy us all. I will learn it at any cost.
- » I can’t let [_PC_] know how much they intimidate me.
- » [_PC_]’s impulsiveness causes nothing but trouble, I will teach them discretion.
- » I will become obsessed with a mystery to the exclusion of any danger around me.
- » My [size/frailty] makes me vulnerable to those more imposing.
- » [_NPC/Group_] has no idea about the truth. I will see their ideas discredited and them made a laughing stock.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You’re a bit banged up, but it’s nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it” off when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M RATTLED:

You’re shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You have a Eureka moment, your current or next Workspace project will be completed in hours or days only.
 - ☐ Your background is eclectic, take your other Background Move.
 - ☐ Your research either creates or uncovers an encroaching threat to local space.
 - ☐ You find yourself in a situation where you must choose between more knowledge and safety.
 - ☐ An academic rival has disproved one of your theories or challenged your expertise.
 - ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
 - ☐ Now or soon, you make a breakthrough in a theory and put it to the test.
- When you perform an experiment to prove your theory, roll+Calculating.

On a 10+, your experiment is a total success, and provides you legitimacy that propels you on a successful career, and you leave the ship.

On a 7-9, your experiment shows that your theory needs more work, but an interested party provides you with facilities to do so, and you leave the ship.

On a 6-, the experiment goes horribly wrong, and you die horribly, vanish inexplicably, or are horrifically wounded and cannot stay with the Crew.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Sniper Rifle: 3 Harm, 1 Damage, AP, Conspicuous, Discharge, Illegal, Sniping
- ☐ Scanner: 3 uses, Basic Gear; When you scan a strange environment, organism, or device, expend a use and you have Advantage to Scope It Out.
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ A Strange Artifact of unknown purpose: Trinket

THE MYSTIC

*Adherent to an ancient order,
bound to fates and duties beyond understanding.*



Many tell stories of your Order. Myths and folk tales of wandering seers and knights guiding events with your far sight and meting out justice or keeping peace with your strange, ancient weapons. Then there's you: trained, but perhaps not tested. It is your task to go out into space and find yourself.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN:

Obi, Solon, Chilon, Bias, Thales, Pittacus, Peri, Book, Dali, Verimir, Dallon, Tilswith, Wynn, Maro, Gale

Description

CHOOSE UP TO 4:

Aged, Wiry, Paunchy, Pallid, Rusty, Elegant, Still, Faded, Ragged, Polished, Pristine, Neat, Respectable

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ SUGGESTION

When you use your power to subtly influence the mind of some weak-willed living thing, Discharge this Move and roll+Alien. **On a 10+**, choose 1. **On a 7-9**, choose 1, but they will soon realize you messed with their head. **On a 6-**, they can ignore your influence, but they realize you were messing with their head straight away.

- » They follow a single command from you for a short time that doesn't risk their life or go against their instincts.
- » You convince them of something without providing proof, so long as you do not lie.

Background - Ancient Order

You belong to an ancient order of mystics. Choose one:

✓ SAGES

Your Order is seen as mysterious and wise seers, sought for their counsel and insight as mediators. **Whenever you try to pierce lies, confusion, or a mystery, and see the wisdom beyond**, you have Advantage.

✓ KNIGHTS

Your Order is seen as protectors and warriors of justice. **Whenever you protect the weak or act against immorality according to your code**, you have Advantage.

Mystic Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain a Mystic Move, select one of the Moves below.

✔ DISCIPLINED

When you focus your mind and disregard the petty hurts and wounds of your body, roll+Calculating. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. Spend hold on the following:

- » Ignore Disadvantage from a wound you have taken.
- » Roll with Advantage on a Recover roll.
- » Ask a question from the Scope It Out list.

✔ MYSTIC WEAPON MASTER

Your Order has an ancient, unique style of weapon that marks them. Describe it. You always have it with you, even in restricted areas, and it doesn't take up a slot in your loadout. You have become an expert in wielding your Mystic Weapon. When you use your Mystic Weapon to avoid Harm from ranged weapons, you have Advantage to Keep Your Cool.

- » Mystic Weapon: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Concealed, Trinket, Rare

✔ FLESHKNITTER

When you focus your mind on a living thing's injuries or illness, Discharge this Move and roll+Alien. On a 10+ you may use your power to heal a wound or a physical injury, condition or malady. On a 7-9, heal them, but it drains you. You have Disadvantage going forward.

✔ EMBRACE ETERNITY

When you gently reach out and mingle your mind with the energies and auras of something living nearby, Discharge this Move and roll+Alien. On a 10+, the connection is open, ask 2 questions from the list, and they ask 1. On a 7-9, you each ask 1 question.

- » What do you seek?
- » Who or what do you wish to protect?
- » Who or what do you love?
- » What are you willing to sacrifice for your beliefs?
- » What do you have faith in?

✔ SCRYING

When you perform the ritual of prophecy, say whose future you wish to scry and offer up something linked to them, roll+Alien. On a 10+, the player of the subject will ask you 3 questions, tell them what you see. On a 7-9, you ask the subject 3 questions, and they will tell you what you see. If you act to bring the Prophecy to pass, you have Advantage. If you act to stop the Prophecy, you have Disadvantage.

- » Who do I see my subject with?
- » What do I see my subject doing?
- » What is my subject feeling?
- » What danger, challenge, or misery do I see my subject facing?
- » What fortune do I see my subject enjoying?

✔ WISE WORDS

When you share your wisdom and perspective on an ethical, emotional, or spiritual conundrum a Crew Member faces, you have Advantage to Lean on Me. If they take your advice or you help them reach a conclusion, mark XP.

✔ PSYCHIC GRENADE

When you lob a grenade, instead of causing Harm, you can choose to cause muscle spasms and incapacitate those affected.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group, choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » I will teach [_PC_] that not every problem can be solved with violence.
- » [_PC_]’s curiosity isn’t tempered with caution, I’ll make sure they don’t get us all killed.
- » I will teach [_PC_] that they can’t always break the rules.
- » [_PC_] is a soulless killer that threatens our safety. [_PC_] needs to see that.
- » I am beginning to think my order is misguided and I’m questioning my faith.
- » I am supposed to be a bastion of peace and wisdom, but I cannot let go of my [Powerful Emotion/Vice]
- » My order is hunted by [Group] for our beliefs, I must stay incognito.
- » [_PC_] has a destiny I must make them see and commit to.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You’re a bit banged up, but it’s nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M RATTLED:

You’re shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You discover some ancient teachings or records of your Order.
- ☐ You gain new psychic abilities, take the Telekinesis move from the Tempest, but when you use it, roll+Alien.
- ☐ Word spreads that one of your order's temples or strongholds has been annihilated.
- ☐ Your order loses favor with a number of local or galactic societies.
- ☐ Your order is split due to political or philosophical difference, and you are called upon to choose a side.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, you are called to the seat of power for your Order. When you return to your order and share premonitions of the future, roll+Alien.

On a 10+, your order sees times of danger approaching, and promotes you to be their leader.

On a 7-9, a conflict with an oppressive empire or ancient evil has broken out, and you are called to join your order fighting it.

On a 6-, your Order is attacked in their seat of power, and you sacrifice your life helping survivors escape.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

You start with all 4:

- ☐ Mystic Weapon: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Concealed, Trinket, Rare
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Shields: Absorb 1, Discharge, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Scanner: 3 uses, Basic Gear; When you scan a strange environment, organism, or device, expend a use and you have Advantage to Scope It Out.

THE OUTSIDER

A Stranger amongst strange worlds, Ever on the outside, looking in.

Life in the galaxy comes in all shapes and sizes, hailing from different societies and cultural backgrounds. But most aliens are just people, with reasonably similar drives and motivations. But you're different. Fundamentally different from the others in a way that makes you entirely alien to them. Perhaps it's your unusual physical form, or that you do not possess a physical form at all! Perhaps you are an AI, or a sentient spaceship, or a drone for a hive mind species. Perhaps you're a unique, strange member of a common species. Whatever it is that sets you apart, it makes you unique and alien to all around you.



Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN.

Tyrl, 223, Drone, John, Zamil, Andop, Bespav, Twelve, Us, Pi, Bespid, Drazah, Graxx, Ravua, Wonfon, Mork

Description

CHOOSE UP TO FOUR.

Amorphous, Asymmetrical, Gaseous, Liquid, Gestalt Hive, Artificial, Crystalline, Aquatic, Reptilian, Formic, Plant-Based, Metallic

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ TRULY ALIEN

What you are and where you are from sets you apart from others in a fundamental way. Finish between 3 and 6 of the below statements to describe how you differ from everyone else.

I am [*Description*] from [*Origin*].

My body is _____.

My culture is _____, But I am different from them because _____.

I have the unique ability to _____.

I don't need to _____, but I do need to _____.

I don't have the sense of _____, but I have the extra sense of _____.

I can only communicate by _____.

I can survive in _____.

The statements you fill in are true and have impact on the Fiction. A robotic body cannot be healed by an Autodoc, but they can by an engineering bay.

Background - Nature

You have an unusual nature that sets you apart from not only the Crew, but most people in the galaxy. Choose your unique nature:

✓ THE CHILD

You carry an innocence and naiveté with you that catches many off guard. **When you learn about a part of everyday life and grow in an unexpected way**, Mark XP.

✓ THE STRANGER

You are from a place or culture so far removed from common galactic civilization that your values and motivations are alien to almost everyone. **When you say how a seemingly inappropriate action forwards your machinations**, you have Advantage going forward to fulfilling your goal.

Outsider Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain an Outsider Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ TOO MUCH CONFUSION

When your unfamiliarity with a society alien to you exposes the absurdity or hypocrisy of their social norms, you may roll+Alien to Manipulate them.

✓ UNIQUE ABILITY

When you display a unique ability or knowledge to solve a simple problem, fill in one of the lines below and you do it. You now have this trait as part of your Truly Alien nature.

I have the unique ability to _____.

I have the unique ability to _____.

✓ UNSETTLING

When your unusual appearance or behavior confuses or disturbs someone, you or a Crew Member have Advantage going forward to interrupt their current course of action.

✓ TRANSFORMED BY DEATH

When you die, change up to 4 of your unique traits in Truly Alien, up to 3 options in your description, up to 3 of your Calamities, and up to 2 Hooks. You will appear again soon in your new reborn form, forever changed by death. When you do, you lose this Move, but may take it again.

✓ GAS GRENADE

When you lob a grenade, instead of dealing Harm, you may choose to envelope your target(s) with a psychotropic gas that causes hallucinations and erratic behavior.

✓ DEATH BLOSSOM

When you roll Firefight, if you choose to Discharge your weapon, you may choose to deal your weapon's Harm to all visible targets instead of double Harm to one target.

✓ UNIQUE MOVEMENT

When you use your alien nature to move in a way or to a place others can't, Discharge this Move and roll+Alien. On a 10+, you get there, no problem. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- » There's trouble waiting when you get there.
- » Getting back won't be easy.
- » It takes longer than you expected to get there.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group,** choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » I owe [_PC_] a life debt. I'll always be there for them.
- » [_PC_]’s rules are a straightjacket. I won’t let them hold me back.
- » I will show [_PC_] the true face of the Abyss.
- » I dislike how [_PC_] treats me. I will teach them to respect me.
- » The spaces we live in are not suitable for me [culturally/physically]
- » [Group/NPC] holds the key to my origin, I must possess it.
- » I must choose between duty to my kind and friendship with the Crew.
- » [Phenomenon/cultural norm] confounds me, I will understand it.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You’re a bit banged up, but it’s nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M RATTLED:

You’re shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I’M KNOCKED OUT:

You’ve been knocked unconscious and can’t move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses “First Aid” when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN’T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You unwittingly leave behind a copy of yourself or offspring.
- ☐ You adapt to your situation, take an Archetype Move from an Archetype not in play.
- ☐ A faction of your kind rises up, invades, or attacks civilized space.
- ☐ You are forced to choose between allying with your kind or alienating yourself to be free.
- ☐ Your kind's homeworld or seat of power is threatened with invasion, attack, or galactic war.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, you enter a dormancy or chrysalis state as you prepare to evolve one final time. When you emerge, roll+Alien.

On a 10+, you go through an apotheosis, and ascend to another plane of existence.

On a 7-9, your new form is perfect, but you are unsuited to continue with your Crew, and you leave.

On a 6-, your metamorphosis is a malformed mistake, and you quickly perish in agony.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Melee Weapon: 2 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Basic Gear
- ☐ Assault Rifle: 2 Harm, Firefight, Discharge, Full Auto, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Body Armor: Absorb 2, Conspicuous, Basic Gear
- ☐ You possess a trinket that's closely tied to your origin. Describe it (Trinket).





THE SCOUNDREL

A lover on every station, a con for every mark, a vice for every occasion. Yeah, you're a criminal, and everybody knows it. But there's light years of difference between knowing it and proving it. You're slick, smart, and more than a little cocky. You have shady connections in numerous seedy underbellies. The only reason you're not filthy stinking rich is just bad luck, certainly not bad impulse control.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN.

Solo, Drake, Mal, Anna, Val, Marcus, Higgs, Vash, Mack, Harman, Lian, Florentina, Akami, Valentine

Description

CHOOSE UP TO FOUR.

Trendy, Charming, Scruffy, Dapper, Worn, Shifty, Nervous, Craven, Sexy, Hot, Sharp, Mismatched, Dexterous

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ CON ARTIST

When you attempt to perform a deception, subterfuge, misdirection, bluff, or con on a person, roll+Slick. **On a 10+**, your deception is masterful, hold 2. **On a 7-9**, your deception will work, for a while. Hold 1. As you act out and maintain your deception, you may spend hold, 1 for 1, on the following:

- » Something small escapes their notice.
- » Suspicion or blame is shifted away from you.

Background - Rap Sheet

Choose a shady past that describes who you were before you joined the Crew.

✓ SCUM

You've always been the lowest of the low and mistrusted those with power and authority. Crime has always been your only way to help those as unfortunate as you out of the sludge. **When you're in danger or trouble anywhere with a number of the poor or downtrodden**, you can describe an ally or friend who can help you in a small way. **When they help**, you have Advantage to Keep Your Cool or Act Quick.

✓ VILLAINY

You come from a fine pedigree of successful and wealthy criminals. You start with the Liquid Assets Gear.

When you prepare to enter a regulated area, you may hide 1 small weapon or inconspicuous armor on your person. **When dealing with the criminal elite or looking for a useful criminal contact**, you have Advantage.

Scoundrel Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain a Scoundrel Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ PEOPLE PERSON

When you have a charged interaction with a person, roll+Slick. On a 10+, you get a good read on them, hold 3. On a 7-9, just hold 1. During your interaction with them spend your hold, 1 for 1, to ask their player one of the following questions:

- » Is your character telling the truth?
- » What is your character truly feeling?
- » What does your character intend to do?
- » What does your character wish I'd do?
- » How could I get your character to _____?

✓ CRIMINAL CONTACTS

When you reach out to the criminal underground of a location for contacts to gain information, buy or sell contraband, or a shady Contract, roll+Slick. On a 10+, you find someone who can get you what you need, choose 1. On a 7-9, it's not so easy, choose 1 and the SM will tell you one:

- » It's not quite what you need.
- » You have a complicated past with your contact.
- » There's strings attached.

✓ CRACK PILOT

You have spent many of your years driving, flying, or operating all kinds of ships and vehicles. When you control a vehicle or ship and make a Move to attempt to avoid danger, you have Advantage.

✓ SEX APPEAL

Your sex appeal is undeniable and near universal. When you turn on your charm you can always make someone attracted to you or unsettled by you, their choice. Depending on their reaction you can use promise of affection or distance as exchange when you Manipulate.

✓ SMOOTH OPERATOR

Add the following option to Con Artist:

- » You convince someone that something you offer is valuable.

✓ CROWD CONTROL

Add the following option to Firefight:

- » You funnel or box a group of enemies into a tight position.

✓ STUN GRENADE

When you lob a grenade, instead of dealing Harm, you may choose to temporarily blind and deafen your target(s).

✓ A WAY WITH MACHINES

Add the following option when you use a Tactical Pack:

- » You issue a single basic command to a simple computer or electronic system, within their programming.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group, choose 1:**

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_] and I have seen everything together, we're closer than family. Nothing will pull us apart.
- » I slept with [_PC_], and now it's awkward.
- » [_PC_] isn't a leader anymore. I don't have to take their orders.
- » [_PC_] is an easy mark. I'll wrap them around my smallest digit.
- » I'm exclusively attracted to folks who are bad for me.
- » I can't resist engaging in a complex deception when the truth would work perfectly well.
- » I stole from [NPC/Group], and now they're after me.
- » I owe [_NPC_] big time, for a caper that went very, very bad.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You're a bit banged up, but it's nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M RATTLED:

You're shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You come into possession of something extremely rare or valuable, but it's stolen or illegal.
- ☐ An old flame you have a complicated history with reaches out to rekindle your relationship. If you do, take your other Background Move.
- ☐ Someone you owe a lot of money to is looking to collect the money or your head.
- ☐ You're faced with a choice: stay under the radar or make a big score.
- ☐ An old lover reaches out to you for help with a problem or danger they're facing.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, an agent of Authority tracks you down and attempts to arrest you for your biggest successful heist. When they corner you, roll+Slick.

On a 10+, you bribe, sweet talk, or romance them into letting you go or joining you in retirement.

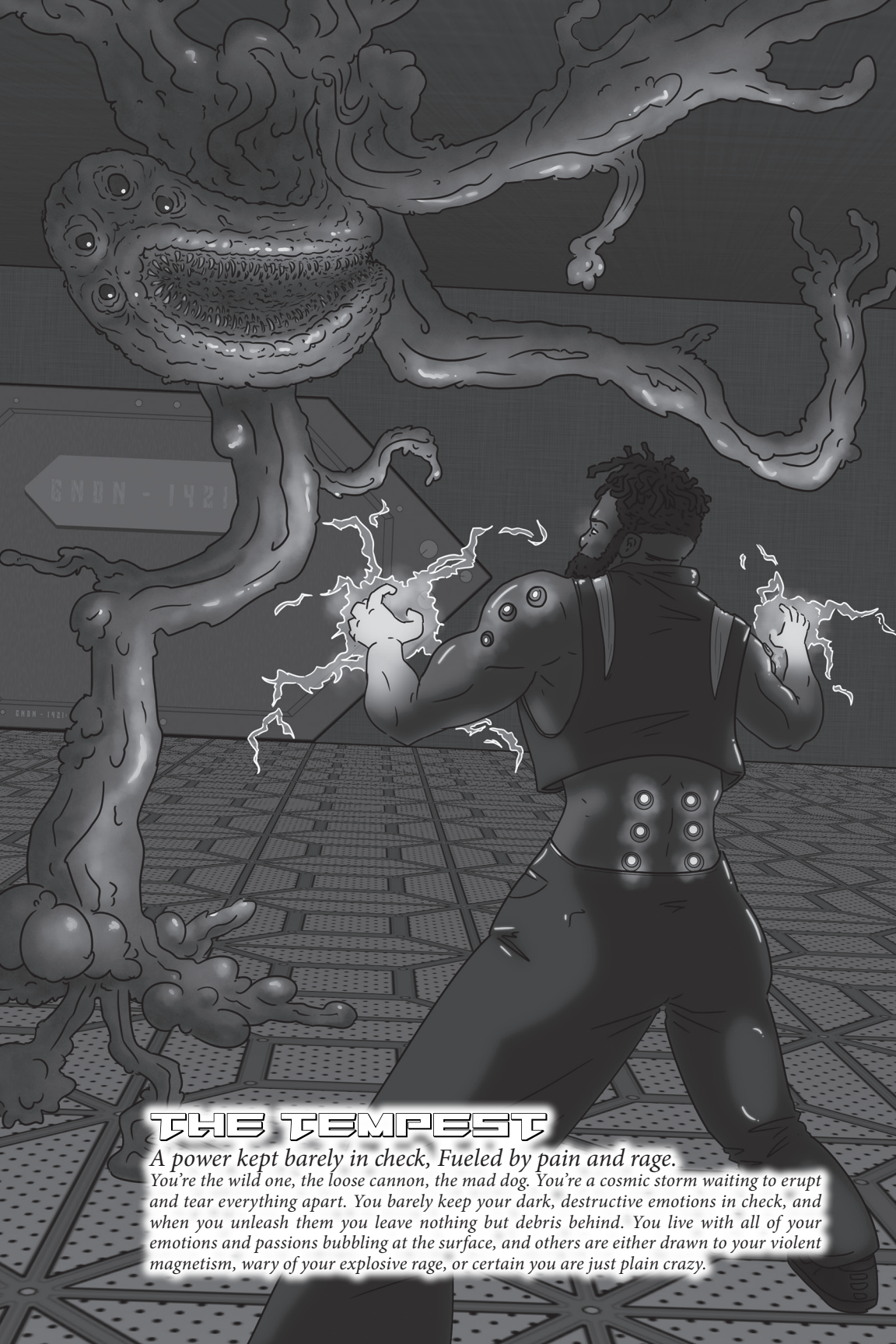
On a 7-9, you get away, but they're still after you. You have to run hard and fast to keep your freedom and leave your Crew behind.

On a 6-, justice is served. You're apprehended or killed.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Power Pack (3 Uses)
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ A valuable artifact, not yours (Trinket)
- ☐ Illegal Drugs (Trinket, Illegal)



THE TEMPEST

A power kept barely in check, Fueled by pain and rage.

You're the wild one, the loose cannon, the mad dog. You're a cosmic storm waiting to erupt and tear everything apart. You barely keep your dark, destructive emotions in check, and when you unleash them you leave nothing but debris behind. You live with all of your emotions and passions bubbling at the surface, and others are either drawn to your violent magnetism, wary of your explosive rage, or certain you are just plain crazy.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN.

Jaq, Vex, Trill, River, Zed, Ember, Storm, Vile, Rana, Slam, Blackout, Hammer, Bull, Storm

Description

CHOOSE UP TO FOUR.

Wild, Twitchy, Expressive, Unconventional, Sexy, Modified, Augmented, Hot-Blooded, Violent, Aggressive, Stormy

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move and 3 Storm slots.

✓ ONCOMING STORM

Your emotions are a swirling unstable mess that can cause you to erupt in fits of passion and destruction. **When you suffer frustration, disappointment, or emotional hurt**, gain 1 Storm.

When you lash out or act destructively, you may spend 1 Storm and choose one of the following additional effects:

- » Something is broken beyond repair.
- » Someone is frightened or cowed.
- » Someone is injured or scarred.
- » You have Advantage on this roll.

When a choice says someone or something is affected, the SM will specify the details.

When you gain Storm while at your maximum Storm capacity, the strain causes you to either lash out immediately and spend all of your Storm at once, or mark 1 Stress.

You may spend more than 1 Storm at a time, so long as you are meeting the trigger of lashing out destructively. You may unlock an extra Storm box from your Calamities, but there are 2 extra boxes on the sheet. You get to figure out how to unlock the second box.

Background - Tragedy

Something terrible in your past put you on this path. Choose one:

✓ ORPHAN

You are an orphan with no ties to a family, community, or organization, because it has all be taken away from you. Describe why you have nothing but your power. **When you are reminded of your loss, or encounter something directly relating to it and react poorly**, immediately take 3 Storm.

✓ EXPERIMENT

Something was done to you to give you unusual powers, but the process was either torturous or mentally and emotionally damaging. **When you rail against authority or ignore orders**, you may spend Storm as though you're lashing out or acting destructively.

Tempest Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain a Tempest Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ TELEKINETIC FORCE

When you instinctively reach out and throw your telekinetic power at someone or something human size and weight or smaller within Skirmish or Firefight range, Discharge this Move and roll+Volatile. On a 10+, your intent is strong, choose 1. On a 7-9, your intentions are muddled, the SM will choose 1:

- » It's sent flying back, as though from a forceful blow.
- » It floats or Moves a short distance.
- » It's pulled towards you.

✓ RECKLESS

When you take rash action that puts another Crew Member in danger, they have Advantage to try and deal with that danger.

✓ BEAUTIFUL FLAWS

When you act on one of your Hooks in a self-destructive way, gain 2 Storm.

✓ HEART OF GLASS

You gain an extra slot in Storm. When you let down your guard and share a tender moment with someone, remove all Storm, and Mark XP.

When you attempt to get close and they reject you or distance themselves, immediately fill your Storm to maximum. You may write a Hook about their rejection and your feelings.

✓ BRAIN SPIKE

When you invade the mind of another, Discharge this Move and roll+Volatile. On a 10+, you push deep into their psyche, hold 2. On a 7-9, you only skim their surface thoughts, ask what they are thinking about right now and their player will give you a true answer. Spend hold, 1 for 1, on the following:

- » You force them to take a single action that doesn't put them in direct Harm.
- » You pillage their thoughts and feelings, ask a question and you will get a true answer.

When you spend Hold and choose, they must either submit or take 2 Harm, ignoring Shields and Armor.

✓ TK MASTER

Requires Telekinetic Force

Add the following options to choose from for Telekinetic force:

- » You activate or manipulate a simple device or switch.
- » You cause the target 2 Harm.

✓ FURY UNLEASHED

When you engage in vicious hand to hand combat and roll a 10+ for Firefight, choose 1 extra option.

✓ POWER BOMB

When you lob a Grenade, on a 7+ you may spend 1 Storm to double its Harm or Damage.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group, choose 1:**

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_] gets under my skin, I want to show them I'm better than they think.
- » [_PC_] has seen me at my most vulnerable. I'll make sure they never tell anyone what they saw.
- » I can't help my feelings for [_PC_], but I can't let them know.
- » [_PC_] is the only one that can calm me down. I want to be closer to them.
- » [_NPC/Group_] ruined my life, I will see them all destroyed.
- » [_Group_] calls me a criminal and a monster, they won't stop hunting me.
- » My powers cause me extreme pain, and there is very little that helps me manage it.
- » I am at the mercy of my [Fear/Rage/Despair], and must struggle against its impulses.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You're a bit banged up, but it's nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M RATTLED:

You're shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing "Shrug it off" when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I'M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I'M KNOCKED OUT:

You've been knocked unconscious and can't move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses "First Aid" when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN'T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ You hear news of someone in the system who shares your past, a survivor or fellow experiment.
- ☐ You gain an extra slot in Storm.
- ☐ Someone dangerous and related to your past is closing in on you, with ill intent.
- ☐ You are given an opportunity for revenge, but risk harm against yourself, or alienating those you care about.
- ☐ Someone that gave you succor when you were hurt has been captured by your enemies.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, you learn of the location of the seat of power for the perpetrators of your tragedy. When you charge in to destroy them once and for all, roll+ Volatile.

On a 10+, you manage to destroy them, but you suffer severe wounds that force you to retire to a quiet life.

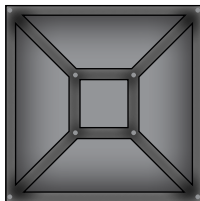
On a 7-9, you unleash your power and annihilate them, at the cost of your own life.

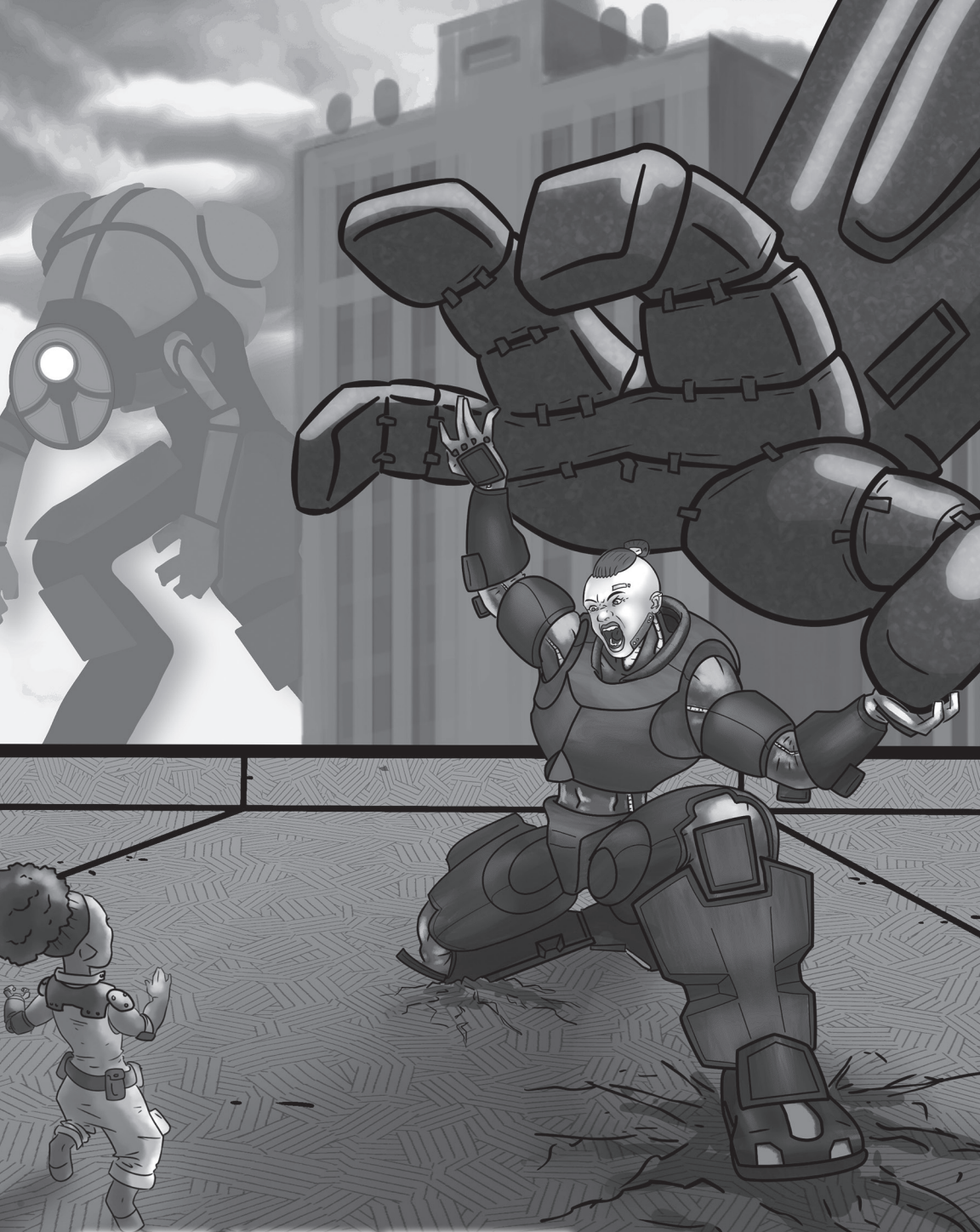
On a 6-, they kill you, but are scattered and destabilized.

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Melee Weapon: 2 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Basic Gear
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Grenades: 4 Harm, 1 Damage, 3 Uses, Firefight, Area, Forceful, Messy, Illegal
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Prized Keepsake: Trinket





THE WARHORSE

A weary warrior who has seen too much death but must endure. You've seen the violent side of space for most of your life, and it has hardened you and honed you to a razor's edge. Few have more experience at fighting and controlling the battlefield than you. Where others may be overwhelmed by the horrors of battle and space, you shrug, pick up your weapon, and stride once more into the breach.

Name

CHOOSE ONE OR MAKE YOUR OWN:

Thrax, Shen, Bastion, The Wall, Valik, Handen, Mei, Phasral, Malcolm, Desen, Harric, Grunt

Description

CHOOSE UP TO 4:

Heavy Build, Scarred, Rugged, Weary, Calloused, Hard, Stern, Stoic, Grim, Imposing, Compassionate

Approaches

Assign the following scores to each of the 5 Approaches: +2, +1, 0, 0, -1.

When you upgrade an Approach, increase one of your Approaches by +1 to a maximum of +3. Each Approach can only be increased once.

Signature Move

You start with this Move.

✓ JUGGERNAUT

When you move forward unflinching towards a goal through an immediate danger or hazard that others cower from, Discharge this Move and roll+Stalwart. **On a 10+** you are unstoppable, choose 2. **On a 7-9**, weariness creeps in at the edges, mark 1 Stress and choose 1.

- » If you take Harm, take -1 Harm.
- » You clear or uncover a way through for an ally. They have Advantage going forward to following you.
- » You unquestionably reach your goal.

Background - War Journal

Your history is a long bloody list of battles and death. Choose one:

✓ WAR ETERNAL

You come from a culture that has been embroiled in a bitter internal conflict for generations. **When you encounter someone from your culture**, you will immediately know which force they are from and how you can push at them to gain support or lose their cool. You have Advantage when you Intimidate or Manipulate them.

✓ WARDENS

You and your people have stood against an external threat for decades. You are an expert on this threat. **When you Share Expertise on the threat**, you have Advantage. In addition to the roll, you can always describe a fact about the Threat that makes them dangerous.

My people have stood between civilization and the _____ for decades.

Warhorse Moves

When you have 5 XP and choose to gain a Warhorse Move, select one of the Moves below.

✓ **HEAVY ARSENAL**

You have a unique, very destructive heavy weapon with limited ammo, give it a name and describe it.

3 Harm, Range: (choose 2) _____, _____ Ammo: [] [] []

When you fire your heavy weapon, reduce its ammo by 1, and in addition to any Harm or other effects that you select, choose one of the following:

- » An object or area is destroyed.
- » Someone has to take you seriously and will back off or escalate.
- » A system or device is shut down or damaged.

✓ **GUNNER**

When you fire a ship or vehicle weapon, you have Advantage.

✓ **BATTLE COMMANDER**

When you roll Recover, you may choose the following as one of the options on the list:

- » Give an ally an order. They have Advantage going forward if they follow the order.

✓ **ADRENALINE RUSH**

When you flood your system with adrenaline in a tense or dangerous situation, Discharge this Move and roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. While you're still in danger, you may spend hold, 1 for 1 on the following:

- » Ignore any negative effects or modifiers caused by Harm you have marked for 1 roll.
- » Perform an incredible athletic feat.
- » Add your Volatile modifier to the Harm you deal for one attack.

✓ **WALKING TANK**

You ignore the clumsy tag on Armor.

✓ **COVERING FIRE**

When you roll Firefight, On a 10+, you give an ally an opportunity to change position or get into cover. They have Advantage going forward to their next action.

✓ **SHIELD PLATFORM**

When you deploy your Shield Platform, spend 1 use of a Grenade. The Shield Platform creates a barrier that provides cover. It cannot be moved. It dissipates when it takes 5 Harm, or when a Scene ends.

✓ **STOIC WALL**

When you stand defiant to defend another from violence or Harm, Discharge this Move and roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. While you still stand in defense of them, you can spend hold, 1 for 1, on the following:

- » Redirect an attack from that which you defend to yourself.
- » Reduce the attacker's attack by 1 Harm.
- » Open up the attacker to an ally, giving that ally Advantage going forward against the attacker.

Hooks

At character creation, fill in at least 3 of your starting Hooks and then choose your favorite 3 to be your current Hooks. **When a Hook applies to the current situation, and either you, the SM, or another player brings it to the attention of your group,** choose 1:

- » Apply your Hook. You have Disadvantage going forward. Determine whether your Hook forces you to make a roll.
- » Decline the offer to apply your Hook and say how your character overcomes or avoids the Disadvantage of the moment.

STARTING HOOKS

- » [_PC_]’s morality will make them hesitate at the wrong time. When they do, I won’t.
- » [_PC_] and I have seen all of each others’ scars. That’s a sacred bond.
- » [_PC_] is like a child to me. I’ll teach them to be strong.
- » I’ll protect [_PC_] from anything, even themselves.
- » I often drown myself in [Vice] to dull the scars on my soul.
- » War has numbed me to suffering, whether it’s my own or someone else’s.
- » I have an unsettled score with [_NPC/Group_].
- » I have fought alongside [_NPC_] for years, I will always come to their aid.

Harm

When you are directed by a Move or the SM to mark Harm, for each Harm you receive, mark off one of the Harm options or mark off 1 Stress.

When you have 5 Stress, clear the Stress track, and take a Calamity.

JUST A SCRATCH:

You’re a bit banged up, but it’s nothing serious. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M RATTLED:

You’re shaken and shocked, you have Disadvantage ongoing to any +Slick or +Calculating rolls. Can be healed by choosing “Shrug it off” when you roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I’M HURT BAD:

You have severe bleeding or broken bones, you have Disadvantage to any roll requiring physical exertion. Can be healed by receiving Surgery.

I’M KNOCKED OUT:

You’ve been knocked unconscious and can’t move, act, or even see anything. Can be healed when an Ally chooses “First Aid” when they roll Recover, or when a Scene ends.

I CAN’T GO ON:

Your journey is over, you pass away, unmourned and unnoticed by the vast black of space.

Calamity

When you mark an item in the Calamity list, describe the Fictional consequences mentioned in your choice and mark XP. If appropriate, you may write a Hook about it.

- ☐ A group of comrades arrive to help end a violent conflict, before moving on.
- ☐ You have hunted down a lead on some heavy duty armor—Power Armor or a Battleframe—but getting your hands on it is going to be costly, illegal, and dangerous.
- ☐ Your great war comes to the local sector or escalates.
- ☐ You are given an opportunity for a great victory, at the cost of a part of your body: an eye, a limb, etc.
- ☐ Your allies in the war are under siege and call for reinforcements: you.
- ☐ You suffer a terrible wound, illness, or debility. Describe what you have lost.
- ☐ Now or soon, your enemy in the war corners you with overwhelming odds.

When you brace yourself for your last stand, roll+Stalwart.

On a 10+, you survive against all odds, and must return to the front lines of your war, over a mountain of your enemies' corpses.

On a 7-9, you manage to defeat them, but your wounds are severe. You retire or succumb to your injuries shortly after the battle.

On a 6-, you are overwhelmed, but charge a heavy cost for your death

Gear

You start with 3 Gear slots and all the Gear listed in your Supplies. **When you choose to Open a Gear slot**, outline a light grey closed Gear slot. Mark off an open, empty Gear slot while you are away from your Supplies and engaged in a dangerous situation to choose a piece of Gear you have with you. **When you get back to your supplies**, empty all your open Gear Slots.

- ☐ Pistol: 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ☐ Assault Rifle: 2 Harm, Firefight, Discharge, Full Auto, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Melee Weapon: 2 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Basic Gear
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Sniper Rifle: 3 Harm, 1 Damage, AP, Conspicuous, Discharge, Illegal, Sniping
- ☐ Grenades: 4 Harm, 1 Damage, 3 Uses, Firefight, Area, Forceful, Messy, Illegal
- ☐ Body Armor: Absorb 2, Conspicuous, Basic Gear
- ☐ Shields: Absorb 1, Discharge, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Shotgun: 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ☐ Mercenary License: Trinket

GEAR

The tools by which the desperate live and die.



Weapons, technological devices of utility and convenience, miscellaneous odds and ends. Gear is all the bits of stuff your character carries around that lets them engage with the world around them in ways they can't otherwise. Use your Gear to increase your chances of survival and success but choose wisely! You can only carry so much Gear.

Gear Permanence

Once you have purchased or obtained a Gear item and returned to your ship, the Gear is considered to be permanently unlocked in your inventory. This can represent owning a blueprint for your Gear, or a supply on the ship that you can refresh your Loadout with. If you use up your grenades or your Tactical Pack, you don't need to buy more, simply return to your ship, or somewhere you have access to supplies, and you can refresh, restock, or exchange your Loadout with other Gear you have. Likewise, if a piece of Gear you have is damaged or lost, you can get another one when you are able to restock at your ship or when you have access to your supplies.

Gear Tags

Tags for Gear give insight into how they behave both mechanically and Fictionally. You can use these tags as a starting point for making your own tags.

Tier Tags

- ▷ **Basic Gear:** It's inexpensive and ubiquitous equipment, easily purchased.
- ▷ **Advanced Gear:** It's reasonably priced and easily purchased.
- ▷ **Illegal:** Purchasing and possessing it is illegal in most lawful societies.
- ▷ **Specialist Gear:** It's expensive or high-tech, and hard to find.
- ▷ **Rare:** It's hard to find and requires knowing the right people to hunt one down. Unless you gain this through your Playbook, check with the SM before taking it.

RANGE TAGS

- ▷ **Skirmish:** Cramped, chaotic exchange of physical blows & small arms fire.
- ▷ **Firefight:** Moving from cover to cover, exchanging fire.
- ▷ **Sniping:** Precise long distance strikes, tense games of hide and seek.

WEAPON TAGS

- ▷ **AP:** It ignores personal Armor on people, and the Armored tag on vehicles.
- ▷ **Area:** It affects an area, and anyone in the area.
- ▷ **Drain:** It blows out the target's technology, making it useless until repaired.
- ▷ **Forceful:** It can knock someone back a pace, maybe even off their feet.
- ▷ **Full Auto:** You may choose to Discharge your weapon to deal your Harm to two targets.
- ▷ **Messy:** It's particularly destructive, ripping people and things apart. You don't have fine control over what you hit.
- ▷ **N Ammo:** Each time the weapon is used, reduce Ammo by 1. When you have 0 Ammo, you cannot fire it.
- ▷ **N Damage:** It does N Damage to ships and vehicles when it hits.
- ▷ **N Harm:** It causes N Harm to its target.
- ▷ **Reload:** It requires reloading after each use.
- ▷ **Silent:** The weapon can be used silently.
- ▷ **Stun:** If you deal the killing blow with this weapon, you may choose to incapacitate your target instead of killing them.

OTHER TAGS

- ▷ **Compact Vehicle:** It's a vehicle that can be driven, rode, or flown. It doesn't require a Vehicle Bay to store, you could keep it in your quarters.
- ▷ **Concealed:** It can be hidden on your person and will not be detected through searching or sensors.
- ▷ **Conspicuous:** It's obvious and very hard to hide.
- ▷ **Discharge:** If it's a Move, it's Discharged when it's used. If it's a weapon, Gear, vehicle equipment, or ship module, it's Discharged when a Move says. If it's Shields, it's Discharged when it absorbs Harm.
- ▷ **Expires:** You only have it for your next Contract. After that, it's Expired for good.
- ▷ **Mod:** It's a permanent Modification to your body. You cannot unequip it, and it does not use a Gear slot.
- ▷ **N Uses:** Each time the item is used, reduce its uses by 1. When you have 0 Uses left, it's Expended and cannot be used.
- ▷ **Trinket:** It doesn't use up a Gear slot when you use it.

ARMOR AND SHIELDS TAGS

- ▷ **Absorb N:** It can absorb up to N points of Harm or Damage from a single source and is then Discharged if it has the Discharge tag, or Damaged if it does not.
- ▷ **Clumsy:** It's noisy and awkward to Move around with. You have Disadvantage to any Move that requires stealth, dexterity, or finesse ongoing while using it.

STATUS TAGS

- ▷ **Damaged:** Use a Tactical Pack and 5 minutes of peace to repair this item.
- ▷ **Discharged:** This item/Move can be recharged as an option when you roll Recover, or at the end of a Scene.
- ▷ **Expended:** This item can be restocked when you have access to supplies.



Gear and Weapons

Gear, Weapons, and Mods are separated into 4 readily available categories: Basic Gear for inexpensive, easily acquired items, Advanced Gear for slightly more expensive but readily available items, Black Market for expensive and illegal or controlled items, or Specialist Gear for expensive and high-tech items. Rare Gear can only be found at the SM's discretion and may require extra effort to create or hunt down.

Gear Lists:

BASIC GEAR:

Basic Gear is reasonably inexpensive and ubiquitous. It's the sort of stuff you can always find with a few guilders in your account.

- ▷ **Melee Weapon:** 2 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Basic Gear
- ▷ **Liquid Assets:** 3 uses, Expires, Basic Gear; You've saved some walking around cash. While on your next Contract, expend a use to offer a bribe as leverage or pay for a service. Liquid Assets expire at the end of the Contract, whether you spent them all or not.
- ▷ **Pistol:** 1 Harm, Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, Stun, Basic Gear
- ▷ **Scanner:** 3 uses, Basic Gear; When you scan a strange environment, organism, or device, expend a use and you have Advantage to Scope It Out.
- ▷ **Body Armor:** Absorb 2, Conspicuous, Basic Gear
- ▷ **Vacsuit:** 3 uses, Clumsy, Conspicuous, Basic Gear; A sealed suit rated for vacuum and poisonous atmospheres. It can carry 6 hours of breathable atmosphere for the user.
- ▷ **Virtual Interface:** Discharge, Mod, Basic Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.

ADVANCED GEAR:

Advanced Gear is still relatively easy to find, as long as you have a bit more money to throw around. It's better suited to military operations or police forces.

- ▷ **Assault Rifle:** 2 Harm, Firefight, Discharge, Full Auto, Advanced Gear
- ▷ **Shields:** Absorb 1, Discharge, Advanced Gear
- ▷ **Prosthetic Gear:** Mod, Advanced Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Sensor Pack:** Discharge, Mod, Advanced Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Shotgun:** 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Messy, Advanced Gear
- ▷ **Tactical Pack:** 3 Uses, Advanced Gear; Mark off a use to choose 1 option from the Tactical Pack list.

BLACK MARKET:

Gear found on the Black Market can't be found anywhere else because it's illegal. Your goods may be confiscated, or you may be fined, arrested, or attacked for carrying Illegal Gear. As such, you have to have a lot of money and the right contacts to find Illegal Gear.

- ▷ **Chameleon:** Discharge, Mod, Illegal; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Grenades:** 4 Harm, 1 Damage, 3 Uses, Firefight, Area, Forceful, Messy, Illegal
- ▷ **Missile Launcher:** 4 Harm, 2 Damage, 2 Ammo, Firefight, Area, AP, Forceful, Conspicuous, Messy, Illegal
- ▷ **Sniper Rifle:** 3 Harm, 1 Damage, AP, Conspicuous, Discharge, Illegal, Sniping
- ▷ **Tactical Cloak:** Discharge, Illegal

SPECIALIST GEAR:

Specialist Gear isn't illegal, but it is very expensive. You can only get your hands on it if you know the right people, or if you have a lot of money to throw around. The most advanced and powerful Gear can be found in the Specialist Gear list.

- ▷ **Hard Skin:** Mod, Specialist Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Redundant Organs:** Discharge, Mod, Specialist Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Super Reflexes:** Discharge, Mod, Specialist Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Super Strength:** Discharge, Mod, Specialist Gear; Requires extensive surgery to implant. See Modifications for more detail.
- ▷ **Nano Blade:** 3 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Specialist Gear
- ▷ **Remote Drone:** Discharge, Specialist Gear; Discharge and roll+Calculating to activate your remote drone.
- ▷ **Speeder:** 1 Hits, 1 Crew, Fragile, Inconspicuous, Tight, Compact Vehicle, Specialist Gear

RARE GEAR:

Rare Gear is not readily available. It will require extra effort or contacts to hunt down. If a player wants a custom piece of Gear, or one of the items below that their Playbook doesn't give them access to, look into making a Personal Project or requiring a few scenes to hunt it down or make it.

- ▷ **Mystic Weapon:** 3 Harm, Skirmish, Discharge, Concealed, Trinket, Rare
- ▷ **Power Armor:** Absorb 4, Discharge, Clumsy, Conspicuous, Rare; Discharge to perform a superhuman physical feat of strength or resilience.
- ▷ **Battleframe:** 1 Hit, 1 Crew, Discharge, +Armored, +Equipped 1, -Cramped, -Flashy, Compact Vehicle, Rare

Weapons

MELEE WEAPON

TAGS: 2 *HARM, SKIRMISH, SILENT, BASIC GEAR*

Melee Weapons can cover anything you swing at or stab someone with. Fictionally, the weapons can be simple lumps of metal or primitive shivs, or they may be some kind of high-tech folding blade. Melee Weapons don't have any kind of power source or energy. If they did, they would have the discharge tag and be a bigger deal.

PISTOL

TAGS: 1 *HARM, SKIRMISH, FIREFIGHT, DISCHARGE, STUN, BASIC GEAR*

Pistols can be laser or beam weapons, or they can fire projectiles either by using chemical propellants or some other means. However you describe your pistol, it still behaves the same mechanically.

ASSAULT RIFLE

TAGS: 2 *HARM, FIREFIGHT, DISCHARGE, FULL AUTO, ADVANCED GEAR*

The Assault Rifle is the workhorse weapon of the galaxy. Many different styles of weapons and designs fall into the Assault Rifle range, from guns that rapidly fire a hail of bullets, to weapons that shoot plasma charges, or rifles that fire cohesive beams or bolts of light.

SHOTGUN

TAGS: 3 *HARM, SKIRMISH, DISCHARGE, MESSY, ADVANCED GEAR*

A dangerous weapon for close range fighting, the shotgun tears apart your enemies with a brutal wide spray of projectiles, or a shredding concussive blast.

SNIPER RIFLE

TAGS: 3 *HARM, 1 DAMAGE, AP, CONSPICUOUS, DISCHARGE, SNIPING, ILLEGAL*

Sniper Rifles are long range, high damage weapons designed for eliminating a target from a great distance. Their high power also make sniper rifles effective at piercing armor and damaging vehicles. Sniper rifles tend to be long, cumbersome and very conspicuous weapons. Due to their potential for destruction and assassination, sniper rifles are considered illegal firearms in most civilized cultures.

NANO BLADE

TAGS: 3 *HARM, SKIRMISH, SILENT, SPECIALIST GEAR*

Nano Blades are swords, daggers, or knives with edges that are only a few nanometers in width, making them incredibly sharp. The keenness of these blades make them perfect weapons for assassins, silently cutting through armor like soft butter.

MYSTIC WEAPON

TAGS: 3 *HARM, SKIRMISH, DISCHARGE, CONCEALED, TRINKET, RARE*

The Mystic Weapon is a unique close combat weapon used by an order of Mystics. Only the Mystic, or someone who has taken the Mystic Weapon Master Move may use this weapon.

MISSILE LAUNCHER

TAGS: 4 HARM, FIREFIGHT, AP, 2 DAMAGE, AREA, MESSY, CONSPICUOUS, 2 AMMO, ILLEGAL

Missile launchers fire explosive projectiles. They can take the form of rocket propelled grenades, charged energy blasts, or explosive shells. Missile launchers are generally designed to assault vehicles but can be devastating against individuals. Due to their potential for destruction, missile launchers are considered illegal firearms in most civilized cultures.

GRENADES

TAGS: 4 HARM, 1 DAMAGE, 3 USES, FIREFIGHT, AREA, FORCEFUL, MESSY, ILLEGAL

Grenades are small, portable explosives that can be thrown at enemies. Grenades are effective at destroying objects, flushing enemies from cover, or just blowing a bunch of people up. Due to their potential for destruction, grenades are considered illegal firearms in most civilized cultures.

Equipment

Gear is all of the equipment Crew Members take on Contracts. Gear serves all kinds of purposes and is a way to give your character expanded utility in certain situations. When you make your character, the Archetype you choose will give you some options for starting Gear.

COMM

TAGS: TRINKET, INCONSEQUENTIAL

Comms are ubiquitous tech. They are made by multitudes of different manufacturers and come in various shapes, sizes, and interfaces. They act as communication devices and links to local networks and systems on many frequencies and bands. Comms can also run various app packages that allow rudimentary translation of common spacefaring languages and access to personal financial accounts and social networks. All Crew Members start with some kind of Comms device or technology.

LIQUID ASSETS

TAGS: 3 USES, EXPIRES, BASIC GEAR

You've saved some walking around cash. **While on your next Contract**, expend a use to offer a bribe as leverage or pay for a service. Liquid Assets expire at the end of the Contract, whether you spent them all or not. You just can't hold on to money.

VACSUIT

TAGS: 3 USES, CLUMSY, CONSPICUOUS, BASIC GEAR

A sealed suit rated for vacuum and poisonous atmospheres. It carries heating and breathable atmosphere for the user. Vacsuits are common equipment on spacefaring ships and allow the wearer to perform repairs on the exterior or in ventilated sections of the ship.

SCANNER

TAGS: 3 USES, BASIC GEAR

When you scan a strange environment, organism, or device, expend a use and you have Advantage to Scope It Out.

TACTICAL PACK

TAGS: 3 USES, ADVANCED GEAR

Tactical Packs are backpacks or pouches of equipment that have a variety of useful items in them. Having a Tactical Pack allows you to not only repair equipment, technology, or Vehicles in the field, but also heal injuries and—when needed—produce a useful mundane piece of equipment to help you solve an immediate problem.

When you rifle through your Tactical Pack for just the right piece of equipment for a situation, mark off 1 use and choose 1:

- » You find just the right piece of mundane equipment for the situation in your pack: a rope, a flashlight, a crowbar, etc.
- » You repair a piece of equipment or basic technology, or recover 1 Hit on a Vehicle.
- » First Aid: You heal the “I’m knocked out” Harm on an Ally.

TACTICAL CLOAK

TAGS: DISCHARGE, ILLEGAL

A suit that provides optical camouflage through advanced technology. **When you activate your Tactical Cloak to try to escape notice**, Discharge your Tactical Cloak and roll Act Quick at Advantage to lose your pursuers or move a short distance undetected.

REMOTE DRONE

TAGS: DISCHARGE, SPECIALIST GEAR

A small, portable drone with a basic AI that can perform simple tasks. **When you activate your Remote Drone AI**, Discharge this Move and roll+Calculating. **On a 10+**, hold 3. **On a 7-9**, hold 2. Spend hold, 1 for 1, to give it one of the following commands.

- » Attack your target, adding +1 Harm to your attack.
- » Spend a minute or two hacking a simple system.
- » Distract a target.
- » Provide telemetry for its current location.
- » Pick something up or manipulate a simple device.



Armor and Shields

Armor and shields are pieces of Gear your characters wear in order to mitigate Damage. Shields are designed to absorb Harm before discharging and then require a short time out of danger for the shields to recharge. Armor is ablative and can absorb Harm for you, but is then considered damaged and needs to be repaired.

SHIELDS

TAGS: *ABSORB 1, DISCHARGE, ADVANCED GEAR*

Shields have an emitter, a small and generally discrete device that attaches to the wearer either on a belt or harness. An energy or force shield is projected around the person wearing the emitter; describe whether an active shield is visible or makes a sound while being worn. Shields are able to absorb 1 point of Harm before becoming Discharged.

BODY ARMOR

TAGS: *ABSORB 2, CONSPICUOUS, BASIC GEAR*

Body Armor is simple, light armor. It can be a tight-fitting bodysuit of nanoweave fiber, or plates of light ceramic or hardened plastics, or thick hide. Body Armor is able to take 2 points of Harm from a single source, and is then Damaged.

POWER ARMOR

TAGS: *ABSORB 4, CLUMSY, CONSPICUOUS, RARE*

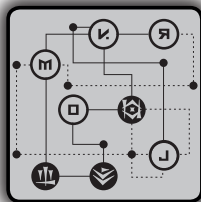
Power Armor is a bulky suit of powered armor that enhances the user's strength and protects them. Power Armor comes in many designs, but it always cuts a hulking, conspicuous figure.

When you use your Power Armor to perform a superhuman feat of strength or endurance, Discharge this move and roll+Stalwart. **On a 10+,** you struggle, but manage to do it. **On a 7-9,** you do it, but the pressure is overwhelming. Suffer 1 Stress.

BATTLEFRAME

TAGS: *1 HIT, 1 CREW, DISCHARGE, +ARMORED, +EQUIPPED 1, -CRAMPED, -FLASHY, COMPACT VEHICLE, RARE*

The Battleframe is a small Armature, at most twice as high as a human. The Battleframe's small size means it's outmatched by larger Armatures, but its heavy armor makes it deadly against standard troops and unarmored vehicles.



Modifications

Modifications are biological or mechanical, alterations to an individual that give them extraordinary abilities or advantages. This can cover genetic Modifications, biological implants, cybernetic implants or bodies, computer technology interfaces, or even complex suits of power armor. Note that a simple cybernetic prosthetic isn't treated as a Modification if it offers the same functionality as the limb or organ it replaces.

Some Modifications won't have a specific Move to them but will change what the character is capable of in the Fiction. Strength Modification will increase the amount of weight a character can lift, hold, throw, or push.

Most Modifications are incredibly expensive and require weeks of invasive surgery or modification to install or graft onto the individual.

SUPER STRENGTH

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, SPECIALIST GEAR

Reinforced bones and muscles, skeletal replacement, hydraulic pistons, surgically-grafted exoskeletons or frames, these methods and more can be used to grant an individual super-enhanced strength, allowing them to exert more force and manipulate much heavier objects.

When you use your superhuman strength to do something, Discharge this Modification and roll Keep Your Cool. **When you gain Super Strength**, take one of the following Hooks:

- » I struggle to control my enhanced strength for delicate operation.
- » Using my enhanced strength leaves me weak afterwards.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

SUPER REFLEXES

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, SPECIALIST GEAR

Accelerated neural pathways, super-efficient carbon fiber muscles, ultralight bone weaves, advanced adrenal networks, all of these systems can provide an individual increased reflexes and super speed, allowing them to react and move at incredible speed for short periods of time. These bursts cannot be maintained and put considerable Stress on the individual. Super Reflexes will often allow for impressive feats like dodging or racing bullets, acting first, or racing somewhere incredibly quickly.

When you use your super speed or reflexes to move quickly or avoid danger, Discharge this Modification, and roll Act Quick at Advantage. **When you gain Super Reflexes**, take one of the following Hooks:

- » My body always needs more Fuel.
- » Using my enhanced reflexes leaves me exhausted afterwards.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

SENSOR PACK

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, ADVANCED GEAR

The Sensor Pack is a standard optic and auditory pack that allows the individual to see and hear well beyond the normal spectrum. It often includes zoom functionality, recording and playback, along with sound isolation and spectrum switching. Sensor packs can help you notice details others would have no hope of perceiving.

When you use your enhanced senses to gather information others could not perceive, Discharge this Modification and roll Scope It Out at Advantage.

When you gain the Sensor Pack, take one of the following Hooks:

- » My enhanced senses sometimes overwhelm me.
- » I can no longer perceive as other do.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

REDUNDANT ORGANS

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, SPECIALIST GEAR

Your internal organs have been enhanced and replaced with multiple redundant systems, allowing you to compensate for all but the worst radiation, toxins, and infections—even exposure to the vacuum of space. While prolonged exposure will still be lethal, you can withstand exposure for a short time that would kill others immediately.

When you rely on your Redundant Organs to survive a short time in a lethal environment, Discharge this Modification and roll Keep Your Cool. **When you gain Redundant Organs,** take one of the following Hooks:

- » My Modifications set me apart as obviously different from others of my kind.
- » I feel disconnected and distant to those around me.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

HARD SKIN

TAGS: MOD, SPECIALIST GEAR

You have had your skin either enhanced or replaced to withstand incredible force. While your Hard Skin doesn't render you invulnerable, you are able to ignore the ill effects from Harm you suffer, right up until you take too much Harm, and you die. In addition, Damage done by Vehicle weapons (not Ship weapons) is treated as normal Harm to you. **When you gain Hard Skin,** take one of the following Hooks:

- » My Modifications are obvious and alarming.
- » I no longer enjoy the sense of touch.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

VIRTUAL INTERFACE

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, BASIC GEAR

A Virtual Interface is one of the most common and stable Modifications on the market, allowing individuals to directly interact and access virtual systems without the need for a device. At its most basic, a VI is like having a comm built into your mind. More advanced VI Modifications allow direct interface with complex virtual systems and entities as though you were interacting with the real world, allowing for enhanced hacking or information gathering.

When you use your Virtual Interface to interact with computer systems, Discharge this Modification and interact with the system as though it were a real, physical space, triggering moves as you normally would. **When you gain the Virtual Interface,** take one of the following Hooks:

- » I'm addicted to the virtual net.
- » Everything seems like a virtual game.
- » I'm not yet used to the information overload from my implant.

CHAMELEON

TAGS: DISCHARGE, MOD, ILLEGAL

Holoprojectors, smartskin, and camotech make the individual either harder to spot, alter their appearance, or create a display of light and color.

When you activate your Chameleon skin and remain completely still, Discharge this Move, and roll Keep Your Cool at Advantage to avoid detection. **When you gain Chameleon,** take one of the following Hooks:

- » My Modification often betrays my mood.
- » Using my Modification makes me overheat.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

PROSTHETIC GEAR

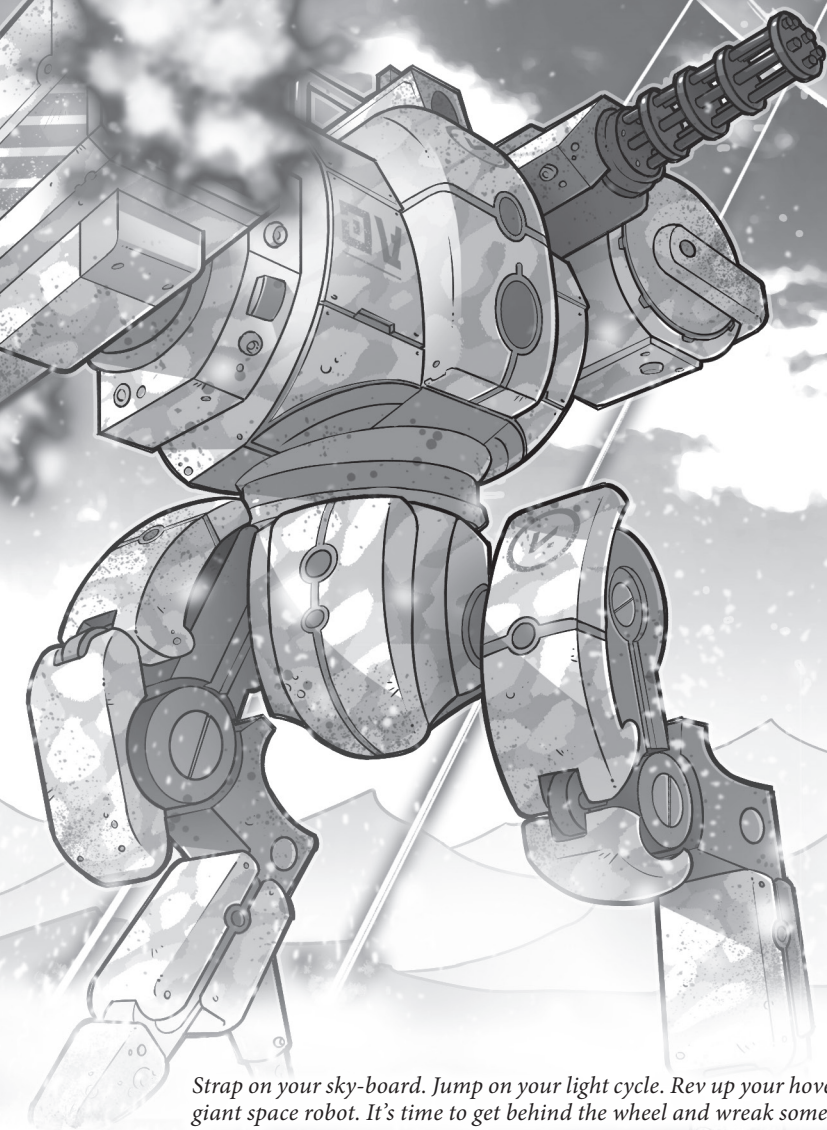
TAGS: MOD, ADVANCED GEAR

Prosthetic Gear allows the incorporation of standard Gear, or grants the biological equivalent of certain Gear or weapons to be built into the individual's body. This allows them to have a Melee Weapon, Pistol, or Tactical Pack as part of their body, with all of that Gear's benefits and limitations. The Tactical Pack can be replenished whenever you have access to you Supplies. **When you gain Prosthetic Gear,** take one of the following Hooks:

- » Sometimes my Modification malfunctions.
- » My prosthetic Gear regularly causes me trouble in regulated areas.
- » My Modification causes me considerable pain.

VEHICLES

*Ride them hard and put them away
crashed and burning.*



Strap on your sky-board. Jump on your light cycle. Rev up your hover-tank. Climb into your giant space robot. It's time to get behind the wheel and wreak some vehicular havoc.

Even if a vehicle can't sail between the stars, it can still be a useful or even powerful asset. Some vehicles simply let you get from A to B in a unique way. Others will have their own armaments and special abilities. Vehicles differ from ships in a few important ways. While some vehicles can equip ship weapons and fly in space, only ships have FTL drives. Vehicles are described using tags that tell you how they behave mechanically and Fictionally. Some tags are purely mechanical or descriptive. Some vehicle tags are +Strengths that apply Advantage in certain Fictional situations. Other vehicle tags are -Weaknesses that apply Disadvantage in certain Fictional situations.

When purchasing most vehicles, they are considered large purchases made by the entire Crew during a Ship Payment Move cycle. You may purchase a vehicle at standard quality without rolling Test Drive or take a gamble and try for a higher quality vehicle. In order to easily store them in your ship, the Vehicles may require a Vehicle Bay or Squadron Bay. Otherwise, you'll have to store them in your Cargo Bay.

The exception is the Speeder. Speeders are found on the Specialist Gear list and can be stored in a Crew Member's quarters.

TEST DRIVE

When you go to the scrap dealers and vendors of vehicles looking for a deal on a particular type of Vehicle, say what you're looking for and either take it as-is or roll+Slick. **On a 12+**, you find a superb example of engineering, or get a customized vehicle. Make 2 enhancements. **On a 10+**, it's better than average, make 1 enhancement. **On a 7-9**, it's serviceable, take it as-is. **On a 6-**, you had to take what you could get, make 1 Compromise.

When you make an Enhancement, add a +Strength, or remove a -Weakness, as established.

When you make a Compromise, remove a +Strength, or add a -Weakness, as established.

- ▷ **Speeder:** 1 Hit, +Responsive, +Speedy, -Fragile, -Cramped
- ▷ **Passenger Vehicle:** 1 Hit, +Reliable, +Inconspicuous, +Spacious, -Fragile
- ▷ **Military Vehicle:** 2 Hits, +Reliable +Armored, +Equipped 1, -Sluggish
- ▷ **Shuttle:** 2 Hits, +Spacious, +Armored, +Spacefaring, -Ponderous
- ▷ **Fighter:** 3 Hits, +Responsive, +Speedy, +Spacefaring, +Equipped 1, -Cramped
- ▷ **Armature:** 3 Hits, +Responsive, +Spacefaring, +Equipped 2, -Ponderous -Cramped

N HITS

Hits show how much Damage a vehicle can take before it's destroyed or breaks down. If you make an Enhancement, you may choose to give the vehicle +1 Hit.

LOOK

You may describe your vehicle's look with a few words. Here are some examples.

Rusty, Dented, Grimy, Well-Worn, Scorched, Battle-Scarred, Refurbished, Mismatched, Clunky, Ugly, Industrial, Blocky, Rough, Shiny, Immaculate, Chromed, Pristine, Fancy, High-Tech, Sleek, Angular, Predatory, Vicious, Organic

+Strengths and -Weaknesses

+Strengths and -Weaknesses are tags that signify qualities of a thing like a Vehicle that are true in the Fiction. These Fictional elements will often have mechanical impact on the game; most commonly they will impart Advantage or Disadvantage under certain circumstances. The tags listed below are standard, common ones you can use, but if you customize your vehicle, talk with the SM about custom +Strength, -Weakness, or even Neutral tags that are simple descriptors.

+STRENGTHS

- ▷ **+Responsive:** It handles well, responding quickly and sharply to its pilot's commands.
- ▷ **+Speedy:** It's very fast, easily outdistancing slower vehicles.
- ▷ **+Reliable:** It starts when you want and will perform at its peak right up until it's destroyed.
- ▷ **+Armored:** It has solid armor that can turn away any amount of small arms fire. You can ram into other vehicles without risking major damage.
- ▷ **+Spacious:** It has plenty of room and is comfortable to be in.
- ▷ **+Registered:** You legally possess it and have the required documents to show you do.
- ▷ **+Inconspicuous:** It's a plain or common vehicle and easily escapes notice.
- ▷ **+Accurate:** It has a targeting system that assists with aiming any weapons it has.
- ▷ **+Autonomous:** It's a living animal or simple virtual intelligence capable of moving under its own volition based on a set of simple behaviors.
- ▷ **+Spacefaring:** It can travel in the vacuum of space, although it doesn't have FTL capabilities.
- ▷ **+Equipped N:** It has N pieces of Vehicle weapons & equipment. Select from the Vehicle Equipment list.

-WEAKNESSES

- ▷ **-Sluggish:** It's slow to respond or responds sloppily to its pilot's commands.
- ▷ **-Ponderous:** It's slower than most vehicles of its type.
- ▷ **-Lemon:** It's unreliable and may not start when you want, or may break down at an inopportune moment.
- ▷ **-Fragile:** It's susceptible to small arms fire, and doesn't protect its occupants from attack very well.
- ▷ **-Cramped:** There isn't a lot of room, it has small and stuffy spaces.
- ▷ **-Stolen:** You don't own it, and its owners or the authorities may be looking for it.
- ▷ **-Flashy:** It's showy, unusual, or noisy in a way that draws attention.
- ▷ **-Inaccurate:** It has unreliable targeting systems, and aiming any weapon is a challenge.
- ▷ **-Skittish:** It responds unpredictably in stressful or confusing situations.

	+Strengths	-Weaknesses
1	+Responsive	-Sluggish
2	+Speedy	-Ponderous
3	+Reliable	-Lemon
4	+Armored	-Fragile
5	+Spacious	-Cramped
6	+Registered	-Stolen
7	+Inconspicuous	-Flashy
8	+Accurate	-Inaccurate
9	+Spacefaring	
10	+Equipped N	
11	+Autonomous	
12		-Skittish

Applying a +Strength or -Weakness as established means making sure they don't contradict each other. A vehicle can't be both +Speedy and -Ponderous. Likewise you can't have a +Reliable -Lemon. Strengths and Weaknesses are sorted into contradicting pairs, where it applies in the chart below.

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT:

- ▷ **Autogun:** 1 Damage, Crash, Dogfighting, Discharge
- ▷ **Cannon:** 2 Damage, Dogfighting, Hold Off, Discharge
- ▷ **Seekers:** 3 Damage, 3 ammo, Guided, Hold Off
- ▷ **Sandthrower:** 2 Damage, Crash, Explosive
- ▷ **Shielding:** Discharge; You may Discharge your Shield to absorb an attack.
- ▷ **SWARM Missiles:** 1 Damage, 2 ammo, Area, Explosive, Hold Off

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT TAGS:

- ▷ **Area:** It hits everything within Crash range of its target.
- ▷ **Crash:** The crunch and smash of vehicles crashing into each other.
- ▷ **Dogfighting:** Maneuvering and dogfighting, jostling for the perfect shot.
- ▷ **Discharge:** If it's a Move, it's Discharged when it's used. If it's a weapon, Gear, vehicle equipment, or ship module, it's Discharged when a Move says. If it's Shields, it's Discharged when it absorbs Harm.
- ▷ **Explosive:** It explodes, destroying individuals and structures within its blast radius.
- ▷ **Guided:** You have Advantage when firing at a ship or vehicle.
- ▷ **Hold Off:** They're circling from far off, keeping their enemies at bay.
- ▷ **N Ammo:** It can be fired N times before you run out of ammo for it.
- ▷ **N Damage:** It does N Damage to ships and vehicles when it hits.

Ranges in Vehicle Combat

Ranges in vehicular combat and action act as descriptions of how you are driving and interacting with your adversaries as much as the distance between you. Below are more in-depth explanations for the Vehicular Combat Ranges.

AREA:

It hits everything within Crash range of its target. Everything within Crash range of the target means anything jostling with the vehicle, ramming it, or right next to it.

CRASH:

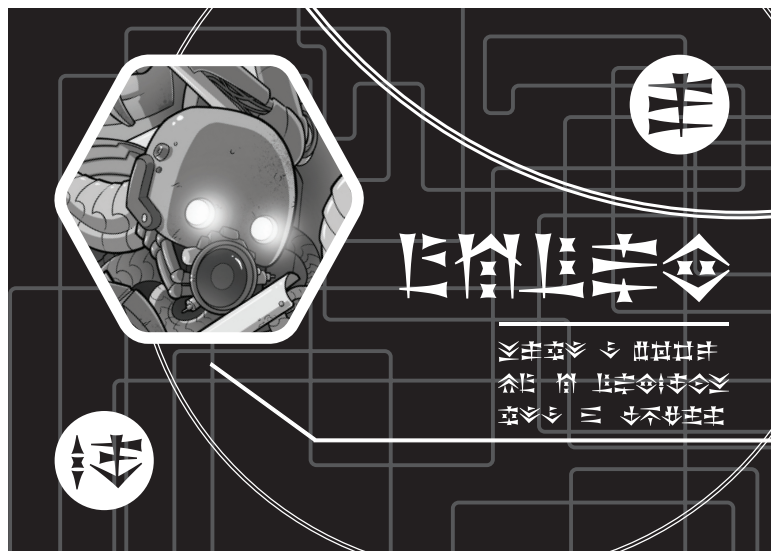
This is the vehicular version of up close and personal. The crunch and smash of vehicles crashing into each other. If you're jostling with a vehicle, or smashing into it, or if you can look the other driver in the eyes, you're in Crash range. Get up in their grill and make it personal.

DOGFIGHTING:

Maneuvering and dogfighting, jostling for the perfect shot. Many Fighters fight at dogfighting range, performing skillful acrobatic maneuvers, ducking and weaving through traffic or other obstacles. It's all about getting a clean lock on your target while avoiding their lock on you.

HOLD OFF:

They're circling from far off, keeping their enemies at bay. Hold Off is about hit-and-run tactics, harrying your opponent with long range strikes and keeping them guessing. Hold Off is also bombardment with flak or artillery fire before they close range.



TERMINATION ORDER 42069

Registered Name: Drone 42069

Species: AI/Cybernetic Organism Hybrid

OutStanding warrants: Illegally Unshackled AI. Priority 1 threat. terminate on sight.

Vehicles

SPEEDER

TAGS: 1 *HIT*, +*RESPONSIVE*, +*SPEEDY*, -*FRAGILE*, -*CRAMPED*, *COMPACT VEHICLE*, *SPECIALIST GEAR*

This is a small vehicle capable of only transporting 1 person. It's very fast and maneuverable. Examples: motorcycle, airboard, jetpack.

PASSENGER VEHICLE

TAGS: 1 *HIT*, +*RELIABLE*, +*INCONSPICUOUS*, +*SPACIOUS*, -*FRAGILE*

This is a vehicle capable of transporting up to 5 people. It's not particularly notable in any way. Civilian transports could be cars, boats, or similar vehicles.

ARMORED VEHICLE

TAGS: 2 *HITS*, +*RELIABLE* +*ARMORED*, +*EQUIPPED 1*, -*SLUGGISH*

This is an armored land or sea vehicle. Examples: armored boat, van, or bus, a tank, or a gunboat.

SHUTTLE

TAGS: 2 *HITS*, +*SPACIOUS*, +*ARMORED*, +*SPACEFARING*, -*PONDEROUS*

This is a small short range sublight ship designed to transport people around on a planet, to and from orbit, or within an asteroid field.

FIGHTER

TAGS: 3 *HITS*, +*RESPONSIVE*, +*SPEEDY*, +*SPACEFARING*, +*EQUIPPED 1*, -*CRAMPED*

This is a short range sublight ship with some armaments. It has been equipped either for bombing stationary targets or dogfighting with other Fighters. Examples: Jet Fighter, Space Fighter.

ARMATURE

TAGS: 3 *HITS*, +*RESPONSIVE*, +*SPACEFARING*, +*EQUIPPED 2*, -*PONDEROUS*, -*CRAMPED*

You have a sublight vehicle that resembles a giant humanoid or other alien species in shape and basic Movement. It's able to use various weapons similar to those Crew Members can use on their Loadouts, but instead of Harm, they do Damage.

ARMATURE DESCRIPTION

Choose up to 4:

Humanoid, Alien, Factory-Fresh, Old, Battered, Shiny, Ancient, Angular, Boxy, Sleek, Practical, Ostentatious, Scarred



YOUR SHIP

*All that is between you
and the infinite cold black
is a thin layer of material.*

The galaxy is big, and the empty spaces between the stars are vast. You need a way to travel between systems, to plot your own course and forge your destiny through the stars. You've got a ship. It may not be pretty, and it certainly has its flaws, but it's yours, your transport and your home out in the vast black.

Making your Ship

Making the ship is a group activity. Everyone should talk about the ship, what it looks like, what it's good at, and what it's bad at. Talk about how big it is, what its shape is, and what its internal layout may be. List some of the important rooms your Crew will spend time in. Some characters get to say something about the ship, their relationship to it, or its past. Other players may make suggestions about these aspects, but the nominated player gets to have the final say.

Choose a ship Playbook

There are four Ship playbooks that come with *Impulse Drive*. These Ship playbooks not only describe what technology your Ship may use, but also the kinds of adventures your Crew will get up to, what motivates them, and the kinds of trouble that will follow your Crew around the galaxy.

THE SMUGGLER

Page 127

You are a crew of misfits, scoundrels, and scalawags. You're also very broke. Not only do you not have two guilders to rub together, but you owe a lot of Currency to the wrong kind of Creditor. You'll need to take jobs, and earn big to keep the wolves at bay.

The Smuggler is a reasonably small frigate. It has either been designed for stealth, or is a retrofitted cargo ship. Smugglers excel at moving contraband between systems, but must struggle to stay one step ahead of their Debt and try to keep their ship running. The Smuggler is considered the default ship for *Impulse Drive*, and will give them the most faithful representation of the original vision for *Impulse Drive*. Touchstones: Serenity from *Firefly*, The Millennium Falcon from *Star Wars*.

THE PREDATOR

Page 134

You are a crew of dangerous Mercenaries with a ship. You take on dangerous and violent missions for money. But not everything is blaster fire and raining guilders. You have a Nemesis, and no matter what you do, there will be blood.

The Predator is about being dangerous individuals for hire whose reputation precedes them. The Predator may be kitted out to be a dangerous vessel in its own right and have a squadron of smaller vehicles to fight alongside it, or a squad of hardened soldiers to help in the wettest of work. But all this danger brings with it powerful and motivated enemies. You have a Nemesis who wants to destroy you, and will stop at nothing in the pursuit of that goal. Touchstones: *Dark Matter*.

THE VANGUARD

Page 141

You are semi-autonomous special agents acting on behalf of an organization. Your organization may be an espionage and intelligence agency, a corporation, a government, or a security and investigation agency. It may be a local organization looking to expand or one that's galactic in scope. Your Organization gives you missions, but leaves how you complete them entirely up to you. Blaze your Patron's purpose across the night-black ocean of space.

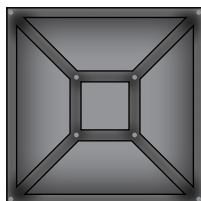
The Vanguard is probably the largest and most technologically advanced of the **Impulse Drive** Ship Playbooks. Your crew is a squad of elite (or expendable) operatives a patron Organization has financed. You have all the best toys, but they have come at the price of your freedom. You have a Duty to your Organization and their interests, and where they send you, you are obliged to go. Touchstones: **Mass Effect**, **Star Trek**.

THE MARAUDER

Page 149

Freebooters, corsairs, buccaneers, privateers. You may be called many things, but there's no hiding what you are: no good, low-down, dirty pirates. You prey on the weak, take what you want, and kill anyone who gets in your way. No one expects mercy from pirates, so don't expect any mercy in return. At least, that's your reputation. Will you live up to the name you have been given as violent, bloodthirsty criminals, or will you carve a more noble destiny?

The Marauder is probably one of the least impressive looking Ship Playbooks, but it hides a ruthless power. If you want to defy authority and power, operating outside the Law, then join a Marauder and go commit some serious crimes. How ruthless and bloodthirsty you actually are is up to your group. Are you good-hearted scalawags fighting an oppressive regime? Or are you murderous cutthroats taking what you can and giving nothing back? Touchstones: **Black Sails**, **Captain Harlock**.



Your Ship

Choose a name

Decide on a name for your Ship together. You'll end up saying your ship's name a lot, so make sure it's something evocative and pronounceable.

Choose a look

Select up to 5 descriptive terms to describe your ship from the list provided. Some of these may be entirely cosmetic, but others may affect how your characters move about, live in, or operate the ship. Elaborate on the descriptive terms you choose and how they influence the look and feel of your ship. If your group is interested, consider drawing it together. Drawing spaceships is fun!

Your Ship's Strain

Each Ship Playbook has its own custom Strain that describes a unique trouble or duty that is intrinsic to that ship. The Smuggler has Debt and their Creditor, a large amount of money owed to the wrong kinds of people. The Predator has a Nemesis and Feud, an ongoing bloody conflict with another group. The Vanguard has Duty and Rank, your Crew answers to an organization that finances you and sends you on missions. The Marauder has Crime and Infamy, you break the law because it is unjust, or just because you want to, and this alerts the authorities to your activity.

If your Ship's Strain is ever "solved" and no longer an issue, either write a new custom Ship Strain that interests the group, or discuss whether your game of Impulse Drive has reached a satisfying climax. Ending on a high note feels more satisfying than your game petering out due to sequelitis.

MAINTENANCE

Your ship may not be the most reliable junker in the cluster, but it will certainly be the most broken if you don't pay to regularly maintain it. Your Ship's Maintenance is tracked with a custom 4-Burn Season Fuse.

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. When the Maintenance Fuse is full, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due.

When you roll your Ship's Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due.

Some Moves call on you to roll+Maintenance. The Higher your Maintenance Fuse is, the worse the modifier you'll be rolling with. Consult the Maintenance section of your Ship for more details.

UPGRADING YOUR SHIP

When you roll your Ship's Payment Move, you may choose to Upgrade your Ship. this gives you 1 Upgrade point you may spend on new Modules, Bays, or Crew options. If you are at the maximum number of Modules, you must swap out an existing Module if you wish to fit in a new module.

Upgrades, Modules, and other Ship Advancements

Upgrades are growth for your Ship, but the primary way to acquire Upgrades is when you roll your Ship's Payment Move. Upgrades purchase new modules for your Ship, increasing its power and versatility. Each Ship has a maximum number of modules it may have installed that cannot be exceeded. When you want to add a new Module to your ship and you are already at the maximum allowed, you must uninstall an existing Module to install the new one.

You may also spend Upgrades to add new Bays for Cargo, Squadrons, or Vehicles. Advancements for Passengers allow you to carry passengers, and Crew Advancements add new NPC crew members as a resource and to interact with. New Bays, Passengers, and Crew sections of your playbook do not count towards your maximum Modules.

SHIP MODULE RANGE TAGS:

- ▷ **Area:** It hits everything within Crash range of its target.
- ▷ **Crash:** The crunch and smash of vehicles smashing into each other.
- ▷ **Dogfighting:** Maneuvering and dogfighting, jostling for the perfect shot.
- ▷ **Hold Off:** They're circling from far off, keeping their enemies at bay.
- ▷ **Broadside:** Heated battle extremely close, within 5 kilometers.
- ▷ **Engaged:** Blazing weapons and flashing ship shields, generally between 5 and 20 kilometers.
- ▷ **Cannonading:** Long range bombardment, between 20 and 50 kilometers.

OTHER SHIP MODULE TAGS:

- ▷ **Explosive:** It explodes, destroying individuals and structures within its blast radius.
- ▷ **Guided:** You have Advantage when firing at a ship or vehicle.
- ▷ **N Ammo:** It can be fired N times before you run out of ammo for it.
- ▷ **N Damage:** It does N Damage to ships and vehicles when it hits.
- ▷ **Penetrating:** Ignores Shielding.
- ▷ **Discharge:** If it's a Move, it's Discharged when it's used. If it's a weapon, Gear, vehicle equipment, or ship module, it's Discharged when a Move says. If it's Shields, it's Discharged when it absorbs Harm.

Some Ship Modules and Advancements appear in multiple Playbooks, but others only appear in specific playbooks, making them unique from the others. The Marauder can never have Stealth Systems, but the Smuggler can't get Overcharge, and will never be a combat powerhouse.

Moves & Your Ship

When you're using your Ship in a situation and one of the Ship's Moves do not apply, use the Universal Moves, but apply the triggers and consequences to your actions through the ship. Treat Moves while operating your Ship as you would in any other situation. Say what you do, and then see if a Move is triggered. If you are operating a Ship Weapon, use the Ship Combat ranges and apply Damage to your Ship and target instead of Harm to yourself.

Each Ship has Moves that are specific to the operation or maintenance of the Ship. Each Ship has a Drive Move based on the interstellar Drive the Ships use to navigate the vast distance between stars, with their own sets of consequences. Spot Repairs and Listing In Space are the same for all ships. Some Ships will have other moves based on Modules they have installed, like Silent Running for the Stealth Systems. All ships have a Payment Move. This Move is rolled at the end of an adventure, under the circumstances listed in the specific Move. The Smuggler has Payday, The Predator has Blood Money, The Vanguard has Mission Complete, and the Marauder has Pieces of Eight.

Not every adventure your Crew goes on needs to be targeted at your Ship's Payment Move. If your Crew has personal goals or is obligated to take on a task because of something they owe, you will still complete Cliffhanger at the end of an Episode. Just be sure to keep an eye on your Ship's Strain!

Your Ship





SHIP PLAYBOOKS

Your home, transport, and way of life, all rolled into one.

When you start your game of **Impulse Drive**, the Crew chooses a Ship playbook to describe and track their Ship. The Ship is not only a means of transportation across the galaxy, it also embodies your Crew's way of life and hints at the kinds of trouble that will chase them across the galaxy.



Smuggler Ship

You are a crew of misfits, scoundrels, and scalawags. You're also very broke. Not only do you not have two guilders to rub together, but you owe a lot of Currency to the wrong kind of Creditor. You'll need to take jobs and earn big to keep the wolves at bay.

Name:

Decide on a name together. Make it evocative and pronounceable.

Look:

Choose up to 5:

Dirty, Rusted, Grimy, Worn, Outdated, Stuttering, Dented, Rattling, Listing, Scorched, Ugly, Functional

Debt and your Creditor:

Your starting Debt is 20 Payments. Write this figure in your Ship's Payments panel. Describe your Creditor and what makes them dangerous. Your Creditor's Disposition starts at Neutral, 0.

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, Mark 1 Burn in the Debt Fuse. **When the Debt Fuse is full**, reduce your creditor's Disposition by 1, and your Creditor comes looking for you. The SM will tell you one of the following:

- » They make an example of a Crew Member and try to break a few limbs.
- » They insist you take a Contract for them, free of charge.
- » They attempt to seize an asset as collateral until you pay.
- » They sell your location to someone that wants to find you.

Smuggler Upgrades & Modules:

Your ship starts with 2 Upgrade points to buy your starting Modules and may have up to a maximum of 6 Modules installed.

When you buy an Upgrade for your ship, check an Upgrade box. **When all Upgrade boxes for a Module are filled**, that Module is installed in your ship.

If you are at the maximum number of Modules and gain a new Module, you must remove an existing Module and replace it with the new one. You don't get a discount on the new module if you trade in your old junk.

REDUNDANT SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Redundant systems and backups make your ship more hardy and reliable. Your ship may take 3 extra hits of superficial damage. Additionally, you have Advantage when making repairs in a fraught situation or when you roll Listing in Space.

SENSOR ARRAY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Advanced sensors allow your ship to quickly acquire and analyze massive amounts of data. You have Advantage to Scope It Out using your ship's sensors.

Additionally, **when you scan a ship or station**, you may ask one of the following questions instead of the standard Scope It Out questions:

- » What modules do they have?
- » Where are they weak?
- » Where are they strong?

AUTODOC SURGERY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

An Autodoc can treat simple injuries or wounds. Unsympathetic, rough Surgery in an Autodoc heals the "I'm hurt bad" Harm. For more unusual maladies, an expert is required.

ATTACHED TRANSPORT SHUTTLE

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 2 HITS, +SPACIOUS, +ARMORED, +SPACEFARING, -PONDEROUS

A basic model shuttle that attaches to the outer hull of your ship. The shuttle doesn't have any weapons or defenses of its own, but it's perfect for getting some passengers from one place to another.

STEALTH SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES, DISCHARGE

Emission tanks, heat sinks, and refractive plating make your ship invisible to other ships sensors, allowing your ship to hide or slip by unnoticed. **When you engage your Stealth Systems**, roll Silent Running.

TETHER

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE CRASH, DOGFIGHTING, HOLD OFF, BROADSIDE

The tether is either a harpoon with a physical line, or a tractor beam or field that you can use to lock proximity with an object outside your ship. When you need to connect to or reel in an external object, the tether allows you to do that. It can automatically connect to inert objects. It can be fired at ships, vehicles, and stations within its ranges using Firefight or Acquire Target.

SHIELDING

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, DISCHARGE

When you activate your Shielding, Discharge Shielding and ignore 1 instance of Damage dealt to your Ship.

MOUNTED TURRET

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, CRASH, DOGFIGHTING, BROADSIDE, DISCHARGE

Whether they fire solid projectiles, short bursts of cohesive light, or plasma bolts, Mounted Turrets are designed to fend off smaller vessels like Fighters or Armatures.

LASERS

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, DISCHARGE

Their versatility, low cost, and accuracy in vacuum make cohesive beam weapons like Lasers the most common and reliable ship-to-ship weapons in production.

MISSILES

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 2 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED

Missiles are self-propelled projectiles with explosive payloads. Their relatively slow speeds only make them effective within 20 kilometres, but their explosive capacity makes them dangerous in close range.

PLASMA CANNON

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 3 DAMAGE, ENGAGED

Plasma cannons fire boiling balls of superheated gas at high speeds. The volatility of the plasma makes it impossible to use at Broadside range, but a devastating weapon at Engaged range.

EMERGENCY OVERRIDES

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

When you ignore safety protocols to relay power from essential systems to immediately ready a Discharged Module while you are in open danger, roll+Maintenance. **On a 10+**, the lights flicker for a moment, ready a Discharged module. **On a 7-9**, safety protocols are implemented for a good reason, ready a Discharged Module and choose one.

- » It's hard on ship systems, mark 1 maintenance Fuse.
- » Something breaks, mark 1 Damage.
- » A power surge or overload injures you, take 2 Harm.

The difference between this Move and Recover is that Recover requires you to have a moment of safety to roll it. Emergency Overrides is for when you have to do it, despite the immediate danger.

The stakes also relate directly to the ship.

Bays & Passengers

You start with a Standard Cargo Bay and Hidden Compartments. You may purchase Passenger Quarters as a Ship Upgrade. This does not count towards your Modules installed.

STANDARD CARGO BAY:

Standard Cargo Bays are designed to store a bulk amount of goods. Your cargo will be visible to anyone who scans or searches your ship. You can put passengers in the Standard Cargo Bay, but they will be pretty uncomfortable.

HIDDEN COMPARTMENTS:

Hidden Compartments are perfect for stashing your illegal or valuable cargo where no one will find it. You can put passengers in Hidden Compartments, but they will be extremely uncomfortable.

When your ship is scanned or searched, anything in the Hidden Compartments will not be found.

PASSENGER QUARTERS:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Passenger Quarters are spaces designed to accommodate the basic needs of a group of passengers during transit. Although these quarters don't offer the height of luxury, they provide adequate places to live during their passengers' stay.

Draw your Ship:

If you want, you can draw a cool picture of your ship or its basic layout. List a few interesting or important locations on your ship where the Crew often interacts.

Maintenance

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. When the Maintenance Fuse is full, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due

When you roll your Ship Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due. **While Maintenance Past Due is checked**, all rolls involving the Ship and its systems are at Disadvantage.

Smuggler Ship Moves

DRILL-SPACE DRIVE

When you drill through Normal Space into Drill-Space to travel to a neighboring or local star system, roll+Alien. **On a 10+**, you get there with no complications. **On a 7-9**, you must waste precious time dropping out of Drill-Space in between the stars to let the drive cool down as events continue without you. The SM will mark an Episode Burn. **On a 6-**, you're out in the black for longer than anyone should be. The SM marks 1 Episode Burn, and each Crew Member suffers 1 Stress from cabin fever and low supplies by journey's end.

SILENT RUNNING

When you engage your ship's Stealth Systems to avoid detection, roll+Slick. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 1, but Discharge your Stealth Systems. You can't roll this Move again until you recharge your Stealth Systems.

- » You move past hostile scans or searches without detection.
- » You get the drop on an unsuspecting enemy.
- » You open up an opportunity to escape.

Any aggressive action while using your Stealth Systems reveals your location.

CONNECTED

When you reach out to someone related to your Background in your local area for information or a favor, roll+Disposition of the dominant Group in the area. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2. On a 6-, either you can't find anyone, or the SM chooses 1, and the person you find is probably going to screw you over first chance they get.

- » It'll take time to get what you want.
- » They want to spend some quality time with you.
- » It'll cost you something in return.
- » Your reputation will take a hit, you have Disadvantage going forward to roll Connected.

SHIP PAYMENT - PAYDAY

When your Crew successfully completes a Contract and collects their pay from the client or contact, roll+Contract Rating.

On a 12+, you make out like bandits, choose 4.

On a 10-11, you get a great deal, choose 3.

On a 7-9, you get the standard deal, choose 2.

On a 6-, it's a set up or raw deal. You may either walk away with a token payment and choose 1, or choose 2 and deal with an enemy that's found you and wants to settle things now.

- » You keep the wolves at bay. Reduce Debt by 1 and reset the Debt Fuse.
- » You pay the maintenance costs for your ship. Reset the Maintenance Fuse.
- » You get the Ship patched up. Remove all Damage from the Ship.
- » You purchase an Upgrade for your Ship.
- » You go shopping for a new Vehicle, roll Test Drive.
- » You fill your ship's cargo hold with lucrative goods for sale elsewhere, roll Lucrative Exports to determine what Cargo is available.
- » You divide the spoils for some walking around money, each Crew Member rolls on Hey Big Spender.

After you've made your selections and resolved any follow-up moves, you're broke again and need to find more work.

LISTING IN SPACE

When you try to limp back to the nearest spaceport while Spot Repairs is checked on Adrift, roll+Maintenance Fuse. On a 10+, you make it, hungry, cold and tired. On a 7-9, you make it, but the journey takes its toll, each Crew Member suffers 2 Stress. On a 6-, you're stuck. You either crash on a barely habitable planet or trigger a distress beacon and await rescue or capture.

We're Hit!

When your Ship takes Damage, mark of one of the options below for each point of Damage your Ship suffers.

When your ship takes Damage and there are no options to mark off, your Ship is destroyed.

When you perform spot repairs on your ship to patch over Damage, describe how you do it. If there are no immediate pressures and you have plenty of time, you do it with little complication. Apply Spot Repairs to one Damage option. If you are in immediate danger or time is limited, roll Keep Your Cool to complete the repairs, unless you have a Move better suited to the job.

When you roll your Ship Payment Move and choose to get your ship patched up, your ship spends a while getting all Damage repaired, and the SM will mark 1 Burn on an Episode Fuse.

SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE

Carbon scoring, melted plating, or scratched paint—Superficial Damage makes your ship look uglier, but it doesn't have any negative effects.

DIRECT HIT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

Smoke and sparks pour from flickering consoles, alarms bleat, the lights flicker, and the deck shudders under your feet. Any roll using a Ship System is at Disadvantage.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Direct Hit, you restore normal operations. Negate Disadvantage from Direct Hit.

HULL BREACH

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

A hole is blasted in the side of your ship. Atmosphere vents, and sections of the ship are depressurized—the SM will tell you which sections.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Hull Breach, you restore atmosphere to the vented sections, but you are dangerously low on Life Support. Any rolls that require physical exertion are at Disadvantage.

ADRIFT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

All systems are down. Power to your ship is gone. No sensors, no weapons, no shields, no light, no gravity. You are dead in the void and easy pickings for enemies. If you're currently in a planet's atmosphere or gravity well, prepare for a crash landing.

When you perform Spot Repairs on Adrift, you manage to restore power—barely. You must roll Listing in Space to get back to a spaceport.

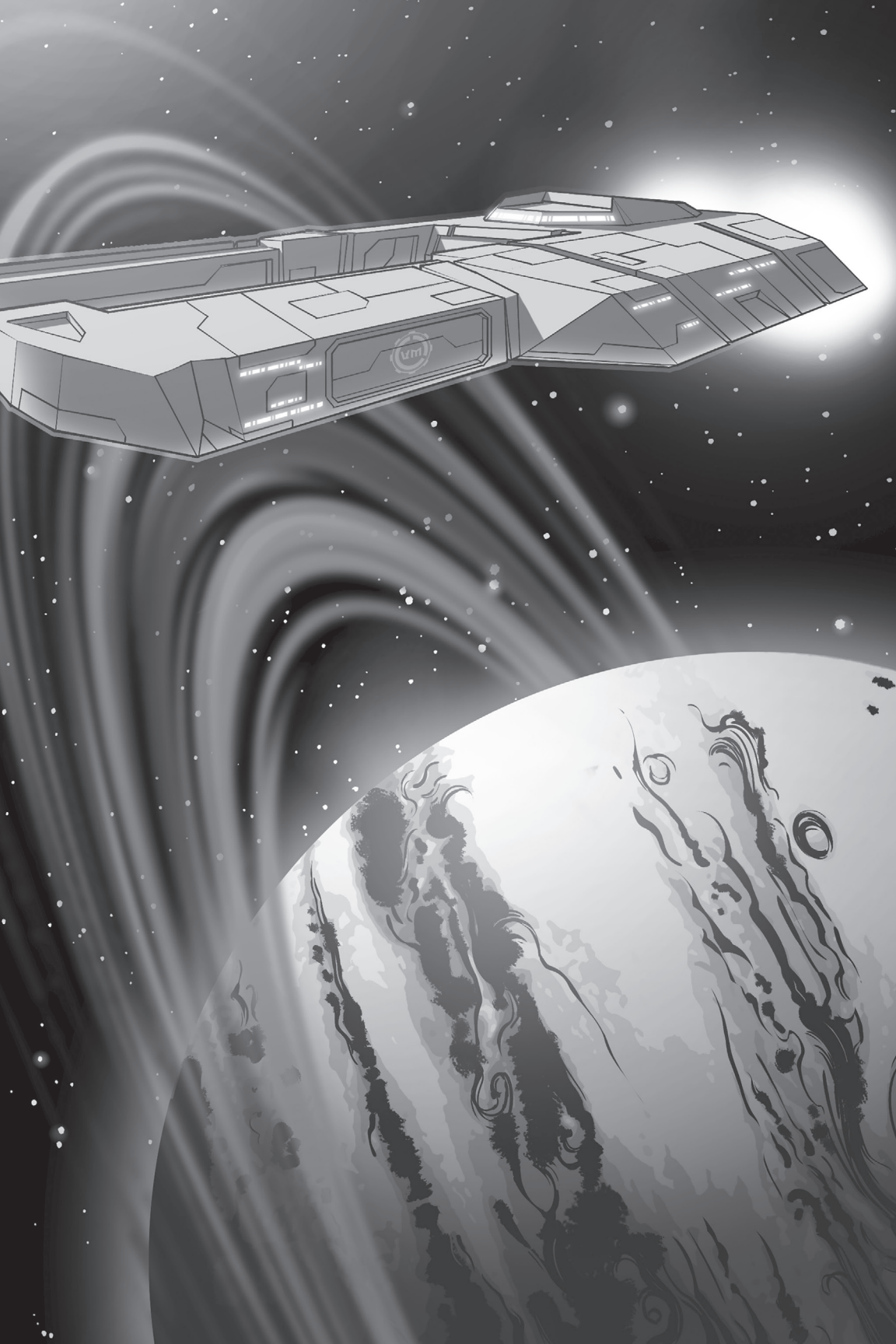
Maintenance

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. **When the Maintenance Fuse is full**, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due.

When you roll the Ship Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due.

MAINTENANCE PAST DUE

While Maintenance Past Due is checked, all rolls involving the Ship and its systems are at Disadvantage.



Predator Ship

You are a crew of dangerous Mercenaries with a ship. You take on dangerous and violent missions for money. But not everything is blaster fire and raining guilders. You have a Nemesis, and no matter what you do, there will be blood.

Name:

Decide on a name together. Make it evocative and pronounceable.

Look:

Choose up to 5:

Sleek, Chrome, Predatory, Humming, Smooth, Pristine, Functional, Military, Organic, Ancient, Worn, Dirty, Cramped, Spacious, Scorched, Ugly, Rattling

Nemesis & Feud

Your mercenary group has a Nemesis. Personal or professional, you have irreconcilable differences with another group. Whether your nemesis is a powerful corporation, a group of formidable warriors, or a dangerous invasion force, your nemesis knows who you are, and any encounter between the two of you is sure to break out into open violence.

Describe your Nemesis. The SM will detail them as a Hostile Group.

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain that interferes with your Nemesis, Mark 1 Burn in the Feud Fuse. When the Feud Fuse is full, a violent encounter with your Nemesis is imminent. The SM will tell you one of the following:

- » They make an example of a Crew Member and try to break a few limbs.
- » They come after a Friendly or Bonded NPC or group hard. An ally will die if you don't act.
- » They take control of territory or collateral you had claim to.

Predator Upgrades & Modules

Your ship starts with 2 Upgrade points to buy your starting Modules and may have up to a maximum of 6 Modules installed.

When you buy an Upgrade for your ship, check an Upgrade box. When all Upgrade boxes for a Module are filled, that Module is installed in your ship.

If you are at the maximum amount of Modules and gain a new Module, you must remove an existing Module and replace it with the new one. You don't get a discount on the new module if you trade in your old junk.

REDUNDANT SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Redundant systems and backups make your ship more hardy and reliable. Your ship may take 3 extra hits of superficial damage. Additionally, you have Advantage when making repairs in a fraught situation or when you roll Listing in Space.

TARGETING COMPUTER

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

The Targeting Computer houses a semi-self-aware Virtual Intelligence that is capable of calculating projectile trajectory and velocity to assist the ship's weapon targeting systems when engaging enemies. Describe the VI and choose between 1 and 2 personality traits from below.

Bloodthirsty, Pacifist, Posh, Crude, Indecisive, Curious, Thoughtful, Lonely

When you work with the targeting VI to engage enemies with your Ship Weapons, you have Advantage.

AUTODOC SURGERY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

An Autodoc can treat simple injuries or wounds. Unsympathetic, rough Surgery in an Autodoc heals the "I'm hurt bad" Harm. For more unusual maladies, an expert is required.

ARMORED VEHICLE

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 2 HITS, +RELIABLE +ARMORED, +EQUIPPED 1, -FLASHY -SLUGGISH

You have a small vehicle bay just big enough for the armored vehicle inside it. You may use it to get from point A to point B in hostile locations. The vehicle is of large, military design and is going to attract attention in Civilian areas.

OVERCHARGE

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, DISCHARGE

Overcharge allows you to disable safety protocols and fire your weapons more rapidly, delivering more Damage.

After you make an attack with your Ship weapons, you may choose to Discharge Overcharge and add 2 Damage before applying any modifiers like Discharging a weapon to double its Damage.

SHIELDING

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, DISCHARGE

When you activate your Shielding, Discharge Shielding and ignore 1 instance of Damage dealt to your Ship.

MOUNTED TURRET

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, CRASH, DOGFIGHTING, BROADSIDE, DISCHARGE

Whether they fire solid projectiles, short bursts of cohesive light, or plasma bolts, Mounted Turrets are designed to fend off smaller vessels like Fighters or Armatures.

LASERS

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, DISCHARGE

Their versatility, low cost, and accuracy in vacuum make cohesive beam weapons like Lasers the most common and reliable ship-to-ship weapons in production.

MISSILES

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 2 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED

Missiles are self-propelled projectiles with explosive payloads. Their relatively slow speeds only make them effective within 20 kilometres, but their explosive capacity makes them dangerous in close range.

PLASMA CANNON

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 3 DAMAGE, ENGAGED

Plasma cannons fire boiling balls of superheated gas at high speeds. The volatility of the plasma makes it impossible to use at Broadside range, but a devastating weapon at Engaged range.

RAILGUN

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES, 4 DAMAGE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, PENETRATING

Railguns propel small, high density slugs at extremely high velocity for devastating effect.

EMERGENCY OVERRIDES

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

When you ignore safety protocols to relay power from essential systems to immediately ready a Discharged Module while you are in open danger, roll+Maintenance. **On a 10+**, the lights flicker for a moment, ready a Discharged module. **On a 7-9**, safety protocols are implemented for a good reason, ready a Discharged Module and choose one.

- » It's hard on ship systems, mark 1 maintenance Fuse.
- » Something breaks, mark 1 Damage.
- » A power surge or overload injures you, take 2 Harm.

Bays & Crew:

You start with a Standard Cargo Bay, Squadron Bay, Barracks, and Rec Suite may be purchased later, each for the requisite amount of Upgrades. Bay and Crew upgrades don't count towards your number of Modules.

STANDARD CARGO BAY:

Standard Cargo Bays are designed to store a bulk amount of goods. Your cargo will be visible to anyone who scans or searches your ship. You can put passengers in the Standard Cargo Bay, but they will be pretty uncomfortable.

SQUADRON BAY:

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Your Squadron Bay has a suite of 8 Fighters and/or Armatures. Describe them. The Squadron Bay also includes a squad of pilots for your attack vehicles. Give names to a few notable squad members, and if one of the player characters isn't the squadron leader, create a leader NPC.

▷ **Pilots:** Disciplined, Trained, Brash, 10 Health, 1 Harm

BARRACKS:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

You have a barracks with a squad of well-trained soldiers. Describe them. Soldiers can be directed to provide support, attack a location or hold a location. Name a few notable members of the squad. If the squad isn't led by a PC, create a leader NPC.

▷ **Soldiers:** Disciplined, Trained, Cold, 30 Health, 2 Harm

REC SUITE:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

The Rec Suite is an onboard bar, exercise & sports arena, or holo-suite where your Crew may enjoy their off-duty hours while away from home. Any NPC Crew or squad gains the +Loyal tag, and Crew Members may spend their Downtime relaxing with another Crew Member and remove 2 Stress instead of 1.

Draw your Ship:

If you want, you can draw a cool picture of your ship or its basic layout. List a few interesting or important locations on your ship where the Crew often interacts.

Predator Ship Moves

SUBSPACE DRIVE

When you plot a course to a star system within Distant range and engage your subspace drive, roll+Alien. **On a 10+** you get there on time and without any complications. **On a 7-9**, you get there, but choose 1. **On a 6-**, you get there, but both.

- » Trouble has caught up with you, the SM will tell you what.
- » Your ship sustained 1 Damage during the trip.

CONNECTED

When you reach out to someone related to your Background in your local area for information or a favor, roll+Disposition of the dominant Group in the area. **On a 10+**, choose 1. **On a 7-9**, choose 2. **On a 6-**, either you can't find anyone, or the SM chooses 1, and the person you find is probably going to screw you over first chance they get.

- » It'll take time to get what you want.
- » They want to spend some quality time with you.
- » It'll cost you something in return.
- » Your reputation will take a hit, you have Disadvantage going forward to roll Connected.

SHIP PAYMENT - BLOOD MONEY

When your Crew successfully completes a Contract and collects their pay from the client or contact, roll+Contract Rating.

On a 12+, you make out like bandits, choose 4.

On a 10-11, you get a great deal, choose 3.

On a 7-9, you get the standard deal, choose 2.

On a 6-, it's a set up or raw deal. You may either walk away with a token payment and Choose 1, or choose 2 and deal with an enemy that's found you and wants to settle things now.

- » You put distance between your Ship and you Nemesis, reduce Feud by 1.
- » You pay the maintenance costs for your ship. Reset the Maintenance Fuse.
- » You get the Ship patched up. Remove all Damage from the Ship.
- » You purchase an Upgrade for your Ship.
- » You go shopping for a new Vehicle, roll Test Drive.
- » You fill your ship's cargo hold with lucrative goods for sale elsewhere, roll Lucrative Exports to determine what Cargo is available.
- » You divide the spoils for some walking around money, each Crew Member rolls on Hey Big Spender.

After you've made your selections and resolved any follow-up moves, you're broke again and need to find more work.

LISTING IN SPACE

When you try to limp back to the nearest spaceport while Spot Repairs is checked on Adrift, roll+Maintenance Fuse. **On a 10+**, you make it, hungry, cold and tired. **On a 7-9**, you make it, but the journey takes its toll, each Crew Member suffers 2 Stress. **On a 6-**, you're stuck. You either crash on a barely habitable planet or trigger a distress beacon and await rescue or capture.

We're Hit!

When your Ship takes Damage, mark of one of the options below for each point of Damage your Ship suffers.

When your ship takes Damage and there are no options to mark off, your Ship is destroyed.

When you perform spot repairs on your ship to patch over Damage, describe how you do it. If there are no immediate pressures and you have plenty of time, you do it with little complication. Apply Spot Repairs to one Damage option. If you are in immediate danger or time is limited, roll Keep Your Cool to complete the repairs, unless you have a Move better suited to the job.

When you roll your Ship Payment Move and choose to get your ship patched up, your ship spends a while getting all Damage repaired, and the SM will mark 1 Burn on an Episode Fuse.

SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE

Carbon scoring, melted plating, or scratched paint—Superficial Damage makes your ship look uglier, but it doesn't have any negative effects.

DIRECT HIT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

Smoke and sparks pour from flickering consoles, alarms bleat, the lights flicker, and the deck shudders under your feet. Any roll using a Ship System is at Disadvantage.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Direct Hit, you restore normal operations. Negate Disadvantage from Direct Hit.

HULL BREACH

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

A hole is blasted in the side of your ship. Atmosphere vents, and sections of the ship are depressurized—the SM will tell you which sections.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Hull Breach, you restore atmosphere to the vented sections, but you are dangerously low on Life Support. Any rolls that require physical exertion are at Disadvantage.

ADRIFT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

All systems are down. Power to your ship is gone. No sensors, no weapons, no shields, no light, no gravity. You are dead in the void and easy pickings for enemies. If you're currently in a planet's atmosphere or gravity well, prepare for a crash landing.

When you perform Spot Repairs on Adrift, you manage to restore power—barely. You must roll Listing in Space to get back to a spaceport.

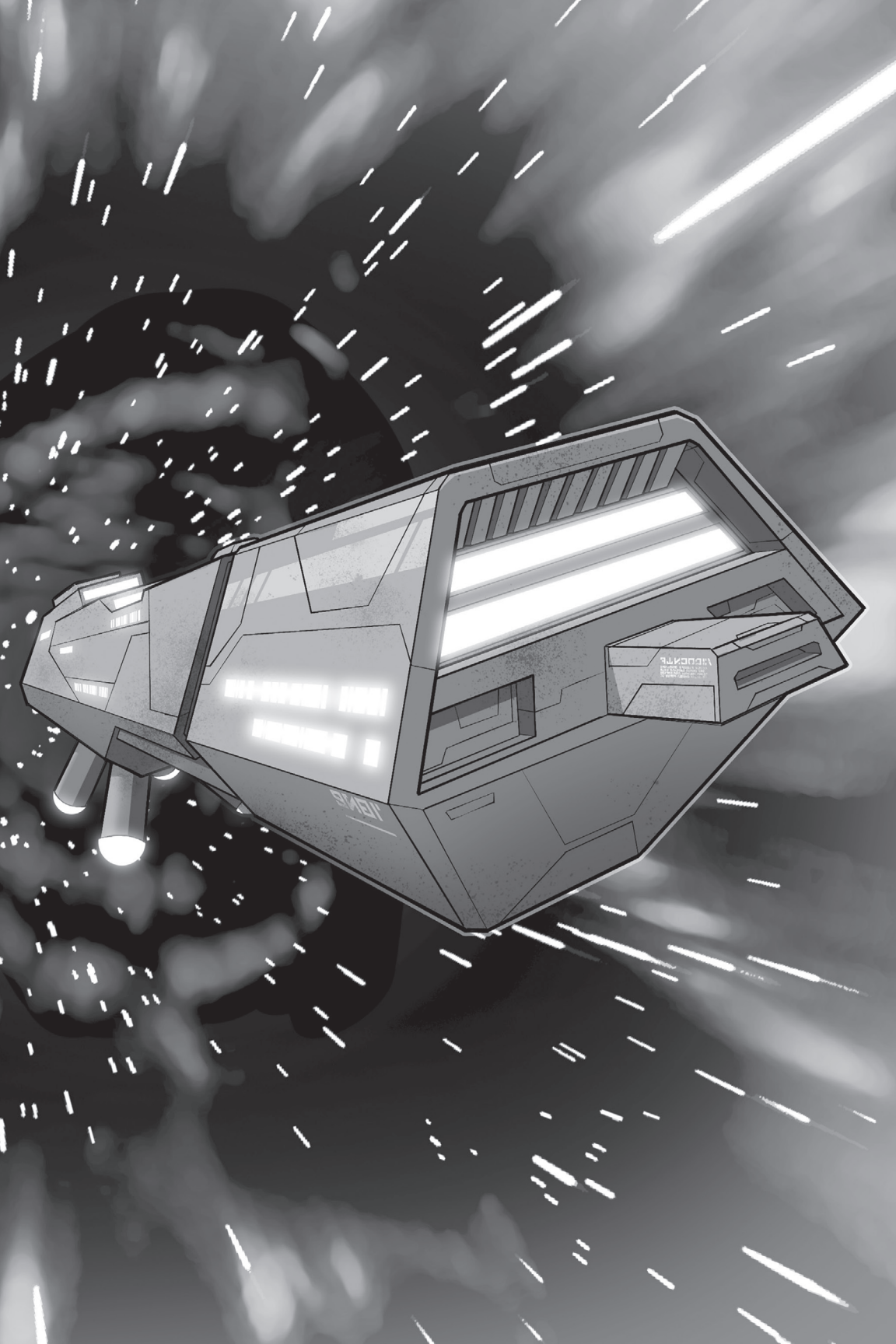
Maintenance

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. When the Maintenance Fuse is full, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due

When you roll the Ship Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due.

MAINTENANCE PAST DUE

While Maintenance Past Due is checked, all rolls involving the Ship and its systems are at Disadvantage.



Vanguard Ship

You are semi-autonomous special agents acting on behalf of an organization. Your organization may be an espionage and intelligence agency, a corporation, a government, or a security and investigation agency. It may be a local organization looking to expand or one that's galactic in scope. Your Organization gives you missions, but leaves how you complete them entirely up to you. Blaze your Patron's purpose across the night-black ocean of space.

Name:

Decide on a name together. Make it evocative and pronounceable.

Look:

Choose up to 5:

Sleek, Chrome, Elegant, Murmuring, Smooth, Sharp, Functional, Military, Advanced, Experimental, Prototype, Spacious

Duty & Rank

Your Organization commands you, and you have a duty to them. As a group of semi-autonomous Specialists, your Crew will be given missions by your Organization that furthers their agenda, purpose, or duty.

Describe your Organization and their purpose. The SM will detail them as a Bonded (+2) Group. Your Crew starts at Rank -1.

When the Duty Clock is full, increase your Rank by 1, to a maximum Rank of +3. **When you fail a mission set by your Organization**, the SM will tell you one of the following:

- » Your failure has affected many in your Organization, and your reputation takes a hit. Reduce your Organization's Disposition by 1.
- » Your failure goes on your permanent record. Reduce Duty by 1. If your Duty is at 0, reduce Rank by 1 to a minimum rank of -1.

Vanguard Upgrades & Modules

Your ship starts with 2 Upgrade points to buy your starting Modules and may have up to a maximum of 6 Modules installed.

When you buy an Upgrade for your ship, check an Upgrade box. **When all Upgrade boxes for a Module are filled**, that Module is installed in your ship.

If you are at the maximum amount of Modules and gain a new Module, you must remove an existing Module and replace it with the new one. You don't get a discount on the new module if you trade in your old junk.

REDUNDANT SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Redundant systems and backups make your ship more hardy and reliable. Your ship may take 3 extra hits of superficial damage. Additionally, you have Advantage when making repairs in a fraught situation or when you roll Listing in Space.

SENSOR ARRAY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Advanced sensors allow your ship to quickly acquire and analyze massive amounts of data. You have Advantage to Scope It Out using your ship's sensors. Additionally, **when you scan a ship or station**, you may ask one of the following questions instead of the standard Scope It Out questions:

- » What modules do they have?
- » Where are they weak?
- » Where are they strong?

AUTODOC SURGERY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

An Autodoc can treat simple injuries or wounds. Unsympathetic, rough Surgery in an Autodoc heals the "I'm hurt bad" Harm. For more unusual maladies, an expert is required.

RESEARCH LAB

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

A high-tech lab equipped with advanced equipment and databanks for studying unusual phenomena and experimenting with exotic materials. **When trying to solve a scientific mystery or conundrum in the Research Lab** you have Advantage.

In addition, **if you use the Research Lab to spend time working on a Personal Project that involves advanced or experimental science**, mark an extra Tick.

ARMORY

TAGS: 2 UPGRADES

An installed Armory not only accommodates the Crew's Gear, but is equipped with an advanced matter configuration system that can replicate Gear based on blueprints. If one Crew Member owns a piece of Basic, Advanced, Specialist, or Illegal Gear, anyone may choose it in their Loadout.

STEALTH SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES, DISCHARGE

Emission tanks, heat sinks, and refractive plating make your ship invisible to other ships' sensors, allowing your ship to hide or slip by unnoticed. **When you engage your Stealth Systems**, roll Silent Running.

TARGETING COMPUTER

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

The Targeting Computer houses a semi-self-aware Virtual Intelligence that is capable of calculating projectile trajectory and velocity to assist the ship's weapon targeting systems when engaging enemies. Describe the VI and choose between 1 and 2 personality traits from below.

Bloodthirsty, Pacifist, Posh, Crude, Indecisive, Curious, Thoughtful, Lonely

When you work with the targeting VI to engage enemies with your Ship Weapons, you have Advantage.

SHIELDING

TAGS: 1 *UPGRADE, DISCHARGE*

When you activate your **Shielding**, **Discharge Shielding** and ignore 1 instance of **Damage** dealt to your Ship.

LASERS

TAGS: 1 *UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, DISCHARGE.*

Their versatility, low cost, and accuracy in vacuum make cohesive beam weapons like Lasers the most common and reliable ship-to-ship weapons in production.

MISSILES

TAGS: 1 *UPGRADE, 2 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED*

Missiles are self-propelled projectiles with explosive payloads. Their relatively slow speeds only make them effective within 20 kilometres, but their explosive capacity makes them dangerous in close range.

PLASMA CANNON

TAGS: 1 *UPGRADE, 3 DAMAGE, ENGAGED*

Plasma cannons fire boiling balls of superheated gas at high speeds. The volatility of the plasma makes it impossible to use at Broadside range, but a devastating weapon at Engaged range.

RAILGUN

TAGS: 3 *UPGRADES, 4 DAMAGE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, PENETRATING*

Railguns propel small, high density slugs at extremely high velocity for devastating effect.

OVERCHARGE

TAGS: 1 *UPGRADE, DISCHARGE*

Overcharge allows you to disable safety protocols and fire your weapons more rapidly, delivering more **Damage**.

After you make an attack with your **Ship weapons**, you may choose to **Discharge Overcharge** and add 2 **Damage** before applying any modifiers like **Discharging** a weapon to double its **Damage**.

Bays & Crew:

You start with a Vehicle Bay and Crew Quarters. You may purchase a Squadron Bay and Barracks later for the requisite amount of Upgrades. Bay and Crew upgrades don't count towards your number of Modules.

VEHICLE BAY:

Your vehicle Bay starts with 1 of the following Vehicles, and you may store Vehicles you gain later in your Vehicle Bay. You may have more than 1 of each Vehicle type.

- ▷ **Speeder:** 1 Hit, +Responsive, +Speedy, -Fragile, -Cramped
- ▷ **Passenger Vehicle:** 1 Hit, +Reliable, +Inconspicuous, +Spacious, -Fragile
- ▷ **Military Vehicle:** 2 Hits, +Reliable +Armored, +Equipped 1, -Sluggish
- ▷ **Shuttle:** 2 Hits, +Spacious, +Armored, +Spacefaring, -Ponderous

SQUADRON BAY:

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Your Squadron Bay has a suite of 8 Fighters and/or Armatures. Describe them. The Squadron Bay also includes a squad of pilots for your attack vehicles. Give names to a few notable squad members, and if one of the player characters isn't the squadron leader, create a leader NPC.

- ▷ **Pilots:** Disciplined, Trained, Brash, 10 Health, 1 Harm

CREW QUARTERS:

You have a section of the ship dedicated to the living and recreational requirements for 15 to 20 crew members who operate and maintain the ship. Describe them.

- ▷ **Crew:** Disciplined, Trained, Naive, 20 Health, 1 Harm

BARRACKS:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

You have a barracks with a squad of well-trained soldiers. Describe them. Soldiers can be directed to provide support, attack a location or hold a location. Name a few notable members of the squad. If the squad isn't led by a PC, create a leader NPC.

- ▷ **Soldiers:** Disciplined, Trained, Cold, 30 Health, 2 Harm

Draw your Ship:

If you want, you can draw a cool picture of your ship or its basic layout. List a few interesting or important locations on your ship where the Crew often interacts.

Vanguard Ship Moves

HYPERDRIVE

When you power up your Hyperdrive to jump to a Remote or closer star system, roll+Alien. On a 10+, you travel with no complications. On a 7-9, you get there, but it's a rough ride. Choose 1. On a 6-, you get there, but the SM chooses 2:

- » You have to maneuver and work the drive hard to avoid the worst hyperspace turbulence, Mark 1 Maintenance.
- » You don't come out exactly where you expected.
- » Your ship sustained 1 Damage, Penetrating during the trip.
- » You've picked up an unlikely passenger.
- » The SM asks each Crew Member a question from The Abyss Stares Back.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

When you give your subordinate(s) a command they are disinclined to follow, or that puts them into direct danger, roll+Stalwart.

IF THEY ARE AN NPC:

On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2:

- » They will do their duty to the best of their ability.
- » They don't get hurt or killed.
- » You don't have to make an example of someone.
- » You won't have to pay for it later.

IF THEY ARE A PC:

On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- » They mark XP if they do it.
- » They have to Keep Their Cool to disobey your Order.
- » They have Advantage going forward to follow your Order.

SILENT RUNNING

When you engage your ship's Stealth Systems to avoid detection, roll+Slick. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 1, but Discharge your Stealth Systems. You can't roll this Move again until you recharge your Stealth Systems.

- » You move past hostile scans or searches without detection.
- » You get the drop on an unsuspecting enemy.
- » You open up an opportunity to escape.

Any aggressive action while using your Stealth Systems reveals your location.

SHIP PAYMENT - MISSION COMPLETE

When your Crew successfully completes a Mission and is debriefed by their superiors, roll+Rank.

On a 12+, your superiors are extremely impressed, choose 4.

On a 10-11, you are commended for your service, choose 3.

On a 7-9, your work is recognized, choose 2.

On a 6-, Your failures are focused on, or someone else steals your glory. Choose 1, or choose 2 and a confrontation with a rival within your Organization.

- » You make the right connections within your Organization, increase Duty by 1.
- » You bring your ship in for service. Reset the Maintenance Fuse.
- » You get the Ship patched up. Remove all Damage from the Ship.
- » You requisition an Upgrade for your Ship.
- » You requisition a new Vehicle, roll Test Drive.
- » You collect your Salary and have off-duty time to spend it, each Crew Member rolls on Hey Big Spender.

After you've made your selections and resolved any follow-up moves, You've used up your off-duty time, and another mission awaits.

LISTING IN SPACE

When you try to limp back to the nearest spaceport while Spot Repairs is checked on Adrift, roll+Maintenance Fuse. **On a 10+**, you make it, hungry, cold and tired. **On a 7-9**, you make it, but the journey takes its toll, each Crew Member suffers 2 Stress. **On a 6-**, you're stuck. You either crash on a barely habitable planet or trigger a distress beacon and await rescue or capture.

We're Hit!

When your Ship takes Damage, mark of one of the options below for each point of Damage your Ship suffers.

When your ship takes Damage and there are no options to mark off, your Ship is destroyed.

When you perform spot repairs on your ship to patch over Damage, describe how you do it. If there are no immediate pressures and you have plenty of time, you do it with little complication. Apply Spot Repairs to one Damage option. If you are in immediate danger or time is limited, roll Keep Your Cool to complete the repairs, unless you have a Move better suited to the job.

When you roll your Ship Payment Move and choose to get your ship patched up, your ship spends a while getting all Damage repaired, and the SM will mark 1 Burn on an Episode Fuse.

SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE

Carbon scoring, melted plating, or scratched paint—Superficial Damage makes your ship look uglier, but it doesn't have any negative effects.

DIRECT HIT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

Smoke and sparks pour from flickering consoles, alarms bleat, the lights flicker, and the deck shudders under your feet. Any roll using a Ship System is at Disadvantage.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Direct Hit, you restore normal operations. Negate Disadvantage from Direct Hit.

HULL BREACH

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

A hole is blasted in the side of your ship. Atmosphere vents, and sections of the ship are depressurized—the SM will tell you which sections.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Hull Breach, you restore atmosphere to the vented sections, but you are dangerously low on Life Support. Any rolls that require physical exertion are at Disadvantage.

ADRIFT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

All systems are down. Power to your ship is gone. No sensors, no weapons, no shields, no light, no gravity. You are dead in the void and easy pickings for enemies. If you're currently in a planet's atmosphere or gravity well, prepare for a crash landing.

When you perform Spot Repairs on Adrift, you manage to restore power—barely. You must roll Listing in Space to get back to a spaceport.

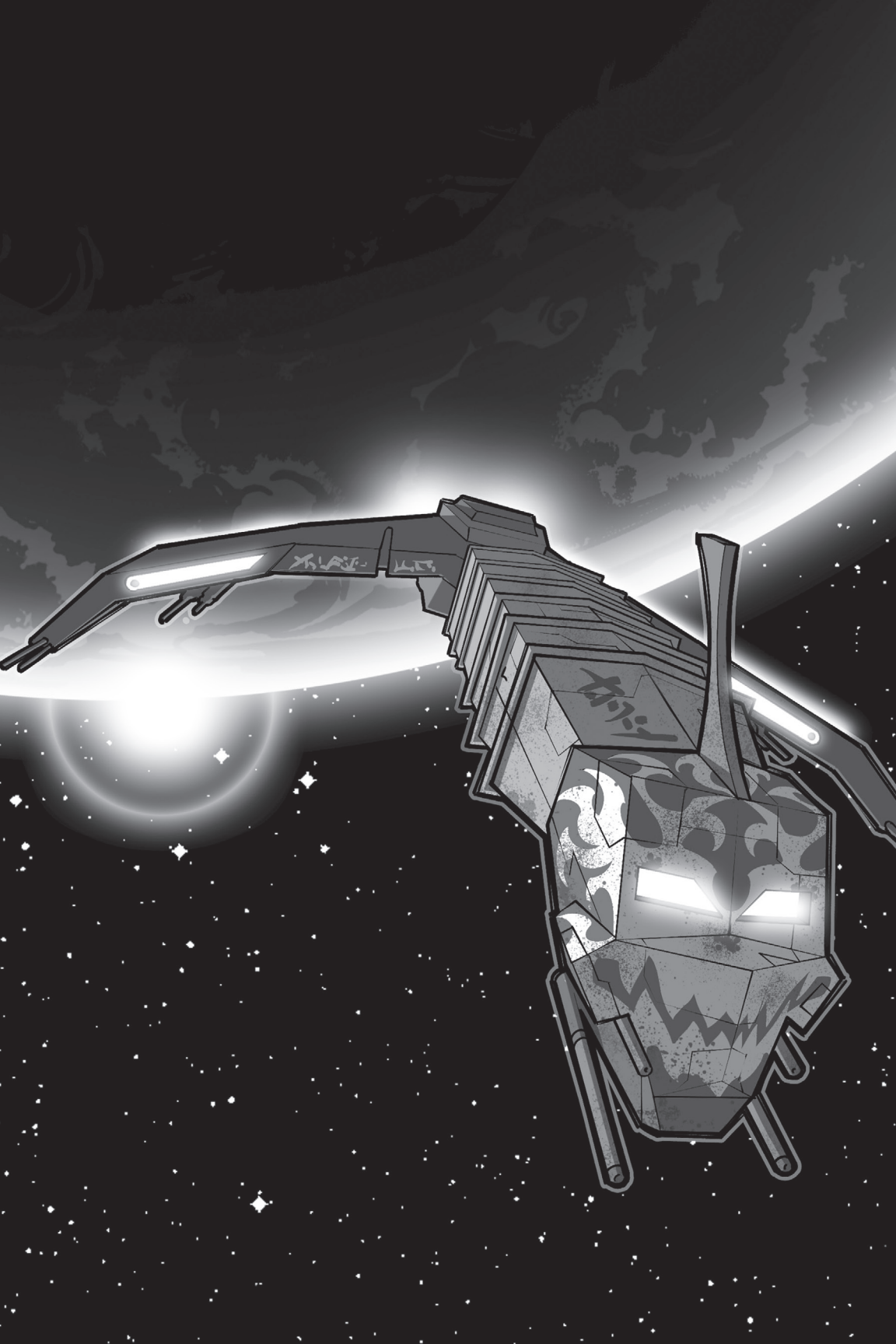
Maintenance

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. When the Maintenance Fuse is full, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due

When you roll the Ship Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due.

MAINTENANCE PAST DUE

While Maintenance Past Due is checked, all rolls involving the Ship and its systems are at Disadvantage.



Marauder Ship

Freebooters, corsairs, buccaneers, privateers. You may be called many things, but there's no hiding what you are: no good, low-down, dirty pirates. You prey on the weak, take what you want, and kill anyone who gets in your way. No one expects mercy from pirates, so don't expect any mercy in return.

At least, that's your reputation. Will you live up to the name you have been given as violent, bloodthirsty criminals, or will you carve a more noble destiny?

Name:

Decide on a name together. Make it evocative and pronounceable.

Look:

Choose up to 5:

Brutal, Predatory, Spikes, Skulls, Dangerous, Mismatched, Intimidating, Piecemeal, Ugly, Vicious, Rusty, Black, Functional, Cramped, Rattling, Groaning

Crime & Infamy

As a pirate ship, you are infamous for breaking the law and attacking the innocent, whether that reputation is justified or not. As such, you are wanted by a powerful agency of galactic law.

Describe the nature of your Crew's criminal reputation, and why civilized space hates and fears you. **When you complete a Contract or Episode Strain that brings your Crimes to the attention of others**, mark the Crime Fuse.

When you complete a Contract or Episode Strain that reinforces your criminal Reputation, increase your Crime Fuse by 1. **When your Crime Fuse is full**, erase all checks, and mark Infamous.

When you roll The Crew Is Back In Town while Infamous is checked, you have Disadvantage.

Upgrades & Modules:

Your ship starts with 2 Upgrade points to buy your starting Modules and may have up to a maximum of 6 Modules installed.

When you buy an Upgrade for your ship, check an Upgrade box. **When all Upgrade boxes for a Module are filled**, that Module is installed in your ship.

If you are at the maximum amount of Modules and gain a new Module, you must remove an existing Module and replace it with the new one. You don't get a discount on the new module if you trade in your old junk.

REDUNDANT SYSTEMS

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES

Redundant systems and backups make your ship more hardy and reliable. Your ship may take 3 extra hits of superficial damage. Additionally, you have Advantage when making repairs in a fraught situation or when you roll Listing in Space.

SENSOR ARRAY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Advanced sensors allow your ship to quickly acquire and analyze massive amounts of data. You have Advantage to Scope It Out using your ship's sensors. Additionally, **when you scan a ship or station**, you may ask one of the following questions instead of the standard Scope It Out questions:

- » What modules do they have?
- » Where are they weak?
- » Where are they strong?

AUTODOC SURGERY

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

An Autodoc can treat simple injuries or wounds. Unsympathetic, rough Surgery in an Autodoc heals the "I'm hurt bad" Harm. For more unusual maladies, an expert is required.

TETHER

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE CRASH, DOGFIGHTING, HOLD OFF, BROADSIDE

The tether is either a harpoon with a physical line, or a tractor beam or field that you can use to lock proximity with an object outside your ship. **When you need to connect to or reel in an external object**, the tether allows you to do that. It can automatically connect to inert objects. It can be fired at ships, vehicles, and stations within its ranges using Firefight or Acquire Target.

MOUNTED TURRET

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, CRASH, DOGFIGHTING, BROADSIDE, DISCHARGE

Whether they fire solid projectiles, short bursts of cohesive light, or plasma bolts, Mounted Turrets are designed to fend off smaller vessels like Fighters or Armatures.

TARGETING COMPUTER

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

The Targeting Computer houses a semi-self-aware Virtual Intelligence that is capable of calculating projectile trajectory and velocity to assist the ship's weapon targeting systems when engaging enemies. Describe the VI and choose between 1 and 2 personality traits from below.

Bloodthirsty, Pacifist, Posh, Crude, Indecisive, Curious, Thoughtful, Lonely

When you work with the targeting VI to engage enemies with your Ship Weapons, you have Advantage.

SHIELDING

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, DISCHARGE

When you activate your Shielding, Discharge Shielding and ignore 1 instance of Damage dealt to your Ship.

LASERS

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 1 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, DISCHARGE

Their versatility, low cost, and accuracy in vacuum make cohesive beam weapons like Lasers the most common and reliable ship-to-ship weapons in production.

MISSILES

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, 2 DAMAGE, BROADSIDE, ENGAGED

Missiles are self-propelled projectiles with explosive payloads. Their relatively slow speeds only make them effective within 20 kilometres, but their explosive capacity makes them dangerous in close range.

RAILGUN

TAGS: 3 UPGRADES, 4 DAMAGE, ENGAGED, CANNONADING, PENETRATING

Railguns propel small, high density slugs at extremely high velocity for devastating effect.

OVERCHARGE

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE, DISCHARGE

Overcharge allows you to disable safety protocols and fire your weapons more rapidly, delivering more Damage.

After you make an attack with your Ship weapons, you may choose to Discharge Overcharge and add 2 Damage before applying any modifiers like Discharging a weapon to double its Damage.

Bays & Crew:

You start with a Standard Cargo Bay and Crew Quarters. You may purchase Hidden Compartments and a Brig later for the requisite amount of Upgrades. Bay and Crew upgrades don't count towards your number of Modules.

STANDARD CARGO BAY:

Standard Cargo Bays are designed to store a bulk amount of goods. Your cargo will be visible to anyone who scans or searches your ship. You can put passengers in the Standard Cargo Bay, but they will be pretty uncomfortable.

HIDDEN COMPARTMENTS:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Hidden Compartments are perfect for stashing your illegal or valuable cargo where no one will find it. You can put passengers in Hidden Compartments, but they will be extremely uncomfortable.

When your ship is scanned or searched, anything in the Hidden Compartments will not be found.

CREW QUARTERS:

You have a section of the ship dedicated to the living and recreational requirements for 15 to 20 crew members who operate and maintain the ship. Describe them.

▷ **Crew:** Disciplined, Trained, Naive, 20 Health, 1 Harm

BRIG:

TAGS: 1 UPGRADE

Your Brig can securely hold any prisoners you have. It's exceptionally cramped and uncomfortable, but its inhabitants will live—for a while, at least.

Draw your Ship:

If you want, you can draw a cool picture of your ship or its basic layout. List a few interesting or important locations on your ship where the Crew often interacts.

Marauder Ship Moves

FOLD-SPACE DRIVE

When you activate the Fold-Space Drive and travel to an Extreme or closer system, roll+Alien. On a 10+, you made it out! Choose 1. On a 7-9, that was a very close call, choose 2:

- » The ship has been invaded, infested, or infected by something.
- » It was hard on the ship, your ship suffers 1 Damage, Penetrating.
- » You work your ship's systems harder than you should, mark 1 Maintenance.
- » Everyone is troubled by hallucinations, visions, or strange dreams. All Crew Members roll Into the Abyss.

CONNECTED

When you reach out to someone related to your Background in your local area for information or a favor, roll+Disposition of the dominant Group in the area. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2. On a 6-, either you can't find anyone, or the SM chooses 1, and the person you find is probably going to screw you over first chance they get.

- » It'll take time to get what you want.
- » They want to spend some quality time with you.
- » It'll cost you something in return.
- » Your reputation will take a hit, you have Disadvantage going forward to roll Connected.

SHIP PAYMENT - PIECES OF EIGHT

When your Crew successfully completes a Contract or a Raid and sells their spoils or collects their pay from the client or contact, roll+Contract Rating.

On a 12+, you make out like bandits, choose 4.

On a 10-11, you get a great deal, choose 3.

On a 7-9, you get the standard deal, choose 2.

On a 6-, it's a set up or raw deal. You may either walk away with a token payment and Choose 1, or choose 2 and a Crew Member has been put in lockup for an inconvenient length of time, advance an Episode Strain by 1.

- » You pay fines or frame someone else for your crimes. Uncheck Infamous and reset the Crime Fuse.
- » You pay the maintenance costs for your ship. Reset the Maintenance Fuse.
- » You get the Ship patched up. Remove all Damage from the Ship.
- » You purchase an Upgrade for your Ship.
- » You go shopping for a new Vehicle, roll Test Drive.
- » You fill your ship's cargo hold with lucrative goods for sale elsewhere, roll Lucrative Exports to determine what Cargo is available.
- » You divide the spoils for some walking around money, each crew member rolls on Hey Big Spender.

After you've made your selections and resolved any follow-up moves, you're broke again and need to find more prey.

LISTING IN SPACE

When you try to limp back to the nearest spaceport while Spot Repairs is checked on Adrift, roll+Maintenance Fuse. On a 10+, you make it, hungry, cold and tired. On a 7-9, you make it, but the journey takes its toll, each Crew Member suffers 2 Stress. On a 6-, you're stuck. You either crash on a barely habitable planet or trigger a distress beacon and await rescue or capture.

We're Hit!

When your Ship takes Damage, mark of one of the options below for each point of Damage your Ship suffers.

When your ship takes Damage and there are no options to mark off, your Ship is destroyed.

When you perform spot repairs on your ship to patch over Damage, describe how you do it. If there are no immediate pressures and you have plenty of time, you do it with little complication. Apply Spot Repairs to one Damage option. If you are in immediate danger or time is limited, roll Keep Your Cool to complete the repairs, unless you have a Move better suited to the job.

When you roll your Ship Payment Move and choose to get your ship patched up, your ship spends a while getting all Damage repaired, and the SM will mark 1 Burn on an Episode Fuse.

SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE

Carbon scoring, melted plating, or scratched paint—Superficial Damage makes your ship look uglier, but it doesn't have any negative effects.

DIRECT HIT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

Smoke and sparks pour from flickering consoles, alarms bleat, the lights flicker, and the deck shudders under your feet. Any roll using a Ship System is at Disadvantage.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Direct Hit, you restore normal operations. Negate Disadvantage from Direct Hit.

HULL BREACH

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

A hole is blasted in the side of your ship. Atmosphere vents, and sections of the ship are depressurized—the SM will tell you which sections.

When you perform Spot Repairs on a Hull Breach, you restore atmosphere to the vented sections, but you are dangerously low on Life Support. Any rolls that require physical exertion are at Disadvantage.

ADRIFT

TAGS: SPOT REPAIRS

All systems are down. Power to your ship is gone. No sensors, no weapons, no shields, no light, no gravity. You are dead in the void and easy pickings for enemies. If you're currently in a planet's atmosphere or gravity well, prepare for a crash landing.

When you perform Spot Repairs on Adrift, you manage to restore power—barely. You must roll Listing in Space to get back to a spaceport.

Maintenance

When you complete a Contract or an Episode Strain, mark 1 Burn in the Maintenance Fuse. When the Maintenance Fuse is full, clear it and check Maintenance Past Due

When you roll the Ship Payment Move and choose Pay the Bills, reset the Maintenance Fuse and clear Maintenance Past Due.

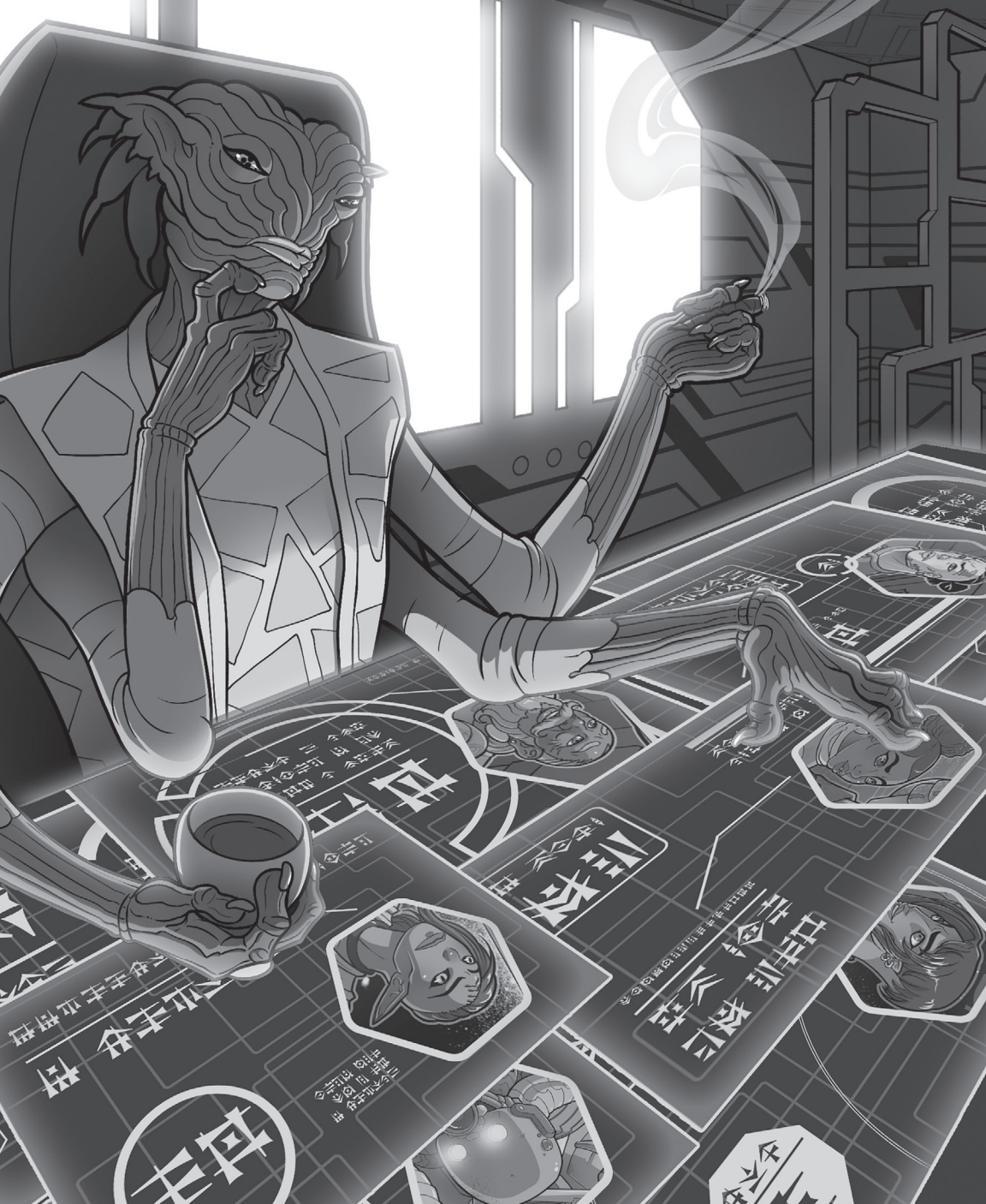
MAINTENANCE PAST DUE

While Maintenance Past Due is checked, all rolls involving the Ship and its systems are at Disadvantage.

THE SPACE MASTER

Mouthpiece of the universe, a hurricane of threat and drama.

The player assuming the role of Space Master has the task of running everything that isn't a Crew Member or the Crew's Ship in the game, which sounds like a big job. Don't panic! This section contains all the rules you need to understand and perform your role.



Running Impulse Drive: A Framework

The SM depends on three key components while running a game of *Impulse Drive*: the SM's Agenda, Principles, and Calls. The Agenda is what you set out to do when you sit down at the table. The Principles are the guides that keep you focused on that Agenda.

The SM's Calls are the concrete, moment-to-moment things you do to move the game forward. You'll make Calls when players miss their rolls, when the rules call for it, and whenever the players look to you to see what happens. Your Calls keep the Fiction consistent and the game's action moving forward.

How to be the Space Master

When you gather with your group to play *Impulse Drive*, you do these things:

- » Describe the situation.
- » Follow the rules.
- » Make Calls.
- » Exploit your Prep.

The players have the easy part. They just say what their characters think, say and do, and maintain their character and ship sheets. You have a little more to do. You say everything else. That sounds like a lot, but what exactly is it?

First and foremost, you describe the immediate situation around the players at all times. This is how you start a session, how you get things rolling after a snack break, get back on track after a great joke: tell them what the situation is in concrete terms.

Use detail and senses to draw them in. The situation isn't just a security guard shouting at you, it's an overweight security guard waving at you ineffectually, shouting out at you to stop between wheezing breaths. You can leverage a lack of information, too. The hum of a weapon charging and shuffling feet, for instance.

The situation around them is rarely "everything's great, nothing to worry about." They're dangerous, exciting people in dangerous, exciting situations—give them something to react to.

When you describe the situation, always end with "What do you do?" *Impulse Drive* is about drama, action, and adventure! Portray a situation that demands a response.

From the get-go, make sure to follow the rules. This means your SM rules, sure, but also keep an eye on the players' Moves. It's everyone's responsibility to watch for when a Move has been triggered, including you. Stop the players and ask if they mean to trigger the rules when it sounds like that's what they're doing.

Part of following the rules is making Calls. Your Calls are different from the Player Moves and we'll describe them in detail in a bit. Your Calls are specific things you can do to change the flow of the game.

In all of these things, exploit your prep. At times, you'll know something the players don't yet know. You can use that knowledge to help you make Calls. Maybe the Warhorse tries to snipe at a pirate and draws unwanted attention. They don't know that the attention that just fell on them was the unblinking gaze of a security drone for the complex they are infiltrating, but you do.

Part of your prep is Strains. Strains are a way for you to organize your notes that assist you in framing the events and situations in the game into scenes, episodes, and Seasons. This allows you to more easily emulate the inspirational media and fiction for *Impulse Drive*: space opera TV shows.

Agenda, Principles, and Calls: Rules for the SM

Agenda

- » Fill the void of space with danger and excitement.
- » Show how big space is and how small the PCs are.
- » Play to find out what happens.

Everything you say and do at the table (and away from the table, too) exists to accomplish these three goals and no others. Things that aren't on this list aren't your goals. You're not trying to beat the players or test their ability to solve complex puzzles. You're not here to give the players a chance to explore your finely crafted setting. You're not trying to kill the players (though their enemies might be). You're most certainly not here to tell everyone a planned-out story.

FILL THE VOID OF SPACE WITH DANGER AND EXCITEMENT

Your first Agenda is to Fill the void of space with danger and excitement. *Impulse Drive* is all about struggle, adventure, and conflict both internal and external. It's about the adventures of a crew of misfits on a spaceship, as they attempt to earn enough money on the fringes of the law to pay the massive debt they owe. It's your job to participate in that by showing the players a world in which their characters can find that adventure. While the universe at large may keep on going without the player characters, they are the lens through which you and the players will explore it, and events will eventually orbit them as they get involved. It's up to you to portray the fantastic and alien elements of that universe. Show the players the wonders of the universe they're in and encourage them to react to it. Encourage your players to get involved. Use their Hooks to find things they're interested in, and make them a part of the situation they face.

Show how big space is and how small the PCs are

Showing how big space is and how small the PCs are means dwarfing them with scale. Large ships beside their tiny vessel, huge fleets, crowds of people, sprawling yet densely populated mega-cities, domed habitats, vast barren wastelands. For contrast, place them in confined spaces: claustrophobic corridors, tiny cells, dimly lit mining sites, and crowded, strange alien spaces.

PLAY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS

Impulse Drive never presumes player actions. It portrays a setting in motion—someplace significant, with groups, individuals, and creatures big and small pursuing their own goals. As the players come into conflict with that setting and its denizens, action is inevitable. You'll honestly portray the repercussions of that action.

This is how you play to find out what happens. You're sharing in the fun of finding out how the characters react to and change the world you're portraying. You're all participants in a great space opera that's unfolding. So really, don't plan too hard. The rules of the game will fight you. It's fun to see how things unfold. Trust us, trust your players, and trust yourself.

Always Say

You need to balance a lot of priorities as the Space Master, and it won't always be clear in what direction you need to steer in any given moment. A good way to clarify what you need to say is to always say:

- » What the Principles demand.
- » What honesty demands.
- » What the rules demand.

Always be scrupulous, even generous with the truth. The players depend on you to give them useful information about their characters' surroundings—what's happening, when, and where. It's the same with the game rules; play with integrity and an open hand. The players are entitled to the full benefit of their Moves, their rolls, and their characters' strengths and resources. Don't cheat them, don't weasel, don't play gotcha. When your players know they can trust you and the system, they will be more comfortable taking risks.

Principles

- » Embrace the senses: describe sights, sounds and smells.
- » Show the fragility of life in space.
- » Make the galaxy's rules internally consistent.
- » Explore the galaxy with your players during play.
- » Create interesting dilemmas, not interesting plots.
- » Address yourself to the characters, not the players.
- » Make your SM Call, but don't speak its name.
- » Treat your ideas and NPCs as expendable.
- » Give everyone a name; make your NPCs real people and your monsters truly alien.
- » Ask provocative questions and build on the answers.
- » Provide opportunities for decisive action.
- » Be a fan of the characters.
- » Think cinematically.
- » Think offscreen, too.
- » Begin and end with the Fiction.

EMBRACE THE SENSES: DESCRIBE SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SMELLS

Embrace the senses means describing the world around the players in terms of what they see, hear, smell, and feel. Engaging the players through their characters' senses will bring the universe you are exploring to life, and give them important clues for how they can interact with it. To help you with this, get into the habit of thinking about the world around you in terms of your senses.

SHOW THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE IN SPACE

The void of space is dark and hostile. Show the fragility of life in space by exposing the Crew and the people around them to the vacuum of space and the violence of your galaxy's seedy underbelly. Fill the game with danger from hostile, unstable environments and from opposing characters or groups. Break stuff and put bystanders in danger when weapons are fired. Show the devastation of a vehicle or ship crashing. Whatever you do, keep danger an ever-present companion to the Crew.

MAKE THE GALAXY'S RULES INTERNALLY CONSISTENT

Making the galaxy behave consistently with its own rules means making sure you don't contradict what has already been established to be true. This includes everything from how FTL travel works, to the look and sound of weapons in your game, to NPCs behaving consistently. The easiest way to do this is take notes about the things you and the players say.

EXPLORE THE GALAXY WITH YOUR PLAYERS DURING PLAY

You don't play *Impulse Drive* to tell your players a story you came up with. When you sit down to play *Impulse Drive* for the first time, you may have a few ideas and assumptions about the universe you will play in—the rules of *Impulse Drive* certainly have some things to say on that matter. Everyone at the table works together to create the starting position of your game's Fiction. It will start small: the characters and the desires and pressures that push and pull them around. Next, you'll establish the situation that surrounds the Crew right now that makes them interesting to watch. From there, you'll spiral out and fill in details as you go—the groups tied to the Crew and opposing the Crew, and the consequences of the Crew's actions, among other things.

Impulse Drive plays this way for a number of reasons, but two of them are important right now.

The first is the most immediately obvious. You can't know what is going to happen. You don't know how your players will react to the things you say, or how the random elements of the rules will influence the situation. You're going to be surprised. You can't prepare for every possible eventuality before you start, because you don't have the full picture. *Impulse Drive* runs on the premise that everyone is acting on imperfect information and will be surprised during play.

The second reason is that you don't need to know what is going to happen. *Impulse Drive* gives you the tools to divine, in the moment, what happens next. Work together as a group to look at situations and reach a consensus on their outcomes using the game's mechanics. Trust the game, and trust yourselves.

As the SM, you are assumed to have more license to resolve the outcome of a situation. This is the case most of the time during play. Most times the consensus is resolved through silent majority. You say what happens as a consequence according to the rules and the rest of the group accepts it and responds.

However this isn't the only way to come to the conclusion of a situation. You as the SM may not be able to or interested in reaching a conclusion by yourself, so you open it up to the group or ask a specific player. There isn't a wrong way to do this. How much you play with this is a dial, with the SM always directing the consequences of actions when the rules say to at one end, to a more open group forum at the other. Experiment, and find a style that suits your group for any given situation.

CREATE INTERESTING DILEMMAS, NOT INTERESTING PLOTS

Create interesting dilemmas, not interesting plots ties directly back to your Agenda: play to find out what happens. It can be likened to setting up a bunch of dominoes, pregnant with potential energy and ready to crash into each other at the slightest nudge. You don't know exactly what will happen when one of the dominoes is nudged, but you know what's at stake. Look at what has been established, and find conflicts that exist. When you add something to the universe, look at what it wants, and what it does to get what it desires, and how those desires conflict with other parts of the universe. Find the points of tension between groups, NPCs, and the Crew. Think of interesting situations or dilemmas that bring those conflicts to light, and pose them in the form of questions:

- » What will happen if the containment field fails?
- » Who wants Rigger dead?
- » Who will win the turf war between the Red Hands and Suer's Rats?
- » Who will get caught in the crossfire?
- » How did Xenia get involved?

You don't want to answer these questions right now, though you may already have some ideas. The answers will solidify in play. People are pattern recognition machines, and the dots will seem to connect automatically as you play and you and the players explore these interesting dilemmas.

ADDRESS YOURSELF TO THE CHARACTERS, NOT THE PLAYERS

Address yourself to the characters, not the players is all about helping everyone get into their characters. Do this when describing the universe and the situation, and it helps you embrace the senses. It isn't always important to do this, and it can help to break out at times when you need to discuss something at the player level. "Samus, the pirate clicks its mandibles angrily and fires an energy bolt at you!" is part of the situation. "Sarah, which Special Move did you take last time?" is an out of character rules discussion. Treating your players as people when you need to is important sometimes for clarity, as well as to check in with someone if it seems like they're not having a good time.

MAKE YOUR SM CALL, BUT DON'T SPEAK ITS NAME

Make your SM Call, but don't speak its name is about maintaining the Fiction you're building with the players. You and the players will refer to Player Moves by their names all the time, and that's fine so long as it accompanies the Fiction. When you make a Call, though, you only need to speak of how it's affecting the situation with your description. The players don't need to know if you're showing danger approaching, using up their resources, or giving them a tough choice. Just present it by telling them what their senses perceive and describing the consequences and stakes as necessary, letting the conversation flow naturally. The SM Calls are there for you to figure out what you say next.

TREAT YOUR IDEAS AND NPCs AS EXPENDABLE

Treat your ideas and NPCs as expendable. Kill your darlings. Be prepared to let go of everything you love, because player characters are designed to crush dreams and smash the status quo to atoms. This Principle is here to create interesting dilemmas, not interesting plots. You're not playing to tell the players the cool story you wrote, and your NPCs are very mortal. All of your ideas and NPCs are things you may get to use, but won't get to keep, so don't be precious about them.

Avery Alder said it best in Monsterhearts:

"Think of the characters you play as stolen cars. You're in control of them for a time, but you don't own them and you can't really keep them. You hold onto them for as long as they're fun and useful, and abandon them when they become dead weight.

The other players, they own their characters, and are loyal to them. That isn't the case for you. Joyride your characters. Play them recklessly, and play them knowing that they aren't going to last. If you do so, you'll have constant drama, constant violence, and constant chaos. That's ideal."

GIVE EVERYONE A NAME' MAKE YOUR NPCs REAL PEOPLE AND YOUR MONSTERS TRULY ALIEN

Anytime someone or something in your world enters the spotlight, imbue it with life. Give it a name or a nickname. Keep in mind what it wants, or what trait makes it unique. People are generally simple. They have straightforward wants and needs, and their own tools for getting them into interesting situations. You don't need all of this straight away—start with a name and a basic description, and see how it goes from there. If the players are more interested in an NPC, you get to explore it along with them, and they will collect more details. Keep notes that will help you remember the NPC if they show up again.

ASK PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS AND BUILD ON THE ANSWERS

Part of playing to find out what happens is explicitly not knowing everything, and being curious. If you don't know something, or you don't have an idea, ask the players and use what they say.

Whenever you make a Call, be sure to end with "What do you do?" It's the easiest question to ask and spurs the Players to action. You don't even have to ask the person you made the Call against. Take that chance to shift the focus elsewhere: "Mordin's armor cracks and shatters from the cyborg's blow and he's thrown back. Vargas, Mordin was protecting your left flank, but now the cyborg's right there. What are you doing now that it's bearing down on you?"

Be curious about the players' characters. When they encounter something new, ask them what they make of it. If someone is an expert, ask them what they know, or what they're looking for. When a Crew Member's Hook comes into focus, ask them about it, and what it means to them.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DECISIVE ACTION

The Crew—the player characters—are dangerous individuals charged with potential energy and exciting possibilities. Look where they are strong, and present them with challenges to act. Look at the Hooks they have written, the things the players have said are important or interesting to them about their characters, and give them opportunities to explore them. Look where the characters are vulnerable or fallible, and push there.

Find out what the characters care about and put it in peril. Give them opponents to confront, authorities to deal with, and innocent bystanders to save, impress, or horrify. Give them strange and alien locations and circumstances to puzzle over or be awed by. Present the characters with opportunities to get what they want, and place challenging situations between them and their goals. When players interact with these various elements, all that potential energy will be released in ways you may not have expected. As always, play to find out what happens!

BE A FAN OF THE CHARACTERS

Think of the player characters as protagonists in a story that you might see on TV. Cheer for their victories and lament their defeats. You're not here to push them in any particular direction, merely to participate in the Fiction that features them and their action. Get excited to see what happens when they're faced with challenges that may be their undoing. Enjoy the tension you and the players feel when the stakes are high and everything's on the line. Being a fan doesn't mean giving the characters everything they want or making it easy for them. It's about getting excited to see them get involved in the world around them and how they change it, and the world changes them. Think about the TV shows you watch. Characters are at their most interesting when the stakes are high and the tension is stretched to the breaking point on a crucial roll.

THINK CINEMATICALY

Think cinematically can be applied overall, or used to drill down on particular dramatic moments. You're encouraged to think of the conversation you have while playing *Impulse Drive* as a series of scenes in a movie or a TV series. You skip over the parts that don't need a scene, or you can have a montage when you want to show someone doing something or getting ready for something over time. You can also describe certain cinematic techniques to enhance the action "on-screen," such as cuts or fades between scenes, camera angles for dramatic moments, or shifting focus or the spotlight. Use Strains to emphasize the cinematic feel. Let Fuses ratchet up the tension, then release it when the Climax explodes.

THINK OFFSCREEN, TOO

Just because you're a fan of the characters doesn't mean everything happens right in front of them. Sometimes your best Call is in the next room, or somewhere else in the ship, or even on another planet. Make your Call elsewhere and show its effects when they come into the spotlight. Think about the trail of destruction and drama the Crew has left in their wake, the different groups and NPCs in conflict with each other, and what's happening elsewhere.

As part of Think Cinematically, you can cut away to another location for a short scene to show the players what's happened. Let them in on the dramatic irony so that they too can relish the new spot their characters will be in. Use this technique sparingly—a short scene at the beginning or end of an episode—to build interest in what you show them and set up a cliffhanger.

BEGIN AND END WITH THE FICTION

Everything you and the players do in *Impulse Drive* comes from and leads to Fictional events. When the players make a Move, they take a Fictional action to trigger it or a Fictional situation triggers it, apply the rules such as rolling dice or making a choice about spending resources, and get a Fictional effect. When you make a Call it always comes from the Fiction.



SM Calls

Whenever everyone looks to you to see what happens, choose one of these. Each Call is something that occurs in the Fiction of the game—they aren't code words or special terms. "Use up their resources" literally means to expend the resources of the characters, for example.

- » Use an NPC, Location, or Ship Call.
- » Divide them.
- » Deliver bad news.
- » Give them a tough choice to make.
- » Put something vital in danger.
- » Deal Harm.
- » Show danger approaching.
- » Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost.
- » Show the stars moving elsewhere.
- » Use up their resources.
- » Destabilize the environment.
- » Give them Advantage or Disadvantage.
- » Turn their Move back on them.
- » Tell them the possible consequences and ask.

Never speak the name of your Call (that's one of your Principles). Make it a real thing that happens to them: "As you dodge the cyborg's pneumatic fist, you slip and land hard. Your pistol goes sliding across the gangplank with a clatter. You think you saw where it went, but the cyborg is lumbering your way. What do you do?"

No matter what Call you make, always follow up with "What do you do?" Your Calls are a way of fulfilling your Agenda—part of which is to fill the void of space with danger and excitement. When a grenade goes wide or the floor drops out from under them, the Crew reacts or suffers the consequences of inaction.

When to Make a Call

You Make a Call:

- » When everyone looks to you to find out what happens
- » When the players give you a golden opportunity
- » When they roll a 6-

Generally when the players are just looking at you to find out what happens you make a soft Call, otherwise you make a hard Call.

A soft Call is one without immediate, irrevocable consequences. That usually means it's something not all that bad, like revealing that there's more information if they can just get the fence to talk (offer an opportunity with cost). It can also mean that it's something bad, but they have time to avoid it, like having a grenade land nearby, initiating a countdown before it blows (show signs of an approaching threat), thereby giving them a chance to dodge out of danger.

A soft Call ignored becomes a golden opportunity for a hard Call. If the players do nothing about the grenade sitting there on the ground, it's a golden opportunity to use the Deal Harm Call.

Hard Calls, on the other hand, have immediate consequences. Dealing Harm is almost always a hard Call, since it means they suffer Harm that won't be recovered without some action from the players.

When you have a chance to make a hard Call you can opt for a soft one instead if it better fits the situation. Sometimes things just work out for the best.

Hard Calls and soft Calls.

WHEN YOU MAKE A SOFT CALL, ALL THREE:

- » It follows logically from the Fiction.
- » It gives the player an opportunity to react.
- » It sets you up for a future harder Call.

Say what happens but stop before the effect, then ask "What do you do?"

WHEN YOU MAKE A HARD CALL, BOTH:

- » It follows logically from the Fiction.
- » It's irrevocable.

Say what happens, including the effect, then ask "What do you do?"

Choosing a Call

To choose a Call, start by looking at the obvious consequences of the action that triggered it. If you already have an idea, think on it for a second to make sure it fits your Agenda and Principles and then do it. Let your Calls snowball. Build on the success or failure of the characters' Moves and on your own previous Calls.

If your first instinct is that this won't hurt them now, but it'll come back to bite them later, great! That's part of your Principles (think offscreen too). Make a note of it and reveal it when the time is right.

Making your Call

When making a Call, keep your Principles in mind. In particular, never speak the name of your Call and address the characters, not the players. Your Calls are not mechanical actions happening around the table. They are concrete events happening to the characters in the Fictional world you are describing.

Note that "Deal Harm" is a Call, but other Calls may include Harm as well. When you fall a great distance and hit the floor hard, you take Harm as surely as if you had been shot by an Assault Rifle.

After every Call you make, always ask "What do you do?"

USE AN NPC, LOCATION, OR SHIP CALL

Many NPCs have specialized Calls that describe how they behave. Some of the Calls are direct descriptions of behavior like "Look for an angle for some illicit pay" or "Threaten and bully outsiders and your subordinates alike." Other Calls have a trigger and a behavior, an "If, then" statement, like "Call for reinforcements when you don't have the advantage." Or "When they defeat your physical form, return later and elsewhere." If a Player Move says something like their opponent gets to attack, make an aggressive Call with that NPC.

Ships and some Locations also have specialized Calls associated with them that work in the same way as NPC calls. These are a great way to show how these people, places, and things are unique compared to the rest of the universe.

DIVIDE THEM

There are few things worse than being in the middle of a raging battle with a swarm of giant bloodthirsty insects on all sides—one of those things is being in the middle of that battle with no one at your back.

Dividing the characters can mean anything from being pushed apart in the heat of battle to being teleported to the far end of the ship. However it occurs, it's bound to cause problems.

DELIVER BAD NEWS

Bad news is a fact the players wish wasn't true: maybe the alarm's been triggered, or that terrified civilian is actually a spy. Reveal to the players just how much trouble they're in.

GIVE THEM A TOUGH CHOICE TO MAKE

A tough choice is when you tell them two dangerous or undesirable situations they're faced with, and they only have the opportunity to stop one. The tougher the choice, the more intense the drama.

PUT SOMETHING VITAL IN DANGER

Put them, or someone or something they care about in danger. Look at their Hooks and see what they care about. Challenge a belief they have, or put their heart's desire on the edge of oblivion. This Call is, above all others, a call to action for the players' characters.

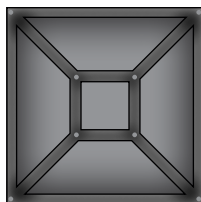
DEAL HARM

When you deal Harm, choose one source of Harm that's Fictionally threatening a character and apply it. In combat with a security drone? It blasts you. Stepped on a mine? It blows up.

The amount of Harm is decided by the source. In some cases, this Call might involve trading Harm both ways, with the player character dealing Harm in return.

When a Crew Member is in danger of being harmed and you don't have an existing reference for how much Harm to deal, use the chart below to determine how much Harm they suffer.

- » Reasonably weak: 1 Harm
- » Somewhat dangerous: 2 Harm
- » Very dangerous: 3 Harm
- » Extremely dangerous: 4 Harm
- » Lethal: 5 Harm



Show danger approaching

This is one of your most versatile Calls. “Danger” means anything bad that’s on the way. With this Move, you just show them that something’s going to happen unless they do something about it.

Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost

Show them something they want: riches, power, glory. If you want, you can associate some cost with it too, of course.

Remember to lead with the Fiction. Instead of simply saying “This area isn’t dangerous so you can land here, if you’re willing to take the time,” make it a solid Fictional thing and say “The asteroid is secluded, with a nice deep crevasse that would hide the ship from sensors. You could put down and make some more substantial repairs to the ship, but you know the informant is going to reach colonized space in the next few days. What do you do?”

Show the stars moving elsewhere

This Call is for showing that the universe is bigger than the Crew, and that there’s more going on in other locations. It can be anything from a strange signal broadcast out of deep space, to twinkles of light showing a space battle hours or days of travel away. But it could just as easily be an explosion heard in the distance, or a short scene showing events from another perspective. This can be done to help you and the players establish stakes for something that’s happening now, or a situation the group cares about. Keep these scenes as short vignettes, showing a part of something, a moment here or there. It’s a hint of events elsewhere, not exposition.

Use up their Resources

Surviving in space, or anywhere dangerous, often comes down to supplies. With this Call, something happens to use up some resource: weapons, armor, Stress, time in the form of Fuses, space to move or think, the goodwill or Disposition of NPCs or Groups. You don’t always have to use it up permanently. A shotgun might just be Discharged or flung to the other side of the room, not destroyed.

Remember that Fuses indicate one of their most precious resources. When you Burn a Fuse, you are showing the players in no uncertain terms they are running out of time. Burn Scene Fuses when they suffer a minor setback. Burn Episode Fuses when a scene goes poorly for them, or days pass. Burn a Season Fuse between Episodes, or when something monumental goes down.

Destabilize the environment

The players may think they’re on solid ground, but they’re not. Shift the ground from under them, start a fire, decompress a section of the ship, have something explode, release a toxic gas, or disrupt the fabric of space with a gravitational phenomenon. But destabilizing the environment can also be more metaphorical. Perhaps a nervous police officer’s panicked shot turns a peaceful but tense protest into a riot, or a tense negotiation between rival factions erupts in a bloody free-for-all. This Call is all about disrupting the status quo, and showing the fragility of life in space.

Give them Advantage or Disadvantage

If a situation is notably stacked in a character's favor, but the outcome is still risky, offer them Advantage to a Move. This should be rare, and only in cases of clever planning that pays off, or a character being uncannily suited to an unusual and unique situation.

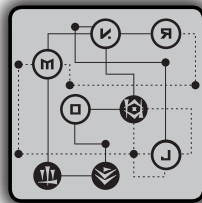
Likewise, if a situation goes bad due to a rough roll, a character's poor decision, or because the odds are overwhelmingly stacked against a character, give them Disadvantage. As with handing out Advantage, do this when it's Fictionally appropriate and the rules haven't enforced it. Be careful not to back a player into a corner with punishing rolls or forcing them to activate one of their Hooks. When it comes to their Hooks, it's always in the player's power to decline applying Disadvantage because of a Hook.

Turn their Move back on them

When a player rolls a 6-, and you're unsure of what to do, look at the choices the Move had them make, and flip those choices against them. On Firefight, you may choose options from the list to apply to the player and their allies, pushing them into a tough spot. A 6- on a Scope it Out may mean asking them one of the listed questions in regards to their character, or answering one of the questions listed with very, very bad news.

Tell them the possible consequences and ask

This Call is particularly good when they want something that's not covered by a Move, or they've failed a Move. They can do it, sure, but they'll have to pay the price, either now or in the form of long-term consequences. Maybe they can leap under the closing bulkhead before the bomb goes off, but they'll have to leave something important or useful behind, like their gun. Of course, this is made clear to the characters, not just the players: they have fractions of a second, and the military droid has hold of their rifle's barrel, for example.



Strains

Impulse Drive is designed to emulate sci-fi space opera drama shows like *Firefly*, *Farscape*, *Babylon 5*, *Andromeda* and, more recently, *Dark Matter* and *Killjoys*. These are TV series that are (mostly) spread across multiple seasons of varying lengths, made up of multiple episodes that each contain multiple scenes.

Season lengths and continuity: how TV shows have changed

Back in my youth, when I was cutting my teeth on episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, TV shows were structured very differently from the way they are now. Seasons were roughly 20 to 26 episodes long, and written in a way that allowed the viewer to jump in at any episode and quickly pick up what was going on. The status quo of the characters and overall situation of the show's fiction were roughly the same at the end of the episode as they were at the start. This allowed networks to air episodes in any order, and it was assumed viewers would be more likely to start watching somewhere in the middle—which was important considering how expensive it was to purchase an entire season on VHS.

Now, with the advent of DVD, Blu-ray, digital distribution, and streaming services, it's much easier to watch a season of a show from beginning to end—often all at once if you're a binge-watcher like me. As such, seasons tend to be much shorter, with less 'filler' episodes, and with a much more volatile status quo. Characters die, and the situation around them changes dramatically. The seasons are tighter, more contiguous experiences.

I bring this up to define what *Impulse Drive* means when it uses the word *Season*. In terms of the game, it's much more flexible than even the modern definition. A Season may be as short as a few sessions, since it's used to express a series of events happening over a longer period of time. When the situation that surrounds the Crew changes dramatically and you have to reorder your notes, you're looking at the end of one season and the beginning of another.

As such, it helps to have tools at your disposal that help you organize your thoughts and ideas, and help you control the pace or cadence of events in your game. For this purpose, you have Strains. Strains are a way of describing the pressures that you apply to the Crew Members and their environment. Use Strains to organize your thoughts and notes about your game, and to add urgency or structure to the game as you play it. Use Strains when they make sense, or when they enhance your game. If using a Strain for a particular occasion feels restrictive or cumbersome, don't force it, and let play happen naturally.

As an Improvisation-heavy Space Master who is familiar with the inspiring fiction and its tropes for *Impulse Drive*, I have a very light touch with Strains, but this isn't the norm for all, or many people who are familiar with running roleplaying games as Dungeon Masters, Game Masters, Masters of Ceremonies, Hollyhock Gods or any other number of similar roles. Your usage of Strains is a dial. Use them as much or as little as helps you as a SM and your style. If you are a new SM, you may use them a lot more to give yourself more structure during play, and to feel more prepared.

Remember that Strains are a tool to help you find out what happens in play, not how you organize plots you wish to guide your players through. Each Strain you create and use does not have to be complete. Leave blanks! Fill in what you need, or what you have, and play to find out if anything fills in the blank sections.

Components of your Strains

Strains are made up of several components. Complete the details that feel relevant to the Strain to make it useful for you in play.

Strain Name or Premise:

A Simple name for the Strain, or a descriptive phrase that conveys its theme or premise.

Strain Type:

Strains come in 3 types, depending on the time frame in which they are expected to be resolved. These are Scenes, Episodes, and Seasons. You will read about them shortly in the Types of Strains section.

Description & Notes:

Strains have a section for descriptions and notes. Record details or NPCs that you wish to keep track of. This is more useful in longer term Strains that move slowly or have more long-reaching effects.

Climax:

Many Strains have an impending outcome. This may be an event that the Crew would wish to avoid or questions that you or the Crew want to answer. This terminal point is called the Climax. To figure out when you get to the Climax of a Strain, you have a Fuse.

Fuse:

A Fuse is a countdown that is comprised of between 3 and 6 checks, depending on how quickly the Strain is moving, or how complex it is. If a Climax is immediate and likely to happen, give it a shorter Fuse. If the Climax will take more effort or is less immediate, give it a longer Fuse.

Burn:

When you mark one of the checks on a Fuse, you are Burning the Fuse. When you Burn a Fuse during play, make it explicit. Tie it to something happening that shows time is running out or a threat is approaching. If it's not something right here and now in front of the Crew, take a moment to show a cut-away to something happening elsewhere. The Crew may not know about the impending Climax, but your players can.

A useful Strain is not necessarily a complete Strain. Explore the galaxy with your players during play. You may not have an idea for a Climax, or aren't sure how long the Fuse should be yet. Leave them empty. You'll fill them in later if something occurs to you. Blanks in Strains are implied questions you make explicit during play.

Types of Strains

Scene Strains:

Scene Strains represent moment-to-moment situations that are happening right here, right now in front of the Crew. The SM may Burn a Check on the Scene Strains Fuse in one of the following circumstances:

- » When a Crew Member's action or inaction escalates or advances the Strain towards its Climax.
- » When a Crew Member is attempting to deal with an issue related to the Strain and rolls a 6-.

If the situation the Strain is related to is resolved before you reach the Climax, then the outcome is averted, and you may end the scene. If the Fuse Burns to 0 before the situation is resolved, then the Climax comes to pass, and the Scene ends, or shifts to a new Scene, with new stakes.

MONTAGE SCENES

Many scenes are in-depth roleplaying interspersed with Moves being activated as normal play. There are occasions when it's better to have a quick montage of events and one roll to determine the outcome of a scene. For instance, a task that involves hours of tedium or a Crew Member acting alone with minor stakes can be elided with a few brief descriptions and—if triggered—a Move, to avoid bringing play to a grinding halt.

Episode Strains:

Episode Strains represent situations or events related to this session of play. The SM may Burn a check on the Episode Strains Fuse in one of the following circumstances:

- » When a Scene is concluded and a Crew Member's action, inaction, or failure escalates or advances the Strain towards its Climax.
- » When a Scene Strain is resolved in a way that escalates or advances the Episode Strain towards its Climax.

If the situation the Strain is related to is resolved before you reach the Climax, then the outcome is averted, and you may end the Episode or move on to another Episode Strain as the focus. If the Fuse Burns to 0 before the situation is resolved, then the Climax comes to pass, and the Episode ends, or shifts to a new Episode strain, with new stakes.



Season Strains:

Season Strains represent situations, conflicts, or themes that take more than a session to resolve. The SM may Burn a check on the Season Strains Fuse in one of the following circumstances:

- » When an Episode is concluded and the Crew has not successfully taken action to defuse or interfere with the Strain's advancement to its Climax.
- » When an Episode concludes and an action or event during an Episode escalates or advances the Strain to its Climax.

If the situation the Strain is related to is resolved before you reach the Climax, then the outcome is averted. Move your focus to another Season Strain, write a new one based on Player Hooks or a Group's Disposition with the Crew, or wait and look for cues in upcoming sessions to focus on.

If the Fuse Burns to 0 before the situation is resolved, then the Climax comes to pass. This may happen in the current episode if the subject of the Strain is front and center right now, or if the episode is unrelated to the Season Strain, it will switch when the current episode wraps up.

Using Strains to add urgency to a Contract

Crews rarely have all the time in the world to complete their Contracts. The Contract may have a small window of opportunity or a time constraint for a particular task. Minister Emara's kidnapped son is going to be killed at midnight unless he's rescued or the ransom is paid. The bomb is somewhere in the Visitor's Center, and it's set to go off soon, but you don't know when. You're impersonating an information broker for a deal, but the Red Mandible Pirates are waiting for you, and they'll only wait so long. Create Episode or Scene Strains for these time pressures as explicit countdowns the players can see, and mark them off when appropriate to lend urgency to the Contract.



Getting Ready to Play

The first session of a game of *Impulse Drive* begins with character creation. Character creation is also world creation; the details on the character sheets and the questions that you ask establish what the world of *Impulse Drive* is like, who lives in it, and what is going on.

This section is all about running the first session of *Impulse Drive*, so it's addressed directly to you—the SM. For the players, the first session is just like every other. They just have to play their characters like real people and explore *Impulse Drive*. You have to do a little more in the first session, since you need to establish the world and the threats that the players will face.

Prep

Before the first session, if you're playing with others in the same physical space, you'll need to print copies of the following documents:

- » The sheets with all the Combat & Action Moves, the Social and Exploration Moves, and the Special and Commerce Moves
- » One copy of each Ship Playbook you intend to offer
- » One copy of each Archetype playbook, double-sided
- » The SM Handouts

If you are playing *Impulse Drive* online, share the Archetype playbooks, Crew reference sheets, the Ship playbooks and reference sheets and the book PDFs with the players. You also need access to the notes sheets and SM sheets PDFs. It's also recommended you use a virtual tabletop program to help organize your game. Roll20 (<https://roll20.net/>) is a popular, feature-rich, and free virtual tabletop service that runs in popular browsers and on many tablets. *Impulse Drive* also has built-in character sheets you can use for Roll20.

You'll also need to read this whole book, especially the sections on being a Space Master (SM Calls) and the Universal Moves. It's a good idea to be acquainted with the Archetype Moves too, so you can be prepared for them. Go over the sections on NPCs and Groups, but you don't need to create any yet.

Think about fantastic worlds, strange science, and bizarre aliens. Remember the games you played and the stories you told. Watch some movies, read some comics—get space opera into your brain.

What you bring to the first session, ideas-wise, is up to you. At the very least bring your head full of ideas. That's the bare minimum, however; if you like, you can plan a little more. Maybe think of an approaching conflict and the forces pushing for it, a basic Contract to get started with, or some aliens you'd like to use.

If you've got some spare time on your hands, you can even imagine specific locations to start in.

The one thing you absolutely can't bring to the table is a planned storyline or plot. You don't know the characters or the world before you sit down to play so planning anything concrete is just going to frustrate you. It also conflicts with your agenda: play to find out what happens.

Cards

Cards for Gear and Archetype Moves have been created for *Impulse Drive* to assist with playing. The cards for *Impulse Drive* are optional, and not necessary for play. If you have the resources and the inclination, print and cut out the cards. The cards may also be bought separately from wherever you picked up *Impulse Drive*.

Getting Started

When everyone shows up for the first session, briefly introduce *Impulse Drive* to anyone who hasn't played before. Cover the mechanical basis of Moves. Have a discussion about the setting, what is going on in the game and what won't. Introduce the character Archetypes, help players pick ones they like, and walk them through character creation.

Your role during character creation is threefold: help everyone, ask questions, and take notes. When a player makes a choice—particularly for their Hooks—ask them about it. Get more detail. Think about what these details mean.

You should also set expectations: the players are to play their characters as people—skilled individuals taking on dangerous missions, but real people. Your role is to play the rest of the world as a dynamic, changing place. Go through the Player's Agenda and Principles, and tell them your Agenda.

Some questions commonly come up during character creation. You should be ready to answer them:

ARE THE CHARACTERS FRIENDS?

No, not necessarily, but they do work together as a crew on the ship to further their common goals. Their reasons for pursuing those goals may be different, but they still manage to work together. The characters may have complicated, fraught relationships with each other based on their Hooks; this gives the group a basis for how the characters think of and interact with each other. Ask the players about their characters' relationships with each other, but don't go too in-depth. Leave space to explore their relationships and histories with each other during play.

HOW MUCH MONEY DO I HAVE?

Money is abstracted in *Impulse Drive*. Instead of tracking every credit, mark, or guild, you only need to think about it in terms of the consequences of having it or not having it when making a Commerce Move. It's assumed that characters have enough loose currency for incidental purchases: a snack, a drink, small inconsequential purchases. If you want to do something meaningful with money that makes someone do what you want, you will either need the Liquid Assets Gear item, or trade threats or favors.

WHAT'S THE ABYSS?

The Abyss is an external, alien presence or force represented by the infinite black void of space. It may be connected to the other types of space that ships pass through during interstellar travel, or a horrific anthropomorphic entity with malevolent intent, or anything in between. Have a brief discussion with your group when the question comes up about the nature of the Abyss and its role in your game's cosmology. Make it as specific or vague as your group is comfortable with. Whether it has a personality and hates the universe, or is an unsympathetic phenomenon or force, the Abyss is alien, dark, and mysterious.

IS THE SM TRYING TO KILL US?

No. The SM's job is to portray the world and the things in it, and the world is a very dangerous place. You might die. That doesn't mean the SM is out to get you.

During this entire process, especially character creation, ask questions. Look for interesting facts established by the characters' Hooks, Moves, Archetypes, and descriptions and ask about those things. Be curious! When someone mentions the invaders that slaughtered their culture, find out more about them. After all, you don't have anything (except maybe a Contract or mission) and everything they give you is fuel for future adventures.

Also pay attention to the players' questions. When mechanical questions come up, answer them. When questions of setting or Fiction come up, your best bet is to turn those questions around. When a player says "Who rules the Empire of Adreni 4?", say "I don't know, who is it? What is she like?" Collaborate with your players. Asking a question means it's something that interests them, so work with them to make the answers interesting as well. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know," and ask them the same questions. Work together to find a fantastic and interesting answer.

If you've come to the table with some ideas about stuff you'd like to see in the world, share them with the players. Their characters are their responsibility and the world is yours—you've got a lot of say in what lives in it. If you want the game to be about a hunt for the lost Promethean of eons past, say so! If the players aren't interested or they're sick to death of ancient advanced ruins, they'll let you know and you can work together to find something you're all excited about. You don't need pre-approval for everything, but making sure everyone is excited about the broad strokes of the setting is a great start.

It's also a chance for people to say things that they as a person just don't want to deal with in a game. If a person expresses discomfort about a topic before or during the game, leave that thing out or fade to black over it, but don't dwell on it or interrogate the player. We all have stuff we don't want to be around or deal with, and respecting the people you play with is important. Not all of this conversation has to be had straight away, just mention that if something uncomfortable comes up during play, it's OK to say you're uncomfortable and you'd rather leave it out or gloss over it.

Once everyone has their characters created, you can take a deep breath. Look back over the questions you've asked and answered so far. You should have some notes that point you towards what the game might look like. Look at what the players have brought to the table. Look to the ideas that've been stewing away in your head. It's time for the adventure to begin!

The First Session

The first session is really about discovering the direction that future sessions are going to take. Throughout the first session keep your eye out for unresolved threats and note dangerous things that are mentioned but not dealt with. These are Fuel for sessions to come.

Start the session with the Crew in a tense situation that demands action: breaching the airlock of a derelict ship, getting ambushed in a dirty alley, peeking through the crack of a door onboard a hostile ship, or being chased by a hostile ship on the outskirts of a lawless star system. Ask questions right away—“Who is the captain of this enemy ship you’re on?” or “Who’s chasing your ship? Why are they so determined to catch you?” If the situation stems directly from the characters and your questions, all the better. If appropriate, create a Scene Strain to highlight the stakes and tensions of the scene.

Here’s where the game starts. The players start saying and doing things, which means they’ll start making Moves. For the first session you should watch especially carefully for when Moves apply, until the players get the hang of it. Often, in the early sessions, the players are most comfortable just narrating their actions—this is fine. When a Move triggers let them know. Say, “It sounds like you’re trying to...” and then walk them through the Move. Players looking for direction look to their character sheet. When a player just says “I roll Firefight,” be quick to ask: “So what are you actually doing?” Ask “How?” or “With what?”

FOR THE FIRST SESSION, YOU HAVE A FEW SPECIFIC GOALS:

- » Establish details, describe
- » Use what they give you
- » Ask questions
- » Leave blanks
- » Look for interesting facts
- » Pay attention to the characters’ Hooks
- » Help the players understand the Moves
- » Give each character a chance to shine
- » Introduce NPCs
- » Make note of the Crew’s enemies

Establish details, describe

All the ideas and visions in your head don’t really exist in the Fiction of the game until you share them, describe them, and detail them. The first session is the time to establish the basics of what things look like, who’s in charge, what they wear, what the world is like, what the immediate location is like. Describe everything but keep it brief enough to expand on later. Use a detail or two to make a description stand out as real.

Use what they give you

The best part of the first session is that you don’t have to come with anything concrete. You might have a Contract sketched out, but the players provide the real meat—use it. They’ll emerge from the danger of that first Contract, and by the time their adrenaline rush wears off, you’ll have built up an exciting world to explore with their help. Look at their Hooks, their Moves, how they answer your questions and use what you find to fill in the world around the characters.

Ask questions

You're using what they give you, right? What if you need more? That's when you draw it out by asking questions. Poke and prod about specific things. Ask for reactions: "What does Samus think about that?", "Is Cade doing something about it?" If you ever find yourself at a loss, pause for a second and ask a question. Ask one character a question about another. When a character does something, ask how a different character feels or reacts. Questions power your game and make it feel real and exciting. Use the answers you find to fill in what might happen next.

Leave blanks

This is related to one of your Principles (Explore the galaxy with your players during play), but it's especially true during the first session. Every blank is another cool thing waiting to happen; leave yourself a stock of them.

Look for interesting facts

There are some ideas that just jump out at you when you hear them. When you hear one of those ideas, write it down. When a player mentions the Forgotten Star Empire being the basis for his thesis, make a note of it. That little fact is the seed for a whole world that your players can explore later on.

Pay attention to characters' Hooks

Hooks are a way for players to tell you "Hey, Space Master! I think this is interesting and I want to have stuff relate to it!" It's how you can tell what challenges to present and questions to pose to the Crew Members, as well as which situations you should give them an opportunity to explore. If Varik the Scoundrel writes about their staggering debt with the Madari Syndicate, have the Syndicate show up to cause them trouble.

Help the players understand the Moves

You've already read the game. The players may not have, so it's up to you to help them if they need it. The fact is, they likely won't need it much. All they have to do is describe what their character does, the rules take care of the rest.

The one place they may need some help is remembering the triggers for the Moves. Keep an ear out for actions that trigger Moves, like engaging in violence or consulting their expertise. After a few Moves the players begin to remember them on their own.

Give each character a chance to shine

As a fan of the characters (remember your Agenda and Principles?), you want to see them do what they do best. Give them a chance to do this, not by tailoring every situation to their skills, but by filling the void of space with danger and excitement (Agenda again) where there are many solutions to every challenge. Direct these challenges at specific characters. Speak to a specific player, and ask them "What do you do?"

Introduce NPCs

NPCs bring the world to life. If every adversary does nothing more than attack and every merchant sets out their wares for simple payment, the world is dead. Instead, give your characters life—especially those that the players show an interest in (Principles, remember?). Introduce NPCs but don't protect them. The recently deceased Lawkeeper Captain is just as useful for future adventures as the one who's still alive.

Make note of the Crew's enemies

The Crew is going to have enemies. They are either created in character creation through Hooks, or in play as the Crew interferes with NPC and Group agendas. Make note of the Crew's transgressions against others, and what those slights may cost the Crew later. When it comes time to introduce a complication in a particular situation, look at which NPCs may be nearby, or who may have been sent after the Crew to settle an old score.

The Second Session and Beyond

Once you're done with the first session, take some time to relax. Don't rush into the next session, let your ideas ferment. Once you've had some time to relax and think over the first session it's time to prepare for the next session. Preparing for the second session takes a few minutes, maybe an hour if this is your first time. You'll create Contracts and Strains, maybe make some NPCs, Locations, or custom Moves, and generally get an idea of what is going on in the system.

Fallout and Consequences

Look at the Crew's actions, and how they have impacted the local situation. Which Groups and NPCs have suffered losses at the hands of the Crew, and which ones have new opportunities? Who knows of the Crew's actions, and who would be interested to know? What evidence of the Crew's actions have been left behind? Modify the Disposition of notable NPCs and Groups as appropriate, improving them with those the Crew has positively affected, and making them worse for those the Crew has negatively affected.

Machinations and Disputes

Look at the Groups and powerful NPCs the Crew has encountered, and think about what they might intend to do next. Look at any Instincts or Goals they have and their connections. Who do they clash with? What do they try and secure? Who or what is put in danger or hurt in their disputes? What opportunities for new Contracts are created when the status quo is upset?

Note these things down so you know where the situation is unstable and what the stakes are next time you play. Make Contracts that express these instabilities, and make complications that relate to unfinished business from your previous sessions.

Trouble left behind, trouble that follows

The big thing about having a spaceship is that the Crew can just fly off to another system when things get too hot where they are. But that leaves a lot of trouble behind. Trouble may follow them in the form of bounties on their heads, or injured parties coming after them for retribution. But they also risk losing the things that they care about and left behind. If your players leave a system behind, put a pin in that system with all of its complications, with a few notes of what has been left to fester there, and what might come after them.

Create new problems for your new system, roll some random components or use a pre-built system seed. Try to think of topics for systems, so that they feel different from each other.

- » When, if ever, is war justified?
- » Who benefits when law is absolute?
- » Who benefits when there are no laws?
- » What is justified in the pursuit of freedom?
- » What is life like for the lowest born in a star empire?
- » How has a new technology changed everyday life for a civilization? Who benefits from it?
- » Is a carefree and oblivious life in an idyllic paradise truly what it seems, or merely a gorgeous prison?
- » What happened to the lost ancient star empire?
- » What do the invaders want from their victims?
- » What is our relationship to bodies when we are embodied in giant robots?
- » How does the plague mirror what is wrong with the society it's devastating?

Don't spend too long on this, since you won't know what's going to hook your players. Start with some seeds, some interesting NPCs, and some tense situations. Use the Location, NPC, and Group creation rules to get a feel for the new system and expand on it in the directions that interest your players.



Creating a Contract

Contracts are how the Crew earns money. They're also the adventures you'll be exploring alongside the Crew. For both of these reasons, Contracts are a very important part of play! In order to make contracts easily evoke the feeling of space opera TV shows, Contracts use a lot of the same tools as Strains. A Contract is essentially an Episode Strain in reverse. Contracts are made up of several components.

NAME:

The name of Contract.

CONTRACT TYPE:

The Basis Contract Type that you will customize. The types are Milk Run, Heist, Assault, Defense, Salvage, and Investigation.

OBJECTIVE:

This is what the Crew must accomplish in order to get paid. This should be straightforward, but may not contain all the tricky details of the objective. Especially if the Client is shady or sketchy.

RATING:

The Rating both describes how dangerous the Contract is, and the modifier the Crew rolls when they complete the Contract and go to get paid. A higher rating is riskier and more lucrative. A lower rating is less risky, but pays a lot less. The Rating of a Contract is established by the highest Rating on all of the elements and Complications of the Contract, and can be modified by other factors.

- ▷ **Safe -2:** There's very little risk to life, limb, or property.
- ▷ **Risky -1:** You may have to break some laws and some bones.
- ▷ **Dangerous 0:** You'll be entering hostile or dangerous territory, risking life and limb.
- ▷ **Deadly +1:** It directly involves violence or destruction. Either you will kill, or you will die.
- ▷ **Lethal +2:** Expect violence on a grand scale. Your targets will be well prepared with heavy weaponry or ships of their own.

CLIENT:

The Client is the individual or organization that has put out the Contract. Depending on the nature of the Contract and the Disposition of the Client to the Crew, they may be anonymous. But you, the SM, always knows who the Client is.

CLOCK:

The Clock describes how many scenes, tasks, or complications the Contract involves. The larger a Clock, the more complex or time-consuming the Contract.

TICKS:

The Sections of the Clock are called Ticks. Ticks represent the number of scenes or tasks required to complete the Contract. A Contract has between 3 and 6 Ticks in its Clock.

COMPLICATIONS:

Complications are ways you can customize the contract to make it more dangerous or complex. Adding more Complications increases the Ticks in the Clock, and may influence the Contract's Rating.

1. Look at the situation, find opportunities

When creating a Contract, start by looking at the overall situation of the local systems and territories. Look at your Season Strains, and where the Crew's actions have recently disrupted the normal operation of local territories and Groups. Look for opportunities and problems that arise from the situation. These are the seeds for your contracts.

ASK SOME OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHERE RELEVANT:

- » What local Season Strains present opportunities or problems? (Local conflicts, shortages, gold rushes, threats, etc.)
- » Which Groups and NPCs of note have an interest in exploiting or resolving these opportunities?
- » Who is the aggressor?
- » Who is the victim?
- » Who wants to interfere?
- » Who can afford to pay?
- » Who is Friendly or Bonded to the Crew?
- » Who is Suspicious or Hostile to the Crew?
- » Whom does a Crew Member have a Hook related to?

2. Choose a Client

Look at the Groups and notable NPCs you have listed. When choosing a Client for a Contract, consider these things especially:

- » Who can afford to pay?
- » Who is Friendly or bonded to the Crew?
- » Who is Suspicious or Hostile to the Crew?
- » Whom does a Crew Member have a Hook related to?

The most important part of choosing a Client for a Contract is who has the money to pay. If multiple parties have the means to foot the bill (or will when the Contract is completed) then choose whomever is wealthiest or more powerful, or whomever is most closely tied to the Crew.

If the Crew wants to take a Contract from an underdog for moral or personal reasons, let them, but reduce the Job rating by -1 or -2 depending on how destitute they are, to a minimum of -3. Good will doesn't pay the bills.

If the Client is Hostile to the Crew, decrease the Contracts Rating by -1 when you detail the contract, to a minimum of -3.

If the Client is Bonded to the Crew, increase the Rating of the Contract by 1, to a maximum of +3.

If the Contract is illegal, shady, or morally questionable, the Client is likely to be anonymous, and advertise their Contract through a broker, fixer, or contact. The Crew may be able to find out who the Client is after they take the Contract, but they don't have enough information beforehand to do so.

3. Choose a type of Contract

Once you have an opportunity or problem in mind, choose one of the Contract types to reflect an approach to resolve the Contract. Contract types are the initial shape for a Contract, but as you add some more detail or as the Crew makes their plans, elements from other Contract types will appear. Let them! Remember that you are playing to find out what happens. Your players finding alternative or clever solutions is one of the things you're playing to discover.

1. Milk Run (Delivery service)
2. Heist (Burglary, infiltration, con job)
3. Assault (Attack, bank robbery, seizing by force, total destruction, combat)
4. Protection (Bodyguard, siege defense)
5. Salvage (Retrieval, looting, scavenging)
6. Investigation (Solve a crime, find a fugitive or missing person, investigate an anomaly, reconnaissance)

4. Detail the Contract

Each Contract type has a concise statement that describes its core action. This statement will have a number of blanks that correspond to themed lists to help you customize the Contract to suit the situation. Use these lists for inspiration, but don't feel bound by them. Use them as a guide when you modify the Contracts Rating and Clock. If the Contracts rating is too low or if you want to make it more risky, add in more Complications or requirements.

Each Contract type has a Baseline Rating, Clock, and number of Complications. Adding more Complications increase the Clock and may modify the Rating. Look at all the elements you used while detailing the Contract and find the highest Rating. Apply any modifiers due to Complications or Client Disposition. Write this as the Contract's Rating.

5. Finalize the Contract

Write all the details for the contract on the SM Contract sheet. Write the details the Crew will have access to on the Crew Contract sheet, and cut it off from the SM Contract sheet. Make a note of any Strains, NPCs, Locations, Ships, or Vehicles you may need.

6. Present it to the Crew

Present your completed Contract along with any other contracts to the Crew.

Randomized Contracts

When you look at Contract types, notice that each element of a Contract has a numbered list. These numbers correspond to funny-shaped dice that other role-playing games often use. If you are stuck for inspiration for new Contracts—or if you just want to exercise your imagination—use the funny dice or any other method of randomization to choose elements for a Contract, and weave them together to create the starting situation for a Contract.

The Milk Run

SAFE -2, CLOCK 3, 0-1 COMPLICATIONS

Milk Runs at their most simple are interstellar delivery services. The most benign example is picking up some simple but necessary goods or resources from a local space station, flying them to a nearby system, dropping them off, and getting paid, perhaps with a small complication along the way. A simple Milk Run may be a Contract the Crew picks up on their way to a more exciting and lucrative contract.

Pick up (Cargo/Passengers) from (Location) and deliver it to (Location).

CARGO OR PASSENGERS: 020

1. Common goods or resources: Cargo, Safe
2. Vital goods or resources: Cargo, Safe
3. Colonists set to settle on a new world: Passengers, Safe
4. Workers heading to a mine or factory: Passengers, Safe
5. An expert in their field reporting on their research or discovery: Passengers, Safe
6. A famous celebrity and their entourage: Passengers, Valuable, Safe
7. Fugitives from a war or disaster: Passengers, Risky
8. Contraband: Cargo, Illegal, Risky
9. Experimental technology: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
10. An ancient artifact: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
11. A diplomat, ambassador, or mediator and their entourage: Passengers, Valuable, Risky
12. A corporate VIP and their entourage: Passengers, Valuable, Risky
13. Sensitive or valuable information: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
14. A dangerous toxin, virus, or compound: Cargo, Valuable, Dangerous
15. Stolen information: Cargo, Illegal, Dangerous
16. Slaves heading to a short life of hardship and misery: Passengers, Illegal, Dangerous
17. A controversial political or religious figure and their bodyguards: Passengers, Valuable, Dangerous
18. A wanted criminal or gang: Passengers, Illegal, Dangerous
19. An agent of the law or bounty hunter delivering a criminal or political prisoner for trial, incarceration, or execution: Passengers, Dangerous
20. Elite soldiers going to or from a war front: Passengers, Deadly

LOCATION: 03

1. A safe location: a port, a warehouse, a factory, a dock, a home: Safe
2. A tense situation or location: Risky
3. A public but regulated area, carrying overt weapons and armor is prohibited: Risky
4. Somewhere you are definitely not supposed to be (a high-security private or government facility, private property): Illegal, Dangerous
5. A violently contested location: Deadly
6. The middle of an open and bloody war: Lethal
7. A nearby location, in this or a neighboring system
8. A far-off location, in a Distant system: +1 Clock

COMPLICATIONS: D8

1. The “pick-up” is actually a kidnapping or theft (Dangerous).
2. The “Delivery” is actually planting a weapon, bomb, surveillance software, kill squad, or incriminating evidence (Deadly).
3. Someone intends to intercept the delivery on the way to steal it, kill it, free it, or neutralize it (Dangerous).
4. The Client is an enemy of the Crew (Hostile): -1 to Ship Payment roll.
5. The Client is close to the Crew (Bonded): +1 to Ship Payment roll.
6. The Cargo/Passenger isn't what it seems: +1 to Ship Payment roll.

The Heist**RISKY -1, CLOCK 3, D-1 COMPLICATIONS**

Heists are all about getting in somewhere you're not supposed to be and getting to someone or something you're not supposed to. Other contracts may have aspects of Infiltration, but if your Contract is a Heist, Infiltration is the primary focus. Infiltration can mean sneaking in, or conning your way in. It doesn't mean storming the place, guns blazing. That's Assault.

Infiltrate (Location) and (Interact with) (Target).

LOCATION: D8

1. A public but regulated area, carrying overt weapons and armor is prohibited: Safe
2. A private location: a warehouse, a factory, an office, a home: Risky
3. A tense situation or location: Dangerous
4. Somewhere you are definitely not supposed to be (a high-security private or government facility, private property): Illegal, Dangerous
5. A violently contested location: Deadly
6. The middle of an open and bloody war: Lethal
7. A nearby location, in this or a neighboring system
8. A far-off location, in a Distant system: +1 Clock

INTERACT WITH: D8

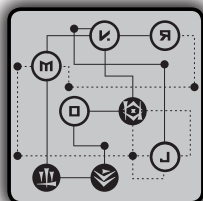
1. Plant: Risky
2. Con: Risky
3. Steal: Dangerous
4. Assassinate: Dangerous
5. Interrogate: Dangerous
6. Sabotage: Dangerous
7. Kidnap: Deadly
8. Destroy: Lethal

TARGET: D20

1. Colonists set to settle on a new world: Risky
2. Workers heading to a mine or factory: Risky
3. An expert in their field: Risky
4. A famous celebrity: Risky
5. Contraband: Illegal, Risky
6. Experimental technology: Risky
7. An ancient artifact: Risky
8. A diplomat, ambassador, or mediator: Risky
9. A corporate VIP: Risky
10. Sensitive or valuable information: Dangerous
11. Well-guarded vital goods or resources: Dangerous
12. A well-guarded shipment of: Dangerous
13. A dangerous toxin, virus, or compound: Dangerous
14. Stolen information: Illegal, Dangerous
15. Slaves heading to a short life of hardship and misery: Illegal, Dangerous
16. A rare and valuable item, trinket, or artifact: Deadly
17. A controversial political or religious figure and their bodyguards: Deadly
18. A wanted criminal or gang: Illegal, Deadly
19. An agent of the law, honest or corrupt: Deadly
20. A ruthless and violent leader: Lethal

COMPLICATIONS: D6

1. News of your intent has leaked to the authorities or the target (Deadly).
2. Circumstance or an event has swelled the location with huge crowds.
3. Another crew or gang is invading, infiltrating, or assaulting the same location at the same time (Dangerous).
4. The Target is unexpectedly being moved: +1 to Ship Payment roll.
5. There is only a limited window of opportunity to act (Dangerous).
6. The Client is an enemy that wants to set you up (Lethal).



The Assault

Deadly +1, Clock 3, 0-1 Complications

Assaults involve direct, violent action as their core component. You're hired guns on the most direct and violent path towards completing your mission. The only question remaining is the extent of the violence you're about to unleash. Roughing up some toughs? A heated firefight? A clash of vehicles or a dogfight? Or an all out ship-to-ship battle?

Assault (Target) to (Intent).

TARGET: D20

1. Colonists stubbornly refusing to move: Deadly
2. Workers on strike: Deadly
3. An expert in their field on the verge of a groundbreaking discovery: Deadly
4. A famous celebrity with controversial views and their entourage: Deadly
5. A lab holding experimental technology: Deadly
6. Private security guarding an ancient artifact: Deadly
7. A diplomat, ambassador, or mediator and their bodyguards: Deadly
8. A corporate VIP: Deadly
9. Sensitive or valuable information: Deadly
10. Well-guarded vital goods or resources: Deadly
11. A Deadly toxin, virus, or compound: Deadly
12. Stolen information: Deadly
13. Slaves rebelling against their masters: Illegal, Deadly
14. A rare and valuable item, trinket, or artifact: Deadly
15. Hostile alien beasts: Deadly
16. A controversial political or religious figure and their bodyguards: Deadly
17. A bloodthirsty wanted criminal or gang: Illegal, Deadly
18. An agent of the law, honest or corrupt: Deadly
19. A well-guarded convoy of vehicles or ships: Lethal
20. A ruthless and violent leader in their secure compound: Lethal

INTENT: D6

1. Clear the way for your Client or their agents: Deadly
2. Return something to its 'rightful owner': Deadly
3. Take something from them: Territory, prisoners, a friend, information, something valuable (Deadly)
4. Capture them to face justice, revenge, or a fate worse than death: Deadly
5. Send them packing, drive them out, force them to capitulate: Deadly
6. Wipe them out, no mercy: Lethal

COMPLICATIONS: D10

1. It turns out the Target is one of your friends (Deadly).
2. An old enemy with a score to settle is involved (Deadly).
3. It's in a public but regulated area; carrying overt weapons and armor is prohibited (Deadly).
4. An enemy with political or legal clout is involved (Deadly).
5. It's in the middle of a violently contested location (Deadly).
6. It's in the middle of an open and bloody war (Lethal).
7. A small army is involved (Lethal).
8. It's going to involve ship combat (Lethal).
9. They know you're coming and they're prepared: +1 Rating, to a max of +3.
10. It's in a far-off location in a Distant system: +1 Clock.

The Defense

DAUGHTER D. CLOCK 4. D-1 COMPLICATIONS

In many ways, a Defense Contract is the exact opposite of an Assault Contract. In fact, if you want, you can create the same situation as two separate Contracts, with one Client being the aggressor and the other being the target. If you do this, be sure the side that has access to the most money or social power (usually the more morally bankrupt) is paying more.

Protect (Target) from (Threat).

TARGET: D20

1. Colonists on an unprotected world: Dangerous.
2. An expert in their field who's made a disturbing discovery: Dangerous.
3. A famous celebrity on tour: Dangerous.
4. Experimental technology: Dangerous.
5. An ancient artifact: Dangerous.
6. A diplomat, ambassador, or mediator: Dangerous.
7. A corporate VIP with an unsavory job to do: Dangerous.
8. A community made up of the vulnerable, disenfranchised, and downtrodden: Dangerous.
9. A scout with valuable intelligence: Dangerous.
10. A peaceful but mysterious alien or AI: Dangerous.
11. Sensitive or valuable information: Dangerous.
12. A convoy of ships or vehicles carrying valuable cargo: Dangerous.
13. A dangerous toxin, virus, or compound: Dangerous.
14. Slaves heading to a short life of hardship and misery: Illegal, Dangerous.
15. Someone vulnerable who overheard the wrong conversation or witnessed a murder: Deadly.
16. A rare and valuable item, trinket, or artifact: Deadly.
17. A controversial political or religious figure: Deadly.
18. A wanted criminal or gang: Illegal, Lethal.
19. An agent of the law, honest or corrupt: Lethal.
20. A weary leader with a bloodstained past: Lethal.

THREAT: D10

1. "Freedom Fighters": Deadly.
2. Marauding pirates or criminals: Deadly.
3. A serial killer or stalker with the means to do real harm to their Target: Deadly.
4. A highly contagious pathogen or hallucinogen: Deadly.
5. Seasoned professionals, like the Crew: Lethal.
6. A black ops military unit: Lethal.
7. Bestial or bizarre aliens: Lethal.
8. A political, corporate, or religious figure with a lot of power: Lethal.
9. Mutated horrors: Lethal.
10. A disaster on a grand scale, natural or otherwise: Lethal.

COMPLICATIONS: D8

1. Your target or its handlers are cowardly and will not fight, or will bolt at the wrong moment: +1 Clock.
2. The Threat's motives are just, even if their methods are not: +1 Rating, to a maximum of +3.
3. The Threat is Friendly or bonded to the Crew, but committed to their task (Lethal).
4. The Target is Hostile to the Crew: -1 Rating, to a minimum of -3.
5. The Target has an addiction or vice that causes them to act irrationally: +1 Clock.
6. The Threat has greater Firepower or numbers, and they're not afraid to use it: +1 Rating, to a maximum of +3.
7. The true extent of the Target's guilt comes to light: -1 Rating, to a minimum of -3.
8. Innocents are put in danger when the Threat attacks (Lethal).

The Salvage

RISKY -1. CLOCK 4. 0-1 COMPLICATIONS

Salvage Contracts come in two varieties: either they have been hired to retrieve something for a Client, or they have acquired the rights to rummage through some ruins or a derelict ship and scavenge anything of value. Salvage operations are akin to treasure hunts or tomb raids in search of forgotten loot; they allow you to put the Crew in unnerving, environmentally hostile, or dangerous locations as they poke around for valuable items. Salvage operations are often somewhere remote or isolated—play on that isolation.

Go to (Location) and search for (Salvage).

SALVAGE: D10

1. Common goods or resources: Cargo, Risky
2. Vital goods or resources: Cargo, Risky
3. Survivors, no matter how unlikely: Risky
4. An expert in their field who stopped sending reports months ago: Passengers, Risky
5. Experimental technology: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
6. An ancient artifact: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
7. The remains of someone important to the Client: Risky
8. A record of what happened here: Dangerous
9. Sensitive or valuable information: Cargo, Valuable, Risky
10. A dangerous toxin, virus, or compound: Cargo, Valuable, Dangerous

LOCATION: D12

1. A derelict ship, only a few decades old: Dangerous
2. A derelict ship from a recent battle: Dangerous
3. An ancient derelict ship of strange design: Dangerous
4. An experimental ship or station, lost due to an accident: Dangerous
5. An abandoned station or settlement, a ghost town: Risky
6. An ancient alien ruin, desolate and strange: Dangerous
7. An abandoned city, reclaimed by the planet's elements: Dangerous
8. A resource-rich comet, made unstable by its proximity to a star: Dangerous
9. A rogue world or object, bereft of any star to orbit and hurtling through the void: Dangerous
10. A mined-out asteroid or moon, riddled with crumbling tunnels deep in the rock: Dangerous
11. An isolated location, avoided due to superstition and anomalies: Deadly
12. A far-off location, in a Distant system: Risky

COMPLICATIONS: DS

1. Someone beat the Crew to it, they're going to have to work hard to find what they're here for: +1 Clock.
2. There's something here with you, it's cunning, hostile, and murderous (Deadly).
3. The environment is incredibly unstable and constantly shifting: +1 Rating, to a maximum of +3.
4. An impending disaster or threat gives you a time limit: create an Episode Strain with a Fuse the same length as the Contracts Clock.
5. Someone else is here looking for the same thing, and they're unlikely to share (Deadly).
6. A terrible secret is hidden here: +1 Rating, to a maximum of +3.

The Investigation

RISKY -1, CLOCK 5, 1-2 COMPLICATIONS

Investigations come in two forms. The first of these are Whodunits, in which the investigation is about discovering the suspect's identity or proving their guilt, depending on whether or not the Crew knows who committed the crime. The second type are known as Anomalies, which are about getting to the bottom of some strange situation or phenomenon. The best way to play Investigations as the SM is with an open mind. Have multiple vague ideas as to what the answer to the Investigation may be, but play to find out which one is true, or if something you hadn't thought of is actually true. Always move the Crew forward when playing an Investigation, even when the Crew Members roll a Miss. Rule out one possibility or use up their resources, but give them their next logical step.

Investigate and resolve (Crime/Mystery).

CRIME: D12

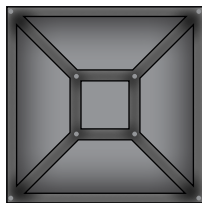
1. The murder of a close friend: -1 Rating
2. The murder of a well-paying enemy: +1 Rating
3. The theft of an irreplaceable heirloom: Risky
4. The murder of a powerful political, corporate, or religious figure: Dangerous
5. Someone important to the local community has gone missing, and they were last seen somewhere dangerous: Dangerous
6. The identity of an individual as a war criminal, accused of atrocities: Dangerous
7. The kidnapping of a valued friend: Deadly
8. The kidnapping of the relative of a powerful figure: Deadly
9. The sale of a recreational drug that's crippling a local community: Deadly
10. The Culprit of local serial killings: Lethal
11. A terrorist act that has claimed many lives: Lethal
12. The massacre of a large number of innocents: Lethal

MYSTERY: D10

1. An unusual signal or message of unknown origin, or sent from a Crew Member who does not recall sending it: Risky
2. An anomaly that has apparitions walking a station, ship, or settlement: Dangerous
3. A thriving new organism in the process of overgrowing a local community, making it unlivable for the inhabitants: Dangerous
4. A mysterious artifact with a dangerous unexplained power: Deadly
5. An ancient, abandoned vessel that has recently appeared in the system: Deadly
6. A debilitating disease or illness of unknown origin that is destabilizing and killing the local community: Deadly
7. A rogue Armature devastating local forces and settlements: Lethal
8. An anomaly that is rapidly aging anyone it touches: Lethal
9. An anomaly that has interrupted interstellar trade in this region: Lethal
10. An anomaly that may lead to a breakthrough in FTL or another field, or unleash an untold horror on the Galaxy: Lethal

COMPLICATIONS: D8

1. A Crew Member has been blamed for the Crime and you must prove their innocence (Dangerous).
2. The suspect is a friend of the Crew (Dangerous).
3. A Crew Member actually did it; you'll need to find a patsy, or prove it was justified and/or out of the Crew Member's control (Deadly).
4. The local community or authority is hiding an unforgivable secret (Deadly).
5. ...Before the Crime/Mystery happens again: Create an Episode Strain with a Fuse equal to the Contracts Clock.
6. ...Before the local authorities take drastic and disastrous action to resolve the Crime/Mystery themselves: Create an Episode Strain with a Fuse equal to the Contracts Clock, +1 Rating, up to a max of +3 Rating.
7. The mystery has a more mundane and sinister cause: Increase the Clock by +1.
8. Nonlinear time is involved: Increase the Clock by 1.



Locations

Locations are the places, big and small, where your Crew travel to and live out their lives.

Clusters, Systems, Worlds, Nebulae, and other objects in space serve as organizational tools and backdrops for the smaller locations where things actually happen. A bridge aboard a ship, a bar on a waypoint space station, or a busy market on a primitive planet is where things happen. The larger locations that are host to this smaller, more immediate location inform who and what is there, what it looks like, and what's at stake.

When creating larger locations, paint with a broad brush. Note how they relate to other locations, NPCs, and Groups, use the following tables to build a brief description of what makes it interesting, and leave it there.

You don't need to make your starmap huge. A handful of systems with interconnected relationships, alliances, rivalries, and problems will give you hours of play and plenty of grist.

The basic rule for how much location prep is enough is to ask yourself the following questions:

DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH TO RUN THE NEXT SESSION?

If you have enough ideas that you will be able to give the Crew Members something to do, or know how the universe will react to the Crew's actions, you're good.

ARE YOU HAVING FUN?

If you're having a good time making interesting locations, NPCs, and situations then continue making stuff! Be as general or as detailed as you like.

Once you have enough to run the next session, and you don't feel like writing any more, stop. Fill any gaps left during play by relying on the tools in the game and the other players. This is your license to leave blank places on the page and be surprised by developments as you play the game.

It's possible to play a compelling game of *Impulse Drive* in a single detailed system with some very involved NPCs and Groups for the Crew to interact with, especially if the Crew has nowhere to run or hide from the consequences of their actions.



Making Locations

Objects in Space

- ▶ **Cluster:** A large, close grouping of stars that are 200 to 500 light years across.
- ▶ **System:** One or more stars orbiting by various other Objects.
 - ◆ *Single star system:* A system with a single star.
 - ◆ *Binary system:* A system with two stars.
- ▶ **Nebula:** A very large cloud of dust and gas that exists in outer space, often a nursery for new stars and protostars. Nebulae often have a poetic name based on their appearance when viewed from a certain angle.
- ▶ **Black Hole:** An area in space where the force of gravity is so strong that light and everything else around it is pulled into it.
- ▶ **Rogue:** A lonely, dark world or other strange object that doesn't orbit a star and is traveling through the void.

DISTANCE BETWEEN OBJECTS

- ▶ Clusters near each other are always Remote.
- ▶ Clusters far away from each other are always Extreme.

Starmap

When you place a new System, Nebula, Black Hole, or Rogue object within or near a Cluster, choose a distance or roll 2d6. Assign that distance between the new object and an existing object:

- ▶ **10+:** Neighbors 50L
 - ◆ Galactic Neighbors are 50 Light Years or less away from each other. Neighbors may be referred to as a neighboring system.
- ▶ **8-9:** Local 100L
 - ◆ Local systems are generally between 50 and 100 Light Years apart.
- ▶ **6-7:** Distant 200L
 - ◆ Distant systems are between 100 and 200 light years apart, on the other side of the Cluster.
- ▶ **3-5:** Remote 500L
 - ◆ Systems at remote distances are generally outside of the Cluster, between 200 and 500 light years away. Distances between 2 neighboring clusters are Remote.
- ▶ **2:** Extreme 100,000L
 - ◆ Extreme systems are on the other side of the galaxy, or well outside of the galaxy.



In a System

Below you'll find lists of naturally occurring and artificial astronomical objects that are often found in star systems. These are often used to help organize your smaller locations.

- **Star:** A massive, hot ball of gas that produces light and exerts gravity. Often orbited by smaller objects.
 - ◆ *Supergiant:* A massive, incredibly bright star. Its sheer scale is hard for most sentient beings to grasp.
 - ◆ *Blue Giant:* A very large star giving off a bright blue light.
 - ◆ *White Giant:* A huge star giving off white light.
 - ◆ *Yellow Dwarf:* A small, steadily burning star, like Sol.
 - ◆ *Orange Dwarf:* A small star that sits between yellow and red dwarf stars in size and brightness.
 - ◆ *Red Dwarf:* A small star that gives off a dim red light.
 - ◆ *Pulsar:* A post-supernova star that rotates and sends out regular pulses of radiation.
 - ◆ *Supernova:* An exploding star that hurls light and matter into the surrounding space in a pyrotechnic display.
 - ◆ *Proto-Star:* A gas giant that may become a star if it gains enough mass.
- **World:** A planet or moon
 - ◆ *Earth-like:* A planet with a good coverage of land and liquid water, possibly with plant and animal life.
 - ◆ *Airless Wasteland:* It could have supported life, if only it had an atmosphere.
 - ◆ *Poisonous Wasteland:* It could have supported life were it not for all the poisonous gases in the atmosphere and surface.
 - **Natural:** The elements that make up this planet or its distance from its star(s) mean its atmosphere can't support life.
 - **Catastrophe:** Some event in its past filled its atmosphere and surface with poisonous gases.
 - ◆ *Hot Marble:* A small, hot planet uncomfortably close to a star.
 - ◆ *Gas Giant:* A huge ball of gas. Often a resource for Fuel for ships.
 - ◆ *Ice World:* A cold world at the extremities of a system.
 - ◆ *Artificial:* It has been constructed by a technologically advanced Civilization and may have a unique shape or environment.
- **Asteroid Belt:** A belt of huge rocks that orbit a star or planet.
- **Comet:** A fast-moving chunk of rock and ice that usually has a long, elliptical orbit around a star.
- **Wormhole Gate:** Large structures in space that use artificial wormholes to connect Clusters to each other. Often found in busy hub systems.

Settlement

A place or structure where people live.

- **Station:** A structure in space where people live and/or work.
- **Domed:** Domed to ensure livable conditions on a hostile world.
- **Outpost:** A small settlement of 50 people or less.
- **Town:** A settlement with 50,000 people or less.
- **City:** A settlement with 500,000 people or less.
- **Metropolis:** A settlement with 2 million people or less.
- **Megalopolis:** A gigantic settlement with a billion people or less.
- **Hollows:** Built into a hollowed-out asteroid.

Rooms

In a ship or on a station:

- ▶ **Bridge:** Room housing consoles for operating much of the ship's systems. Captain and bridge crew operate and command the ship from the Bridge.
- ▶ **Quarters:** Personal living space for crew and passengers. May be individual rooms or shared spaces.
- ▶ **Cargo Bay:** A large compartment for storing cargo.
- ▶ **Engineering:** Room where the drive is housed and other systems can be accessed directly for repairs and maintenance.
- ▶ **Mess:** Communal space for eating and socialization.
- ▶ **Rec Room:** Room for recreational activities and exercise.
- ▶ **Research Lab:** Room with advanced equipment for experimentation and observation.

Places In a Settlement

- ▶ **Spaceport:** A Station or port in a city where ships can land to repair, and take on or sell passengers and cargo.
- ▶ **Hospital:** A place to go for medical assistance.
- ▶ **Bar:** A place to go to enjoy recreational drugs and casual socialization.
- ▶ **Headquarters:** Central location for an organization suited to their purpose.
- ▶ **Sacred:** It's considered sacred, holy, or significant by a group, often religious or historical in nature.
- ▶ **Market:** A centralized location for various merchants to sell goods and services.
- ▶ **Residential:** An area devoted to living spaces. It may be expansive, comfortable, suburban, or cramped.

Interesting locations

Use these ideas as inspirations to set scenes or make up your own ideas.

- ▶ An isolated ruin, ancient and alien
- ▶ An unstable cave system
- ▶ A dirty side street, dimly lit
- ▶ A wealthy facility, clean, polished, and impressive
- ▶ A derelict dreadnought ship, adrift and abandoned
- ▶ A seedy bar, busy with illegitimate activity
- ▶ A customs checkpoint, with sensors and security drones or bored guards
- ▶ A cramped habitat building, grimy and overpopulated
- ▶ A dark warehouse, half filled with cargo containers
- ▶ A busy shopping center, filled with crowds
- ▶ A loud concert or live performance, filled with a diverse multitude of revellers
- ▶ An underground base for criminals or rebels
- ▶ A manicured garden, kept tidy and precise
- ▶ An overgrown jungle, with multicolored plants and a cacophony of calls from wildlife
- ▶ A crashed ship, billowing smoke and fire
- ▶ A barren desert, with oddly-colored sand
- ▶ An exceptionally cold room full of data servers
- ▶ A digital space, familiar but strange
- ▶ A crowded docking station, overworked and undersupplied
- ▶ A cheap motel room, cramped and unsanitary

Tags for Locations

Location tags can help you quickly describe how a location behaves in regards to the Fiction and some rules. Use this list as a starting point, but feel free to create your own tags that describe a location's unique properties or behavior.

- **Restricted:** Access is restricted to authorized persons only. Trespassers may be detained, or killed.
- **Regulated:** It's illegal to carry weapons or wear armor in these areas.
- **Lawless:** There are no laws governing this place, or no authority to enforce them.
- **Peaceful:** Trouble or violence is rarely seen here.
- **Police State:** It's heavily policed and its laws are aggressively enforced.
- **Criminal:** Committing crimes and breaking laws is everyday.
- **Supply:** _____; It's easy to find this particular type of goods cheap.
- **Demand:** _____; It's hard to find this particular type of goods, and they fetch a high price.
- **Hub:** It's a center for commercial or cultural exchange and travel.
- **Fortified:** It has defenses that help it fend off attacks.
- **Prison:** It's used to isolate criminals from society and punish them.
- **Secret:** Its existence or whereabouts are not common knowledge.
- **Hostile:** It's actively dangerous to those that enter it.
- **Dark:** It's dark, with no light of its own.
- **Suffocating:** It has no atmosphere, or the atmosphere is toxic.
- **Unstable:** It's unstable in some way and likely to collapse, explode, erupt, or otherwise change violently.
- **Isolated:** It's remote or somewhere obscure and out of reach, requiring a difficult journey to get to.
- **Pristine:** It's clean and orderly, without blemishes or stains.
- **Grimy:** It's dirty, rusty, covered in muck or grime.
- **Worn:** It looks old and scratched, as though it has seen hard use for a long time.
- **Abandoned:** Whatever used to live here has left, or died out. It may have fallen into disrepair, filled with dust and detritus, or been overgrown.
- **Diverse:** It's known for having a huge variety of cultures, species, and organizations.

Connections

Connections describe how the location relates to the Crew, other locations, NPCs, and Groups.

Examples:

- **It's home to:** (NPCs, Groups)
- **It's owned by:** (NPC, Groups)
- **It's near:** (other locations)
- **It was built by:** (Groups, Cultures)
- **It's within:** (Locations)

Description

After using tags and connections to give your location its qualities, write a brief description of a few sentences about what makes it notable. You reference the description when you introduce the location to the players, or whenever you need to describe or reference something about it.

NPCs

NPCs are the people and creatures the Crew encounters on their travels. Some are friendly or benign, others may be hostile or predatory. Most NPCs have their own desire or goal, described in their Impulse. This is what informs the decisions they make and how they act to fulfill their Impulse.

Treat your NPCs as real people and creatures. Let them follow their impulses around, and mostly care about their safety. When they have the advantage, they push it, and when they don't they back down. When things are hopeless and they're backed into a corner, they act desperately.

When you make an NPC, whether it's before or between sessions or during play, write in enough to get started and fill in the blanks as you play with them.

Make your NPCs diverse. Whether they're aliens with unique physiology and cultures, or humans with mixed ancestry, names cobbled together from different cultures, and interesting accents. Give your NPCs quirks and behaviors that makes them stand out.

Example NPCs

Here are a few example NPCs to help give you inspiration:

- ▶ An everyday civilian, only important if the Crew interacts with them
- ▶ A brutish thug, protecting their territory with violence
- ▶ A wily merchant, ready to make a deal
- ▶ A feral animal, hungry, desperate, vicious, and scared
- ▶ A suspicious agent of the law, ready to believe the worst
- ▶ A terrifying monster, hidden, alien, and deadly
- ▶ A lazy security guard, underpaid and disinterested
- ▶ A businesslike pirate, happy to leave you alive if you let them take what they want
- ▶ A brutal mercenary, ready and willing to kill for money
- ▶ A faithful soldier, believing in their cause and their people
- ▶ A large predator, stealthy and cunning
- ▶ A curious drone, too nosy for its own good
- ▶ A leader or commander, confident in their authority
- ▶ A petty con artist, in way over their head
- ▶ A distracted scientist, caught up in their research

NPC Tags

- ▶ **Mechanical:** All or part of its body is mechanical.
- ▶ **Digital:** It's a digital entity, existing in computer systems.
- ▶ **Intelligent:** It's roughly as smart as an average person.
- ▶ **Superintelligent:** It's magnitudes smarter than an average person.
- ▶ **Devious:** It's skilled at deception.
- ▶ **Amorphous:** Its anatomy and organs are bizarre and unusual.
- ▶ **Cowardly:** It prizes its own survival above all else, and only uses violence if it knows it has an overwhelming advantage.
- ▶ **Fearless:** It rarely shies away from a dangerous situation.
- ▶ **Mobile:** It has a unique form of Movement, and moves in unusual or surprising ways.
- ▶ **Stealthy:** It's adept at sneaking and not being found.
- ▶ **Terrifying:** Its presence and appearance evoke fear.
- ▶ **Extradimensional:** It's from beyond the known world.
- ▶ **Swarm:** It's made up of countless smaller organisms.
- ▶ **Small:** It's half as large as an average person.
- ▶ **Large:** It's much bigger than an average person.
- ▶ **Huge:** It's massive, dwarfing an average person.
- ▶ **Ancient:** It has existed longer than some civilizations.

Impulse

An NPC's Impulse is what they're driven to do. Either it's a goal they pursue, or a behavior that defines them.

IMPULSE	1-2 THEY DESIRE:	3-4 THEY FEAR:	5-6 THEY BELIEVE:
2 DESTRUCTION:	To kill and annihilate.	Death.	That all must be sacrificed to _____.
3 CREATION:	To give birth or create new life.	That they will be surpassed.	That their faith speaks of the true creation of all.
4 DISCOVERY:	To reveal the truth.	Their secret will be revealed.	That scientific logical deduction is the only way to understand.
5 PASSION:	To own, collect, or accrue wealth.	The disinterest or pity of others.	That life is for living and seeking pleasure.
6 HOPE:	To uplift or save the desperate.	Oppression.	That they are chosen, destined, or blessed.
7 DESPAIR:	To give up and fade into oblivion.	Failure at every turn.	That they are damned or cursed.
8 LOVE:	To find true love.	Loneliness and solitude.	That good will prevail.
9 ANGER:	To have revenge.	The violence of others.	That the wicked or unworthy will be punished.
10 POWER:	To conquer.	The weight of rulership.	That those who rule are divinely chosen.
11 CONTROL:	To impose law and order.	The loss of their freedom.	That order is required for peace.
12 CHAOS:	To pull down a government.	Anarchy and chaos.	That anarchy will provide true freedom.

Connections

Connections describe how the NPC relates to the Crew, locations, other NPCs, and Groups.

EXAMPLES:

- ▶ It leads the _____
- ▶ It's loyal to _____
- ▶ It's a member of _____
- ▶ It lives in _____
- ▶ It hates/loves _____

Health

Health Describes how much Harm an NPC can suffer before they die or stop functioning. Here is the breakdown for how much health you should give an NPC:

- ▶ It's harmless and weak with no defenses: 1 Health
- ▶ It's armored or hardy: 2 Health
- ▶ It has strong defenses or is very tough: 3 Health
- ▶ It has very high defenses and is very tough: 4 to 6 Health.

Attack

If the NPC has a particular weapon, they deal that weapon's Harm. If the NPC has a unique way of attacking, Give the attack a descriptive name and assign it appropriate ranges and a Harm number:

RANGE TAGS:

- ▷ **Skirmish:** Cramped, chaotic exchange of physical blows & small arms fire.
- ▷ **Firefight:** Moving from cover to cover, exchanging fire.
- ▷ **Sniping:** Precise long distance strikes, tense games of hide and seek.

HARM:

- ▶ **Its attack is reasonably weak:** 1 Harm
- ▶ **Its attack is somewhat dangerous:** 2 Harm
- ▶ **Its attack is very dangerous:** 3 Harm
- ▶ **Its attack is extremely dangerous:** 4 Harm
- ▶ **Its attack is lethal:** 5 Harm.

Calls

NPC Calls are like SM Calls, but more specific to how that NPC behaves. If you NPC is going to feature heavily, or if you are using them as a group of similar individuals, you may give them a few Calls to describe their behavior. When an NPC Call mentions "them" it's referring to the individual (or individuals) whom the NPC is acting against or otherwise interacting with.

EXAMPLE NPC CALLS:

- ▶ Seek guidance from a higher authority
- ▶ Slow them down with bureaucracy
- ▶ Threaten them with violence
- ▶ Steal something when no one is paying attention
- ▶ Stalk them silently
- ▶ Strike suddenly and violently
- ▶ Dismiss them as unimportant or unpleasant
- ▶ Make a deal in bad faith
- ▶ Fire at them haphazardly
- ▶ Use tactics and training to outmaneuver them
- ▶ Hint at your attraction to them

Description

You can write a brief description of the NPC, describing them and their connections in more detail. Leave this very open, with room to write more notes during play. Only write one or two sentences.

Disposition

NPCs can have a Disposition towards the Crew, the ship, or even specific Crew Members. If you need to track how the NPC views a Crew Member, use this scale to determine how the NPC behaves towards them. The Crew can influence how NPCs view them based on how they behave. While more fleshed out NPCs may have more conflicted or complicated feelings towards the Crew Members, this is a quick way to establish how new NPCs or nobodies are most likely to react to the characters.

HOSTILE

They see you as an enemy or intruder, and will attack you or try to drive you off.

SUSPICIOUS

They see you as untrustworthy or suspicious, and will watch you warily.

NEUTRAL

They don't have any inclination towards you one way or the other. Perhaps they don't even notice you.

FRIENDLY

They like you. They're generally happy to see you, but they won't go out of their way or put themselves at risk on your behalf.

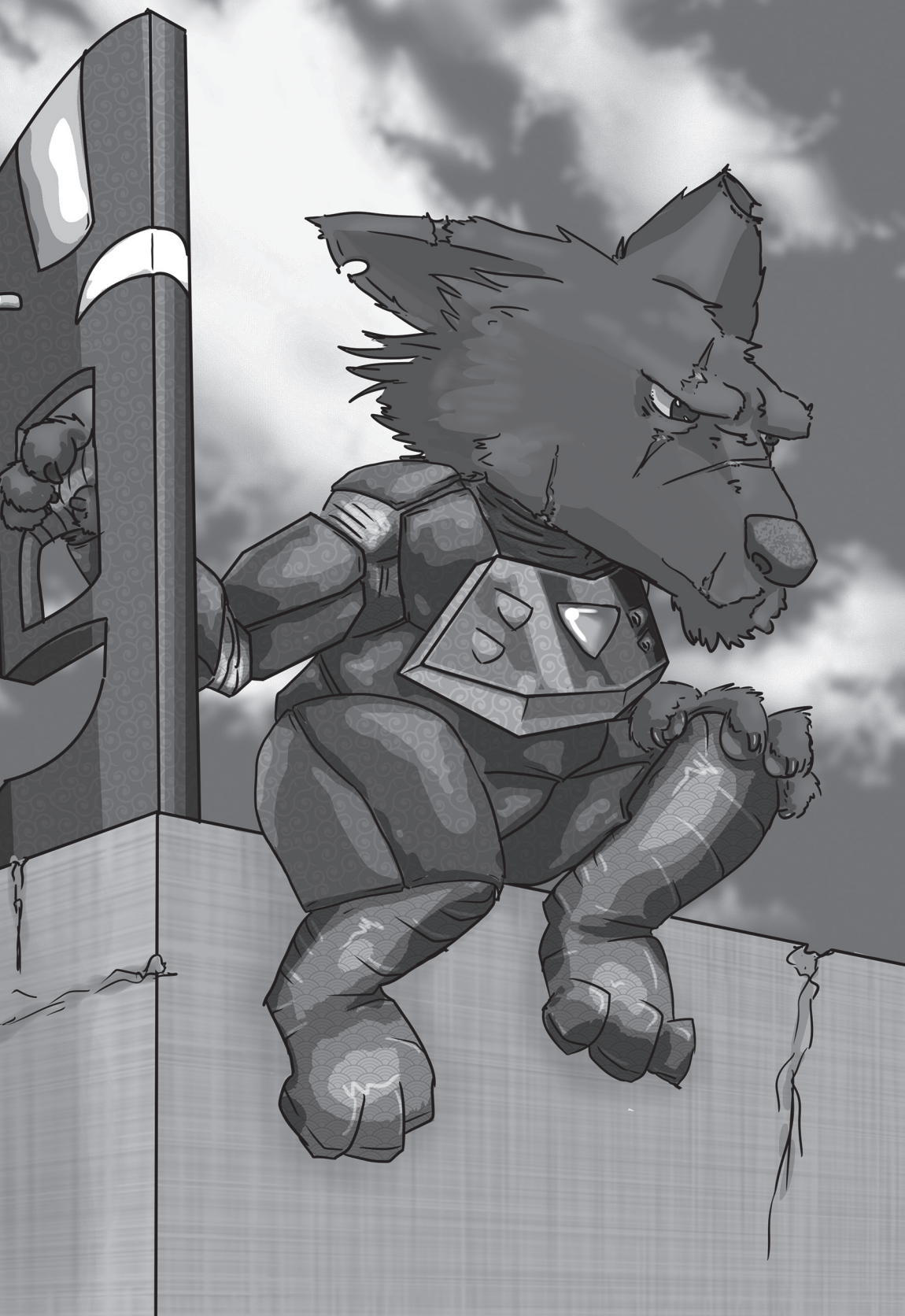
BONDED

They have an important bond or relationship with you. They're likely to want to help you out in whatever way they can, though perhaps at a cost. They will also expect the same kind of help from you when they need it.

INHERITED

The NPC's Disposition is inherited from the Group that they belong to.





NPCs as Adversaries

Some NPCs will obviously and explicitly be adversaries, providing conflict of either a physical, intellectual, emotional, or otherwise nature. Keep these NPCs simple and direct. If there is a bunch of pirates, or soldiers, or thugs making life difficult for the Crew, treat the bunch as a single large NPC. Give them a collective value of Health, and if that value is reduced to zero, then they have all died, been incapacitated, surrendered, or fled.

The actual individuals in a gang may still be spread out over a larger area and coming at the crew from different angles and using smart battle tactics, but when a player attacks and neutralizes one of them, drop the group's health by the amount of Harm. This may be more Harm than an individual has, but it shows the group's overall effectiveness or willingness to fight.

The Area tag on weapons is described Fictionally first like everything else. You describe the effects over an area. Perhaps the PC doesn't need a direct line of sight to hit an enemy in cover. It may not kill an entire squad of sector cops, but it sends them scrambling and taking cover. Are any of the Crew's allies within the blast radius? That's not good!

This may feel like it's shortchanging the player on damage compared to individual NPCs affected in an area, but it expresses that a larger group that is practiced at working together is less vulnerable to this kind of tactic than a small gang of individuals.

If your group comes to the conclusion that the attack in a particular situation is incredibly lethal and everyone caught in it would be incapacitated, take the number of enemies hit, multiply that by the Health value for an individual, and subtract that amount from the group's total Health.

Basic NPCs

NPCs in *Impulse Drive* are separated into two broad categories: People and Aliens. These categories are designed to describe how the NPCs relate to the Crew in a general sense, not the NPC's species or origin.

People

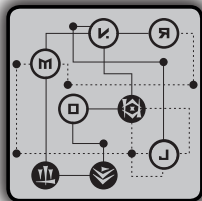
The People category is used to describe individuals or groups you have a chance of understanding in general. Their motivations are something you as players can relate to, even if your characters can't immediately understand them. People could be humans, other sentient or self-aware species, or even advanced AI or computer systems.

Aliens

The Aliens category is used to describe individuals or groups that you cannot easily comprehend, communicate with, or relate to. Their behavior is unpredictable, unfamiliar, or inherently hostile. Aliens can cover animals, interdimensional beings, hive mind entities, strange phenomena, viruses or diseases, or individuals stripped of their personality. It's possible that an Alien NPC may Move to being a Person NPC if the Crew comes to understand it, or it becomes a part of a society.

Whether an NPC or group falls into the Person or Alien category can vary between different groups of players depending on the setting you create. Does the Crew belong to an isolated or xenophobic civilization that sees all external cultures as Alien? Does the Crew live in a multicultural melting pot of species from all over their Cluster? Is there a large invading force pushing against allied space? Are AI, advanced artificial systems, and other technologies seen as people or things? How much like civilians are your AI? How different does your everyday space citizen look from an average human?

These lists are quick ways for you to get stats on an NPC at a glance. Use these as the foundation upon which you layer your NPC's characteristics. These types describe the numbers they're often encountered in, the sort of situations you will encounter them in, or the type of roles you will see them filling.



People NPCs

Civilians

Business owners; employees; middle management; families; bystanders; bureaucrats

- ▶ **Tags:** Intelligent, Cowardly
- ▶ **Impulse:** To try to live your everyday life
- ▶ **Connections:** Is a member of _____, Follows _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 1
- ▶ **A family or small gathering, Gang:** 5
- ▶ **A crowd or mob, Mob:** 15

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Panicked struggling:** Skirmish, 1 Harm

DISPOSITION:

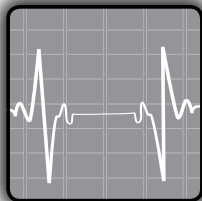
- ▶ **Inherited**
- ▶ **Suspicious of criminals and scum**
- ▶ **Neutral to everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Civilians are people that fill the world. A civilian has simple wants—to do their job and live peacefully.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Cause an obstruction through panic, incompetence, or bureaucracy**
- ▶ **Be threatened by death or injury in a dangerous situation**
- ▶ **Get out of the way of obvious danger**
- ▶ **Stay in the background and try not to get involved**
- ▶ **Cower in fear or misery in the face of danger**



Mooks

Thugs; criminals; pirates; fanatics (ideological, political, religious)

- ▶ **Tags:** Intelligent, Cowardly
- ▶ **Impulse:** To incite conflict and violence
- ▶ **Connections:** Follows _____, Is a member of _____, Victimizes _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 2
- ▶ **A small gang or boarding crew, Gang:** 10
- ▶ **A large gang or pirate ship crew, Mob:** 20
- ▶ **All the members of a gang in a territory, or a pirate base, Force:** 50

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Grappling and dirty fighting:** Skirmish, 1 Harm
- ▶ **Ugly shiv or bludgeon:** Skirmish, silent, 2 Harm
- ▶ **Pistol:** Skirmish, Firefight, 1 Harm
- ▶ **Assault Rifle:** Firefight, Full Auto, 2 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ **Inherited**
- ▶ **Hostile to agents of the law**
- ▶ **Suspicious of everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Your average thugs and low-ranking members of criminal or fringe groups. Mooks are the dime-a-dozen violent individuals that make up shady organizations. You often come across them in small or medium sized groups.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Look for an angle of some illicit pay**
- ▶ **Throw your weight around and cause trouble**
- ▶ **Rely on threats and bullying outsiders and subordinates**
- ▶ **Quickly resort to violence when you have the advantage in a charged situation**
- ▶ **Call for reinforcements when you don't have the advantage**
- ▶ **Give in when you're clearly outnumbered and outmatched**



Authorities

Police; private security; religious authority; agents of justice, order, or law

- ▶ **Tags:** Intelligent, Fearless
- ▶ **Impulse:** To enforce order or law
- ▶ **Connections:** Is a member of _____, Has Authority over _____, Is subordinate to _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 2
- ▶ **Patrol squad, Gang:** 10
- ▶ **Highly trained special response squad, Gang:** 15
- ▶ **Large organized anti-riot force or security detail, Mob:** 20
- ▶ **Entire police force or local department, force,** 50

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Batons and stun sticks:** Skirmish, Stun, 2 Harm
- ▶ **Pistol:** Skirmish, Firefight, 1 Harm
- ▶ **Assault Rifle:** Firefight, Full Auto, 2 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ **Inherited**
- ▶ **Suspicious of criminals**
- ▶ **Friendly to agents of the law**
- ▶ **Neutral to everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Authority describes those who police and maintain order in a location. They may be police, employed by a government, or private security, or freelance agents of the law.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Follow orders from superiors**
- ▶ **Enforce the laws in your jurisdiction**
- ▶ **Confront and arrest those committing a crime**
- ▶ **Only use violence as a last resort**
- ▶ **Show your prejudices through selective enforcement of law**
- ▶ **Escalate quickly against perceived violent criminals**



Hunters

Police investigators; private detectives; freelance bounty hunters

- **Tags:** Intelligent, Devious
- **Impulse:** To pursue, expose, and capture
- **Connections:** Is hunting _____, Is employed by _____

HEALTH:

- **Individual:** 3
- **Elite squad of hunters:** 12

ATTACK:

(Choose 2)

- **Melee Weapon:** Skirmish, Silent, 2 Harm
- **Superb Pistol:** Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, 2 Harm
- **Assault Rifle:** Firefight, Full Auto, 2 Harm
- **Shotgun:** Skirmish, Messy, Discharge, 3 Harm
- **Sniper Rifle:** Sniping, AP, 1 Damage, Illegal, Discharge, 3 Harm
- **Grenades:** Firefight, Area, Messy, Forceful, 1 Damage, Illegal, 3 Uses, 4 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- **Hostile to Criminals**
- **Friendly to agents of the law**
- **Suspicious of everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Hunters are agents of the law (or the highest bidder) who pursue criminals (or their targets). They seek out information, track down their prey, and capture or kill them, depending on their orders. Some hunters try to solve crimes and bring the criminals to justice, other hunters are simply charged with hunting wanted criminals and bringing them to justice. Hunters (mostly) work within the law.

CALLS:

- **Barter, intimidate, or seduce others for information on your prey**
- **Investigate the scene of a crime for clues**
- **Doggedly follow your prey**
- **Bend the law to get the lead you need**

Soldiers

Armed forces; private armies

- ▶ **Tags:** Intelligent, Fearless.
- ▶ **Impulse:** To follow Orders and fight the enemy
- ▶ **Connections:** Is subordinate to _____, Is the enemy of _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 3
- ▶ **Squad, Gang:** 15
- ▶ **Company, Mob:** 30
- ▶ **Army, Force:** 80

ATTACK:

(Choose 2)

- ▶ **Melee Weapon:** Skirmish, Silent, 2 Harm
- ▶ **Superb Pistol:** Skirmish, Firefight, Discharge, 2 Harm
- ▶ **Assault Rifle:** Firefight, Full Auto, 2 Harm
- ▶ **Shotgun:** Skirmish, Messy, Discharge, 3 Harm
- ▶ **Sniper Rifle:** Sniping, AP, 1 Damage, Illegal, Discharge, 3 Harm
- ▶ **Grenades:** Firefight, Area, Messy, Forceful, 1 Damage, Illegal, 3 Uses, 4 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ **Inherited**
- ▶ **Hostile to the enemy**
- ▶ **Friendly to your comrades and civilian members**
- ▶ **Bonded to your leader**
- ▶ **Suspicious of everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Soldiers are members of armed forces that are loyal to their parent group or cause. Soldiers have good military training in weapons and tactics.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Follow orders**
- ▶ **Fight the enemy**
- ▶ **Call for reinforcements when things get bad**
- ▶ **Fight to the last soldier for your cause**

Brutes

Enhanced individuals; members of a particularly dangerous species; feral soldiers

- ▶ **Tags:** Intelligent, Fearless, Terrifying, Large
- ▶ **Impulse:** To smash, crush, and destroy
- ▶ **Connections:** It terrorizes _____, It only follows the commands of _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 6
- ▶ **Vicious pack, Gang:** 20

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Devastating blow:** Skirmish, Messy, Forceful, 5 Harm
- ▶ **Thrown debris, furniture, or object:** Firefight, Forceful, 4 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ **Bonded to their Alpha**
- ▶ **Friendly to their pack**
- ▶ **Hostile to Everyone else**

DESCRIPTION:

Brutes are enhanced individuals or particularly violent and dangerous species. They are often territorial, friendly to their own pack, and loyal to their Alpha. Brutes can be seen as savage packs or elite thugs for criminals or enforcers.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Intimidate with an overwhelming display of force**
- ▶ **Smash and crush your surroundings**
- ▶ **Crush someone nearby**
- ▶ **Throw them a long way, with a hard landing**
- ▶ **Lose your temper and your awareness of your surroundings**

Leader

Commanders, captains, alphas, chiefs, rulers, luminaries

- **Tags:** Intelligent, Devious
- **Impulse:** To lead your group according to their values
- **Connections:** Is the leader of _____

HEALTH:

- **Individual:** 3

ATTACK:

- **Inherited from your group,** + 1 weapon

DISPOSITION:

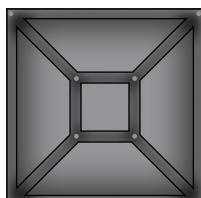
- **Inherited**
- **Friendly to your followers**
- **Bonded to your trusted inner circle**

DESCRIPTION:

Leaders are the people in charge of a group of individuals. Anyone who's important enough to name as a leader fits here. Leaders inherit many properties from the group that they are the leader of. Look to their group or subordinates for Dispositions, attacks, extra tags and calls.

CALLS:

- **Sacrifice your subordinates to keep yourself safe**
- **Order your subordinates to attack**
- **Lord your superiority over others**



Alien NPCs

Stranger

Unique individual from outside galactic civilization; inter-dimensional interloper; ancient being with hidden agenda

- ▶ **Tags:** Super-intelligent, Devious, Amorphous, Mobile, Stealthy, Extradimensional, Ancient
- ▶ **Impulse:** To enact your mysterious plan
- ▶ **Connections:** It's a traveler from _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Individual:** 6

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Cold, vice-like grip:** Skirmish, Silent, 5 Harm
- ▶ **Psychic assault:** Skirmish, Firefight, 3 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ Neutral to its pawns
- ▶ Friendly to its own kind
- ▶ Hostile to everyone else

DESCRIPTION:

The Stranger is an enigmatic individual that is spoken of in hushed rumors and legends. It stalks known and unknown space, leaving devastation behind it without rhyme or reason. The Stranger may have thralls, in the form of worshipers or unwilling slaves acting out its will or relaying information to it. The Stranger is often an immortal being that may not be killed by conventional means, only delayed.

CALLS:

- ▶ Destroy a location offscreen, leaving destruction in your wake
- ▶ Work against them through thralls
- ▶ Collect strange artifacts of unknown purpose
- ▶ When they defeat your physical form, return later and elsewhere
- ▶ Disrupt established power structures and order

Swarm

Nanomachine grey goo; mindless hordes, hive mind; swarm of creatures

- ▶ **Tags:** Amorphous, Fearless, Mobile, Stealthy, Terrifying, Swarm
- ▶ **Impulse:** To overwhelm and consume
- ▶ **Connections:** Its home territory is _____, It's infesting _____

HEALTH:

- ▶ **Small detachment, Gang:** 10
- ▶ **Swarm, Mob:** 20
- ▶ **Horde, Force:** 50

ATTACK:

- ▶ **Swarming bites and scratches:** Skirmish, 3 Harm
- ▶ **Projectile attack:** Skirmish, Firefight, 2 Harm

DISPOSITION:

- ▶ **Hostile to invaders of its territory**

DESCRIPTION:

Swarms represent large groups of smaller components or organisms. This could be a swarm of insects (small or large), Grey goo made of nanomachines, a hive mind species, or civilians controlled by a virus. The swarm is made of countless constituent parts.

CALLS:

- ▶ **Disrupt and distort technological systems, causing malfunctions**
- ▶ **Announce your presence with glimpses of Movement and disturbing sounds**
- ▶ **Emerge from cracks, vents, and small spaces**
- ▶ **Corner and surround them**
- ▶ **Swarm over them in an attempt to consume**

HEALTH:

ATTACK:

- DISPOSITION:**

- DESCRIPTION:**

CALLS:

-

Enigma

A hidden intelligence in an unlikely place; a living puzzle or maze; a coveted person or thing, fleeing across civilized space

- **Tags:** Superintelligent, Devious, Amorphous, Extradimensional, Ancient
- **Impulse:** To hide and manipulate from the shadows
- **Connections:** It makes _____ an unlikely home, Only _____ knows of its mysteries

HEALTH:

- N/A

ATTACK:

- N/A

DISPOSITION:

- Suspicious of Civilized Space

DESCRIPTION:

The Enigma is the strangeness of space life. It could be a living nebula intelligence, or person with a unique gift that others wish to manipulate. If you have something weird, unusual or baffling you want to have in the game, then the Enigma suit your needs.

CALLS:

- Present them with unanswerable questions
- Expose them to the strangeness of the unknown
- Hint at a strange truth



Making NPC Ships

Creating a ship that's not owned by the PCs is a cross between making a location and making an NPC. If the players only interact with the NPC ship through their own ship, then you would treat it as an NPC in many respects with only one or two voices to represent whomever is in charge of communicating with the PCs; typically this task falls to the commanding officer or their subordinates. Instead of having Health and Harm, the ships have tags that describe their qualities, weapons, hits, and systems.

When you create an NPC ship, choose a class and subclass for its tags, then give it a name, a look, and—if useful—a leader NPC.

When the NPC ship takes Damage, if it has Shielding, you may Discharge Shielding to ignore damage from 1 attack. If not, mark off one of its Hits for each Damage it suffers.

If the Crew ever captures an NPC Ship, there is a list of the full stat range for the ships under Vehicles, or you can transcribe the ship's details to a new Ship sheet if the Crew intends to keep it. Warn them that piracy is a capital crime that's going to put them at Hostile Disposition with any lawful society, and that they're going to have a lot of powerful people and groups coming after them.

Use these steps to create an NPC ship:

1. Choose or write a ship name.
2. Choose up to 3 or write your own look.
3. If applicable, write a notable NPC to act as the voice of the ship.
4. Choose a ship class and subclass.
5. Choose the specified secondary or weapon systems.
6. Write up to 2 ship calls.

Ship names:

Dauntless, Enterprise, Endeavor, The Gull, The Yellow Rose, The Annabelle, Catch Me If You Can, Late Breakfast, Ask Questions Later, Starkiller, Bad Romance, Avinder

Ship look:

Sleek, Glossy, Smooth, Clean, Symmetrical, Organic, Matte, Black, Angled, Sharp, Ugly, Boxy, Rusted, Grimy, Damaged, Worn, Looming, Predatory, Unassuming, Exposed Wires, Conduits, Sensors

NPC Ship Calls:

Write up to three calls that describes how the ship and its crew behaves.

- » Maneuver into a favorable position
- » Fire weapons at them
- » Hail them
- » Dock with them
- » Hold steady
- » Escape

NPC Ship Classes, Systems, and Tags:

Choose a ship class and subclass. This determines how big it is and its various tags. Ship subclasses have different layouts depending on their general purpose.

CIVILIAN VEHICLES

- ▷ **Speeder:** 1 Hits, 1 Crew, Fragile
- ▷ **Civilian Vehicle:** 1 Hits, 1 Crew, Fragile

MILITARY VEHICLES

- ▷ **APC:** 2 Hits, 1 Crew, Autogun, Armored, Cargo
- ▷ **Tank:** 2 Hits, 2 Crew, Autogun, Cannon, Armored

FLYING AND SPACEFARING VEHICLES

- ▷ **Shuttle:** 3 Hits, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Fighter:** 2 Hits, 1 Crew, 1 Armaments, Shielding, Armored, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Agile Armature:** 3 Hits, 1 Crew, Autogun, Sand Thrower, Shielding, Armored, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Blaster Armature:** 3 Hits, 1 Crew, Cannon, SWARM Missiles, Sandthrower, Shielding, Armored, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Heavy Armature:** 4 Hits, 1 Crew, Autogun, Cannon, Shielding, Armored, Spacefaring

FRIGATES

- ▷ **Gunboat:** 6 Hits, Lasers, Missiles, Plasma Cannon, Railgun, Shielding, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Freighter:** 6 Hits, Lasers, Missiles, Shielding, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Smuggler:** 5 Hits, Lasers, Shielding, Armored, Hidden Compartments, Cargo, Spacefaring

CRUISERS

- ▷ **Standard:** 10 Hits, Lasers, Shielding, Armored, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Warship:** 12 Hits, Lasers, Missiles, Plasma Cannon, Railgun, Shielding, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring

CAPITAL SHIPS

- ▷ **Standard:** 15 Hits, Lasers, Shielding, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring
- ▷ **Devastator:** 18 Hits, Lasers, Missiles, Plasma Cannon, Railgun, Shielding, Armored, Cargo, Spacefaring

NPC SHIP & VEHICLE TAGS

- ▷ **Armored:** It has solid armor that can turn away any amount of small arms fire. You can ram into other vehicles without risking major damage.
- ▷ **Fragile:** It's susceptible to small arms fire, and doesn't protect its occupants from attack well.
- ▷ **Spacefaring:** It can travel in the vacuum of space, although it doesn't have FTL capabilities.
- ▷ **Equipped N:** It has N pieces of Vehicle weapons & equipment. Select from the Vehicle Equipment list.
- ▷ **N Crew:** It requires a minimum of N Crew to pilot it.
- ▷ **N Hits:** It can withstand N Hits of Damage before it's destroyed or disabled.

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT:

- ▷ **Autogun:** 1 Damage, Crash, Dogfighting, Mounted, Refurbished
- ▷ **Cannon:** 2 Damage, Dogfighting, Hold Off, Mounted, Refurbished
- ▷ **Seekers:** 3 Damage, 3 Ammo, Guided, Hold Off, Mounted, Refurbished
- ▷ **Sand Thrower:** 2 Damage, Crash, Explosive, Mounted, Refurbished
- ▷ **SWARM Missiles:** 1 Damage, 2 Ammo, Area, Explosive, Hold Off, Mounted, Refurbished
- ▷ **Shielding:** Discharge; Discharge to ignore Damage from 1 attack.
- ▷ **Stealth Systems:** Discharge; Discharge to activate Stealth. When it's Stealthed and it lies in hiding, it can only be found by an active search.

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT TAGS:

- ▷ **Crash:** The crunch and smash of vehicles smashing into each other.
- ▷ **Dogfighting:** Maneuvering and dogfighting, jostling for the perfect shot.
- ▷ **Hold Off:** They're circling from far off, keeping their enemies at bay.
- ▷ **Area:** It hits everything within Crash range of its target.
- ▷ **Explosive:** It explodes, destroying individuals and structures within its blast radius.
- ▷ **Guided:** You have Advantage when firing at a ship or vehicle.
- ▷ **Mounted:** It can only be mounted on a vehicle.
- ▷ **N Ammo:** It can be fired N times before you run out of ammo for it.
- ▷ **N Damage:** It does N Damage to ships and vehicles when it hits.
- ▷ **N Hits:** It can take N Hits of Damage before it's destroyed or disabled.

SHIP MODULES:

- ▷ **Lasers:** 1 Damage, Broadside, Engaged, Cannonading, Discharge, Arsenal
- ▷ **Missiles:** 2 Damage, Broadside, Engaged, Arsenal
- ▷ **Plasma Cannons:** 3 Damage, Engaged, Discharge, Arsenal
- ▷ **Railgun:** 4 Damage, Cannonading, Penetrating, Arsenal
- ▷ **Shielding:** Discharge; Discharge to ignore Damage from 1 attack.
- ▷ **Stealth Systems:** Discharge; Discharge to activate Stealth. When it's Stealthed and it lies in hiding, It can only be found by an active search.
- ▷ **Tether:** Broadside; Can automatically connect to inert external objects in Broadside range. To hit ships and stations, roll Fire Weapons.
- ▷ **Cargo:** It has space dedicated to carrying cargo.
- ▷ **Hidden Compartments:** It has space dedicated to storing contraband cargo that cannot be penetrated with scans.

SHIP MODULES TAGS

- ▷ **Broadside:** Heated battle extremely close, within 5 kilometers.
- ▷ **Engaged:** Blazing weapons and flashing ship shields, generally between 5 and 20 kilometers.
- ▷ **Cannonading:** Long range bombardment, between 20 and 50 kilometers.
- ▷ **N Damage:** It does N Damage to ships and vehicles when it hits.
- ▷ **Discharge:** If it's a Move, it's Discharged when it's used. If it's a weapon, Gear, vehicle equipment, or ship module, it's Discharged when a Move says. If it's Shields, it's Discharged when it absorbs Harm.
- ▷ **Spacefaring:** It can travel in the vacuum of space, although it doesn't have FTL capabilities. If you don't have a Docking Bay, it takes up your Standard Cargo Bay.
- ▷ **Vehicle:** It's a vehicle that can be driven, rode, or flown. If you don't have a Vehicle Bay, it takes up your Standard Cargo Bay.

Groups

Groups are used to describe and track the various gangs, cultures, civilizations, and organizations in your game. Groups often work against each other, and these conflicts create opportunities for the Crew to influence the outcome of the conflicts or just earn some money. As with locations and NPCs, less is more. Write enough to start using a group and get a sense of what they're like, and then discover more about them through play.

Group Tags

Tags for groups help you determine how that group behaves, and the types of things they can do, and how they interact with the rules and the Fiction. This list of tags is a starting point, but create your own as you need them.

Types of Groups:

- ▶ **Crew:** A group that work and/or live on a ship full time.
- ▶ **Gang:** A small group that defends a patch of territory. Often criminal and violent.
- ▶ **Organization:** A large group that is unified by a purpose and has a hierarchy.
- ▶ **Society:** A group that lives together using shared social values and norms.
- ▶ **Civilization:** A large group defined by its territories, societies, cultures, common languages, and technological achievements under a unified Government.
- ▶ **Species:** A group defined by its shared genes and place of origin.
- ▶ **Army:** An organization united by military training and objectives.
- ▶ **Corporation:** An organization united by commercial pursuits.

Tech Level:

- ▶ **Primitive:** A relatively simple society capable of crafting simple stone and wood tools.
- ▶ **Pre-Industrial:** Equivalent to any period in human history before the Industrial Revolution.
- ▶ **Industrial:** Capable of producing any technology developed after the Industrial Revolution, but before the discovery of FTL travel. Able to establish colonies on planets in their local system at their peak.
- ▶ **Post-Light:** Capable of FTL travel and supporting ships with FTL capabilities.
- ▶ **Post-Scarcity:** Any citizen can live comfortably with access to shelter, food, water, and other amenities without the need for work or a standard currency. Shortages are a thing of the past.
- ▶ **Post-Singularity:** Capable of creating AIs that can learn and upgrade themselves to the point where they meet or even surpass the intelligence of their creators.
- ▶ **Cosmic:** Able to build and move worlds and stars.

Other Group Tags:

- ▶ **Influential:** They have the wealth or power to influence others.
- ▶ **Committed:** They have a cause they believe in, and are ready to die or kill for their cause.
- ▶ **Criminal:** Their activities are often against the law.
- ▶ **Authority:** They hold a position of authority, or act like they do.
- ▶ **Warmongers:** They are warlike, and try to settle most conflicts with violence.
- ▶ **Pacifists:** The abhor violence and try to avoid committing violent acts, no matter what's at stake.
- ▶ **Religious:** They strongly believe in and follow a spiritual doctrine.
- ▶ **Unforgiving:** They do not forgive insult or opposition.
- ▶ **Prolific:** They have members everywhere.
- ▶ **Xenophobic:** They hate the alien and the different.
- ▶ **Friendly:** They are open and welcoming to strangers.
- ▶ **Savvy:** They are adept at making deals and brokering negotiations.
- ▶ **Desperate:** Their situation is dire, and they look for any avenue to escape.
- ▶ **Secretive:** They keep their presence and activities hidden from others.
- ▶ **Monocultural:** A group where everyone shares the same sensibilities of society, art, language, and history.
- ▶ **Multicultural:** A group that has a mix of different sensibilities of society, art, language, and history.

Example Groups:

Here are a few examples you may use as inspiration.

- ▶ A backwater colony planet, with few resources, little support, and minimal rules
- ▶ A peaceful colony
- ▶ A zealous cult, pursuing their goal with an unshakable faith, no matter who is Harmed on the way
- ▶ A greedy corporation, intent on profits via any means
- ▶ A struggling security force or authority, lacking the resources to police and protect
- ▶ A small gang of street youths, protective of their territory and distrustful of everyone else
- ▶ A merchant guild, obsessed with balance and fairness
- ▶ A criminal organization, divided by internal power struggles
- ▶ A sector-spanning empire, expanding and adding new member worlds and cultures...
 - ◆ *Through diplomacy and peace*
 - ◆ *Through war and conquest*
 - ◆ *Through trade and prosperity*
- ▶ An ancient religion, couched in superstition and ceremony...
 - ◆ *With a positive message at its core*
 - ◆ *With its original message lost to time*
 - ◆ *With a bitter and toxic message demanding obedience*
- ▶ A multicultural society on a hub world, vibrant with diversity and commerce
- ▶ A secret organization that collects and archives knowledge across the galaxy

Impulse

Just like NPCs, Groups have an Impulse that signifies their purpose, desire, or common behavior in a short phrase. These are some example Impulses, use them for inspiration to write your own.

- » To enforce order
- » To undermine authority
- » To spread your doctrine
- » To conquer and enslave
- » To amass wealth
- » To destroy a hated enemy
- » To dig out a hidden or forgotten truth
- » To chart the unexplored
- » To cure an illness
- » To find something lost
- » To make a scientific breakthrough
- » To bury a shameful or destructive secret
- » To survive just one more day
- » To spread suffering
- » To claim control of a territory
- » To bring peace to a war-torn area
- » To amass power and influence
- » To win the subservience of the masses
- » To abolish a technology, drug, or behavior
- » To proliferate a technology, drug, or behavior
- » To save a person or group from a disaster
- » To secure your borders
- » To live in safety

Connections

- » It rules the _____.
- » It's allied with _____.
- » It's enemies with _____.
- » It has contracts/treaties with _____.
- » It has a complicated past with _____.
- » It exploits _____.
- » It's a member of _____.
- » It lives in _____.
- » It hates/loves _____.

Calls

- » Make deals and recall threats from the shadows
- » Intimidate others with a show of force
- » Bring your might to bear on those that defy you
- » Use your influence or wealth to enforce your will
- » Hint at a greater mystery as yet undiscovered
- » Use threats and intimidation to push them into a tight spot
- » Hire or buy someone that can get the job done
- » Send trained assassins after you enemy
- » Execute a well-thought-out plan or attack

Description

You may write a brief description for groups that will factor heavily in the game, or a few sentences to help add background flavor to a scene. Less is definitely more, just write enough to conjure up a sense of the group.

Random Names:

Use this chart when you quickly need a name for a location, NPC, or group.

Aahotep	Ayub	Cleskel	Enrris	Heket
Abassi	Baldr	Coaugh	Enthbard	Hel
Abbasi	Bari	Collene	Enwor	Helena
Abdalla	Basha	Corey	Epsilon	Hilaal
Abdulla	Bast	Corinna	Erjtia	Hocker
Abiku	Been	Cory	Esta	Hope
Aching	Begrelmir	Coves	Estrella	Horghdar
Achstur	Beldbel	Cyim	Eta	Horus
Achusia	Bella	Dahlstrom	Etilia	Humaidaan
Addaya	Belle	Damato	Etuph	Humberto
Adro	Bennett	Daniel	Eugena	Hurin
Agemos	Benny	Danika	Evelina	Huveane
Agueda	Bernadine	Dansum	Faraj	Hwa
Ahaneith	Bess	Dardar	Faro	Ianyso
Ai	Besse	Deghd	Feltman	Iaocia
Aibeb	Beta	Delavega	Fenn	Iasia
Ailene	Beyla	Delaw	Fenrir	Iatheru
Alan	Biambe	Delftan	Fera	Ightacia
Alecia	Birgit	Delta	Fian	Illuminada
Aleeg	Bobur	Dimo	Fischer	Imighta
Aleen	Bolan	Dino	Flinchbaugh	Inar
Alesia	Bonet	Ditaolane	Fredia	Ingsam
Alfredia	Boyce	Dominque	Fredrick	Iota
Alina	Bragi	Donn	Freyja	Irpa
Alline	Breanna	Dragkin	Freyr	Iropol
Allyn	Britt	Dreough	Frigg	Irtia
Alpha	Burki	Drew	Gabriela	Irtoru
Alyssa	Burma	Drusilla	Gabrielle	Isis
Ammit	Byron	Dxui	Gamma	Itawi
Anen	Caleb	Dynigh	Garorm	Jacques
Angele	Camelia	Dynov	Genna	Jacqui
Angila	Cara	Dytdan	Genoveva	Jakuta
Aniket	Carlos	Eastman	Geralyn	Jamaal
Anja	Carolee	Ebore	Gertrud	Jami
Annetta	Cathryn	Echler	Ghaol	January
Anont	Catrina	Echosia	Ghassaan	Jaquelyn
Ansari	Celeste	Echus	Gheen	Jaymie
Anubis	Chango	Edgardo	Ghekre	Jayne
Apophis	Chantay	Eir	Gist	Jeelm
Arlette	Chashye	Elamin	Gita	Jeremy
Arnette	Ch Leigh	Eldhat	Gowers	Jillian
Arpera	Cheinia	Elegua	Gullveig	Johnie
Aryd	Chekenth	Elois	Haitse	Jok
Asarda	Cherly	Else	Halley	Jolynn
Ashlea	Chi	Elusa	Han	Jona
Ashley	Chi	Elvira	Hapi	Josh
Aslam	Chrim	Emtia	Hashem	Juwairiya
Asmaa	Chrohkim	Emyd	Hassen	Kala
Atiyya	Chroos	Endel	Hatinia	Kali
Atos	Chuck	Endus	Hauptman	Kappa
Aurea	Chuku	Enghqua	Hayley	Karoline
Awus	Cleora	Enkai	Heimdall	Keas

Keisha	Ma'at	Oughor	Serdald	Theta
Kelelia	Mckinley	Paklou	Serqet	Thisam
Kenton	Mebeghe	Pappas	Shaban	Thor
Kenyetta	Meg	Parman	Shaer	Thora
Kepler	Meili	Paryn	Shaker	Thoth
Keri	Melpomene	Paulene	Sharad	Thriclt
Kieth	Modzelewski	Pernusk	Shawnta	Tiet
Kimhtur	Monda	Pershall	Shella	Tinenia
Kinqua	Moronta	Pesqueira	Shelton	Tion
Kothar	Mostafa	Phebe	Sheryll	Titen
Kaufugh	Mosynt	Phi	Shydel	Tracey
Lambda	Mouazz	Pi	Shyol	Trudy
Laon	Mu	Pik	Shyrod	Truman
Larae	Munir	Poeng	Shysul	Tum
Larry	Muslih	Psi	Siddique	Turick
Laryn	Myest	Qamta	Sidlold	Tyr
Lauretta	Myrta	Quaquei	Sigma	Uhlanga
Laurine	Myrtle	Quaycia	Sins	Untpqe
Lauryn	Nadja	Raaida	Siobhan	Untsbel
Lemos	Nalacko	Rachel	Sjofn	Upsilon
Lenna	Naseera	Radacia	Skelesia	Urnlray
Leslee	Nasilele	Ramiro	Skelgshy	Urnvtan
Leticia	Natale	Ran	Skoog	Ute
Lewor	Nazeeha	Randol	Slyough	Valene
Linsey	Nef	Raphael	Snaorm	Valery
Lionel	Nell	Rayilt	Snirny	Vanita
Lleack	Nephthys	Rayrod	Sobek	Velma
Llynys	Nerthus	Rho	Sockrther	Vennie
Loki	Ninnr	Rhulor	Socorro	Veronique
Lorenza	Nirgkal	Rilulia	Socorro	Vili
Lorretta	Nob	Risiss	Solange	Vor
Lourdes	Nobuko	Ritor	Sophie	Waddle
Loves	Nolan	Rodden	Sothusk	Wakim
Lovetta	Nount	Rolanda	Sotur	Waneta
Luciano	Nu	Roman	Stield	Wanita
Lynna	Nuha	Rose	Suer	Wei
Machelle	Nyem	Rosy	Swadiss	Whurad
Mahbolb	Nyhin	Roxane	Taem	Wundqua
Mahmood	Nysver	Rubin	Taiard	Wyckoff
Maisara	Nzame	Rynoll	Tanage	Xavier
Malena	Odin	Rynrril	Tanalea	Xi
Malik	Odudu	Sachiko	Tanfauna	Yang
Mannan	Ofelia	Salama	Tani	Ying
Marcy	Olen	Salina	Tarrgh	Yuonne
Marg	Omega	Salome	Tashina	Zarda
Margorie	Omicron	Samira	Tau	Zayyaan
Marguerite	Omos	Saulters	Taxxu	Zentra
Marianne	Onor	Sayert	Tes	Zeta
Marilyn	Osiris	Scriber	Thaabita	Zhiskel
Markita	Osumi	Seevers	Thald	Zisa
Marwaan	Otis	Sekhmet	Therath	Zuhriyaa
Massim	Oughking	Selena	Therhban	Zyves



DRIFTING

An alternate universe, a dimension where different choices were made

Drifting is where alternate rules are found, so you can customize your game experience to make **Impulse Drive** play like a different kind of game about misfits in spaceships. Some of these changes will be minor tweaks, extra Gear or tools, or extra Moves to add to the core experience. Other will throw out major sections of the game and replace them with something else to create a very different experience. There is also a section included for creating custom Moves for players or specific situations you may want to show more granularity for.

New or different Universal Moves

The Moves you find in this section aren't part of the main experience for *Impulse Drive*, but you can use them to replace aspects of the rules or add to the rules to create a slightly different experience. It's recommended you play *Impulse Drive* in its standard state before trying this stuff out in your game, just to understand how all the parts fit together before you start messing with them.

BLEEDING OUT

When you would mark “I can't go on” on the Harm tracker, you are instead Bleeding Out. Roll+Stalwart. On a 10+, you stabilize, uncheck “I can't go on” and get back up. On a 7-9, you're out of action until someone uses some kind of Healing on you. On a 6-, you are beyond the help of field medicine, if you don't get to a hospital or medbay soon you will die.

If you suffer further Harm while bleeding out, you die.

Bleeding Out is a variant Move designed to keep characters from dying as easily as they can in the base game.

ATYPICAL ARCHETYPES

When you have taken at least 4 Special Moves from your Archetype, you may select a new Move from another Archetype. If that Archetype is not currently being used, consult the SM first, and if they say yes, you may do it. If that Archetype is currently being used by another player, clear it with both the SM and the player first. You may only have a maximum of up to 2 Moves from other Archetypes.

This Move can be used for players that want to drift the concept of their character away from the core Archetype they are playing. Because Moves allow players to shine the spotlight on a particular thing about their character, buy-in from the SM and the other player are necessary before taking a Move that might affect their spotlight. If it's just a specific circumstance or narrow field that the advancing player wants to focus on, you can consider working with them to create a custom Move that does what they're looking for. Consult the “Creating Moves” section of Drifting on Page 230 for more information.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

When you give your subordinate(s) a command they are disinclined to follow, or that puts them into direct danger, roll+Stalwart.

IF THEY ARE AN NPC:

On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2:

- » They will do their duty, to the best of their ability.
- » They don't get hurt or killed.
- » You don't have to make an example of someone.
- » You won't have to pay for it later.

IF THEY ARE A PC:

On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- » They mark XP if they do it.
- » They have to Keep Their Cool to disobey your Order.
- » They have Advantage going forward to follow your Order.

CRASH COURSE

When you spend your downtime trying to learn a new skill or amass knowledge on a subject, tell the SM what you want to learn, and they will tell you “sure, but...” and then:

They will tell you one of the following:

- » You can do it in a Scene with a 3-6 Tick Clock.
- » You can do it in an Episode with a 3-6 Tick Clock.
- » You can do it in a Season with a 3-6 Tick Clock.

And perhaps one or more of the following:

- » You will need _____ to teach you.
- » You will need to work on _____ to understand it.
- » First you must _____.
- » It will cost _____.

When you have completed your study or training, you will have a basic understanding, be an expert, or you may take a new Move. The SM will tell you which.

This Move can be used if a player wants to learn another Archetype's Move that's based on a skill or knowledge. It's recommended that before a player learns a Move that is part of another player's Archetype, they get permission from that player, since their character's impact may be diluted if there's another character that can do what makes their character unique. At its core, this Move is best suited for characters to gain new topics on which they can roll the Share Expertise Move. This Move can be stretched to fill the space when a player says “I want my character to do a thing, but there's no rules for how I can do the thing, or get the ability to do the thing.”

TURNING OF THE STARS

When your group skips over an extended amount of time as the rest of the galaxy continues to move, roll 2d6. On a 10+, the Crew earns enough on bit jobs to keep up with their Debt payments, and the SM Burns a Season Strains Fuse. On a 7-9, they earn enough to make payments, but the SM Burns 2 Season Strain Fuses. On a 6-, they fall behind on payments, Burn the Debt Fuse by 2, and the SM Burns all active Season Strains.

This Move is designed to be used when the players want to do something that will take an extended period of time, but don't want to play that time out day-by-day. If you have weeks or months of boring busy work ahead of your group, you can condense that into a few rolls that will give you ideas for exploring how the setting has changed in the intervening time. Examples of where this may come into play are when the ship needs extensive repairs or is getting upgraded, or a character is having Modifications added which take a long time, or any other kind of long-term project with lots of boring hours of drudgery, or a very long journey none of your group is interested in playing out day-to-day.

CUSTOMIZE GEAR

When you want to start a Personal Project to customize or upgrade a piece of Gear or vehicle with a new tag or to add a feature, tell the SM what you want. They will say "Sorry, it can't be done" or "Sure, but..." And then some of the following.

- » It will cost a lot in currency or favors.
- » You can do it in a Scene with a 3-6 Tick Clock.
- » You can do it in an Episode with a 3-6 Tick Clock.
- » You can do it in a Season with a 3-6 Tick Clock.
- » You will need _____ to do it first.
- » You will need _____ to make it for you.
- » You'll only be able to make a less effective or less reliable version.
- » It will have the drawback of _____.

The SM will connect them with an "and" or a merciful "or." When you have completed the requirements, your Gear is customized and ready to use.

*The default Gear in **Impulse Drive** is simple by design, with only general descriptions. It's up to you and your players to describe how these items look and behave aesthetically. If a player wants to mod their Gear to have a purely aesthetic effect that doesn't impact the Fiction or the rules, just let them do it. However, if they want a weapon that does more Harm, or an item that has an extra tag, or is Fictionally effective in a way that it normally wouldn't, that is where this Move can be useful. It's worth noting that combining certain existing tags can be very powerful or implausible. Adding Trinket to an item is generally not recommended, since that means they can take it without filling up their Gear slots. Gear choices can be a fun challenge, and the Trinket tag applied widely can short circuit that. The Concealed tag can also seem implausible when applied to a sniper rifle.*

LOB GRENADE

When you step into danger and lob a grenade at your enemy, expend a use and roll+Volatile. **On a 10+**, you hit exactly where you want, deal Harm and choose 2. **On a 7-9**, your aim is off or they get a chance to react, deal Harm and choose 1:

- » You don't get attacked or put in danger.
- » You flush them out of cover or force them to Move.
- » You hit multiple targets.
- » The effects are intimidating; you have Advantage going forward against the survivors.

Lob Grenade gives players a lot more control when using Grenades, since they have the option to avoid Harm on a 7+. Lob Grenade was a part of the core set of Moves for a long time, but it has been removed since Firefight, Acquire Target, and Merciless cover the different situations when the Grenades may be used.

Extra Moves for all Archetypes

The Moves and Gear in this section can be taken as additional Advances once a player has taken 4 Special Moves from their own Archetype, or alternate Background starting Moves if the group agrees and it fits the theme of your game. If certain Moves do not fit the flavor of your game, remove them from the list of available Special Moves.

FORESIGHT

Your deductive skills give you an uncanny sense for danger. **When you roll Scope It Out**, you may also ask any of these questions instead of the standard questions.

- » Is there a hidden immediate danger in my near future?
- » What danger would I be exposed to if I _____?
- » What are _____'s intentions towards me?

SPIRIT FONT

When you roll Recover, if you choose to recharge a Move, you recharge a Move for an ally as well.

CUNNING LINGUIST

When you attempt to communicate or interact with an alien entity that you do not share common language or understanding of the universe with, roll+Alien. **On a 10+**, you find some common ground or understanding as a basis for communication, both are true. **On a 7-9**, you find some common ground or understanding as a basis for primitive understanding, choose 1.

- » They communicate a simple concept to you.
- » You communicate a simple concept to them.

NOT DEAD YET

When you die and there is some room for doubt about your demise, you may return at the next available safe scene, battered and broken and in need of help. When you come back from the dead, decrease one of your Approaches by -1, to a maximum of -3.

DIG FOR CLUES

When you take time to study the scene of a recent conflict or crime, roll+Calculating. **On a 10+**, your observations are acute, ask 3. **On a 7-9**, you find some evidence, ask 1. **On a 7+**, you may choose to waste time looking for more info, and ask 1 extra question.

- » What went down here recently?
- » Who or what was here recently?
- » What hard evidence of past events can I record?
- » What here is useful or valuable to me?
- » What has been hidden or obfuscated here?

NAVIGATRIX

When you plot a course for an interstellar journey, you have Advantage on the Drives interstellar travel Move.

REDSHIRTS

You have a group of 15 to 20 followers. Give 2 or 3 of them names, the rest are expendable nameless nobodies.

CHOOSE YOUR STYLE OF FOLLOWERS:

- ▶ **Ship's Crew:** crew, disciplined, trained
- ▶ **Violent Gang:** gang, warmongers, criminal
- ▶ **Close Family or Clan:** society, friendly, savvy
- ▶ **Religious Cult:** society, religious, secretive

CONVINCING ARGUMENT

When you present a reasonable or intelligent argument on a topic you are an expert in to convince someone of a particular fact or course of action, roll+Calculating.

IF THEY ARE AN NPC:

On a 10+, they are convinced, and will act accordingly.

On a 7-9, it will require some evidence or proof of your claims to convince them.

IF THEY ARE A PC:

On a 10+, both. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- » If they believe you and act on it, they mark XP.
- » They have to Keep Their Cool to ignore your argument, at Disadvantage.

PRESTIDIGITAL INTERFACE

When you use misdirection and clever hands to manipulate, take, or hide a small object when there is a risk of being noticed, roll+Slick. On a 10+, you have a deft touch, choose 1.

- » You take a small object from a person or spot you are right next to.
- » You hide a small object on a person or spot you are right next to.
- » You hide a small object you have somewhere on your person, only a thorough search would find it.

On a 7-9, choose 1 of the above, but the SM will choose one of the below.

- » You raised someone's mild attention, curiosity, or suspicion.
- » Your misdirection won't go unnoticed for long.

If you're using sleight of hand to entertain or please someone and there's something at stake, then roll Manipulate instead.

CONNECTED

When you reach out to someone related to your Background in your local area for information or a favor, roll+Disposition of the dominant Group in the area. On a 10+, choose 1. On a 7-9, choose 2. On a 6-, either you can't find anyone, or the SM chooses 1, and the person you find is probably going to screw you over first chance they get.

- » It'll take time to get what you want.
- » They want to spend some quality time with you.
- » It'll cost you something in return.
- » Your reputation will take a hit, you have Disadvantage going forward to roll Connected.

Unique or Rare Gear, Vehicles, Ship Systems, or Weapons

GEAR: POWER PACK

▷ **Tags:** 3 Uses, Basic Gear

When you expend a use, you instantly Recharge a piece of Gear without having to roll Recover.

GEAR: ADVANCED SHIELDS

▷ **Tags:** Advanced Shields: Absorb 2, Discharge, Clumsy, Conspicuous, Specialist Gear

Advanced Shields will have an emitter, a fairly conspicuous device that is worn by the wearer, often as a chest piece or backpack. An energy or force shield is projected around the person wearing the emitter; describe whether an active shield is visible or makes a sound while being worn. Advanced shields are able to absorb 2 Harm before becoming Discharged.

GEAR: HEAVY ARMOR

▷ **Tags:** Heavy Armor: Absorb 3, Clumsy, Conspicuous, Advanced Gear

Heavy armor is serious armor. Police riot gear, a soldier's solid armor vest, or a full suit of thick, hardened materials. It's bulky, obvious and conspicuous when you wear it. Most people find it cumbersome and are clumsy when wearing heavy armor. Heavy armor is able to take 3 Harm before being damaged.

GEAR: THE GUIDE

▷ **Tags:** Trinket, Rare

The Guide is a device shaped like a small, battered travel guide with a thin faux leather cover, and the faded words "Don't Panic" written across its front in friendly letters. When you consult The Guide about a new place or culture, it will give a description in a friendly, upbeat tone, intended to inform travelers and tourists, and you have Advantage when trying to navigate said place or communicate with the locals.

GEAR: FLAMETHROWER

▷ **Tags:** Illegal, Skirmish, Area, Messy, Conspicuous, 3 Ammo, 3 Harm

A monstrous contraption that spits flaming death. Burn it all down.

CLEANSING FLAME

When you bathe an area in the cleansing flames of your flamethrower, spend 1 Ammo and roll+ Volatile.

On a 10+, deal Harm and enemies that witness the conflagration are stunned, giving an ally an opportunity to act. In addition, choose 1. On a 7-9, deal Harm and choose 1.

- » Everything flammable in the area is utterly destroyed.
- » The fire catches and spreads out of control.

GEAR: HIDDEN BLADE

▷ **Tags:** 1 Harm, Skirmish, Silent, Concealed, Trinket, Basic Gear

A small, simple blade you can hide anywhere on your person. It escapes the most rigorous of searches.

VEHICLE: VARIABLE SYSTEMS

- ▷ **+Variable:** It has two vehicle forms of the same size with their own Tag sets it can transform between
- ▷ **Discharge:** After it transforms, the Variable Systems are Discharged.

When you create a **Vehicle with Variable Systems**, work with the SM to create the Tags both forms share, such as number of Crew, Passengers, whether it's -Cramped or +Spacious, how many weapons are +Equipped, etc. Then work together to choose which unique tags each Form has.

Common examples would be combining a Speeder and a Battleframe or Power Armor, or a Fighter and an Armature.

VARIABLE ARMOR

- ▷ **Speed Form:** 1 Hit, +Responsive, +Speedy, -Fragile, -Cramped
- ▷ **Armor form:** 1 Hit, +Armored, +Equipped 1, -Cramped, -Flashy

VARIABLE ARMATURE

- ▷ **Fighter form:** 3 Hits, +Responsive, +Speedy, +Spacefaring, +Equipped 1, -Cramped
- ▷ **Armature form:** 3 Hits, Accurate, +Spacefaring, +Equipped 2, -Cramped

SHIP WEAPON: ANTIMATTER BOMB

- ▷ **Tags:** Fleet Killer, Planet Killer, War Crime

The Antimatter Bomb is a lethal, destructive weapon that sets off a devastating matter-antimatter explosion. Due to how Antimatter Bombs affect FTL space, can kill entire fleets, or wipe out an entire planet, their use is outlawed in all Clusters, and even possessing one carries the highest penalty.

WARP DRIVE

- ▷ **Tags:** Drive, Rare

Warp space is the strangest and most dangerous way to travel between the stars. In warp-space, mass, distance, and time have less relevance than normal space. This can allow ships to travel vast distances, but the trip is rarely easy or uneventful. Warp space is ever-shifting and full of hostile organisms that do not follow the same natural laws that normal space natives do. It's possible for your ship to come out somewhere and sometime completely different from what you intended, and the Ship and Crew may be forever changed or warped by the journey.

When you activate the highly unstable Warp Drive and take a precarious trip through Warp Space, roll+Alien. On a 10+, you made it out! Choose 1. On a 7-9, that was a very close call, choose 2:

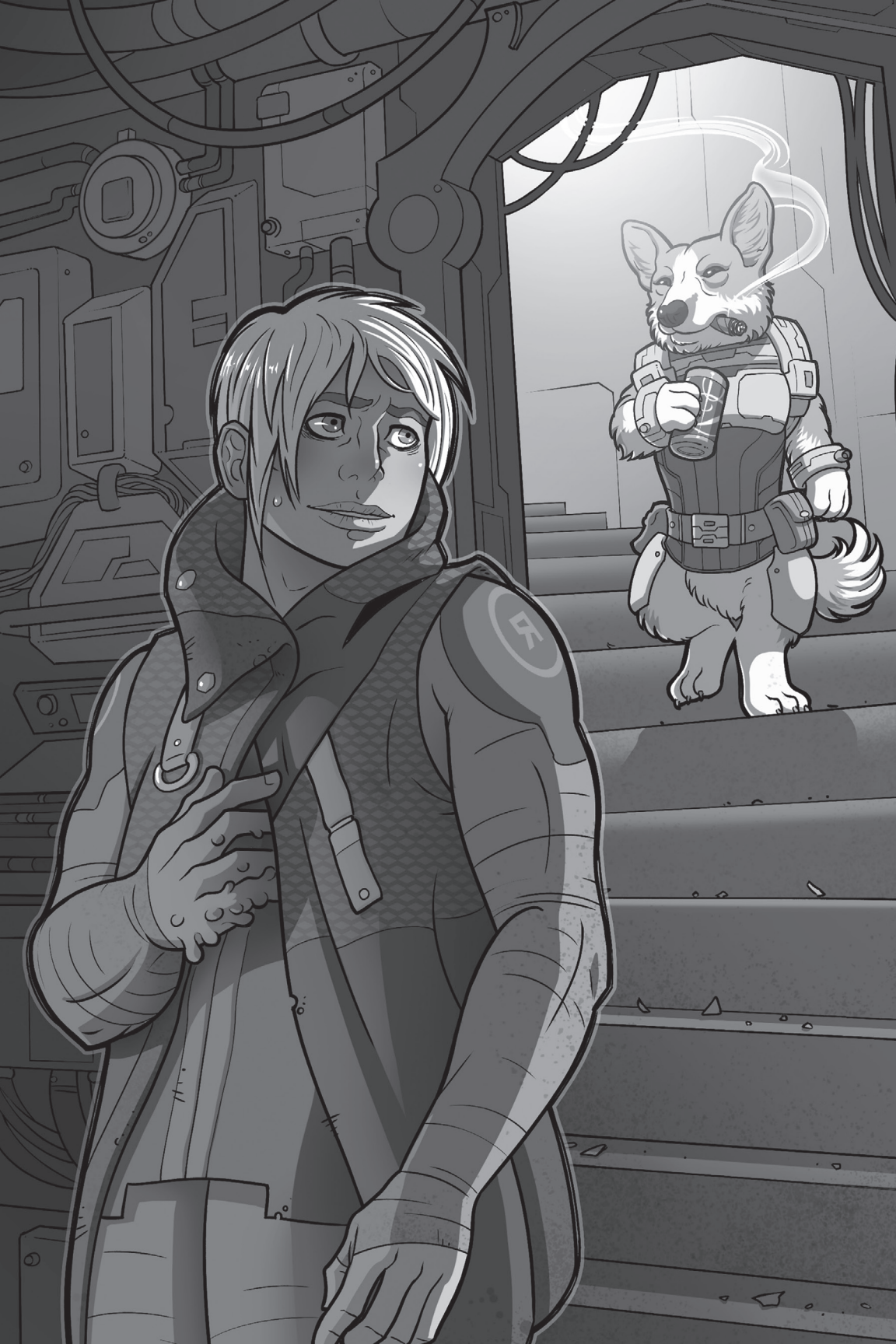
- » The ship has been invaded, infested, or infected by something hostile.
- » You don't know where you came out...
- » It was hard on the ship, your ship suffers 1 Damage, Penetrating.
- » Someone onboard has suffered a mutation

Mutations

	1-2: MISERABLE	3-4: MIXED	5-6: TRIUMPHANT
1	Sickly: Whenever you are exposed to an illness, you catch it. Whenever you eat something unpleasant, it makes you ill. Whenever you consume alcohol or other behavioral affecting drug, you feel the effects greatly.	Paranoid Telepathy: You hear every negative thought those nearby direct to you—whether they are thinking it or not!	Photoreactive skin: Your skin glows with a soft light in the dark, but when you spend an hour in natural sunlight, it's treated as a full day of treatment and rest.
2	Bleeder: When you are wounded, you take +1 Harm.	Photophobia: When you are exposed to bright light, you have Disadvantage. Your dark vision however is excellent, you have Advantage to Scope It Out while in dim light or darkness.	Psychometry: When you touch an item that has been used in an act of extreme violence or emotion, ask the SM one question about the item's past, and they will answer it. Then take 2 Harm, ignoring armor.
3	Living Agony: Everything is pain. Without medication to ease your suffering, you find it difficult to endure your constant agony, and have Disadvantage on any roll.	Chitinous Carapace: Your skin is covered in bone-like plates. You cannot wear armor, but you naturally have 1 Armor. Your sense of touch is dulled, and you have Disadvantage for any delicate or fine work.	Extrasensory: One of your senses is heightened, allowing you to sense things that others cannot perceive. More spectrums of light, sounds that are quieter or further away, minute vibrations, faint scents.
4	Senseless: You are missing a primary sense: touch, sight, hearing, taste, smell.	HIDEOUS VISAGE: You have Advantage to Intimidate others, but Disadvantage to charm, manipulate, or seduce others.	Redundant vital organs: You have various vital organ redundancies, meaning you can ignore severe injuries and keep going. Add 2 extra check boxes to Badly Injured on your Archetype sheet.
5	Short-lived: Your life expectancy is severely reduced. Permanently remove 2 check boxes from your Stress track.	Acidic Blood: When spilled, your blood becomes a highly corrosive acid that eats through all but the most chemically inert materials	Extra Limb: Choose or randomly determine a limb—you now have an extra one! This may allow you to Move in a unique way, or carry more, but clothing and armor doesn't fit until you get some custom made.
6	Narcoleptic: When you would mark Stress, you can instead immediately fall asleep.	Strange form: Some part of your appearance is strange and unique. A large nose or asymmetrically sized limbs, or one limb with extra joints, thick body hair, or mismatched facial features.	Mutative Modification: Spend 5 days pupating, then randomly gain one of the Modifications, but gain 2 Hooks related to it.

For hundreds more mutations, check out *The Metamorphica* by Johnstone Metzger.

<http://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/115703/The-Metamorphica-Classic-Edition>



Creating Custom Moves

Impulse Drive is designed to create a certain type of experience. You can enhance or change that experience by creating new Player Moves that replace Universal Moves, describe special circumstances or situations that may occur on a particular Contract or in a certain situation (When you inject the untested Hyper Serum), or add choices to the players' Archetype Moves. You can also take the Moves already in this game and tweak them to do something different, with new triggers or outcomes.

Eventually, you may have an idea for a new Archetype, and write a whole suite of custom Moves for them. That's great! **Impulse Drive** is purposefully licensed for anyone to come along and create content for it and release it themselves either for free or for some money.

The Components of a Move

Moves are made up of a Trigger, a Process, and an Outcome. The Trigger tells you when a Move comes into play, the Process tells you how to determine the Outcome, and the Outcome tells you how the Move affects the game going forward.

THE TRIGGER

The most logical point to start creating a Move is the trigger. This is the action or circumstance that brings the rules (or process) of the Move into play. Writing a good trigger is one of the most important parts of writing the Move. Some action or event will come up, and you will feel like there should be some process to resolve it. Triggers can both be Fictional events in the game, or play off another component of the rules. Usually, if another Move is part of the trigger, it's recommended that you tie some more specific Fictional requirement to the trigger, to describe how the character's behavior or situation is different from any other time the mentioned rule comes into play.

Here are some broad types of triggers:

- » When a character takes action. *Examples: Scope It Out, Brain Spike (Tempest), Bloodhound (Hound)*
- » When a character takes action under specific circumstances. *Examples: Acquire Target, Paranoid Android (Hound), Too Much Confusion (Outsider)*
- » When circumstances dictate, no character action. *Examples: Into The Abyss, Cliffhanger*
- » When a character uses a thing. *Examples: Unique items, Heavy Arsenal (Warhorse)*
- » From now on. *Examples: Walking Tank (Warhorse), Sting like a Bee (Infiltrator)*

THE OUTCOME

You can start with the outcome. This is the consequences or result of the Move. It includes the results of actions the players set out to do, or the consequences of failure or success, and will modify the situation the Crew finds themselves in. The Outcome sometimes will feed into other mechanics, but most often will have some Fictional impact. Start with the outcome if you know there's something that is the possible result of a situation, or that a particular kind of character often does that you want to reinforce with some rules.

THE PROCESS

The process is usually the last part of creating the Move. There are several existing mechanics built into **Impulse Drive** that you can draw on already, and mechanics from other Powered by the Apocalypse systems that you can mine. You may have your own idea for a mechanic or process that you want to add to the game using some Moves. Beware of creating an entirely mechanical Move that doesn't consult or change the Fiction at all though. **Impulse Drive** flourishes on the idea of Fiction in, Fiction out.

Here are some example Processes:

- ▶ Roll 2d6+X, apply Fictional outcome based on result:
 - ◆ 10+: *It's great*
 - ◆ 7-9: *You get what you want, but...*
 - ◆ 6-: *The SM tells you what happens.*
- ▶ Roll 2d6+X and make a number of choices from a list based on your results.
- ▶ Roll 2d6+X, and hold a number based on your result. Spend hold on a related list of choices as you continue to play.
- ▶ Apply Advantage or Disadvantage according to a specific situation.
- ▶ Describe a specific outcome based on a specific situational trigger.
- ▶ Say what you want, and the SM will tell you the requirements based on a list.
- ▶ Gain or spend a specific resource (Hold, XP, Storm, Ammo, uses, time.)
- ▶ Deal, heal, or suffer Harm.
- ▶ Deal or suffer Stress.
- ▶ Break, ignore, or apply an existing rule in a specific situation.
- ▶ Add options to an existing Move.



OUTSTANDING WARRANT 34543

Registered Name: [UNKNOWN]

Known Aliases: Blade of Volnoch, Nocta

Suspected Victims: Lord President Barun, Hyperion Heavy Industries CEO
Nils Vrecker

Types of Moves

What role the Move is fulfilling determines what kind of Move you're creating.

SITUATIONAL

Moves for dealing with the current situation or a unique element of the worlds your characters are exploring are special Moves. The triggers for these Moves will usually be based on the Crew interacting with something specific, or being put into a particular situation. Situational Moves may not be a part of extended play, and only feature in a particular location or when dealing with a particular phenomenon. Often, these Moves are designed for introducing or dealing with specific dangers or situations, and it's not unusual for situational Moves to have negative outcomes.

Have these Moves printed somewhere that everyone can see them. If the Move is something the Crew wouldn't have any idea about, you might not display the Move, or you may display only the trigger, delicious bait for the players' curiosity.

ABILITIES, COMPETENCY, AND POWERS

These types of Moves are there to express some unique capability of a player's character. These Moves usually have positive outcomes and express the characters competency or abilities. These usually end up being Archetype Moves for a particular Archetype, or Extra Moves. If the Move is tied to a specific Archetype, add this Move to their Archetype Moves list. If the Move is one that any Archetype could take, or one that could be opened up by some Fictional condition, add it to the Extra Moves list.

Iterate

Once you have your Move drafted up, go over it. Look for situations where it may apply, but might not work. Look for non-choices where there is one option that would always be picked, or never be picked. Is the Move too harsh, or too soft? Troubleshoot where you can, look for advice among your gaming friends or the many roleplaying and PbtA communities online for advice. When you take the Move to your players, tell them it's a work in progress. If they're cool to play with it, let them know that it may be tweaked to work better in the future.

SM CALLS

You can also write custom SM calls for specific situations, locations, groups, or NPCs. This is pretty common, and you can trigger these Calls when the player characters interact with an element of the situation in a particular way. The SM Calls are usually short "If, then" statements.

Big Changes to Primary Mechanics: A Different Game

Starting With More

For shorter running games that have only one to three sessions, or to give your player characters a small edge at the beginning, allow the players to select one Archetype Move at character creation.

Change Difficulty

One of the core parts of *Impulse Drive* that determines the longevity of a character or how long a game lasts is Calamity. Stress works as a pressure valve for absorbing Harm. By reducing the number of Calamity choices, you reduce the amount of Stress a character can absorb before they meet their end. This can also be used to make a shorter group of sessions or a one-shot feel tense and exciting.

Before you modify the amount of Calamity characters have, discuss it with your group and get everybody's consent and understanding before you decide on a difficulty.

You may either select a number of Calamity to cross out as a group, or roll a D6, and cross out a number of Calamity equal to the result. When crossing out Calamity, always start at the top and work your way down.

- ▶ **Cross out 0 to 2 Calamity:** Hard difficulty, a normal campaign.
- ▶ **Cross out 3 Calamity:** Hurt me plenty Difficulty, a short campaign.
- ▶ **Cross out 4 to 6 Calamity:** Nightmare Difficulty, a one-shot game.

TRANSMISSION END

*Transmission concluded.
Sending via star lanes.
Delivery times may vary.
Please wait...*



*This section is reserved for the change log
notes, and my thanks for those that have
helped make this game from something to
nothing.*

My Thanks

The people listed below have helped me with their time, advice, inspiration, wisdom, and enthusiasm throughout this games development. I would like to thank all of you for helping me to make this game.

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- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
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| » Deanna Nygren | » Heath Borton |
| » Trenton Kennedy | » Nick Frech |
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| » Adam Steel | » Kyle Strong |
| » Will Nicholas | » Rueben John |
| » Simone Hodgetts | » Peter Cobcroft |

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- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
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| » Andrea Gauke | » Rich Rogers |
| » Jan van Zon | |

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- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
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| » Heidi Schlottman | » Timothy Bennett |
| » Jen Kitzman | |

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- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| » Bryan Lotz | » Steve Moore |
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| » Maciej Starzycki | » Maxime Lacoste |
| » Mathias Belgier | |

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Jeff Workman, Jenevieve "Tasha" DeFer, Jeremy Hamaker, Jeremy Scott, Jeremy Strandberg, Jeremy Tidwell, Jerry Schwartz, Jim Hart, Jim Heath, Jimmy Smick, J Nicklas Andersson, Joachim Schulz, Joe Blake, Joel Notsch, Joe Tither, Johan Jaurin, Johannes Paavola, John 'johnkzin' Rudd, John & Kimberly Poole, John Bowlin (virtuadept), John C, John Canales, John Griffis, John Lambert, John M. Portley, John M Campbell, John Robertson, Johnstone Metzger, John Wick, Jonas Karlsson, Jonathan "Buddha" Davis, Jonathan Edward Fearn Badillo, Jonathan Hurley, Jonathan Korman, Jonathon Dyer, Joseph Hacker, Josh Flint, Josh Medin, JP Frantz, Julian H., Justus Goldstein-Shirley, Karen & Benjamin Ryan, Karl Scheer, Ken Napper, Kevin Flynn, Kevin G. Nunn, Kevin P. Hutton Jr., Krzys, Kwyndig, Kyle Burckhard, Kyle R Krueger, Kyle Simons, Kyle Urban, Laura "Laura47" Boylan, Laurits Tamborg Christensen, Leandro Pondoc, Lee Barnes, Leron Culbreath, Les and Dashiell Simpson, Lester Ward, Liam Moher, Liam Murray, Lily Gioia, Loki Carbis, Lonnie "GameFu70" Spangler, Lord Hillbilly, Luc Millette, Lukas Feinweber, Luke Maciak, Luke Walker, LuleNZ, Mamading Ceessay, Manuel Suarez, Marc Majcher, Marcus Burggraf, Mark Fenlon, Mark Tygart, Marshall Miller, Mat Forest, Matt Boothman, Matthew Edwards, Matthew Knighton, Matt Metford, Matt Sharwarko, Matt Smith @nerdwit, Matt Towle, Mauro Adorna, Maxwell Baker, Meg & Vincent Baker, Megan Coppock, Mendel Schmiedekamp, Merlin Thomas, Michael D Blanchard, Michael Esperum, Michael Feldhusen, Michael Kennedy, Michael Pelletier, Michael Raichelson, Michael Schwartz, Michele "Snake" Gelli, Michelle VanSetten, Mike Llaneza, Mike Quintanilla, Mikey "quantumdot" Zee, Misha Polonsky, Morgan Ellis, Nat "woodelf" Barmore, Nell Wilson, Niall O'Donnell, Nick Bate, Nick Cadigan, Nick Frech, Nick G, Nick Wild, Nicola Urbinati, Nicole Arroyo, Nigel Clarke, Ninja Mitton, Noah Schoenholtz, Nullpunkt, Ola Janson, Oliver Lind, Olivia Zircon, Oscar Iglesias, Oubliette, Owen Thompson, Patrice Mermoud, Patrick "HDisco" Brannick, Paul "Ettin" Matijevic, Paul Abell, Paul Appleby, Paul Arezina, Paul Beakley, Paul E. Castle II, Paul Townsend, Pedro Salgado, Pete Curry, Peter Allen, Peter Cobcroft, Peter Frottier, Peter Larsen, Philip "xipehuz" Espi, Philip Hindley, Philipp Dopichaj, Philip W Rogers Jr, Phillip Ames, Pierre Savoie, Ralph N E Malein, Ramnesis, Randy Pinion, Ravenwinged, Ravi, Remi van Casteren, captain of the Numina, Rev. Keith Johnson, Ricardo Madeira, Richard J Rogers, Richard Kreutz-Landry, Richard Ohnemus, Richard Robertson, Roaming Bard (Jo Robson), Rob Abrazado, Robert Bersch, Robert C Kim, Robert Hedley, Robert J. Finamore, Robert Ruthven, Robert Slaughter, Ronald Whitehead, Ron Blessing, Roo Wetzel, Rubén Astudillo, Russell, Scion of Space, Russell Reed, Ryan Kent, Ryan Little, Ryan Poe, Rylen Dreskin, Salvador A. Melo, SAM, Sam Carter, Sam Samaritan Fokker, Scene Play Podcast, Schubacca, Scott Kullberg, Scott Raby, Scuba Chuck, Seán D. Rose, Sean M. Dunstan, Sean M Smith, Sebastian "Buddy" Anton, Serf McSerfington, Seth Zeren, Shana Hausman, Shane Liebling, Shane Moll, Shaun Vellucci, Shaun W. Joyce, Shawn Hendrickson, Shervyn, Sidney Icarus, Simon and Frankie Frech, Simon Appleton, Simone Spinozzi, Simon Ward, Simon Young, Siobhan McKenna, Sitex, somnolik, SpitefulFox, Stefan Mühlinghaus, Stephen A. Lee, Stephen Smith, Steve Lord, Steven C. Brown, Steven Watkins, Stuart "Hotshot Pilot" Acimovic, Stuart Dawson, Surcel Vladimir, Suzi R, Terry L Gilbert Jr, The Gauntlet Podcast, The Owl, Tim H, Tim Jensen, Timothy "TDK" Knox, Tiroth, Tobias Mcnabb, Todd Nicholas, Todd Zircher, Tom Androy, Tom Davies, Tom Ladegard, Tom S, TravelingTim Salisbury, Trenton Greyoak, Trevor Ramirez, Trevpb_101, Trey Mercer, Trip Space-Parasite, Tyler Magruder, Tyler Puryear, Urox, Veronica Hamilton, Victoria Hawthorne, Victor M. Suarez, Victor Wyatt, Vincent "Digiconda" Arebalo, Viveka Nylund, W. David Pattison, Walter German, Wes Baker, Wesley "The Heartbreaker" Rayner, William Gerke, William Nichols, WolfPrime, X, Kiwo Xerase, Xofour, Yoshi Creelman, Yvonmukluk, Zach Brown, Zach Cullimore, Zach Farnsworth, Zeb Berryman.



Registered Name: Wayfarer Solon

Bio: *"Solon has served the Wayfarers for three decades and aside from some rebellious outbursts in his earlier years has been a paragon of peace throughout the sector. However this record cannot exculpate Wayfarer Solon's involvement in the events in the Mar System. The crimes he is complicit in are inexcusable on a legal basis, in the potential harm he may have allowed, and against the founding principles of the order"* - Pathfinder Wynn, of the Arcturus Order

