DARING TALES OF THE SPACE LANES

WAYLAID ON WAYLAND & GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

SAVAGE WORLDS
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WAYLAID ON WAYLAND & GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

WITH SPECIAL RULES APPENDIX: SPACE DANGERS

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WAYLAID ON WAYLAND

This booklet contains two short adventures based around the exploits of four pre-generated, space faring characters. The full character sheets are available for free at **www.tripleacegames.com**.

The heroes have no defined sex. Players can assign gender as they wish.

The heroes have all their leveling opportunities from Seasoned (at which they begin) into Legendary mapped out in advance. Each published adventure in this line earns the heroes a fixed 5 Experience Points, guaranteeing them an advance every mission till Legendary (then every two). All the players need do is tick the appropriate box and start making use of the new upgrade. This means you can use the character sheets at conventions and run adventures of any Rank without having to create your own characters from scratch. It also means you can run these tales as pick-up games without any preparation!

Better yet, you'll know that when you buy one of our adventures, you can guarantee the adventurers will have all the skills and abilities they need to win the day!

In addition, you'll find a set of setting rules, for free, at our website, as well. These are tailored specifically for *Daring Tales of the Space Lanes*.

BACKGROUND

The planet Wayland is an industrial world. Lacking a central government, the planet is governed instead by corporations and trade organizations, each with their own territory. Among these is the Daksha Syndicate, a cartel of small companies who banded together for mutual protection and trading purposes.

Each company in the cartel nominates a member to sit on the Syndicate. These esteemed bureaucrats and businessmen receive the title Pro-Syndic. Every five years, one member is elected by his peers to the post of Syndic, spokesperson for the entire Syndicate.

The Syndic sets trading policy and prices, and negotiates new contracts with off-worlders, in return for which he receives a cut of all new contracts. However, he is also responsible for appeasing all the companies in the organization, no mean feat given each is out to secure as much profit as possible for its board members.

Nagan Jatha, current Syndic of the Syndicate, is standing for reelection in a few weeks. He intends to make sure he retains his post by bribing the other senior members of the Syndicate to vote for him. He has hired the heroes to deliver a valuable cargo of wine to him.

Unfortunately, a rival, Pro-Syndic Asgaya Ash, has learned of Jatha's ploy and intends to steal the cargo. His first plan involves an attack on the inbound freighter, but when this fails (hopefully), he resorts to more drastic action—he attacks the heroes during their meeting with Jatha, planning both to swipe the goods and remove his main rival from the scene.

Characters: 20 XP (as per the sheets).

CONVENTION PLAY

This adventure is ideal for convention play and for introducing new players to *Savage Worlds*. To help ensure the adventure fits into a standard convention time slot, the GM can implement some of the following changes:

* Brush over Act 1 Scene 2. Ignore the need for a bribe to clear the inspection. Instead of having to bribe the inspector for a decent filter mask, he offers them two choices—take the free (and faulty) one or buy one that works for $20.
* For quick demo games and short convention slots, the entirety of Act 3 and much of Act 4 can be left out. After escaping the crusher, Jatha gives the heroes the location of his rival's lair. Skip straight to Act 4, Scene 3.
* If time is running low, skip Act 4 Scene 2. Instead of having to hack the robot's memory as an extended series of tasks, a single Repair roll suffices. This allows the GM to move directly to the finale.
* The automated factory in Act 4, Scene 3 adds an extra

dimension to the combat, but it also makes the combat longer. For a convention game, this feature can be ignored without adversely affecting the adventure flow.

ACT 1: ROCKS & REGULATIONS

The adventurers have been hired to deliver a cargo to the planet Wayland, a world covered in sprawling industrial parts and wreathed in a shroud of dense, acrid smog. Their patron is Nagan Jatha (jay-thar), a local crime lord, but one with fingers in many inter-planetary pies. They have no idea what they're carrying, but the pay is good.

SCENE 1: A BUMPY RIDE

Red streaks of laser fire zip past the cockpit window as the Blazing Star *pulls a tight turn to avoid a colossal asteroid. You're not sure why you chose to enter an asteroid field to avoid the pirates hot on your ion stream, but it seemed like a good idea at the time! Now you just have to survive long enough to make planetfall and deliver your cargo.*

The adventure begins in the middle of a chase—the characters' ship is being tailed by two fighters. Run this Scene using the Chase rules. Alternate Obstacles rules are provided below. The two fighters begin three Range Increments behind the characters, and each Increment equates to 5SU.

Deal each fighter an action card. This prevents them both hitting an asteroid and getting wiped out on the same card. In the event the fighters drop out early as a result of bad luck, as opposed to good shooting, the GM should feel free to have more join the fray.

The fighters are faster than the *Blazing Star*, so the pilots have +1 to Piloting rolls.

Although the action starts immediately, the characters haven't yet activated any shield pods *unless* they choose to have done so. Since the *armor* and *deflection* options last just three rounds, it's up to the heroes if and when they popped a pod. Remember, though, activating a pod is an action, so they can only have popped one per round.

The fighter pilots have not yet activated their shields. They do this on the first round, selecting the *deflection* option.

The asteroid field is a jumbled mass of tumbling rocks. Whenever a pilot draws a Club suit, he has to avoid a particularly dangerous rock. Check the value of the card against the table below. The Mod column gives a modifier to the pilot's Piloting roll that round. In the event of a failure, the damage column is used. Don't worry about relative speed or the asteroid's armor—just roll the damage. All damage is as from a Wild Card.

DATA: WAYLAND

Default: All the heroes know Wayland is a heavily industrial world.

INVESTIGATION RESULTS

Success: The surface of Wayland is literally covered in industrial works. Every inch of usable ground has been concealed beneath foundries and forges.
Raise: Pollution levels are near-hazardous. Thick, acrid smog blankets the world, making breathing difficult for those not wearing filter masks, and during the summer months the smog can be deadly. Surface water contains high levels of heavy metals and toxins, and must be carefully filtered before consumption.
Two Raises: There is no centralized government. Over the centuries, rival corporations have grown into nations, swallowing up smaller companies and expanding their sphere of operations. Corporate espionage is rife.

STREETWISE RESULTS

Success: Wayland is polluted. The local authorities sell filter masks tweaked to keep out the local pollutants, but most don't work properly. A small bribe ensures a good quality mask.
Raise: Society is broken down into two core groups—Highs and Lows. The Highs live in huge tower blocks, the tops of which actually stick through the smog layer. The Lows dwell on the actual surface, and lead a wretched life.
Two Raises: Many bars and cantinas catering to visitors, offer off-world beverages and food, but most are actually produced locally and thus contaminated. They figure folk won't be around long enough to get poisoned, and local produce is cheaper than imports.

Card	Mod	Damage
Deuce	–6	2d6
3–5	–4	3d6
6–10	–2	4d6
Jack–Queen	–1	5d6
King–Ace	0	6d6

FIGHTERS

Fighters are poorly armed and armored, but have great maneuverability. The ones presented here are the most basic model on the market.
Top Speed: 8; **Toughness:** 14 (4); **Handling:** +1;
Shields Pods: 1; **Crew:** 1
Abilities: Piloting d8, Shields d6, Shooting d8
Notes: 1 x AMCM, Atmospheric, Fixed Weapon, Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer, Spacecraft

Weapons:
* 1 x forward-firing laser (Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)
* 1 x missile turret (Range: 20/40/80; Damage: 4d8; ROF 1; AP 8, HW), no reloads

SCENE 2: GREASING THE WHEELS

Once the combat is over, allow the heroes some retroactive die rolls to learn more about their current situation. This is information they gained before the pirates attacked, but it's better to start straight into the action than mess around with lesser details.

Characters can use Investigation or Streetwise to learn more about the planet they're visiting and their patron. One roll per character per topic is permitted, though multiple characters make an attempt. See the sidebars on pages 3 and 4 for details.

The rest of this Scene allows the players the opportunity for some roleplaying, and provides a brief introduction into the corrupt galaxy in which their characters operate daily.

LANDING FORMALITIES

Once clear of the asteroid field, the heroes can open communications with the planet. After giving their ship registry information, they are directed to a landing pad controlled by the Daksha Syndicate.

DATA: NAGAN JATHA

INVESTIGATION RESULTS

Default: All the heroes know Jatha is a crime lord.
Success: Jatha is a respected businessman, and controls the Daksha Syndicate, a collection of smaller companies which banded together against larger corporate takeovers.
Raise: Jatha is a Thesan, a near-human species who lost the power of speech during their evolution. They have short range telepathic abilities, but can only communicate through members of the Yasna species, with whom they have a symbiotic relationship.
Two Raises: Jatha is facing reelection as Syndic, the head of the Daksha Syndicate, in the next few weeks.

STREETWISE RESULTS

Success: Jatha takes obese to a new level. He's so huge he can no longer walk, but instead moves around in a hover chair.
Raise: Extremely arrogant, Jatha likes to be addressed by flowery titles. Mentioning his weight is a good way to earn his respect—Jatha takes it as a sign of his good lifestyle.
Two Raises: Jatha's hold on the Daksha Syndicate isn't as solid as he makes out. He has many powerful rivals.

Down on the ground, they are visited by a customs official—a blue-skinned reptilian by the name of Dekan Deng who constantly flicks his tongue out to taste the air (he can even lick his own eyelids, which he does if he thinks anyone is squeamish). The inspector, like many of his comrades on Wayland, is corrupt.

After taking the docking fee (covered in off-screen expenses), he enters the cargo hold. Without even looking at the crates he begins tutting and shaking his head, muttering just loud enough to be heard about "irregularities." He's looking for a bribe.

Anything over $50 causes Deng to pass the inspection with flying colors. Failure to take the hint and hand over a bribe results in his impounding the cargo until a more thorough check can be arranged. That's likely to take several days at the minimum, time the characters don't have—the contract contains a penalty clause for late delivery, reducing their fee by 10% of the total value per day.

Mentioning Jatha by name doesn't get the result the characters were probably hoping for. The inspector raises an eyebrow and whistles loudly.

> *"You're shipping these," Deng says, tapping the nearest crate, "to his Luminous Exaltedness Nagan Jatha? Well," he pauses for a long second, "you'd better find a way to get these crates off your ship quick. His Corpulosity doesn't like to be kept waiting by the hired help."*

Yes, Corpulosity is a made up word. Jatha, like most crimelords, pays his staff the minimum wage. He expects customs inspectors to make up their paychecks through fleecing visiting ships. Captains who don't pay often miss delivery dates, which means Jatha can reduce their fee due to "serious breach of contract."

FILTER MASKS

If the heroes don't bring up the subject of filter masks, the customs inspector does.

> *"You going outside like that?" he asks, as you head toward the airlock. "Boy, you're brave! The weather center said the pollution was going to be very high today. Probably burn your nose and throat before you get twenty yards, and then there's the coughing. I saw a man die from coughing so much. Very unpleasant way to go." He offers you each a filter mask, adding, "Compliments of the Daksha Syndicate."*

The masks are faulty. Accepting the free masks requires the heroes to make a Vigor roll at the start of each Act, hereafter. On a failure, the character takes a level of Fatigue, which can't be removed during the adventure. This can lead to Incapacitation, but not Death (the spacers won't be on planet long enough).

A bribe of $20 per person suddenly results in a new

set of filter masks being produced. These negate the need for any Vigor rolls to withstand the pollution.

ACT 2: JUNKYARD WARS

After the customs official clears the cargo for transportation, the heroes load the crates onto a hover barge (provided as part of the berthing cost). A pilot is provided, as well—barges have been stolen in the past, and they're not cheap to replace. Deng provides coordinates for where His Bulbous Majesty Jatha wants the cargo delivered—a junkyard on the planet's surface.

SCENE 1: SCRAP AMID THE SCRAP

Jatha and a small number of goons are clearly visible as the barge settles down on a clear space in the junkyard. The goons immediately rush over to unload the crates, after which the barge departs. Jatha then signals the party to approach him.

The words obese, corpulent, and bulbous are totally inadequate to describe Nagan Jatha. Too fat to walk on his legs, the mighty crimelord instead moves around on a hover chair, although the sound the engines are making indicates they're under immense stress.

You don't know where Jatha's chins end and his stomach begins, his fingers are squat sausages, and his piggy eyes peer out from beneath drooping layers of forehead fat. The worst thing is the crimelord's clothing—aside from a small loin cloth he's naked!

Standing beside him is a small creature with an enlarged cranium. "Ah," the small being says loudly while Jatha feebly wiggles his fingers, "my precious cargo. I trust there were no problems, no damage to the contents?"

The small creature is Jatha's translator, Pix. It hasn't got a stat block—it's totally nonviolent and easily replaced from the fat criminal's pool of minions.

Give the characters time to introduce themselves and roleplay any trivial topics they want to mention. Jatha enjoys small talk, so long as his hirelings are suitably obsequious and flattering. If they invent an impressive sounding title for Jatha ("Greeting, your flabtacular bulbosity!"), his flab shakes in silent laughter, and his symbiotic translator chortles deeply.

"I like it! I like it! Yes, I shall insist my minions use that title, at least for a week. Add a further $100 to your fee for the kind compliment."

One of the criminal's minions cracks open a crate, withdraws a silver bottle, and carries it over to his master.

As the goon cracks the seal, a fragrant scent momentarily overpowers the stench of smoke and rust, even through your filters. Several layers of flab jiggle.

"Excellent!" beams the translator. "Angovian Blossom Wine, the best money can buy! With a few small donations to the right people and my reelection as head of the Syndicate is assured. You have served me well. Now for your compensation…"

The translator's words are cut short by several energy blasts striking near your feet. Looking around, you can make out a dozen or so robots, each brandishing a blaster weapon, approaching through the junkyard.

"You dare double cross me?!" the translator screams, as Jatha powers up his hover chair. Jatha's thugs seem to be drawing a bead on two sets of opponents…

Deal action cards!

The junkyard measures 24" to a side. Mounds of junk, easily presented by using a variety of overlapping burst templates, litter the area. Treat movement through these as difficult ground.

There is also a small trash compactor, a demolition buggy, and a control console for a magnetic grapple. Place all three within 8" of the heroes, who begin in the center of the junkyard, alongside Jatha and his goons. The robots enter from any side of the battlefield the GM wants.

Jatha wrongly assumes the heroes are trying to double cross him—that's just the way his mind works. He and his goons attack both the heroes *and* the robots. As there are two goons per hero, have half attack the group and half the real villains.

Convincing Jatha the characters are on his side requires a Persuasion roll at –2 as an action. Pointing out the obvious ("They're attacking us as well!" is worth a +2 bonus. Once the crimelord sees the light, he orders his men to switch targets solely to the robots. Hand out Ally Sheets for Jatha and the goons to the players to control.

The heroes and their allies are outnumbered, but the junkyard has several important bits of machinery they can use to help even the odds.

When the last robot falls, more arrive on the scene—dozens and dozens more. Make it clear to the heroes and their surviving allies that they are vastly outnumbered and outgunned. This is one of those moments where surrendering and earning a benny is far better than being beaten unconscious and forced to play out the inevitable with wound penalties.

The party is then disarmed, as are Jatha and his goons, but not manacled. A hover car touches down a

few yards away, and out lurches a cyborg—part man and part machine.

TERRAIN

As well as being able to shelter behind piles of junk, there are two other handy pieces of scenery and a mobile wrecking buggy. Make sure you point these out to the players.

* **Crusher:** Junk is deposited into the open top of the crusher. When the switch is activated, which requires an action from an adjacent hero, anything inside is crushed and compacted into a small cube.

Robots dumped in the crusher but not crushed can escape by climbing out. This takes a complete round and permits no other actions. Place their figures adjacent to the crusher.

* **Magnetic Grapple:** The grapple is the same size as a Small Burst Template. It can be moved a maximum of 4" per round by any hero who spends an action while adjacent to the control console.

Any robot that the template passes over must make a Strength roll at –4. With failure, it is pulled into the air and sticks to the magnet. However, they can still fire their weapons, albeit with a –2 penalty for the Unstable Platform.

Dumping the robots into the trash compactor is a free action for the operator once the template moves over the crusher, but ends the magnet's movement for the round. Dropping the robots to the ground is also a free action, but inflicts just 1d6 damage from the short fall.

⭐ **Nagan Jatha:** See page 10.
⭐ **Jatha's Goons (2 per hero):** See page 11.
⭐ **Robot Commander (1 per hero):** As robot soldier (page 11) but with the Command Edge.
⭐ **Robot Soldiers (4 per hero):** See page 11.

DEMOLITION BUGGY

This small, tracked vehicle has an enclosed cab. Attached to the end of a long boom is a small but heavy wrecking ball.
Acc/Top Speed: 1/4; **Toughness:** 12 (2); **Handling:** –1; **Crew:** 1
Notes: Tracked
Weapons:
* Wrecking ball (Reach 2, HW). The ball can be used in several ways. In all cases, Driving is used as the attack skill.
* Dropped: The ball can be dropped on any square within 2". This causes 2d8 damage.
* Limited Arc: Pick four adjacent squares in a straight line. None can be more than 2" from the vehicle. All creatures in the affected squares must make an Agility roll at –2 or suffer 2d6 damage and be knocked prone.
* Full Circle: The cab and boom can be rotated at high speed, swinging the ball around in a complete circle. This functions as the Sweep Edge. The –2 penalty ap-

plies even if the operator has the Edge. Damage is 2d6. Foes hit, whether they take damage or not, are knocked prone.

SCENE 2: GOT A CRUSH ON YOU

Jatha's translator hisses loudly. "Pro-Syndic Asgaya Ash! I should have known you were behind this attack on my person! You treacherous dog! I'll see you dunked in a vat of steam weevils for this insult!"

The cyborg chortles gleefully. "Oh mighty Jatha, I don't think you'll be doing anything of the sort. My agents failed to hijack your hirelings' ship as it approached Wayland, but fortunately your customs officials are easily bribed.

"So you thought to buy votes, eh? A low plan, even for you, but one I feel I must duplicate since I now have several crates of Blossom Brandy at my disposal. As for you, fatty, you and your minions are of no further use to me."

He clicks his fingers, and a horde of robot soldiers surround you. "Take them to the main garbage crusher. I'll be interested to see how much juice we can squeeze out of you!"

The main trash compactor is located across the junkyard. The heroes, Jatha, who is unceremoniously toppled from his chair, and Pix are thrown inside and the door sealed. Within seconds the gravity begins to increase. Any hero making a Common Knowledge roll knows how these trash compactors work—gravity is increased to a point where the junk is literally crushed.

In order to escape, the heroes have to perform four tasks in order. Unless otherwise stated, only one hero per round can attempt the roll. Others may assist using the Cooperative Rolls rules. A failed roll can be repeated in subsequent rounds. On round four, the gravity starts to increase. All rolls have a –1 penalty. On round five the penalty increases to –2. Finally, the penalty is –4 on round six. At the end of the sixth round, the gravity surges to a level where the contents are crushed flat.

* The first thing the characters must do is break free of their bonds. This requires a Strength or Agility roll (character's choice) at –2. This may be done as a Cooperative roll. Once a hero is free, he can release one comrade per round. This prevents him taking other actions, however.
* The characters must then unscrew the main access panel. There are a total of four screws. Unscrewing a screw requires an Agility roll. Only one screw per character per round may be unscrewed, but as many as four heroes can work on the screws in total (one per screw). Cooperative rolls are no use here—there isn't enough space for more than a single pair of hands on each screw.

* The characters must then study the system's operating language. This requires a Repair roll. Only one roll per round may be attempted, though the Cooperative rules may be used. Success allows the characters to understand the programming code.

* Finally, the controls must be reprogrammed to lower the gravity and open the door. This requires a Smarts roll. Only one roll per round may be attempted. With success the heroes are saved!

And what if the group fails their tasks? Well, we're not about to have the heroes killed (though the individual GM can do as he wishes). At the end of the 6th round, after all actions have been handled, the gravity unexpectedly returns to normal. The door creaks open to reveal…a maintenance robot. The compactor wasn't scheduled to be on at this time, and the robot has orders to perform routine repairs.

Note that if the *players* expect to be saved ("He won't kill our character") and are thus reluctant to spend bennies on failed rolls, the GM should have them crushed to death. Our special rules give the characters a lot of breaks, but only when they get into the spirit of the game and try their hardest to escape any deathtrap under their own steam.

ACT 3: ON THE TRAIL

Jatha is furious! He demands the heroes help him into his hover chair, which is outside the trash compactor, all the while ranting about what he'll do to Ash. After a while he calms down enough to speak.

"How dare he attack the Syndic while still in office!" Pix roars loudly. "This goes against all the rules of the Syndicate! I want him out of business! Permanently! You," Pix says, turning to face you, "how'd you like to earn a bonus? An extra $250 each if you bring Pro-Syndic Ash to me in chains, $150 if you bring back his head?"

Jatha may be irate, but he didn't get rich by giving away money—he won't haggle one iota. Assuming the heroes agree (if not, they can end the adventure here and go on their merry way), Jatha gives them some advice.

"Ash has never revealed to the Syndicate where he lairs. He's tighter than an airlock seal with information." Pix pauses while Jatha slowly scratches his mountainous rolls of flab. "Try Jazz's cantina. It's near the landing pad you used. All the information brokers hang out there. Someone is bound to know something of interest."

SCENE 1: THE CANTINA

Jazz's cantina sells locally produced food and drink, but its primary service is information. Whether you want to know about events on Wayland or what's going on across the other side of the galaxy, Jazz's cantina is *the* place to visit. Jazz, the owner, runs a no blaster policy, and it is strictly enforced by his goons. In return for providing information brokers with a safe haven, he takes 10% of their fees.

If the GM wishes, he can add a band playing a catchy tune to the description below.

The bar stinks of unwashed aliens, alcohol, and various tubes of burning plant matter. Dozens of aliens stand at tables or lean against the walls in small groups, each whispering intently while keeping an eye on other the parties. No one pays much attention as you enter.

Learning anything about Pro-Syndic Ash requires a Streetwise roll at –4. There's a +1 bonus for each $100 spent on bribes, to a maximum of +4. With success, they learn Ash keeps a rented lockup in an industrial waste processing plant, in the heart of the Syndicate's territory.

If your heroes are up for it, the Streetwise roll can be made as part of a card game or game of chance—gambling is very popular among spacers and criminals alike. Let the heroes set the stakes for the game. Assume there are as many NPCs playing as heroes, and that all but two have d6 Gambling. One has Gambling d8 and a Wild Die, while another only has a d4 skill, but he cheats.

Should a player character cheat and get caught, a bar fight starts. Ash's goons (see below) take this opportunity to enter the fray. Increase the number of thugs to 3 per hero!

Ash has many of his own men encamped in Jazz's, mainly to keep an ear out for anyone asking questions about him, but also to spread false information and eavesdrop on hot gossip from the spacelanes. Once any questioning or card games are over, they jump the heroes without warning.

Check for Surprise, and then deal action cards as necessary.

The cantina is 12" to a side. The floor is covered in small tables (Small Burst Template sized), but no chairs—everyone stands at Jazz's.

Hand-to-hand weapons are permitted, but not many folk carry them these days. As such, the heroes are armed primarily with fists and feet. Bottles and tankards can be used as weapons (Str+d4), but they shatter on a Fighting roll of 1, regardless of the Wild Die. If the Wild Die indicates a success, then the object breaks after inflicting damage.

Jazz's bouncers don't interfere in the fight, since no blasters are involved. A little rough and tumble is considered fair play.

⭐ **Goons (2 per hero):** See page 11, but without blasters.

SCENE 2: ACID RAIN, ACID RAIN

Breaking into the unguarded lockup requires a Lockpicking roll at –2. Once inside, the heroes discover

dozens of crates (trade goods) and several computers. Whatever no information can be gained from the computers.

Entering the facility activated a silent alarm. As the heroes leave, a hover barge pulls alongside the platform and disgorges a squad of blaster-wielding robots.

Deal action cards.

The platform is circular and measures 16" across. The northern part touches a huge skyscraper, in which the lockup was located. Two elevated roads, each 3" wide, lead off to the left and right for hundreds of yards, before they connect to adjoining buildings.

The heroes begin anywhere within 3" of the northern point of the platform. Half the robots begin 9" down the left road and the other half, led by Robot Commander Drax, begin down the right road. The hover barge doesn't take part in the fight, though it hangs around until the last robot falls. Then it zooms off into the smog. A few crates scattered around the platform provide cover.

During the fight, clouds of acid rain drift over the area, dumping their caustic load. At the start of each round the GM should flip the top card of the action deck. If it's black, then a Medium Burst Template size cloud of acid cloud enters play. A Joker means the cloud uses a Large Burst Template.

Next, secretly roll two d12s. Read the results like a clockface, with one die marking a start point around the edge of the platform and the other the end point of an imaginary line. When the flipped card's value is reached during initiative countdown the cloud moves across the entire battlefield, following the imaginary line between the two d12 results. Anything underneath suffers 2d6 damage from an Extra.

⭐ **Robot Commander Drax:** See page 11.
⭐ **Robot Soldiers (3 per hero):** See page 11.

ACT 4: BOARD RESHUFFLE

The hover barge can be seen weaving through the smokestacks. Seated nearby is a hover taxi. The driver has just stepped out to grab junk food from a vending machine, and has left the engine running.

If the spacers don't see the need to give chase, allow them a Common Knowledge roll. With success, tell them that Ash keeps his affairs very secret, yet obviously has a command base somewhere in the sprawling city. The hover barge might be headed back to his location. If not, the driver, who they noticed was a robot, probably has the information they seek stored in its memory banks.

SCENE 1: PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY

If the heroes give Chase immediately, they begin three Range Increments behind. Each Increment equates to 5". The taxi is faster than the barge, giving the heroes a +1 bonus to Piloting rolls.

The large flatbed makes an easy target for heroes who want to leap onto the barge. Agility rolls to leap over are made at +2. Once onboard, they can target the robot driver (Toughness 8) with weapons or try to disable him.

The latter requires a Repair roll at –2 as an action. With success, he slumps over the controls, causing the barge to nosedive! Pulling it up in time to avoid a collision needs a Piloting roll at –2. On a failure, the hero can try next round at –4. A second failure leads to a collision with the ground.

The particular part of the city through which the chase takes place is a mass of smoke stacks, each pumping out thick, black, acrid fumes. Visibility can go from hazy to completely obscured in seconds as the clouds shift on the wind.

There are two potential hazards in this scene—the smog and the smokestacks.

At the start of each round, after regular action cards are dealt, the GM should deal each vehicle (not each player) a single card. Compare the value to the table below. This represents the smoke clouds. Modifiers apply to all Piloting and Shooting (or other ranged skill) rolls made by the vehicle or its passengers until the pilot's next action card.

Card	Modifier
Deuce	–4
3–5	–2
6–10	–1
Jack–Joker	0

The second hazard, the smokestacks, counts as hard Obstacles. The pilot's action card determines whether a stack has to be avoided in any given round. As normal, only Club suit cards are used. Check the value on the table below and apply the modifier to the Piloting roll. This is cumulative with the smoke penalty, if any! Damage is calculated as per the core rules.

Card	Modifier
Deuce	–6
3–4	–4
5–6	–2
7–10	–1
Jack–Ace	0

HOVER BARGE

Hover barges are large, flat platforms, designed for carrying cargo across cities. This particular model has a robotic driver. All that exists is a torso, head, and arms—its pelvis connects directly into the barge.

A heavy, blast cannon has been installed by Pro-Syndic Ash. This is on a swivel mount, allowing the robot to fire in any direction. The driver still suffers a –2 penalty for multi actions if he wants to fire in the same round the barge moves.

Acc/Top Speed: 4/40; **Toughness:** 16 (2); **Handling:** –1;

Crew: 1
Abilities: Piloting d8, Shooting d8, Steady Hands
Notes: Max height 50"
Weapons:
* Heavy blast cannon (Range: 30/60/120, Damage: 2d10, ROF 1)

HOVER TAXI

Hover taxis are small and nimble, capable of weaving through traffic at breakneck speeds.
Acc/Top Speed: 15/60; **Toughness:** 12 (2); **Handling:** 0; **Crew:** 1+4
Notes: Max height 100"

SCENE 2: HEADS UP

Whether he is destroyed or shut down, the robotic driver of the barge can still be of use to the heroes. Once the Chase is over, and when the heroes are nearby, the robot stutters out a few words (even if shut down). Consider them his final, cinematic appearance.

"I shall never betray my master! Activating internal memory drive self-destruct!"

If the characters want information, they need to work quickly. They have just six rounds to complete the following tasks in order. Only one hero per round may make a roll, those others may assist. Unless otherwise stated, failed rolls can be reattempted on the next round.

To ensure the entire party has something to do, the crash is witnessed by a squad of Ash's robot soldiers, who launch an attack. Set up the battlefield as an open plaza littered with crates, barrels, and other useful cover. Start the soldiers 16" away from the heroes.

* First, the character must remove the droid's head so he can access the wiring. This requires either a Strength or Repair roll at –2 (hero's choice).
* The character must then hook up a wrist computer. Under no pressure, this would be a simple action, but with the clock ticking it requires an Agility roll.
* Now the security locks on the droid's memory circuits must be deactivated before any information can be accessed. A Smarts (–4) or Repair (–2) roll is required to achieve this.
* Finally, the technician must find the relevant information before the self-destruct erases the robot's mind forever. This requires an Investigation roll at –2.

With success, the party learns the location of Pro-Syndic Ash's secret lair—it's in an automated hover car construction factory across town. In the unlikely event the time expires before the heroes succeed, the GM has two choices. First, he can have the heroes make a Cooperative Streetwise roll at –6 to find Ash's headquarters. Second, he can rule the self-destruct mechanism was faulty and never activated.
  ⭐ **Robot Soldiers (2 per hero):** Page 11.

WAYLAID ON WAYLAND

SCENE 3: INDUSTRIAL CARNAGE

GM Note: The constant whirling, stabbing, thrusting, and rumbling machinery in this Scene should always be mentioned in your combat descriptions. This is especially true if the automated factory attacks a hero or NPC. Don't say that a rivet gun attack "misses." Describe the hot pellets ricocheting off the flooring and singing the hero's hair as they whiz past like angry bees. Your players will enjoy the fight more if you help them visualize the action.

The taxi cab settles down onto a small landing platform. Nearby are a set of heavy blast doors. It looks like Pro-Syndic Ash isn't expecting company, as there's no sign of any guards.

Opening the doors requires simply pressing a button.

Beyond the doors is a vast industrial complex. Far below are raging furnaces and whirling blades. Your level is a series of catwalks and conveyor belts, crisscrossing the immense building. Robotic arms cut, hammer, and weld to their own unique beats. Far across the hall stands Pro-Syndic Ash and a squad of his robotic soldiers.

Looks like the door triggered some sort of silent alarm, but Ash has clearly given his minions orders to attack!

Deal action cards!

Divide the robot minions into pairs for the purposes of action cards. This is important, as the machinery is as much a threat to them as it is the heroes.

The heroes begin at one end of the battlefield. Ash starts 20" away, while his minions begin 18" away. Make sure to spread them out across the scenery as much as possible.

TERRAIN

The battlefield should measure 24" to a side. The factory is divided into two levels. The lower level is covered in furnaces and assorted deadly machinery, and is 40" below the upper level. Any hero who falls suffers 10d6 from a Wild Card source.

The upper level, where the action takes place, is a maze of crisscrossing catwalks and conveyor belts. Each is 1" wide. These should be spaced 1 or 2" apart, horizontally and vertically, thus forcing heroes who want to move around the battlefield to jump.

Any Wild Card who fails a jump isn't doomed to certain death—that fate is reserved for Extras. Instead, he is left hanging onto the edge of the target square by his fingertips. As an action, he can make a Strength roll to haul himself to his feet. A –2 penalty applies if the character is holding a weapon (two-handed weapons are deemed clutched in a single hand) or other object. Likewise,

characters knocked back over the edge of a catwalk by any means don't fall—they always get that lucky break.

All conveyor belts run in straight lines. Mark the direction of their travel. A hero moving with the belt gains +2 Pace. Moving against the flow gives him –2 Pace. If he elects not to use his Pace, he still has the option of moving up to 2" in the appropriate direction. Heroes who cannot move, such as those *entangled* or pinned to a belt, *automatically* move 2" each round.

In addition, the GM should add in a few circular platforms where catwalks join. Use a Medium Burst Template for these. Likewise, numerous stacks of metal barrels or crates, or huge metal buckets which move through the room at regular intervals should exist to provide cover and force the heroes to move around to get clear shots at targets.

ADDED DANGER

In addition to the hazards posed by Pro-Syndic Ash and his robot servitors, the automated factory and its mindless robotic limbs is a danger to all the combatants.

As well as the terrain above, the GM should place marker stones of four different colors. Each color must correspond to one of the card suits. Place half a dozen of each color anywhere on the map within 1" of a catwalk or conveyor belt.

In any round in which any character draws a deuce for his first action card, part of the automated factory attacks at the *start* of the round, before other actions are taken. Check the value against the entries below to determine which machines attack and their specific effects. Each machine of the corresponding suit attacks *every* target within its 3" Reach with no multi action penalty. If a machine takes a single wound, remove its token from play. As a reminder, all damage from the machines is as an Extra.

If multiple deuces are drawn, then all the appropriate machines attack that round!

Suit	Result
Club	A series of heavy blades slash at the hero. Make two Fighting (–2) rolls per target. Damage is 2d10 per successful attack.
Diamond	A huge hammer swings at the hero. Roll a single Fighting attack. Damage is 2d8. Any hero hit, whether wounded or not, must make an Agility roll or be pushed back into an adjacent square that is unoccupied. Ideally, the square entered should be the most problematic one for the character (such as off a catwalk).
Heart	A rivet gun sprays the hero with hot steel. Treat this as a RoF 3 Shooting roll. Damage is 2d6+1 per hit. The Autofire penalty applies as normal. The attack is considered Short Range.
Spade	A spiked arm tries to impale the target. Make a single Fighting roll. Damage is

2d8. In addition, any hero Shaken or wounded is pinned to the floor. He cannot move until he first makes a Strength –2 roll as an action, but he can take other actions, such as firing a gun or shooting.

★ **Pro-Syndic Asgaya Ash:** Page 12.
★ **Robot Soldiers (2 per hero):** Page 11.
★ **Automated Machinery:** Page 12.

AFTERMATH

Whether Ash is killed or arrested, the adventure ends when he is defeated. Jatha is true to his word, and rewards the heroes with their bonus money. This isn't part of the background expenses, so they can add it to their character sheets.

Jatha, pleased by the heroes' loyalty, adds them to his list of trusted hirelings. The blubbery rogue may reappear in other *Daring Tales of the Space Lanes*, or he could be used as a contact or patron for your own space stories.

If captured, Ash is put on trial by the Syndicate, found guilty, and exiled. He can become a recurring villain. Jatha's bribery works exactly as he planned, earning him another 5-year tenure as Syndic.

THE CAST

NAGAN JATHA, CRIMELORD

Nagan Jatha is beyond obese. He can only move through a hover chair, which has trouble supporting his massive bulk. Publicly he is head of the Daksha Syndicate, but everyone on Wayland knows he's really a criminal.

Jatha is a Henchman, so he has three wound levels like a Wild Card but no Wild Die. His Great Luck Edge gives him two bennies. These should only be used to Soak wounds, though.

Special: Jatha's chair is fitted with a variety of special devices. These work like spells, generally using Smarts in place of an arcane skill roll. The *bolt* power uses Shooting, however. The chair has no Power Points. Instead each device can be used a limited number of times per Scene. Spells with a normal duration of 3 (1/r) instead last for a flat three rounds per activation. Jatha's "powers" are the equivalent of 10 Power Points.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d4, Vigor d8
Skills: Intimidation d10, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8
Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 1; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 10
Hindrances: All Thumbs (fat fingers), Greedy (Minor), Ugly (bulbous form)
Edges: Charismatic, Command, Connections (many and varied), Great Luck
Gear: —

Special Abilities:
* **Defenses:** 2 x *bolt* (laser cannon; 3 bolts for 2d6 damage), *deflection* (force field), 2 x *speed* (booster engines).
* **Hover Chair:** Pace 4, d4 running die. On foot, Jatha has Pace 1 and cannot run.
* **Immovable:** For the purposes of resisting being pushed or lifted, treat Jatha's Strength as d12+2. Psions with *telekinesis* find it impossible to lift the villain—his weight requires them to have a Spirit die of d12+8, and that's if they score a raise!
* **Large:** Attackers add +2 to attack rolls because of his immense, bloated body.
* **Size +4:** Jatha is only 5' 8", but he weighs in excess of 1,000 pounds. He's so fat he fills a Small Burst Template.

JATHA'S GOONS

Jatha's goons, like most of their ilk, are low on brains but extremely loyal. They are from a variety of alien species, but none have any special abilities worth noting.

Shock gloves are the space lane equivalent to knuckledusters, and deal a short, sharp, electric jolt on impact.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6
Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6
Hindrances: Loyal
Edges: —
Gear: Blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, Semi-Auto), shock glove (Str+d4; cannot be disarmed)

ROBOT SOLDIER

Robot soldiers aren't smart or particularly skilled, but you don't need to pay them, and they follow orders without question. They are typically used in high numbers, since they are susceptible to damage.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)
Gear: Blaster carbine (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, Semi-Auto)
Special Abilities:
* **Armor +1:** Metal skin.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; Called Shots do no additional damage; immune to poison and disease.

ROBOT COMMANDER DRAX

Drax may be a robot, but he's got a powerful processor and plenty of battle experience. He serves Ash as his senior enforcer, and commander of his private robot army.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Throwing d8
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)
Hindrances: Loyal (to Pro-Syndic Ash)
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Hold the Line, Level Headed, Marksman, Rock and Roll
Gear: Repeating blaster carbine (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, ROF 3), two grenades (Range: 4/8/16, Damage: 3d6, Medium Burst Template), sword (Str+d6)
Special Abilities:
* **Armor +2:** Thick metal skin.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; Called Shots do no additional damage; immune to poison and disease.

PRO-SYNDIC ASGAYA ASH

Half-man and half-machine, Pro-Syndic Ash is a senior member of the Syndicate, but not senior enough for his tastes. When his agents reported his great rival Jatha was planning on securing votes for reelection through bribes, Ash decided to do away with his competitor and secure the top spot in a single, bold move.

Among his mundane modifications are armor plates, blades which shoot out from his forearms, and powerful legs for leaping great distances. He also has some very unusual additions.

Special: Ash also has a series of extra features built in. In game terms, these function as spells. With the exception of *smite*, which uses Smarts, the other powers are activated using Shooting. Ash has no Power Points. Instead each device can be used a limited number of times per Scene. Spells with a normal duration of 3 (1/r) instead last for a flat 3 rounds per activation. Ash's "powers" are the equivalent of 20 Power Points

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Charisma: –2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy (Minor), Overconfident, Ugly (cyborg)

Edges: Command, Fleet Footed, Frenzy, Improved Dodge, Improved Nerves of Steel, Improved Tough as Nails, Level Headed, Sweep, Two Fisted

Gear: Blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6, Semi-Auto), two arm blades (Str+d6; cannot be disarmed)

Special Abilities:

* **Armor +1:** Partially armored skin.
* **Gizmos:** 1 x *armor* (force field), 1 x *blast* (3d6, MBT; miniature rocket), 1 x *entangle* (Medium Burst only; net launcher), 2 x *smite* (each arm sword splits into two blades for added damage), 3 x *stun* (electricity)
* **Leap:** Can move up to full Pace when leaping from a standing start (+1" if he runs).
* **Partial Construct:** +1 to recover from being Shaken; Called Shots do half the normal bonus damage; +2 to resist poison and disease.

AUTOMATED FACTORY

The vast factory is comprised of hundreds of separate arms and tools, any of which pose a threat to the heroes. A wound inflicted on one appendage does absolutely nothing to stall the general running of the factory.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d8

Pace: —; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Special Abilities:

* **Armor +3:** Metal limb.
* **Mindless:** Immune to Smarts Tricks, Fear, and Tests of Will.
* **Weaponry:** Reach 3. The weapons used against a hero vary depending on the suit of the deuce drawn. These are summarized in the preceding text.

GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

The unpopulated Zahhak system has been a battle-field for decades. On one side of the star system sits the worlds of the powerful Miners Guild, while on the other are the Confederated Worlds of the Braxian Star League. Both sides laid claim to Zahhak simultaneously, eager to harvest its abundant natural resources. Neither side wished to share the rich spoils, diplomacy failed, and war ensued.

At first the war was popular with the masses on both sides—victory would mean increased wealth for everyone. But a decade of constant war has left the economies of both factions weakened, and the loss of life has been appalling. Recent elections have swept more level-headed leaders into power, and for the first time since the war began, dialogue has been opened.

Both factions agreed to talks, so long as they were mediated by a member of the Peace Guild, a faction dedicated to ending wars in the galaxy and bringing about mutually beneficent trade agreements. A conference has been arranged, and Jox Valsen, a senior Peacemaker (as Guild members are known), invited to chair the meeting.

However, peace does not suit everybody. A small faction of the Star League military sees peace as defeat, not victory. They don't want their people to share—they want total victory. Unable to sway their leaders into continuing the campaign, they have switched to a new plan.

After kidnapping Valsen, they intend to lure their own leaders into a trap and slaughter them. The military will then take control of the government in a carefully staged coup, and the war will continue unabated.

Characters: 25 XP.

CONVENTION PLAY

This adventure is ideal for convention play and for introducing new players to *Savage Worlds*. To help ensure the adventure fits into a standard convention time slot, the GM can implement some of the following changes:

*   Ignore Act 1, Scene 1. Instead, Valsen hires the heroes directly, fearing he is being followed and his scheduled transport is unsafe. There's going to be a fight a few moments later, so losing the initial combat won't delay the fun too long.
*   The cruiser in Act 2, Scene 2 doesn't have a hyperspace jammer. This likely means the characters can enter hyperspace much more easily.
*   Ignore the obstacles table in Act 3, Scene 1. Instead, assume space is empty. This will speed up the action scene, though at the expense of some excitement.

ACT 1: COURIER SERVICE

The action begins almost immediately, with the heroes' background situation being described in the opening paragraph. All trade is assumed to have been completed, and the money safely in the heroes' bank account. Once the adventure starts, there is no reason for them to hang around the space station.

SCENE 1: HELPING HAND

The Hub, a colossal trading space station above the desert world of Calthis III, has been your home for the last week. After tense negotiations, you managed to unload your cargo for a tidy profit, enough to keep Blazing Star fuelled and stored for several trips. Your hold is currently full of glittersand, a product of the local system, and highly prized by the three-armed artists of the Ventra species.

After loading your cargo, you're heading back to this little bar you discovered for a final drink before hitting the spacelanes. Up ahead, from a small cargo bay, you can hear the distinctive sounds of blaster fire.

When the characters investigate, they spy a lone figure with white hair and eyes (Jox Valsen) crouched behind a crate across the cargo bay. Lying beside him are three aliens, blasters dangling from their limp hands. A small group of men are firing blasters at the survivor to keep him pinned down, while a few sneak up unseen.

Deal action cards.

The cargo bay is 18" long and 10" wide. About a quarter of the floor space is covered in shipping crates, barrels, and other storage containers. Although only Extras, the soldiers are trained warriors—they'll make the best use of cover possible during the engagement.

The white-haired figure is in the northeast corner, hiding behind a pile of crates. The main body of his attackers is near the opposite corner. There is an airlock door nearby. A quarter of the goons are creeping along the north wall, using boxes for concealment. The heroes begin in the center of the southern wall.

The soldiers' weapons are initially set to stun—they need the diplomat alive for their plan to work. Once the heroes wade in, the troops providing covering fire flick their carbines over to lethal and switch firing to the spacers.

After losing half their men, make a Group Spirit roll for the soldiers. Failure means they pull back and try to escape through the airlock—they don't panic and run, but rather aim for a tactical withdrawal.

Captured soldiers know only that they were to capture the white-haired man alive, take him to the Zahhak system, and hand him over to their commanders. They know nothing of the big plan to keep the war going.

⭐ **Jox Valsen:** See page 19.
⭐ **Soldiers (2 per hero):** See page 20.

SCENE 2: THE GALAXY NEEDS YOU

Valsen thanks the heroes for their timely arrival on the scene. He invites them to dinner, adding that he has a short-term job offer for them. Assuming they accept, read the text below to the players.

"My name is Jox Valsen," the alien says. "I am a Peacekeeper, and a senior member of the Peace Guild. My bodyguards and I were due to catch a ship bound for the Zahhak system, but as you discovered, we were ambushed.

"The Miners Guild and the Star League have been at war over the Zahhak system for a decade, but new leaders are now in power and they seem intent on brokering a peace deal. I am set to chair the meeting.

"However, it seems that certain parties want the war to continue. I see no other reason for attempting to murder me. I need to reach the diplomatic ship in orbit around Zahhak. I suspect whoever arranged the ambush knows my travel plans,

and thus I need to travel incognito and avoid the usual diplomatic shuttles and charters.

"In return for $300 each, plus the cost of fuel, I wish to hire you as my escorts."

Have the heroes make Common Knowledge (–2) or Piloting rolls (hero's choice). Success reveals the Zahhak system isn't too far off their planned route. Given a smooth hyperspace calculation, they should only lose a day or so from their schedule.

Valsen may be desperate for a ride, but he's shrewd enough to know whoever he tries to hire will demand more money. To that extent, he is prepared to negotiate. There is no die rolling in this section—it's up to the characters to accept what they feel is a fair price.

He counters the first demand for more by keeping the cash the same, but agreeing to cover the costs of any damages to their ship picked up during the mission. This alone is *potentially* worth several thousand galactic trade credits. His highest offer is $500 each plus fuel and repairs, though he'll try to secure a lower deal by raising the cash reward in increments of $50 from his opening offer.

Heroes who still demand more are out of luck—a passing merchant overhears the negotiations and accept the terms. Unless they *lower* their fee, they lose the patron and the adventure is over. Award the party a single Experience Point.

ACT 2: ESCAPING THE STATION

Everything the characters own is either on their person or aboard the *Blazing Star*. There's no need for them to go anywhere but straight to their ship. As such, the action cuts to their arrival in the hangar bay. The bulk of the enemy soldiers are already here, waiting for Valsen to make an appearance.

SCENE 1: ABANDON SHIP

The aim of this scene is to make the escape exciting and seem like a close run thing. If the soldiers are *easily* defeated, the GM should have another squad equal in number to the party arrive on the scene.

The hangar bay is a battlefield! Armored men are blasting at work crews and pilots alike, while a heavy blaster is peppering starships with fire. The Blaze hasn't been hit yet, but it won't be long! A handful of station security staff is mounting a valiant but futile defense.

Now that isn't good! It looks like the attackers have shut the hangar's reinforced outer blast doors. Unless those doors are opened, you're going nowhere fast!

Deal action cards! Divide the soldiers into three equal groups for initiative. This prevents them all acting before the heroes and helps break up the action a little.

Hand out an Ally Sheet for Valsen—he isn't much of a fighter, but he's good for Smarts Tricks and Tests of Will. In addition, each player controls a single member of the station's security troops.

The main hangar bay measures 30" long and 24" wide. The west wall is the exit, and is currently blocked by a pair of heavy blast doors. The heroes know that when these are opened, a weak forcefield kicks into life, preventing the bay from depressurizing. The *Blazing Star* is parked against the west wall. Assume it fills an area measuring 10" by 10". Mark one square of the ship in some manner to indicate the entrance ramp.

Scatter some crates and large forklift robots around to provide cover for the attackers and the heroes.

The blast door override controls are located on a computer terminal halfway along the south wall, between two of the smaller bays. To activate them, a hero must make a Smarts roll while adjacent to the terminal.

The heroes enter halfway along the north wall. The attackers begin scattered around the hangar bay as the GM wishes. One pair operates a heavy blast cannon. This is currently set up near the blast doors, pointing back into the room. It cannot be fired in the same round it is moved. If one of the operators is slain, the other can move the weapon at half his Pace and cannot run.

As before, the soldiers won't try to kill Valsen—they want to kill his bodyguards, though. They are free to use their stun grenades, however. Lieutenant Skyme, the soldier's commander should survive this scene—use the Recurring Villains rules to ensure this happens.

The *Blazing Star's* laser turret functions perfectly well while the ship is landed, and is thus a valuable asset in the battle. The missiles, however, are designed for space combat, and won't fire unless they lock onto a starship. Assume that once a hero reaches the entrance ramp he can fire the guns on the next round as an action.

Once the doors are open, the heavy cannon is disabled, and all the heroes are aboard *Blazing Star*, the ship can blast off into space. The spacers don't have to kill all the soldiers to "win" the scene.

⭐ **Lieutenant Skyme:** See page 20.
⭐ **Soldiers (3 per hero):** See page 20. One pair operates a heavy blast cannon (Range: 30/60/120, Damage: 2d10, AP 4, HW, cannot move and fire)
⭐ **Security Staff (1 per hero):** Treat as soldiers (see page 20).

SCENE 2: HYPERSPACE HERE WE COME

The space station rapidly disappears to a twinkling dot as Blazing Star shoots into the gas clouds

above Calthis III. Sensors immediately begin beeping an alarm, but you didn't need them to tell you you're being chased—the brilliant flashes of blaster fire are warning enough. A quick scan reveals a pair of fighters and a heavy cruiser approaching from behind.

This Scene uses the Chase rules, with a few adjustments.

Lay out 14 markers for the Range Increments. Use a different color token for the 13th Range Increment. The enemy begin on the first marker, while the heroes are three ahead. Each Range Increment equates to 5SU (remember, that's 5" for ship stat purposes).

In order to make the passage to hyperspace, the *Blazing Star* must move beyond the 13th Range Increment. On any marker thereafter, the pilot can try to fire up the engines. Unfortunately, the heavy cruiser is equipped with a hyperspace damping field. Any ship within three Range Increments of the cruiser cannot enter hyperspace.

The area of space above Calthis III contains clouds of electrically charged gas. Like thunderstorms on Earth, the gas builds up a charge, which is then released in the form of lightning. It may not be good science, but it's an interesting backdrop.

Any pilot who draws a deuce as his first action card in a round has his ship struck by a discharge. Until the pilot's next action card, use of all systems onboard suffer a –2 penalty due to hull ionization. This affects Piloting, Shooting, Repair, and Knowledge (Shield) rolls. This can be negated by popping a shield pod as if Soaking damage.

The fighters and cruiser act on individual initiative cards. The cruiser will not use its batteries on any Range Increment containing its own fighters except after the *Blazing Star* reaches the 13th Range Increment.
⭐ **Fighters (2):** See page 3.

HEAVY CRUISER

Heavy cruisers are powerful warships, but not much good at taking down small craft. When used operationally, they are escorted by destroyers packed with anti-fighter lasers or supported by fighter squadrons.
Top Speed: 8; **Toughness:** 50 (30); **Handling:** +0; **Shields Pods:** 4; **Crew:** 50
Abilities: Piloting d8, Shields d8, Shooting d8
Notes: 4 x AMCM, Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer, Spacecraft
Weapons:
* 2 x medium laser battery port (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d8; ROF 1; AP 10, HW)
* 2 x medium laser battery starboard (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d8; ROF 1; AP 10, HW)
* 1 x light laser battery port (Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)
* 1 x light laser battery starboard (Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)

ACT 3: TRAITORS TO PEACE

The hyperspace trip is uneventful, and takes just over 12 hours. Unless the GM wants to run a small encounter or roleplaying segment, he can fade straight to the next scene.

SCENE 1: COLLATERAL DAMAGE

The ship's return to normal space is indicated not by the usual quiet beeping, but by proximity alarms blaring into life! You've emerged straight into the ruins of countless ship battles. All around are tumbling pieces of wrecked spaceships. A second alarm sounds, alerting you to a more immediate danger—fighters hot on your tail!

Through the debris field your sensors pick up a large, heavily armed vessel. Valsen slaps the pilot on the shoulder. "That's the Neutral Ground, a diplomatic frigate sent by the Peace Guild. That's where the peace conference is being held. We need to dock with her immediately."

Run this Scene as a Chase. Don't use the regular Obstacles—instead, there's a set of Obstacles below. The heroes are three Range Increments ahead of their foes, and each Range Increment equates to 5SU. The faster fighters grant their commanders +1 to Piloting rolls.

Attempts to communicate with the frigate fail automatically. A hero making a Common Knowledge roll realizes the signals are being jammed, not from an external source, but from within the *Blazing Star*. The attackers managed to place a jammer on the hull during the fight in the space station.

Disabling the jammer requires two Repair (–2) rolls as separate actions, the first to locate the jamming signal, and the second to disable it. Once this is achieved, the heroes can contact the frigate as an action from either the pilot or co-pilot. It immediately dispatches two pairs of fighters, causing the attackers' ships to break off and flee at the end of the current round.

⭐ **Fighters (2):** See page 3.

OBSTACLES

Deuce (–4) We're Heading In: The hulking wreck of a ship is too close to avoid. The best the pilot can hope to do is fly through the ruined superstructure! A failed roll causes a collision with a stationary hard obstacle.

As the wrecked vessel has Heavy Armor, this is added to the damage roll. This vessel has Armor +10. As an example, the *Blazing Star* would take 6d6+10 damage.

Three (–2) Explosive Mine: The debris field is littered with proximity mines. A failed Piloting roll causes one to detonate close to the ship. The ship suffers 3d8, AP 30, HW damage from an Extra. Other ships on the same Range Increment suffer half damage (still AP 30). Wounds can be Soaked with a shield pod or the Ace Edge.

Four (0/–2) Through or Round?: Dense debris ahead gives the pilot two choices—fly through or fly around. The enemy fighters always play safe, and head around.

Going through the debris gives no penalty, but failure causes multiple collisions. Treat these as a single AP 6 hit with damage based on the ship's speed. Opting to fly around requires taking a longer but safer route. There is no specific penalty for failure—the ship just doesn't move as far forward this round.

Five (–2) Blinded: Sunlight reflecting off the wreckage momentarily blinds the ship's sensors. As well as modifying the Piloting roll, gunners suffer the penalty to their Shooting rolls this round. Failing the Piloting roll causes no special problems—the pilot just throttled back and played it safe, but in doing so made little headway.

Six (–2) Ion Mine: The ship wanders close to an ion field discharge mine. It detonates if the Piloting roll fails. Until the pilot's next action card, any roll made to use a ship system suffers a –2 penalty. This can be negated by using a shield pod as if Soaking damage.

Seven (–2) Narrow Gap: The pilot has no choice but to try and fly through a narrow gap between two wrecked starships. Failure causes a collision with a hard obstacle (+6 Heavy Armor).

Eight (–2) Gravity Mine: The ship wanders close to a gravity well mine. A failed roll causes detonation. The ship is Shaken. Instead of using Spirit, the pilot uses his Piloting skill to unShake. This can be negated by using a shield pod as if Soaking damage.

Nine (–1) Light Debris Field: The ship plunges into an area saturated with debris. A failed Piloting roll causes a collision with a stationary hard obstacle (+10 Heavy Armor). Damage is from an Extra.

Ten (–1) Backwash: Automatic systems aboard a wreck are trying to ignite the engines. The resultant blast catches the ship, knocking it off course. A failed Piloting roll causes the ship to be automatically Shaken. This cannot be Soaked by shield pods, but Ace works as normal.

Jack (–1) Automated Cannons: A battery of cannons, activated by an automated firing system, opens up on the starship. Treat this as Suppressive Fire, except the pilot suffers a –1 penalty to avoid the shots, due to the difficulty of avoiding obstacles. A roll of 1 or less, regardless of Wild Die, causes a single 3d8 damage (AP 8, HW) hit from an Extra.

Queen (–1) Reactor Breach: A failed Piloting roll means the ship is caught up in the explosion of an overloading reactor in a nearby derelict.

Roll for two Critical Hits. The ship suffers no actual wounds, just the effects of the Critical Hits (thus, Chassis hits cause no damage). A Crew hit causes 3d6 damage (from an Extra) to each crewmember. The effects can be Soaked using a shield pod, but each Critical Hit counts as a separate injury.

King (0) Automated Missile: An automated defense system locks onto the ship and fires a missile. A failed

Piloting roll means the missile is at Short Range. Success places it at Medium Range, and a raise at Long Range. Avoiding the missile (Damage: 4d8, AP 8, HW) is handled as normal.

Ace (0) Robotic Mine: An automated mine equipped with engines locks onto the ship and gives chase. Treat avoiding this as a missile. See the entry above for the initial range.

The GM should roll a d6 to determine the type of mine: 1–2 indicates an explosive mine (see Three above), 3–4 an ion mine (see entry Six), and 5–6 a gravity mine (see Eight above). Effects for failing to avoid the mine are as per the entries noted in parentheses.

SCENE 2: A DEADLY TRAP

Once the chase ends, and assuming the jamming signal is disabled, the diplomatic frigate communicates with the *Blazing Star*, giving permission to land.

Valsen and the heroes are welcomed aboard, and led straight to a conference room by an armed escort of a dozen men. The diplomat briefs the officer leading them about recent events, though he allows the heroes to add their own commentary.

As the conference room door opens, the heroes are met by an unpleasant surprise—two dozen armed guards, with blasters leveled at the party! Lieutenant Skyme should have survived the previous encounter. If so, he's the ringleader. Otherwise replace him with another Star League officer with the same stats.

"Drop your weapons now!" the officer barks. "Failure to comply will result in your immediate execution."

Let the heroes decide whether they want to fight or surrender. They're badly outnumbered, and the GM has infinite reinforcements at his disposal for this scene. Once the spacers surrender or are defeated, they are disarmed. They are not manacled, however. Skyme then addresses them.

"Your little adventure is at an end," the officer gloats. "This proposed peace treaty is an affront to the Star League military and a slur on the names of our dead heroes. The Star League will not kowtow to the Miners' Guild, and soon our people will rise up again with military fervor and a desire for revenge!

"You see, the moment we landed we signaled the Star League fleet waiting nearby, telling them of your arrival and your desire to speak with our leaders immediately. As we speak, a shuttle is en route. When it docks, this ship will explode thanks to a device planted in the engines, wiping out our civilian leadership. Naturally, the Miners Guild will be blamed for this atrocity, and war will recommence.

"Alas, you won't be around to witness our eventual victory. You, Peacekeeper Valsen, and your bodyguards, will be on this ship when it detonates. The rest of the ship's compliment is already imprisoned in the hold—we need the bodies in case anyone searches the wreckage.

"Take them away!"

⭐ **Lieutenant Skyme:** See page 20.
⭐ **Soldiers (36 initially):** See page 20.

ESCAPE PLAN

The heroes are thrown into the brig. They don't have any weapons, but the search wasn't very thorough—any wrist computers were ignored (they're as common as wristwatches, and often forgotten), as were small tools, like lockpicks.

In order to escape and save the Star League leaders from certain death, not to mention saving their own butts, the characters need to complete the following tasks in order before the end of six rounds. Each round isn't a typical 6-second combat round—it's an abstract amount of time used simply to measure the flow of the scene. Unless otherwise stated, failed rolls can be reattempted on subsequent rounds.

At the end of six rounds the ship explodes, killing everybody onboard. There is no get out of jail free card this time—it's do or die!

Less-than-heroic characters may wish to escape, even though that means dooming the frigate's crew. Valsen vocally opposes any such plan to abandon ship until the last possible instant.

Escaping requires two rounds of actions—an Agility roll to reach the hangar bay, and a Piloting roll (can be Cooperative) to get the *Blazing Star* out of the blast radius. Success saves the heroes' bacon and the lives of the Star League officials, who can be warned of the traitors in their military and diverted from the diplomatic ship.

* The first thing they must do is escape their cell. This requires a Lockpicking roll at –2. The heroes can attempt to force open the door. This is a Strength roll at –6, but can be done Cooperatively.

* Next they must run through the ship. The characters have two places of immediate interest—the bridge, from where they can try to communicate with the approaching shuttle, or the engine room, where the bomb is located. This requires an Agility roll at –2.

Some spacers may aim for the cargo hold, where the crew is imprisoned. While they can be freed, the only ship currently docked is the *Blazing Star*, and at best it can rescue half the crewmembers.

* Heroes reaching the bridge discover the communications system has been trashed. They must make a Notice roll to locate enough spare parts to fix it. Those who headed for the engine room need to make a Notice roll to find the bomb. Notice rolls can be made Cooperative-

17

SCENE 1: STAR CHASERS

The traitor's ship is a small destroyer. In the time the heroes took to save the frigate, Skyme and his cohorts reached their vessel and are preparing to vacate the system (we're assuming the characters saved the day and Valsen alerted the Star League to the traitors' existence).

The characters have little chance of destroying the destroyer through force of arms, although they might get in a few lucky hits. Instead, Valsen recommends they board her. No other League ships are able to help—their crews are busy rounding up suspect military officers—and the Miners Guild fleet, which is orbiting the planet, has no desire to get involved in what they see as a Star League internal problem.

This Scene is run using the Chase rules. Use the Obstacles table from Act 3, Scene 1 for added danger. Each Range Increment represents 5SU, and the destroyer is three Range Increments ahead of the *Blazing Star*. The destroyer is faster, so the pilot has +1 to Piloting rolls.

When the characters get within two Range Increments of the destroyer, they discover its hangar bay blast doors are closed. Forcing them open requires a Called Shot (–2) to the external systems. A successful shot, whether it causes any damage to the destroyer or not, causes the doors to open at the start of the *next* round. Docking requires a successful Force maneuver.

DESTROYER

Unlike capital ships, destroyers have weapons capable of targeting small ships. They also carry medium lasers, though these can only fire against the *Blazing Star* as batteries.

The gunners aboard the destroyer have 2 bennies between them. They can use these to reroll Shooting dice as normal. They can also spend a benny *after* making a damage roll to be treated as Wild cards. This means any damage dice *can* Ace for that shot only.

Top Speed: 10; **Toughness:** 30 (10); **Handling:** +0;

ly, but there isn't time to allow for individual attempts from every hero.

* Whether on the bridge or in the engine room, the appropriate technical task requires a Repair roll at –2. With success, the bomb is disabled or the communicator is repaired and the shuttle warned away. The former saves everyone, while performing just the latter leaves the characters aboard a floating bomb!

ACT 4: SAVING THE DAY

So long as the heroes survive, Valsen urges them to give chase to the traitor's shuttle so they can be brought to justice. Allowing them to escape, he adds, will cause immense problems for the Star League, and jeopardize the peace treaty.

Shields Pods: 2; **Crew:** 20
Abilities: Piloting d8, Shields d6, Shooting d6
Notes: 4 x AMCM, Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer, Spacecraft
Weapons:
* 1 x medium laser battery port (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d8; ROF 1; AP 10, HW)
* 1 x medium laser battery starboard (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d8; ROF 1; AP 10, HW)
* 2 x light laser double turrets port (+1 Shooting, Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6+1; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)
* 2 x light laser double turrets starboard (+1 Shooting, Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6+1; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)
* 1 x missile turret (Range: 20/40/80; Damage: 4d8; ROF 1-2; AP 8, HW), 8 spare missiles

SCENE 2: DEATH TO TRAITORS

No matter how good the Piloting roll, the *Blazing Star* lands awkwardly, leaving the crew unable to use her lasers in this fight. Give the heroes one action round to move (start them at the base of the exit ramp) before Skyme and his guards appear on the scene.

The hangar bay is 24" to a side. The *Blazing Star* is considered to be "off-screen," and so doesn't interfere with play. Obstacles and cover should include crates, idle robots (filling either a 1" square or a 2" x 2" area), fighters (6" long and 4" wide), and other such things. Near the center is an elevator platform, measuring 3" to a side. This begins in the down position. A single door is located in the west wall, while the east wall is the open hangar door.

Half the soldiers enter through the door to the bay. The other half, along with Skyme, arrives on the elevator.

Deal action cards! Divide the soldiers into groups equal in number to the heroes. This increases the likelihood of an interesting event occurring (see below), and also stops the goons all being affected by a single hazard.

At the start of the second round, Star League cruisers begin blasting at the destroyer. Valsen tried to convince the Star League his agents were personally handling the job, but they have ignored has requests for a cease fire.

Each round, including this one, in which any one draws a deuce as their first action card, the destroyer takes a hit. Heroes with the same action card suit as the deuce must check the table below to determine the effects they suffer at the start of the round, before any actions are taken.

Suit	Result
Club	**Steam Pipe:** The blast breaks a high-pressure steam pipe. The hero must make a Vigor roll as a free action or be Shaken.
Diamond	**Collapsing Ceiling:** Affected characters must make an Agility roll as a free action or suffer 3d6 damage (from an Extra).

GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

	A critical failure means the character is pinned beneath the debris. He cannot move. This is treated as the *entangle* spell as if cast with a success, except the character cannot move while pinned. The square the character occupies is difficult ground for the remainder of the scene.
Heart	**Buckled Floor:** Victims must make an Agility roll as a free action or fall prone. A critical failure means the spacer is Shaken as well.
Spade	**Explosion:** The hero is caught in an explosion. Place a Medium Burst Template over each victim. Anyone under the template must make an Agility roll at –2 as a free action or suffer 3d6 damage (from an Extra) and be knocked prone.

⭐ **Lieutenant Skyme:** See page 20.
⭐ **Soldiers (3 per hero):** See page 20.

AFTERMATH

Once Skyme and his crew are dead, the adventure ends. Outnumbered and badly damaged, the destroyer surrenders to Star League forces. Although there are many more traitors in the League, most are captured, tried, and executed over the next few weeks. A few escape their hunters, which means the GM can use them as recurring villains in his own adventures.

The peace conference begins a few days later. It takes many months of hard negotiation, but Valsen eventually brings the two sides together in harmony. A new, joint business venture is set up to exploit the Zahhak system, with both sides profiting equally.

True to his word, Valsen pays the heroes what he owes, and has any damage to the *Blazing Star* repaired free of charge.

THE CAST

JOX VALSEN

Jox Valsen is a senior member of the Peace Guild, a union of diplomats dedicated to bringing peace to the galaxy. Jox is a near-human, his species, Ralzorians, being distinguishable by their shock-white hair and eyes.

Jox is a Henchman (three wound levels, but no Wild Die).
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d12+2, Shooting d6, Streetwise d10, Taunt d8
Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Pacifist (Major)
Edges: Charismatic, Connections (many & varied), Mas-

ter (Persuasion), Strong Willed
Gear: Model II wrist computer with Persuasion Level III program

SOLDIERS

These stats are for typical soldiers found fighting wars across the known galaxy.
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6
Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)
Hindrances: Loyal
Edges: Combat Reflexes
Gear: Armored vest (+2), blaster carbine (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Semi-Auto), stun grenade (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 3d6 nonlethal, Medium Burst)

LIEUTENANT SKYME

Skyme is a junior member of the conspirators aiming to keep the war going. He hopes that by proving his loyalty he will earn his superiors' respect, and thus be promoted when the new regime takes control of the Star League. He is quite prepared to sacrifice his men to achieve his goals, but isn't so brave with his own life.

Special: Skyme is a telekinetic. He has no Power Points. Instead each device can be used a limited number of times per Scene. Spells with a normal duration of 3 (1/r) instead last for a flat 3 rounds per activation. Skyme's "powers" are the equivalent of 20 Power Points
Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Psionics d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8
Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)
Hindrances: Arrogant, Cautious, Loyal
Edges: Arcane background (Psionics), Combat Reflexes, Command, Dodge
Powers: 2 x *deflection* (minor telekinesis to blocks shots with nearby small objects), 1 x *dispel* (wards off powers with telekinetic burst), 1 x *entangle* (single victim; causes objects to bury victim), 3 x *stun* (telekinetic energy; Shaken victims also fall prone), 1 x *telekinesis*
Gear: Armored vest (+2), blaster carbine (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, RoF 1, Semi-Auto), stun grenade (Range: 5/10/20, Damage: 3d6 nonlethal, Medium Burst)

SETTING EXPANSION: SPACE DANGERS

Starship combat and chases are an important part of the *Daring Tales of the Space Lanes* series. While it's easiest just to run a chase scene without any special features, that isn't very exciting. Let's face it, the Millennium Falcon's flight from the TIE fighters after escaping Hoth in *The Empire Strikes Back™* was great cinema because it took part in an asteroid field. Had it occurred in empty space it would have been extremely dull. This chapter takes a look at ways to enliven your space combat.

RANDOM HAZARDS

GMs are a creative bunch—that's why they tell stories. However, even the best GM can suffer from creative block. Likewise, players are a resourceful bunch, and sometimes they may stray off the adventure path and into a chase the GM hadn't planned.

This section provides a quick random table for space hazards. All the GM needs do is roll a d10, check the table below, and implement the results.

Except as noted, all hazards are designed for the Chase rules.

Note that the entries are only examples—radiation storms, for example, could just as easily flare up to dangerous levels only on a deuce and give a random penalty to the engineer's Knowledge (Shields) roll and/or a hero's Vigor roll. GM's should be imaginative in their interpretation of the rules and how they implement these events. By switching mechanics around, the GM can keep his players on his toes.

RANDOM HAZARD TABLE

d10	Result
1	Radiation Storm
2	Gravitational Flux
3	Ion Storm
4	Asteroid Field
5	Minefield
6	Explosive Gas
7	Dark Cloud
8	Gravity Shear
9	Pocket Wormholes
10	Draw twice and combine the results

ASTEROID FIELD

The area of space is saturated with asteroids and assorted debris. During any space chase, there is a chance a ship will be forced to avoid a space rock. On any round in which the pilot draws a Club his ship is in danger of striking an asteroid.

The value of the card determines the Piloting roll modifier for the round, the damage dice should a collision occur, and the asteroid's Heavy Armor rating.

Suit	Modifier	Damage
Deuce	–6	5d6 (15)
3–5	–4	4d6 (12)
6–10	–2	4d6 (9)
Jack–Queen	–1	3d6 (6)
King–Ace	0	3d6 (3)

Tabletop Play: Specific rules for using asteroids on the tabletop are presented starting on page 23.

DARK CLOUD

Swirling clouds of dark gases and fine particles interfere with targeting sensors and a gunner's eyesight. Draw an action card each round to determine the visibility. All ships involved in the action use the same modifier (because it's easier on the bookkeeping).

Suit	Result
Club	Pitch Darkness (–4)
Diamond	Dark (–2); maximum visibility is 10 SU (likely 2 Range Increments).
Heart	Dim (–1)
Spade/Joker	Clear (0)

Tabletop Play: On the tabletop, the GM may instead

choose to use a variety of burst templates to represent particularly dense patches of gas. Each should be given a rating of Dim, Dark, or Pitch Darkness. Shots made into, out of, or through the cloud use the appropriate modifier.

EXPLOSIVE GAS

A gas cloud reacts violently to laser beams, resulting in small explosions. Missiles don't produce any additional results.

A missed shot causes the target to take half damage from the explosion. A successful hit causes normal damage to the target, and also inflicts half damage to any ship on the same Range Increment. In instances where damaged is halved, apply the AP in full (only the actual die roll is halved).

Battery fire automatically inflicts half damage on all ships in the same Range Increment. A pilot who rolls a 1 on his Piloting die to avoid a battery suffers a normal hit, in addition to the automatic half damage.

Tabletop Play: Treat laser weapons as area effect attacks. Roll for deviation when they miss. Place a Small Burst Template over the square. Any ships under the template take half damage. Battery weapons have their Template increased one size category, to a maximum of Large. Even if the Pilot avoids being struck, all ships which enter the template automatically take half damage from the constant explosions.

GRAVITATIONAL FLUX

Gravitational fluxes can occur as a result of black holes, neutron stars, a sun's gravitational field, or just because the GM says it happens.

Any ship which draws a deuce as its first card in a round suffers the effects of the gravitational shift. Piloting rolls suffer a penalty according to the card's suit (shown below) for that round. This modifier is in addition to any other penalties or bonuses.

Suit	Modifier
Club	–6
Diamond	–4
Heart	–2
Spade	–1

Tabletop Play: The GM may choose to use the system above on the tabletop. Alternately, he can use burst templates to represent areas of gravitational flux, perhaps caused by micro black holes or a tear in space-time. These should be given one of the modifiers above.

The pilot of a ship entering a template, or a ship which begins a round in a template, must make a Piloting roll with the appropriate penalty as a free action. On a failure, all remaining movement for the round is in a random direction. Roll a d12 and read the result as a clockface to see which direction the ship moves.

GRAVITY SHEAR

Gravitational fluxes (see above) make it difficult to pilot a ship, but gravity shears can tear a vessel to pieces. Any ship which draws a deuce as its first card in a round suffers the effects of the gravity shear. This is shown on the table below. Note that damage is treated as a Wild Card source. Damage may be Soaked using a shield pod or the Ace Edge.

The engineer may make a Knowledge (Shields) roll as a free action to try and offset the effects. This doesn't use a shield pod, as all the engineer is doing is countering the gravitational effect by leaking small amounts of energy. With success, damage is halved. A raise negates all damage.

Suit	Damage
Club	5d6
Diamond	4d6
Heart	3d6
Spade	2d6

Tabletop Play: As above, a GM can use templates marked with the modifiers to represent gravity shears. A ship entering one, whether by design or because it was forced to, or which begins its turn in a template, takes damage as indicated.

ION STORM

A pilot who draws a deuce as his first action card in a round has his ship hit by an ion surge. This temporarily fries the electronics, making the ship difficult to handle, and shorts out the guns. Use the Gravitational Flux table on page 22. The suit determines the penalty, which is applied to all rolls to use a shipboard system (most often Piloting, Shields, and Shooting).

Effects last until the pilot's next action card. A hero can expend a shield pod to remove the penalty. Note that the modifier applies equally to the Shields roll, though!

Tabletop Play: The GM may choose to use the rules above on the tabletop. Alternately, he can use burst templates to represent areas of ion disturbance. For the penalties they impart, the GM may either pick one of the modifiers (–6, –4, –2, or –1) or draw a card each time a ship enters a template and consult the table for Gravitational Fluxes on page 22. A Joker represents a weak field, and the ship suffers no penalty this round. A ship which enters a template by design or by accident, or begins its turn in an ion cloud, suffers the appropriate penalty.

MINEFIELD

Mines may be remnants of an old battle, or placed around a planet to protect it from uninvited guests. Whoever seeded the mines, and for whatever reason, they are dangerous to all ships in the vicinity.

A pilot who draws a deuce as his first action card in a round is in danger of colliding with a mine. Check the

suit of the deuce against the table below. A failed Piloting (–2) roll indicates the mine has been triggered.

Suit	Mine
Club	**Explosive Mine:** The ship suffers 3d8, AP 30, HW damage from an Extra. Other ships on the same Range Increment suffer half damage (still AP 30). Wounds can be Soaked with a shield pod or the Ace Edge.
Diamond	**Ion Mine:** Until the pilot's next action card, any roll made to use a ship system suffers a –2 penalty. This can be negated by using a shield pod as if Soaking damage.
Heart	**Gravity Mine:** The ship is Shaken. Instead of using Spirit to unShake, the pilot uses his Piloting skill. This effect can be negated by using a shield pod as if Soaking damage.
Spade	**Radiation Mine:** Roll on the Critical Hit table. The ship doesn't take an actual wound, however. Until the pilot's next action card, the effects of the Critical Hit are in play. On a Crew Critical Hit, the players must make a Vigor roll to avoid a level of Fatigue. This effect can be negated by using a shield pod as if Soaking damage.

Tabletop Play: The GM should use burst templates to represent particularly dense patches of mines. He can either use one sort of mine, or draw a card (ignoring Jokers) each time a minefield is entered. A ship entering a minefield, or which begins its turn in one, must make a Piloting roll at –2 as a free action or detonate a mine.

POCKET WORMHOLES

Wormholes are tears in space-time. A ship entering one can instantaneously travel across space. In this case, the travel is only over short distances.

In a chase, wormholes work slightly differently to account for the abstract mechanics. Roll two d4. Subtract the result of the second die from the first die. If the result is positive, the ships moves forward that many Range Increments. If it's negative, the ship moves backward. A tie means the jump was very short, and the vessel remains on the same Range Increment. Thus, a ship which rolls a 2 and a 4 has a net result of –2. It moves backward two Range Increments.

Because each Range Increment represents a larger area of space than a 1" square on a battlemat, the risk of collisions are ignored.

Tabletop: The GM can use wormholes in one of two ways.

First, a ship encounters a pocket wormhole when the pilot draws a deuce as his first action card in a round. The pilot may either go with the wormhole, or try to avoid it. Avoidance requires a Piloting roll at –2 as a free action.

A wormhole teleports a ship 2d10" in a random direction. Determine direction by rolling a d12 and reading the result like a clockface. Ships emerging from wormholes may find themselves embedded in solid objects. If the object is another ship, its pilot may make a Piloting roll at –2 as a free action to avoid the collision. The pilot of the ship moving through the wormhole can roll to avoid the collision. Asteroids and other non-piloted objects cannot be avoided.

Calculate collision damage as normal, except the speed of the ship emerging through the wormhole is the distance it traveled through the wormhole. For instance, a ship which "teleported" 12" has a speed of 12". If it collides head on with a ship moving at 5", that's 17d6 damage!

Second, the GM can use 1" square numbered counters to represent wormholes. The number used should equate to one of the regular die types. When a ship enters a wormhole, roll the appropriate die to determine where it emerges. The ship exits in a random direction (roll a d12) and must move at least 1" before it can perform any turn maneuvers.

Movement through a wormhole doesn't subtract from the vessel's speed. Thus, a ship with Top Speed 6 which moves 4" and into a wormhole still has 2" of movement remaining when it leaves.

RADIATION STORM

High powered radiation storms ravage the space lanes. Although ships provide protection against low-radiation storms, they don't help much against high-powered ones. However, shield pods do help.

Each round as an action, a character may make a Knowledge (Shields) roll to leak out small amounts of energy in a bid to prevent deadly radiation penetrating the hull. On a failure, or if the roll isn't attempted, roll on the Critical Hit table. The effects of the Critical Hit last for one round (until the engineer's next action card), before backup circuits kick into life. Note that the ship doesn't suffer an actual wound, just a temporary glitch.

On a Crew Critical Hit, the players must make a Vigor roll to avoid a level of Fatigue, just like the Savage Worlds rules for Radiation. Make a Group roll for NPCs on a ship with more than five crew.

Tabletop Play: The GM may choose to use the rules above on the tabletop. Alternately, he can use burst templates to represent areas of high radiation. A ship which enters a template by design or by accident, or begins its turn in a radioactive area, suffers the effects detailed above.

ASTEROIDS & BATTLEMATS

The rules above are really designed for chase scenes, although most work equally well for tabletop play. One

exciting addition to a tabletop starship battle is the inclusion of asteroids. This section provides simple rules for running battles in asteroid fields.

COUNTERS

First, the GM needs to create some asteroid counters. For convenience, we've grouped asteroids into four categories—small, medium, large, and huge. Ideally, small asteroids should be the most numerous, and huge ones the least common.

Small asteroids fill a 1" square. Medium rocks fill two 1" squares. Large asteroids fill three squares, either in a line or as a triangular block, while huge ones take up four squares and can be of any shape so long as each square is adjacent to at least one other.

Before the battle begins, the GM should seed the battlefield with asteroids. Don't go overboard, or the heroes won't have a fair chance, and what should be an exciting fight will devolve into a quick death for all involved.

IN COMBAT

Asteroids move at the start of every round. They move after action cards are dealt, but before the first action is taken. The GM draws a single card from the action deck to determine which type of asteroids move that round.

Suit	Result
Club	Huge
Diamond	Large
Heart	Medium
Spade	Small
Joker	All asteroids

Next he rolls 2d6 to determine how many inches the rocks move. This is known as Pace for familiarity. All asteroids move the same distance—don't waste time rolling for individual counters. The direction moved is determined by rolling a d12 and reading it like a clock-face. Movement is measured from the appropriate edge of the asteroid.

HITTING A SHIP

If an asteroid moves over a ship, there is a chance of collision. The pilot makes a Piloting roll as a free action, but subtracts the number of squares the asteroid fills. For example, a huge asteroid fills four squares, and thus imparts a –4 penalty. A failed roll means the ship takes damage.

Treat this as you would a regular collision, but remember that damage is 1d6 per inch of movement. An asteroid has Heavy Armor equal to 5 times its size category (so that's +20 for a huge rock).

HITTING ANOTHER ASTEROID

When an asteroid hits a space rock that is larger that it, it takes one automatic wound and is deflected back along its original path. The distance it moves is half its remaining speed for the round. The larger asteroid doesn't move due to the impact, neither does its size alter.

When as asteroid strikes another asteroid of smaller size, the smaller rock takes one wound (see below). Any remnants are then shoved in the direction of the larger rock's course for a distance equal to the larger rock's full speed this round. The larger asteroid continues its movement as normal.

In the event asteroids of similar size collide, both suffer one wound and a reduction in size. The original asteroid stops moving, while the target moves along the original rock's course a distance equal to the Pace remaining that round.

Example: A medium asteroid rolls 10" for its Pace. After moving 6" it strikes a large asteroid. The medium asteroid suffers a wound and is reduced in size to a small asteroid. Since it has 4" of Pace left this round it bounces back 2" along is original course. The large asteroid does not move.

Example: A huge asteroid rolls 7" for its Pace. After moving 5" it strikes a large asteroid. The large asteroid takes a wound, which reduces it immediately to medium size. The impact knocks the rock 7" in the direction the huge asteroid was travelling. The huge asteroid then completes its remaining 2" of movement. Had the struck asteroid been small, the impact would have reduced it to a handful of harmless pebbles.

Example: The large asteroid struck above (now a medium rock) was shoved 7". That brings it into collision with another medium asteroid after 3". The original rock is smashed down to small by the impact and halts its movement. The target rock is also reduced in size one step. It moves the remaining 4", following the striker's original course.

DESTROYING ASTEROIDS

Asteroids are objects, and thus have a Toughness and Heavy Armor score, and can thus be destroyed. Only ship's weapons can damage an asteroid—for ease, and to prevent lots more die rolling, collisions with a starship don't affect asteroids.

Asteroid	Toughness
Small	15 (5)
Medium	20 (10)
Large	25 (15)
Huge	30 (20)

For each wound an asteroid takes, reduce it by one size category (replace the counter as well). Small asteroids which take a wound are removed from play. Thus, a huge asteroid which takes two wounds in a single blow is reduced in size by two steps to a medium asteroid.

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