RAIDERS RENEGADES & ROGUES

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SOURCEBOOK

Special Thanks: Rob Vaux would like to thank John Wick, who knows scurvy dogs backward and forward.

Dedication: To Jim Cambias and John Snead, who have graced several *Star Trek* RPG products with their considerable writing talents. Jim and John both contributed sections to the DS9 core rulebook, and both were inadvertantly omitted from the game's credits. We apologize, guys!

Disclaimer: While Last Unicorn Games has researched extensively to make this the most authentic *Star Trek*® *Deep Space Nine*™ Roleplaying Game possible, the depth of information necessary for a fully-realized roleplaying game is not always revealed during a weekly television show. While we have tried to extrapolate logically within the flavor of *Star Trek*®, we have taken some liberties and players should remember that only the events, characters, and places that appear on the show or in films are canon.

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"Greed is Eternal"

— The Tenth Rule of Acquisition

INTRODUCTION

While shining starship corridors and crisp Starfleet uniforms often serve to define the Star Trek universe, they certainly don't encompass it. Out on the frontiers and in the less-than-perfect societies scattered throughout the Alpha and Beta Quadrants, shades of gray predominate. Thieves steal, using their consummate technical skills or abilities to deceive the unwary to make a dishonest bar of latinum. Gamblers obtain wealth by a different route, one fraught with pitfalls laid down by Lady Luck. Pirates, raiders, and privateers assault ships in high space, stealing their cargoes (and occasionally the ships themselves). Their martial cousins, mercenaries, hire themselves out as professional warriors to anyone who can pay their fees. Assassins whose merest touch spells death take money to kill those who have endangered, offended, or harmed someone wealthy (or desperate) enough to afford a hired killer. And bounty hunters pursue all of these people when the regular authorities can't capture them.

All of these characters, and more, walk the pages of *Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues*, the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* supplement that explores the dark underside of the *Star Trek* setting. The characters it covers—unscrupulous people like Quark, Garak, Retaya, and Martus Mazur—stand in stark contrast to the squeaky-clean members of Starfleet. This isn't to say that they're all horrible, evil people; Quark and Garak, for example, clearly have their good sides. But they possess skills and practice professions that more "noble" or "honorable" characters usually scorn, and they make their livings in ways which, if not blatantly illegal, at least skirt the edge of the law on a rather frequent basis. Collectively this book refers to such types as "rogues."

Chapter One, *Life on the Edge*, takes a look at "the life," as rogues call it. It serves as a good general introduction to the nature of the shadier side of the *Star Trek* setting, and covers in brief the concepts of making a living at illegal pursuits and the different types of people who do just that.

Chapters Two and Three, *Pirates and Privateers* and *Piracy and Plunder*, examine the world of pirates and their prey. In regions where the likes of Starfleet don't patrol regularly, merchant ships and similar vessels become vulnerable to those who would waylay them, take their cargoes, and maybe even kidnap their passengers. These chapters examine the lives and operations of pirates in the universe of *Star Trek*.

On a somewhat less violent note, Chapter Four, *Thieves and Gamblers*, looks at these professions. Thieves make their ill-gotten latinum by taking it from others through technical skills or trickery, or occasionally with strong-arm tactics. They range from cat burglars who can sneak into the most heavily guarded facility to suave con men who employ their considerable charms for illicit gain. Gamblers, on the other hand, win their money through skill at games—or perhaps skill at cheating. This chapter tells you how they do it.

Chapter Five, *Mercenaries*, touches on the world of the soldier of fortune. Conflicts exist throughout the *Star Trek* universe, and on the front lines of many you'll find mercenaries fighting. This chapter shows you how they learn their trade, how they negotiate jobs, and what kind of contracts they take.

Chapter Six, *Bounty Hunters and Assassins*, examines the strife-filled worlds of the assassin and his counterpart on the opposite side of the law (at least sometimes), the bounty hunter. There are plenty of people who want other people dead, and assassins—whether consummate freelance professionals or brutal thugs—exist to satisfy that need. Bounty hunters, on the other hand, make their livings capturing most of the other characters described in this book, though in some cases they're really not any better or kinder than the criminals they pursue.

Chapter Seven, *Technology and Equipment*, describes the gear rogues use to do their jobs—everything from new pistols and hand weapons (pirate disruptors, Varon-T disruptors, *kut'luch* daggers, and the like) to exotic weapons like microexplosives and remat detonators, to stealth and infiltration technology such as proximity detector decoys and dataports. Also included are rules for

poisons in the Icon System. Chapter Eight continues the technological theme by describing several different types of vessels used by pirates and other rogues.

Chapter Nine, *The Rogues Gallery*, provides descriptions for several infamous rogues. From the infamous DaiMon Fog to the swashbuckling Gideon Tamerlaine, you can use these scoundrels as supporting cast characters, contacts, rivals, or sworn enemies.

All these rogues need a place to hang their hats, disruptors, and EVA suits—not to mention hide out when the authorities come looking for them. Chapter Ten, *Havens*, discusses *havens*, places where rogues can lay low when necessary, and even provides a couple of ready-made examples for the Narrator to use.

Chapter Eleven, *Character Creation*, details rogue character creation. It includes new Templates, Overlays, and Background History stages for scoundrels of every stripe, following the model for "civilian" characters used in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook. It also reviews skills, advantages, and disadvantages with an eye toward rogue characters, and describes several new traits unique to rogues.

Once you've created your roguish characters, tell your Narrator to read Chapter Twelve, *The Rogue Series*, which describes storytelling in shadier reaches of the galaxy—everything from using standard *Star Trek* characters in rogue-oriented settings to running an entire series centered on rogue characters.

Whether you're a Narrator looking for villains for a standard series or you want to run a series unlike any you've run before, or you're a player looking for information on creating rogue characters to play, *Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues* has something for you!

ICON LINKS

This symbol appearing behind a sentence indicates that additional information on the subject in question can be found at the Last Unicorn Games Web site at www.lastunicorngames.com.

The United Federation of Planets takes justifiable pride in its tradition of respect for the rule of law. Since its inception, the Federation has devoted itself to the promotion of law and justice among its diverse member worlds and to eliminating the root causes of criminal behavior and lawlessness. On the worlds of its founders, such as Earth, Vulcan, and Andoria, the Federation has largely succeeded; these worlds are free from crime, conflict, hunger, and want. Advanced Federation technology largely eliminates even the *need* for criminal activity, since it provides for all the daily needs of the populace.

Out on the edges of Federation space, however, tradition often takes second place to the practicalities of daily survival. Conditions on the frontier remain more primitive, leading to greater needs among colonies and other worlds distant from the prosperous Federation core. The frontiers of Federation space are also often near areas of conflict or tension, such as the Romulan Neutral Zone or the Demilitarized Zone established with the Cardassians. In these regions social pressures and individual needs often blossom into criminal activities. Federation authorities do what they can to deal with these criminal elements, but their resources are often stretched so thin that they cannot enforce the law effectively throughout the frontier. In any event, until society addresses all the reasons for its existence, it does not seem likely that crime will ever disappear entirely.

Federation Law

The Federation legal system draws both its authority and its mandate from two basic principles—a fundamental respect for the law and a sincere appreciation for the rights of all sentient beings. The Federation takes the violation of its laws very seriously, as any criminal operating in or near UFP territory knows all too well.

The most important thing to understand about Federation law is that it technically applies only *outside* a Federation member world's sphere of influence—in Federation-controlled space and on
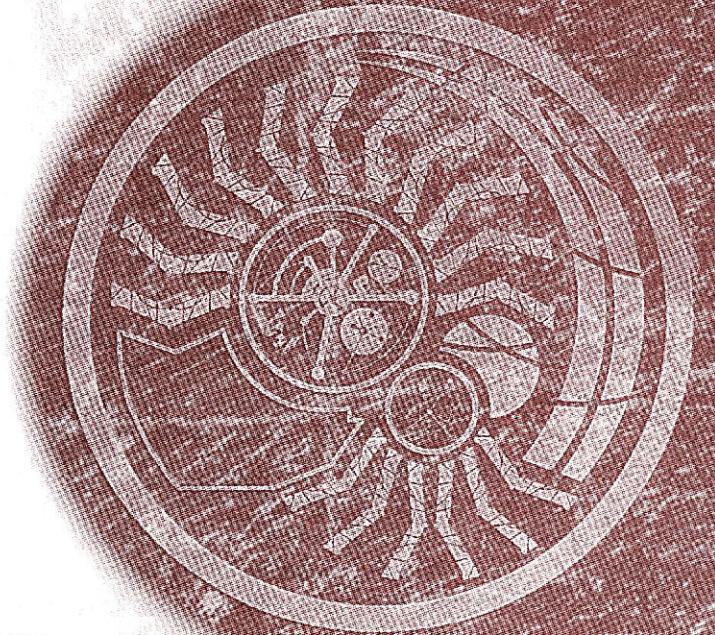
Federation-controlled stations and colonies. Individual Federation worlds maintain certain sovereign rights, including the right to determine their own laws. The Federation charter does stipulate certain requirements for membership, but otherwise member worlds remain free to create and enforce their own laws. Many members of the Federation take their cues from core planets like Earth, Vulcan, Betazed, and Andoria, but each world retains its own unique laws and customs. Something perfectly legal on Andoria—such as killing someone in a duel—might land the perpetrator in prison on Trill. Worf's killing of Duras in "Reunion" provides another example; while acceptable in Klingon society, his action would run contrary to Federation law.

Crimes committed on a planet's surface—or on board stations or vessels controlled by that world—fall under the jurisdiction of that world's legal authorities, unless the crime involved Federation property or personnel. Crimes committed in Federation-controlled space, on board Federation vessels and stations, and on Federation-protected colonies fall under the jurisdiction of the Federation.

In general, Federation law respects and upholds the rights of the individual. This includes serious offenses such as murder, assault, rape, and kidnapping. Federation law also recognizes and respects the individual ownership of property, treating it as an extension of the individual, so acts like theft, arson, and vandalism are also considered crimes. Federation member worlds must uphold this code of conduct; a society that considers the murder of outsiders, or even members of its own culture, an acceptable activity would likely not achieve Federation member-

ship (though some accommodations are made for cultural differences, such as Andorian ritualized duels). The same applies to cultures that practice slavery, such as the Breen.

The Federation also regulates the possession and use of certain items and materials. These include things like illegal pharmaceuticals, technologies such as genetic resequencing, many types of weapons, dangerous lifeforms, and certain types of biotechnology. Starfleet is charged with apprehending smugglers who attempt to transport or sell prohibited materials in Federation space, but the sheer vastness of UFP territory, and the scope of Starfleet's duties as a whole, make this mission difficult. In practice, regional planetary and port authorities handle most trade enforcement and import inspections, and smugglers can and do operate within the Federation—though in most instances this occurs on the outskirts of Federation space.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN THE FEDERATION

Federation citizens rarely become involved with criminal activities. Most Federation citizens hold a strong respect for the law and choose not to violate it for personal gain. Most Federation worlds remain prosperous and peaceful, and those qualities tend to limit the economic and social needs for criminal activity. With replicators able to produce any material goods one might need, criminals often find themselves with little reason to operate in Federation space at all. Still, Federation society does produce criminals from time to time.

Federation criminals generally possess motivations apart from mere greed. Some of these motivations include political, ideological, or philosophical beliefs, revenge, desperation, or even mental illness.

The last motivator is the most easily detected and treated. Cases of mental illness in the Federation are rare, given the advanced state of medical science. Still, sometimes an illness goes undetected and untreated, leading to criminal behavior on the part of the victim. This is more common in frontier areas that lack modern medical facilities; such areas also demand higher-stress lifestyles, which can lead to mental deterioration or breakdowns.

The Federation accepts mental illness as a defense for criminal activity and chooses to treat the mentally ill as victims rather than criminals. The UFP judicial system generally remits these individuals into the custody of a medical facility capable of treating them, such as the facility on Elba II. Once cured of their illnesses, these people may rejoin society.

Scholars of criminal behavior debate at length whether individuals who engage in criminal activities for pleasure should be considered "mentally ill." For the time being, the Federation does *not* consider such individuals ill, just misguided. These people become involved in criminal behavior out of boredom or a desire to do "forbidden" things. The excitement of criminal activity becomes addictive to them, and they commit crimes solely for the thrill. All other considerations—money, property, or other forms of personal gain—remain secondary.

This small minority of criminals has popularized and romanticized the idea of "the life" among the Federation's criminal element (see below). They often see themselves as outcasts or rebels fighting against an oppressive society, and may even consider themselves superior to other beings because they live "free" from societal or moral constraints. The Federation does everything possible to prove these criminals wrong and to rehabilitate them when opportunities present themselves.

Political, philosophical, or ideological agendas motivate the last type of criminal found within UFP society. The Federation respects and honors many different belief systems, but it also expects citizens to behave within the dictates of the law. Most political factions within the Federation have no difficulty with this, working to further political change or their own agendas through accepted channels.

A small minority of politically active groups and individuals choose to stray beyond the bounds of legality in order to effect change. For example, the New Essentialists Movement has many law-abiding adherents throughout the Federation, working to restore what they see as the moral core of Federation society. A small group of extremist Essentialists sabotaged Risa's weather-control system to make a political statement about the complacency of Federation society. A major political faction known for its illegal conduct—the Maquis—seeks to push the Cardassians off several planets in the Demilitarized Zone.

Although profit and personal gain do not motivate most politically minded groups, these groups may engage in theft or smuggling to further their goals. For example, the Maquis occasionally engage in piracy against Cardassian targets, seizing ships and cargoes to sell on the black market, or using captured vessels and weapons against the Cardassians. The needs of such renegade groups in the Federation also provide business for non-Federation smugglers, pirates, mercenaries, and other rogues.

CRIMINALS FROM OUTSIDE THE FEDERATION

Most of the criminal activity in the Federation originates outside Federation space. The Federation maintains a policy of external noninterference; how

SERVING ON THE FRONTIER

The "frontier mentality" also manifests in Starfleet officers who serve for any length of time in frontier regions. Officers serving on board vessels in the heart of the Federation remain in contact with Federation society, regularly avail themselves of shore leave, and rely on Starfleet rules and regulations to guide them. Even officers serving on board exploration vessels rarely face the difficulties of dealing with frontier life. Their vessels regularly resupply at starbases, and life on board a *Galaxy-* or *Sovereign-*class starship is luxurious by the standards of many colonies.

However, Starfleet officers serving on board starbases and small vessels stationed along the frontier often find that traditional Starfleet methods don't work as well as they should. Situations on the border often call for compromise rather than unbending adherence to Starfleet regulations. Picard's association with Arctus Baran's mercenary group in the *TNG* episode "Gambit" provides a good example.

Officers stationed in the hinterlands of Federation space often overlook small things in favor of dealing with "the big picture." This is not to say that Starfleet officers serving in these regions are less efficient or trustworthy (quite the opposite), merely that they learn a different way of dealing with situations, and that not everyone is as law-abiding and honest as your average Federation citizen.

other powers choose to govern themselves is entirely their business. But the Federation does expect other cultures to respect its laws and customs when in UFP territory. This, unfortunately, does not always occur.

Some cultures, like the Klingons, respect Federation law (at least to the point where it begins to interfere with Klingon honor). Numerous unaligned species in and outside Federation space also respect the rules of the Federation, either because they have hopes of Federation membership at some point (Bajor, for example), because they fear being cut off by the Federation and left to deal with less hospitable civilizations, or simply because their own ethical principles cause them to do so.

Other species, like the Breen or the Ferengi, have little or no regard for Federation law, except as an irritant to avoid. These species engage in illegal activities both outside and inside Federation space. For example, Ferengi DaiMons regularly smuggle contraband into Federation territory. The Ferengi Alliance simply claims that it does not regulate the cargo that individual Ferengi vessels carry, so the Federation must deal with each vessel and its DaiMon individually. The Breen, known enemies of the Federation and supporters of criminal elements, raid vessels, illegally mine dilithium, and even capture individuals for use as slave labor in and near Federation space. When confronted with these transgressions, the Breen government simply ignores the accusations or lays the blame at the feet of "renegades" acting outside of their control. In cases like these, the Federation extradites accused criminals, but most serious offenses warrant a trial and punishment in a Federation court.

Finally, there are the species and cultures who actively flout Federation law. This may be due to cultural biases, as in the case of violent races like the Nausicaans, or because a state of hostility exists between the species and the Federation, such as with the Cardassians, Romulans, or Breen. Although the Federation's political enemies usually take care to remain outwardly within the letter of the law, when within Federation space they participate in all manner of covert illegal operations. The Cardassian shipments of weapons and military-grade ships to planets in the Demilitarized Zone provide only one example.

The activities of political enemies normally fall under the heading of "espionage," described in detail in *The First Line: The Starfleet Intelligence Handbook*. Spies often make use of existing criminal elements to carry out their operations. For example, a spy may hire mercenaries for extra muscle, or deal with a smuggler to acquire restricted technology or obtain valuable information from UFP installations.

THE FRONTIER

The vast majority of criminal activity in the UFP takes place on the outskirts of Federation space, particularly along frontiers that border on areas of conflict. Frontier regions often remain wild and unsettled, far from the peace and prosperity of the UFP core worlds, and often far from the technology, legal constraints, and organizations that maintain law-abiding Federation society.

Life on the frontier combines proud individualism with the often harsh realities of survival. New colonies and settlements face many challenges, especially during their first few years. Even on Class M worlds, a single natural disaster or similar incident can spell doom for a young colony. Federation records describe numerous incidents of disease, star-

vation, weather, and stellar disasters—the whims of nature can destroy a colony in moments. A colony may not see a visiting starship, much less a Starfleet vessel, for months or even years. Thus, colonies must remain highly independent and self-sufficient, and colonists are usually cut from stern stuff.

The difficulties of life on the outskirts of UFP space leads to both a hardening and a softening of legal and cultural restrictions. On one hand, the survival of a colony depends on the cooperation of the colonists. Most colonies take a very dim view of crimes for personal gain, especially those which hurt the colony's chance of survival. Living on their own, colonists enforce their own laws, and "frontier justice" can be harsh. Colonies may imprison criminals, exile them, or inflict brutal corporal punishment—such as "the box" used on Orellius—upon them.

On the other hand, the harsh realities of life on the frontier often lead to a softening of some of the stricter UFP moral codes. "You do what you have to" is a common saying among colonists and folk living on the frontier. Away from some of the advantages of Federation technology and a stable planetary infrastructure, colonists sometimes cut corners and ignore legal niceties in the name of survival. For example, a colony might purchase much-needed supplies from a Ferengi trader without asking too many questions about their origin. Likewise, frontier folk often engage in certain pastimes like gambling, exotic pleaasures, and other pursuits considered "vulgar" (or at least unwise) by many in the Federation. When one tosses regular contact with non-Federation cultures and individuals, and often tense border situations, into the mix, it becomes clear why the frontier regions play home to the majority of the Federation's criminal element.

WELCOME TO THE LIFE

Rogues, especially those operating within Federation space, often refer to being "in the life." Federation criminals primarily enter the life for the thrill it provides or for a cause, making the idea of living outside the law appear romantic and exciting. Rogues from outside the Federation often adopt this image as well. There is an unspoken assumption among rogues that they all exist in a kind of shadowy world apart from normal society. For the most part, this assumption holds true.

Most criminals adhere to a small core of fundamental concepts that serve to define and clarify their participation in the life—these form a kind of

"rogues' code" that most Lifers respect. The first embodies the concept of "honor among thieves"—rogues do not betray each other to those outside the life under any circumstances. A criminal who aids the authorities immediately becomes an outsider; he will very likely meet his doom soon after his transgression. Some rogues manage to cut deals with the authorities that leave their reputations intact, but those who play both sides of the fence truly walk a razor's edge of deception.

Rogues often have tremendous egos and believe they are superior to their marks and victims. Many rogues think society owes them something—either a "repayment" for the hardships they've suffered, or the "spoils" rightly due someone of their strength or cleverness. Obviously, rogues have little respect for the property, rights, and even lives of others.

Most rogues do respect certain boundaries, however. For example, experienced or veteran rogues rarely operate in the "territory" of another without permission. Not doing so can result in conflicts ranging from a personal vendetta to wars between entire guilds or gangs, so most rogues maintain a healthy respect for each other's territories.

PIRATES AND PRIVATEERS

Even in an era where ships sail between the stars rather than across the waves, there are still pirates and privateers who prey on other vessels. Pirates range from small groups of individuals on board a single—often antiquated—vessel to privateers who unofficially serve a government by disrupting shipping and commerce among its enemies.

Generally speaking, profit motivates and drives pirates. They attack and raid other ships (and sometimes space stations or colonies) in order to loot and plunder valuables, which they then sell on the black market. This means pirates tend to go after valuable cargoes, although not all pirates discriminate so carefully. Some take a scattershot approach, raiding every vulnerable mark that presents itself in hope of finding a cargo worth the effort. Pirates quickly become hazards to interstellar trade, and Starfleet maintains a strong interest in tracking down and detaining vessels suspected of piracy. As the *TNG* episode "Gambit" illustrates, Starfleet has little patience for raiders and their activities.

Privateers operate in much the same way as pirates, but for a different purpose. Governments license privateers (officially or unofficially) to raid vessels belonging to enemies of that government. For example, many of the "renegade" Cardassian

ships engaged in piracy along the Federation border are in fact secretly supported by the Cardassian government, which outwardly denies allegations of supporting privateers. Likewise, the Romulans and the Ferengi have been known to provide covert aid and support to pirates operating on the outskirts of Federation space (though the Ferengi view such activities as perfectly acceptable business ventures). The Klingons once supported extensive piracy against Federation targets before the establishment of the Khitomer Accords and the Treaty of Alliance.

RAIDERS

There's a fine line between a "raider" and a "pirate," and many fail to see the distinction. Organization and motivation constitute the primary differences. Pirate bands normally form around a strong leader or leaders, are motivated strictly by profit and personal gain, and stay together for extended periods of time. Raiders, by contrast, tend to be loosely organized bands brought together by circumstance and individual need. They raid for profit and gain, but usually because of other outside forces, such as economic or social pressures.

Examples of this include the Ackamarian Gatherers, who operated in small, nomadic raiding bands in order to secure the materials and wealth needed to maintain their nomadic lifestyle, and the Miradorn raiders, who usually operate in small bands using a single ship owned by one pair of them. The Son'a also fit this description in some respects. A raiding band usually lasts only as long as a strong leader or motivating force holds it together. Without these factors, raiding bands break up and drift apart, members forming or joining other bands as needed.

THIEVES AND CON ARTISTS

Thieves steal items of value. The definition of "value" varies greatly depending on the thief and the victim—in this age of replicator technology, value often relies entirely on perception and luxury, although in certain outlying and replicator-poor frontier regions many basic goods retain considerable value. Many thieves steal strictly for profit, either to sell their booty on the black market or to acquire items for particular clients. Some thieves steal more for the challenge and thrill of outwitting the authorities and sophisticated security systems that protect their targets. Such thieves tend to be highly skilled, but their own egos usually cause them to make mistakes sooner or later. In the 24th century, most

thieves must contend with advanced security systems, including retinal and voice print identification, scan-locks, force fields, magnetic locks, and proximity detectors. Skilled thieves are nearly always technologically adept, although there is still some call for old-fashioned sleight-of-hand skills.

Concern about "petty theft" has become a contradiction in terms in the Federation, because anything worth stealing is generally valuable and well protected. Replicators provide common items like food and clothing, eliminating the need to steal them. This doesn't always hold true on the frontier, where replicator technology is less common, and even Federation citizens use materials like latinum to trade with foreign merchants. On some particularly isolated planets and colonies, thievery may even be a way of life, such as with the gangs on Turkana IV.

A human named P. T. Barnum once said, "There's a sucker born every minute." Con artists firmly believe in this maxim and use it to their advantage. They steal property from others using guile and trickery rather than outright theft. They range from small-time hucksters of useless trinkets and fake "artifacts," to those ambitious enough to swindle victims out of things like starships or asteroid mining rights, to master criminals like the woman who operated under the name "Ardra." In 2367, she used advanced technology to convince the population of Ventax II that she was the Ventax version of the devil so that the inhabitants would surrender their entire world to her. Con artists rely on personal charm and/or consummate skill in acting, often coupled with complex illusions, lies, and technological trickery.

GAMBLERS

Games of chance and skill remain popular throughout the Federation. The prime difference between a gambler and someone who plays games as a hobby is the desire for profit and winning at all costs. Roguish gamblers in and around the Federation tend to break down into two major types: those motivated by profit and those motivated simply by the thrill of the game.

Profit motivates most gamblers. These individuals gamble in order to win money or other valuables, and for many gambling becomes their sole source of income. While it is possible for some "sharks" and "hustlers" to subsist simply on pure skill, luck tends to run out for everyone sooner or later. Thus, professional gamblers generally become adept at cheating. They develop a wide range of sleight-of-hand and technological tricks aimed at rigging games in their

favor. This makes skilled professional gamblers not unlike con artists who specialize in convincing victims to play "innocent" games of chance with them, eventually taking them for all they're worth. Some gamblers go beyond games played by small groups to brokering bets placed on things like sporting events, which can be rigged to go whichever way the gambler wishes in order to maximize profit.

For other gamblers, the danger and thrills inherent in games of chance supply the motivation. For these gamblers, profit simply provides a means of keeping score and demonstrating their success. Betting makes the game "interesting," since there's less of a thrill when there's nothing to lose. This type of gambler becomes a criminal largely through his need for bigger and bigger thrills—this need eventually leads to illegal betting activities or high-risk games. Gamblers who live the life simply for the thrill of it usually end up broke or deeply indebted to criminals when their luck inevitably runs out. This may drive them to become professional gamblers, cheating to win back enough to pay off their debts. It may also prompt a gambler to enter other areas of criminal activity, particularly smuggling, thievery, or con games, as a way to earn enough profit to continue his risky lifestyle.

SMUGGLERS

Smugglers buy, transport, and sell goods and materials deemed illegal in the Federation, or legal materials which are restricted or difficult to obtain. Although commercial freedoms abound, the Federation still chooses to ban or restrict the possession and sale of many items, including but not limited to weapons, drugs and biotechnology, exotic or endangered lifeforms, dangerous materials (like trilithium resin or biomimetic gel), archaeological artifacts, and certain alien technology. Smugglers try to find ways around these restrictions because they can earn considerable profit by selling such forbidden goods on the black market or to specific customers.

Although the Federation does what it can, it remains nearly impossible to regulate smuggling effectively along the UFP frontier. Customs inspectors and other officials, including Starfleet officers at Federation starbases, stations, and starports, hold the responsibility to check the cargo manifests of incoming vessels. These officials do their best, employing sophisticated scanning equipment and physical sweeps to check for contraband, but smugglers use a variety of means to thwart these methods, such as shielded cargo compartments and camouflage fields. Even in the 24th century, the most effective means of detecting contraband remains a physical search, but such searches are too time-consuming to perform on every vessel. Only vessels strongly suspected of carrying contraband receive a thorough physical search. Further complications arise because many goods considered illegal in the Federation (like Romulan ale) are perfectly legal in other societies—such commercial "gray areas" often hamper Federation efforts to restrict such items.

Some smugglers specialize in transporting illegal goods from place to place. This may be a sideline for an otherwise legitimate merchant or freighter captain, or for a pirate vessel. Pirate ships may smuggle their own booty or items for another customer if raiding opportunities prove thin. Other smugglers operate strictly as intermediaries, arranging the purchase, transport, and sale of illegal items through a complex network of contacts without ever leaving home.

SLAVERS

Slavers are a type of raider/smuggler specializing in a particular product: sentient beings. Slavery remains illegal in nearly every major Alpha Quadrant civilization, but the exact definition of a "slave"

sometimes varies from world to world. For example, the Cardassians used Bajorans as slave laborers during their occupation of Bajor, although the Cardassians would no doubt object to the term "slave." Likewise, the Breen have been known to use slave laborers from other species for mining dilithium and for other dangerous or labor-intensive activities, and the Klingons use political prisoners as laborers at facilities like Rura Penthe.

Some slavers operate independently like pirates, capturing people on raids, then selling them to slave markets in, among other locations, Orion space. However, the vast majority of slavers work for an organization—either a government which sanctions the enslavement of certain species or groups, or a criminal group with sufficient power and influence to run a slavery ring, such as the Orion Syndicate.

MERCENARIES

The galaxy is a dangerous place, and conflict is a common occurrence, especially in frontier regions where different interstellar powers meet and mingle, or among societies given to civil war or other internal strife. Sometimes a government or group involved in such a conflict cannot, or will not, field enough of its own soldiers to win the day. Perhaps population problems or lack of political willpower limit the number of troops it can commit, or maybe it simply isn't as technologically sophisticated or powerful as its opponent. In such situations, mercenaries—professional soldiers working for pay, rather than out of political loyalty—often provide the additional muscle or firepower.

Although working as a mercenary is not technically illegal in the Federation—particularly when one operates under the guise of "freelance security operative"—much of the work mercenaries perform is highly illegal (although, depending on the circumstances, a mercenary force's actions may fall under the jurisdiction of planetary, rather than Federation, law). This includes working for criminal organizations as freelance pirates or enforcers, carrying out missions of aggression against peaceful worlds and individuals, assassination missions, and so forth. The Federation takes a dim view of mercenaries operating either within its space or on its frontiers, where they often make tense diplomatic situations even more difficult.

Some species are infamous for their tendency to work as mercenaries. Nausicaans, Miradorn, and Breen all like to get paid to fight (something they seem to enjoy even when no money is involved), and dishonored Klingons or Cardassians often find outlets for

their military talents and proclivities on the open market. Even members of some Federation species, such as humans and Andorians, form mercenary bands.

BOUNTY HUNTERS

Bounty hunters are individuals licensed by a government or governments to track and capture criminals in exchange for financial reward. Again not technically illegal in the Federation, bounty hunters may practice their trade in Federation space provided they obey the laws regarding reasonable use of force. Many bounty hunters don't limit themselves to operating within the metes of the law, however, and are particularly reluctant to deal with Federation legal niceties, such as extradition agreements, which may cause them to lose their "prey" and their payment. Even bounty hunters who prefer to remain on the straight and narrow often find they have to stray from that path just a little every now and then to get the job done.

Bounty hunters from other cultures often have intentions which conflict with Federation law, such as hunting criminals whose only crime is political dissidence or simply being born into the wrong subculture. Some governments also authorize bounty hunters to carry out death sentences—an absolutely illegal practice in the Federation. Bounty hunters rarely receive any help from Federation personnel and sometimes must turn to underworld resources and contacts to complete their tasks.

ASSASSINS

The "art" of assassination remains alive and well in the Alpha Quadrant, despite the Federation's best efforts to eradicate it. Assassins continue to find employment dealing with targets ranging from criminal informants to major political figures. Criminal organizations such as the Orion Syndicate, intelligence agencies like the *Tal Shiar* and Obsidian Order, and rogue political or fringe groups employ the majority of assassins both within and outside of Federation space. Freelance assassins are a rare and endangered breed, and usually quite skilled at their craft. Reasons for operating as an assassin vary, from political allegiance to a pure desire for profit, but most assassins are characterized, at some level, by a disdain for life and an enjoyment of killing other beings.

In Earth's 17th century, the might of a nation was measured, in part, by its ships. Proud navies clashed with each other over the right to the New World, while empires rose and fell among the waves. But while the colors of Europe flew from one end of the Atlantic to the other, there were those who recognized no flag: outlaws, murderers, and assorted bloodthirsty criminals willing to kill their own mothers for the promise of a few doubloons. These dogs hunted clipper ships and merchantmen with ruthless efficiency, sending those who crossed them to the bottom of the sea. When naval vessels sailed to stop them, they hid amid islands and archipelagos, or fought their way free with cutlasses and cannon. They were buccaneers, and legends of their deeds lived on long after their ships and booty disappeared into the mists of history. Citizens of Tellar, Betazed, and many other Federation worlds can recount similar episodes from their own histories, proud traditions celebrating the antiheroes of high seas, icy wastes, or verdant jungle.

DURANIUM SHIPS AND IRON MEN

Today, in the cold recesses of space, buccaneers have again risen to terrify those unlucky enough to encounter them among the spacelanes. Only now, the stakes span entire sectors—and the ocean stretches into infinity. The buccaneers of the 24th century have replaced their cutters and flintlocks with starships and disruptors. Where they once rode the open waves, they now ride subspace currents, searching for targets in the dark between the stars. But their methods haven't changed, and their fearsome reputation has only grown in the intervening centuries.

Buccaneers in the *Star Trek* universe fall into three distinct categories: pirates, raiders, and privateers. Each adheres to its own codes of behavior and *modus operandi*, and Starfleet maintains
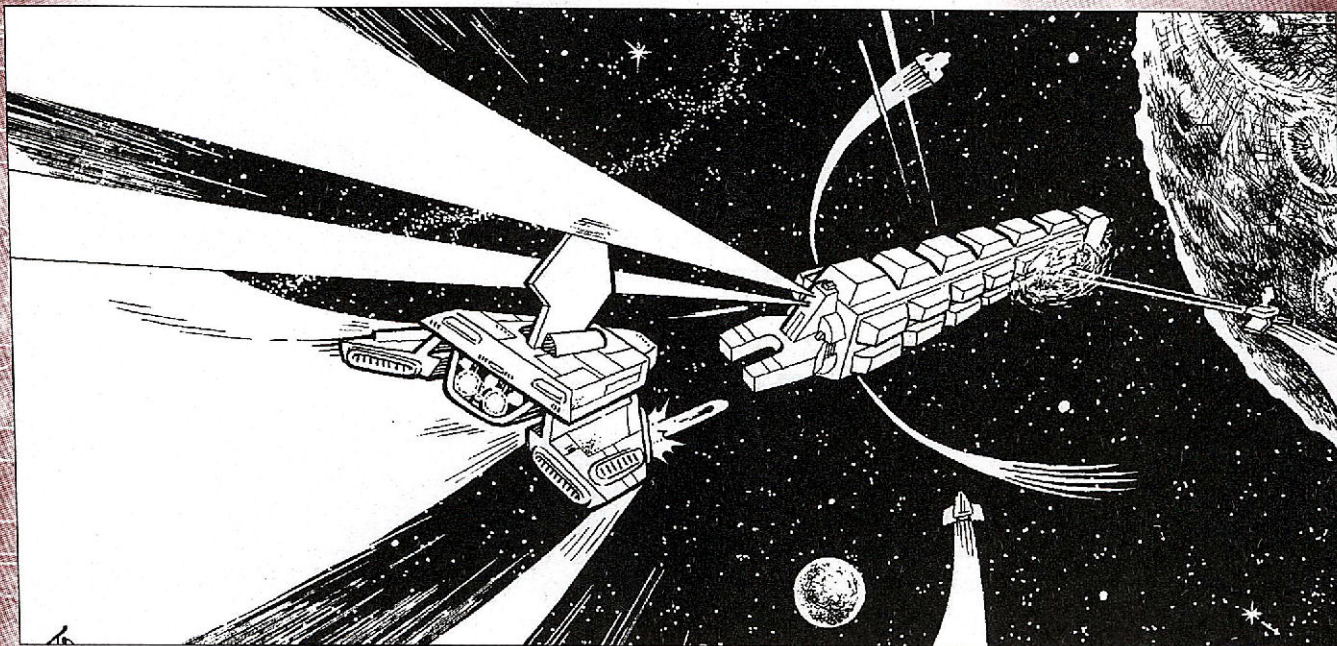
different threat and security protocols for dealing with each group. Unlike the ships comprising the fleets of organized powers, each pirate vessel is unique. Thousands of pirate crews exist in the Alpha and Beta Quadrants, and an entire legion of Starfleet Intelligence analysts couldn't identify them all. Consider what follows a partial overview of 24th-century raiders and their practices, not an exhaustive study.

PIRATES

Organized groups of buccaneers who raid shipping lanes for money, cargo, and even slaves, pirates typically attack poorly defended merchant ships or fleets lacking the benefit of military protection. Profit serves as their principal motive and driving force, although some pirate crews raid purely for the thrill it gives them. Still others enter the life to pursue some political or ideological agenda. Merchants and traders alike can smell trouble when such a ship appears on their sensors.

Among the core worlds of the Federation, the news services often paint pirates as lone wolves: hit-and-miss robbers who rarely plague the cautious or the sensible. Starfleet knows better, however. Disciplined and well outfitted , many pirate bands strike with military precision. The more organized groups have plagued Federation colonies and outlying sectors for years, and a few even consider themselves political powers in their own right.

Organized pirate bands employ sophisticated mission plans and strategies, strike from hidden outposts or abandoned planetary bases, and in some cases use uniforms and military command structures on a regular basis. While they shun the well patrolled cores of the great stellar powers, there are plenty of pickings to be had on the frontier, where scattered colonies or a few shaky border treaties are all that stand between them and their targets.

MODUS OPERANDI

Pirates normally move in bands consisting of a single ship or several ships. They rarely split up, except as a diversion or for other tactical considerations. They usually remain in a particular region of space, raiding and plundering ships traveling in the area (though they may need to leave from time to time when Starfleet or some other authority comes to hunt them). Intelligent pirate crews vary the times and places of their attacks to keep others guessing; those who don't rarely last long, as Starfleet patrols or well armed convoys make short work of them.

Career pirates often refer to the space lanes they frequent as "preserves" and become quite possessive of them if allowed to prosper. These preserves vary widely from place to place, but most have several distinctive characteristics that make them lucrative territories.

They tend to be remote, existing between colonies or on the frontier. At the same time, they must be established enough to support regular convoys or trader flights. Finally, preserves often exist near stellar phenomena which facilitate hiding and covert operations: asteroid belts, nebulae, regions like the Badlands, even subspace fields that disrupt

sensors. Fast entrances and easy escapes stand as the watchwords of piracy, and a canny buccaneer may find a shipping lane which facilitates them impossible to resist.

Pirates tend to attack in waves, relying on surprise and intimidation to overwhelm their targets. They strike at a ship's weapons and engines, aiming to disarm and disable the target's critical systems rather than destroy it. Once they render a ship helpless, they either board it and seize the vessel's cargo, or simply beam any plunder out of the ship's holds. Treatment of prisoners depends upon the particular pirate band; the more honorable leave crews with their vessels or allow them to limp home, while others kill them or sell them into slavery (thus preventing witnesses and allowing them to take the ship as booty as well).

Well armed and highly maneuverable, typical pirate vessels aren't designed for extended combat operations (which, among other things, tend to damage potential booty and should be avoided if possible). On the other hand, no pirate fears getting his nose a bit bloodied if it means obtaining what he came for. Most pirate captains are skilled at evasive maneuvers and know how to make use of the nearby stellar environment to escape. More than a few

Starfleet officers have lost pirate bands by assuming they could run them to ground...only to find themselves outfoxed by a clever helmsman and a few stray asteroids. Those experienced at hunting pirates learn never to underestimate the opposition.

Pirates prey on a staggering variety of cargo. Dilithium, weapons, precious metals, and computer equipment form the core of preferred booty, items a band can dispose of quickly and profitably. However, rich marks are often few and far between, so most pirate crews will take almost anything if they believe they can unload it for a profit (no matter how small). Regional preferences and scarcity normally determine targets in a particular area.

Information also constitutes a valuable commodity in most circles; unscrupulous Ferengi and shady Orion Syndicate representatives often trade in such less tangible goods. Pirates seeking information typically behave less ruthlessly than their fellows, allowing captured ships to continue on their way after extracting what they need from a vessel's computer banks.

INFAMOUS PIRATES OF RECENT TIMES

Pirates in the Federation remain uncommon, due to the vigilance of Starfleet and the general quality of life there, but several crews working mainly along the frontiers have gained notoriety in recent years. The most infamous of these is the Red Band, led by the vicious Ferengi "DaiMon" Fog. His forces make their home in the vast Vertana Nebula, along the borders of UFP, Ferengi, and Cardassian space, and prey upon the forces of all three governments. The Red Band has grown increasingly bold in recent years, attacking shipping as far away as Rigel VII. The Ferengi sponsor a bounty on Fog's head, and Starfleet has stepped up its efforts to capture him and his men. (See page 93 for more about Fog.)

Other pirates evoke less notoriety, but enjoy prominent and fearsome reputations nonetheless. The brother and sister team of Margaret and Fineas O'Sullivan have come to embody the epitome of swashbuckling derring-do, leading some of the wiliest raids in recent history. They try to avoid loss of life if they can help it, and always leave a wild Irish rose as "payment" for the goods they steal.

Other well known UFP pirates include Buntar "The Boar" Gnakk (a Tellarite of nasty disposition) and the renegade Andorian crew of the *Orion's Bane* (who, as their ship's name indicates, wage a running feud with the Orion Syndicate). The Boar recently conducted a costly raid against the Qualor II
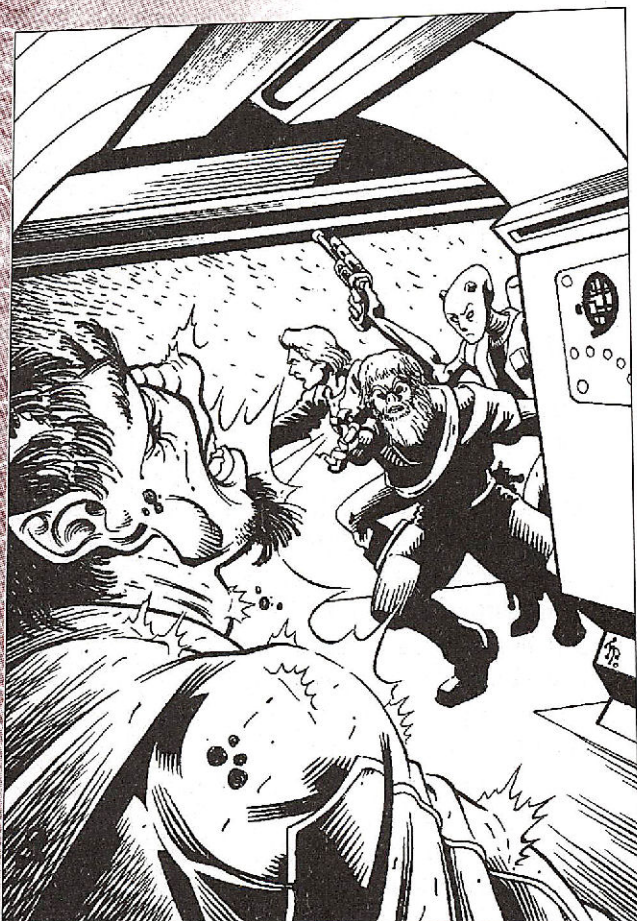
salvage yards, stealing numerous technological systems scheduled for short-term upgrade and reshipment to Starfleet supply depots throughout the sector.

Piracy Beyond the UFP Frontier

The Klingons have been plagued by Cardassian pirates since the recent war between the two powers, and sporadic attacks continue to occur throughout the Empire. While individual Klingons have expressed respect for the daring acts of certain pirates, the High Council has no tolerance of them and ruthlessly hunts them down wherever they appear.

Klingon officials actually prefer to capture pirates alive, sentencing them to penal colonies such as Rura Penthe rather than granting them an "honorable" death in combat. Even a few Klingons, mainly those from disgraced houses, have formed pirate bands. These exiles lurk on the fringes of the Empire and target their old enemies for revenge strikes. The fearsome Vochar of the disbanded House of Khatvan represents the best known of these; he's used his small fleet of cruisers to harass Klingon shipping for decades.

Pirates in Romulan and Cardassian space operate under equally grim circumstances; both governments view pirates as affronts to their authority and harbor no reservations about taking extreme steps to make examples of those they catch. Piracy abounded in Cardassian space following their devastating war with the Klingons. The alliance with the Dominion brought such activity to an abrupt halt, since even the best-equipped pirate crews proved no match for the Jem'Hadar hunter-seeker teams dispatched to exterminate them. Following the end of the Dominion War and the resulting devastation of Cardassia, piracy is once again on the upswing.

Romulan pirates often assume the roles of privateers who serve as senatorial or political pawns, caught in the Machiavellian webs of treachery and deceit that characterize the Imperial political sphere—common assignments include image assassination, industrial sabotage, ambush, and all manner of interstellar trickery.

Those operating outside the Byzantine political web—and without political sanction—find themselves hunted down with ruthless, methodical efficiency. The renegade half-Vulcan, half-Romulan Tal Mok, who uses his uncanny intellect to predict the weakest Imperial marks, remains the most prominent pirate in Romulan space.

Ferengi and Orion space have become havens for numerous pirate bands, attracted by the loose laws and prominent criminal communities present in both regions. Pirates in Ferengi territory must obey the strict rules of commerce laid down by the Alliance—those who adhere to these guidelines, however, normally find their "hosts" very accommodating. Most Ferengi maintain a general "don't ask, don't tell" policy toward pirate booty—as long as such booty doesn't come from one of *their* freighters *and* the appropriate nagi and subnagi get their cut, most Ferengi will pay the current value for whatever "salvage" a pirate produces.

In Orion space, of course, pirates have almost become accepted parts of the community. Merchants traveling in Orion space learn to arm their ships to the teeth.

Motivations

Not everyone who travels the spacelanes wishes to do so under the strict rules of Starfleet or the tedious patterns of merchant fleets. Some take to piracy out of a need for adventure or a desire for profit—and the power that these can bring. Others enjoy the sense of freedom their deeds provide. A few simply enjoy stealing, or possess a natural tendency toward criminal and violent behavior.

Pirates hail from all walks of life and are driven into the life by countless motivations and circumstances. A common desire to live on one's own terms and a willingness to prey on others give pirates of every stripe a common fraternal bond. A few of the more common pirate motivations include:

Criminal: In many cases no complex motive for becoming a pirate exists at all. Some people simply prefer to steal rather than work for a living—they enjoy the thrill of committing illegal acts, seek an outlet for their violent natures, or like lording their power over helpless victims. These misfits and desperate thugs do what comes naturally to them: They break the law. The clever ones can keep it up for years, turning their misanthropic tendencies into a viable profession. The rest soon turn to easier crimes or end up rotting in captivity in a place like the lunar prison on Meldrar I.

Ex-citizen/ex-patriot: Galactic governments are large, sprawling affairs, often encompassing tens of billions of individuals. While some (like the

Federation) take care to protect the rights of their citizenry, many do not, and even in the best of societies an unfortunate few always slip between the cracks. Sometimes a headstrong or charismatic individual—say, a former soldier treated unjustly, a person whose patriotism became a casualty to political reality, or a high-minded person with access to military hardware—fights back by committing acts of piracy. Such raiders aren't strictly rebels and espouse no set political agenda; they simply feel wronged by their governments and turn to piracy as a means of getting even (perhaps even adopting "Robin Hood"-like practices of donating most of their loot to the downtrodden).

Revenge: Pirates motivated by revenge usually have nothing left to live for. They're former traders or merchants who have lost family or friends, typically at the hands of some government or other enemy. Cast adrift, they turn to piracy as a means of staying alive; it becomes a way to fill the void left by their loss, and most importantly to obtain revenge against whomever wronged them. After a time, piracy simply becomes second nature. These Lifers tend to be more ruthless and bloodthirsty than most.

Businessmen Gone Bad: Companies along the frontier have a much more difficult time of it than their core world counterparts. Their businesses depend on tenuous supply lines, regular customers, and a host of other shaky factors. When things start to go bad, it can be easy to justify a little piracy to help make ends meet. This sort of pirate operates under a cloak of legitimacy, using the original company's name and reputation to disguise his actions. He steals cargo after transfers, disrupts the shipping of more successful rivals, and sells his booty as legitimately acquired goods. Eventually he may abandon pretense altogether and become an ordinary rogue.

Rebellion: Similar to "ex-citizen/ex-patriot," above, rebel pirates have become disenchanted with their governments and strike back as means of expressing their rage or trying to foment revolution. Unlike ex-patriots, however, they usually have the numbers and equipment to effect some sort of political change. They use piracy to fund their activities, to damage the government they fight, and to attract the attention of a larger power (such as the UFP) which might aid them.

Not all such rebels fight noble battles, however; some use rebellion as a cover story to excuse their piracy or to justify their actions in their own minds by claiming some larger purpose.

Bummers: Every conflict has scavengers following in its wake, and the dogs of war don't always remain planet-bound. "Bummers," as they're universally known, take advantage of a diverted military to go after easy pickings, travel in normally restricted areas, or attack targets they'd otherwise avoid. They prey on damaged starships, raid military convoys, and even seize supply depots if they can manage it. Some of them act out of patriotism, seeking to support one side or the other through their actions. Others do it because they can, and because crimes are often forgotten in the fog of war. Their activities differ from those of privateers in that they don't work at the behest of one side or the other; they take the initiative themselves and seize opportunities without the benefit of sanction.

Contractors: Contractors represent mercenary types who simply make their way through the life as best they know how. When they cannot find work as guns-for-hire or privateers, they turn to piracy, using their meager (and, in some cases, only) skills to raid the spacelanes. They raid only as long as no other work presents itself; if a "legitimate" employer turns up or a less hazardous opportunity arises, they will quickly return to their more "steady" work. Common in lawless regions or in regions where privateering occurs on a regular basis, contractors represent the essence of the true roustabout.

RAIDERS

Although not as organized as pirates, raiders work toward similar goals and have often been driven into the life by similar circumstances, motivations, and desires. Much like pirates, raiders enter the criminal life from a host of backgrounds and for a myriad of reasons. Unlike pirates, however, raiders tend to be poorly organized and outfitted. They typically operate with only a single ship, and must often scrape supplies together from the goods they plunder.

While pirate bands may operate as units for many years, raiding bands often spring into being on the heels of fortune or circumstance—refugees from conquered worlds left with nothing, former soldiers

seeking vengeance against their government, or others forced into their positions by circumstances and situations beyond their control. Raiders may be despicable or noble, depending upon their goals, background, and intentions. Good-hearted raiders, thrown together by happenstance and acting out of good intentions, are much more prevalent than good-hearted pirates, who spend years planning their criminal missions.

Because many raiders enter the life through circumstances beyond their control, their activities end when those circumstances change or when they meet whatever nebulous goals they set for themselves. Depending on the individual, these goals could range from freedom for a particular planet to simply amassing enough money to retire.

Raiders act with much less tact and organization than pirate bands. They strike targets of opportunity, grabbing what they can and escaping before reinforcements arrive. Because they lack the permanence of pirate bands, they tend to be harder to predict and can operate with more freedom … at least initially. The downside, of course, is that they lack the security of their more organized cousins and tend to go down hard when the authorities finally catch up with them.

Raiders usually target undefended colonies or shipping lanes on the frontier. They usually can't afford to trade body blows with heavily armed opponents and will flee rather than face a straight or protracted fight.

Starfleet applies a policy of intimidation through strength to stifle raider activities. When news of raids on a particular region appears, Starfleet increases patrols in the area, relying on starship captains to ferret out the offenders. Such a display of force usually results in quick captures, or else convinces the raiders to move on.

With politically motivated raiders, things can become a little trickier; but captains on the scene can usually determine the best policy. If the raiders are acting because of legitimate grievances, Starfleet can alert the UFP to the situation and attempt to find a solution.

CURRENT RAIDER ACTIVITIES

Raiders don't enjoy the lifespans of better-armed pirate bands, so there aren't as many known to exist currently. Within the UFP, the Maquis represent the most famous (or infamous, depending on your point of view) raiders of recent years, their operations focusing on the Cardassian border regions. Angered at the loss of their homes to a border treaty and unwilling to submit to Cardassian rule, they launched a brilliant series of raids against their oppressors; these operations were designed to drive Cardassia away from their worlds.

With the help of sympathetic locals and access to the sensor-confounding "Badlands" region of space, the Maquis played havoc with Starfleet and Cardassian fleets alike, straining relations between both powers. They were wiped out, however, when the Cardassians joined the Dominion—they could not stand against the dreaded Jem'Hadar.

Other raiders in the UFP enjoy less spectacular reputations, but constitute no less of a nuisance. Recent attacks by Antarean partisans on the nearby shipyards have resulted in the loss of numerous raw materials, and hit-and-run missions by unknown parties have plagued the Klingon border for years.

In one daring instance, an Andorian raider named Tarev Vetna stole a shipment of dilithium from one of the most highly guarded supply depots in the quadrant. Distracting nearby starships with an ingenious fleet of holographically created "ships," Vetna beamed the dilithium directly from the warehouse storing it, then used a tractor beam to tow it out of the system. By the time Starfleet had finished with

his nonexistent fleet, he was safely hidden in a nearby nebula. Warrants for his arrest have been stymied by the fact that he hasn't undertaken any other operations; apparently, the dilithium raid was a one-time-only occurrence.

Outside the Federation, raider activity continues to increase. Klingon houses occasionally raid each other for resources during blood feuds, or to uphold a house's honor, but such activity has declined since the end of their civil war. A band of Nausicaans calling itself the "No'char" has raided the Klingon and Romulan borders off and on over the past few years. The chaotic nature of Nausicaan politics, coupled with the high level of distrust between the Klingons and Romulans, have allowed the No'char to remain free thus far.

Raiders have smelled Cardassian blood in the water since the collapse of the Cardassian Union and have raided many of its worlds with virtual impunity, adding to the litany of Cardassian problems. Breen raiding parties figure prominently in this new rash of attacks.

MOTIVATIONS

Like pirates, raider motivations are as diverse and widely varied as the raiders themselves. Political motivations tend to figure more prominently, and the concept of "fighting the good fight" often looms large in a raider's mind. The key difference between pirate motivations and raider motivations lies in the circumstances.

As stated earlier, raiders often enter the life through no fault of their own: People fall into it by disasters that claim their homes and livelihoods, or wars which destroy all they hold dear. Because of this, they often act out of feelings of persecution, or a desire to survive (it's easy to justify criminal behavior when your belly's empty). The more noble or heroic raiders usually come from these ranks: Forced into the life by oppression or persecution, they strike back as best they know how and try to maintain a strong ethical code even when committing criminal or illegal acts.

Those raiders who act primarily for the money, or for the thrill their actions provide, don't last very long. They combine raiding with other activities such as smuggling and try to wait a long time between their assaults (to draw as little attention as possible to their activities). They commonly follow criminal (or at least mercenary) motivations, and possess far fewer scruples than their politically motivated counterparts.

PRIVATEERS

To become a buccaneer on your own is one thing; to do so at the behest of a government or other formal body is something else entirely. Privateers are buccaneers supported (and in many cases protected) by a sponsor of some kind. They receive sanction for their actions and can depend on their benefactor for aid and assistance. Unlike pirates and raiders, however, privateers generally must follow certain rules if they wish to maintain their privileged status.

Privateers always remain separate from standard military fleets; they obey no rigid chain of command and can more or less act as they please. While many adopt a pseudomilitary lifestyle (with ranks, regulations, and uniforms), they don't belong to the military and aren't subject to military restrictions or protocols. They possess a license to raid, striking targets as they see fit and collecting whatever booty they can seize. In addition, they receive support from their sponsor in the form of money, advanced weapons and equipment, and a safe port to hide in should that prove necessary.

In exchange for this sanction (and the protection and privileges it provides), privateers must limit their targets to specific entities or affiliations. They may only attack sponsor-approved groups or individuals, always staying within certain defined sociopolitical bounds. A privateer working for Cardassia, for example, could attack Klingon and UFP ships, but not those of the Dominion, and certainly not any Cardassian ships.

In addition, sponsors often expect privateers to adhere to certain ethical codes as well: They must refrain from killing, for instance, or ensure that their victims will remain safe after they have left. Again, specifics vary from privateer to privateer, but are often written into the charters of individual groups or vessels; of course, some privateers pay only lip service to such restrictions.

METHODS

Privateers typically move in small bands of several ships, although in wartime those bands can swell. They attack lone ships or small groups, striking whenever and however good tactics demand. Unlike pirates and raiders, they're less interested in cargo than in salvage, and often attack to destroy rather than disable.

Ethical privateers offer their targets a chance to surrender their vessel without harm; they won't

harm anyone unless it's absolutely necessary, and even then try to keep casualties to a minimum. Most victims fare better against privateers than against their unsponsored, and often more violent, brethren.

Privateers employ standard tactics when engaging their targets; many possess formal military training and can match wits with any Starfleet captain. Since their equipment is usually superior to that of their pirate and raider cousins, they carry the resources to go toe to toe with heavily armed vessels of all varieties; the technology salvageable from a military starship can fetch a handsome price.
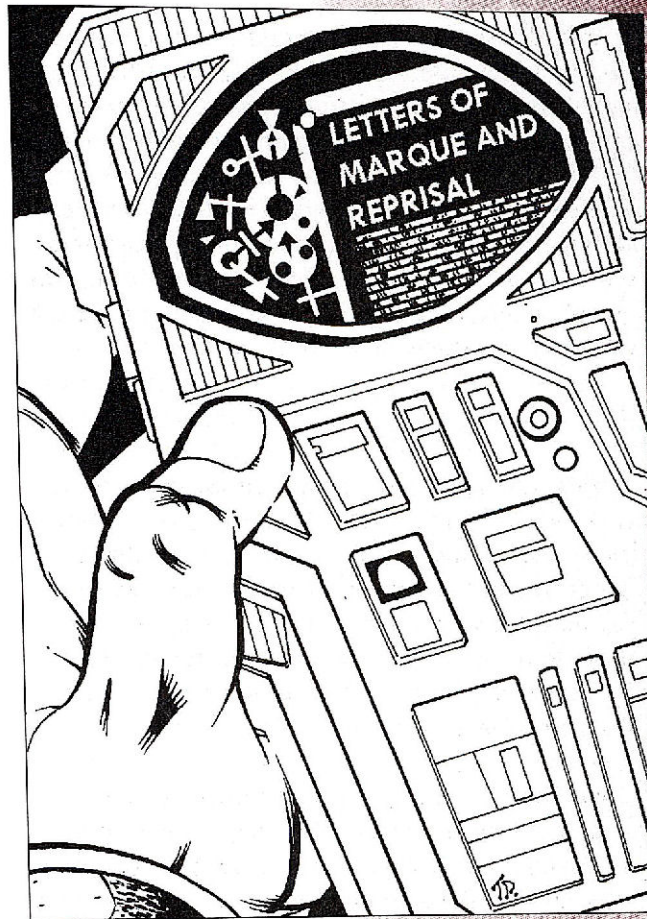
Privateers run only if outnumbered and put up a staunch fight if cornered; canny captains never underestimate the skills of a known privateer. Once they have achieved their objectives, they usually tow what remains of their mark back to a safe port, where the wrecks are disassembled and sold off, piece by piece. During wartime, privateers often leave their victims burning in space rather than claim salvage; they get paid to hurt the enemy, not scavenge their remains.

Because of their sanctioned status, privateers stand as the strongest and best-equipped buccaneers in the galaxy. Recent conflicts, from the Klingon civil war to the struggle between the Federation and the Dominion, have provided tremendous opportunities for privateer fleets, and their presence grows with each new battle. In fact, during a war, infamous pirate bands sometimes join the ranks of privateers in exchange for pardons from the governments they formerly preyed upon. With all this activity, privateers are likely to remain part of the political landscape for some time to come.

How Do They Do It and Get Away with It?

Privateers have the potential to cause great havoc. While technically operating outside galactic law, they receive sanction from great powers and can act as instruments of covert warfare if properly employed. How do they do it? What keeps a privateer's raids from turning into an all-out war between powers?

Among the major powers, letters of marque and reprisal do the trick. These are essentially contracts with the privateers' sponsors, granting them legal status to attack "pirates," "criminals," and other enemies of the state. They also grant salvage rights to empty or derelict vessels. These rights allow for a large amount of political leeway when dealing with abandoned or wrecked vessels—such broad interpre-

tations allow privateer crews to take what they wish from these ships while simultaneously keeping the sponsor's nose clean.

If an enemy captures a privateer, the sponsor can simply declare that his charge acted "without authorization," thus abandoning him to his fate. By revoking official authorization, the sponsor avoids responsibility and thus any diplomatic repercussions. Privateers—especially those working for a major government—risk becoming political liabilities every time they conduct a raid; it's an accepted risk of the profession.

The luxury of good equipment and reliable bases of operation comes with a hefty price. Privateers who cross the wrong lines may find themselves in deep trouble very quickly. In addition to the risk of political reprisal, they must take care to maintain good relations with their sponsors, who often know where they are, how much equipment they have, and the most opportune times to strike. If an employer decides to renege on a contract, or feels betrayed by a privateer for some reason, things could quickly become untenable. Denied resources and hiding places, privateers soon become desperate fugitives more concerned with staying alive than with wreaking any damage.

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

In addition, victims of privateers practice their own brand of justice—a particularly nasty brand. If a would-be target turns the tables on his attacker, he can deal out punishment more or less with impunity. Privateers aren't protected by the Seldonis IV convention regarding prisoners of war, and as such can be treated in whatever brutal fashion their captors see fit. The UFP treats its prisoners ethically, regardless of crimes or affiliation, but woe to the privateer who falls into Romulan or Klingon hands.

POSSIBLE SPONSORS

Any number of people and organizations could conceivably sponsor a privateer. Reasons for hiring them range from mercantile interests to political opposition to flat-out terrorism. All someone needs is a motive and enough money to meet a privateer's price. In the *Star Trek* universe, sponsors fall into four general groups, each with its own reasons for needing privateers.

Governments: Governing bodies possess considerable resources and can fund large numbers of privateer fleets if they wish. Few claim to engage in such business, at least in public. With an existing legitimate military and the funds to defend their interests publicly, the need for private freelance forces disappears. Or so they say. However, in the cutthroat realm of interstellar politics, tasks need accomplishing which governments do not wish to claim responsibility for. Rival powers must be checked, new technology destroyed or disposed of, and dangerous individuals eliminated, all without drawing suspicion to the political organs responsible. While intelligence divisions and black ops groups can perform some of these operations, privateers provide an admirable alternative to the cloak and dagger routine. Privateers give governments the freedom to act without revealing their true motivations. Because of this, most large governments in the Alpha Quadrant other than the UFP make use of privateers from time to time.

Political Groups or Parties: Divided societies often have several factions vying for control, be they political parties wrangling in the capital or isolated tribes competing for resources. The conflicts between such groups usually remain civilized, limited to heated arguments or intense propaganda campaigns. Sometimes, however, more direct measures must be used. Enter the privateer.

Privateers employed by a political group usually work toward a set goal defined by that group's philosophy. It could be patrolling a border the group feels is underdefended or attacking ships of political undesirables. Such operations often last until the group can elicit a formal shift in policy from the government as a whole—as short as a few days or as long as decades, depending upon the issue. Political privateers can act openly or clandestinely, depending upon the society. Romulan senators, for example, shroud all of their dealings in mystery, and don't want their political rivals knowing the forces at their disposal.

Rebellion/Guerrilla Movements: On occasion, privateers have served as the *de facto* military for an armed insurrection, lending their forces to an otherwise outgunned resistance. Such privateers can often make the difference in a guerrilla movement's survival. They rarely work for money, since most sponsors of this nature have little to give, and rely instead on salvage rights for their payments.

Corporation/Mercantile Concerns: Large companies sometimes have interests or goals that don't always coincide with the governing powers above them. Less scrupulous concerns use privateers to attack rival companies, taking care to hide their connections. Entire corporate wars have been fought in this manner under the guise of independent pirate raids. Privateers unable to find government or political employers can become rich by playing rival merchant groups off against each other—a practice far more in vogue in the wild reaches of space than the Federation would care to admit.

WHO USES PRIVATEERS AND WHY?

Except for the UFP, the various Alpha Quadrant powers have all used privateers at one time or another. Each one has different reasons for hiring them, and the circumstances under which they operate differ from one power to the next. A brief discussion of the privateers employed by each major power follows:

Cardassians: The Cardassian social structure emphasizes the state over the individual and encourages its citizens to contribute to the Union's defense. Those who fail the military's stringent entrance requirement can still serve as privateers, perform-

ing missions outside of the standard command structure. While not afforded the respect of the formal military, Cardassian privateers still receive sanction from the government, which outfits them with surplus materials and instills in them a sense of "serving greater Cardassia." They conduct assaults on lesser foes and will occasionally raid Romulan or Federation interests if they can. Their ranks have swollen with the recent Klingon war and alliance with the Dominion.

Ferengi: The Ferengi maintain no formal navy, only individual ships with a rough sense of loyalty. Essentially, all Ferengi are privateers, sanctioned to act in any manner they wish in order to secure profit. The Ferengi Alliance charges a fee to "commission" an official ship and admonishes the captain and crew to adhere to the Laws of Acquisition, then sets them loose to acquire profit as they see fit. Ferengi privateers have a tendency to bully their targets into submission rather than fight; a live potential customer is always preferable to a dead one. If pressed, however, they can blast away with the finest weapons latinum can buy. And big guns always make bargaining easier.

Orions: The Orion syndicates make extensive use of privateers for a variety of illicit activities. They generally sell commissions to the highest bidder, granting jobs to those who offer to pay the most. In exchange for winning a bid, the privateer acquires total salvage rights, the protection of the syndicate in question, and an immediate buyer for any seized booty. The glut of ne'er-do-wells in Orion systems seems to consider that a fair deal, and Orion-sponsored privateers can be found throughout known space.

Romulans: Few outside species are privy to the Byzantine world of Romulan politics, where senators use every dirty trick in the book to gain power over their rivals. Privateers play a role in these endless games, giving political leaders an opportunity to strike without revealing their intentions. Romulan privateers attack private resources or shipping lanes (to promote a shift in policy), or enemies which the Senate as a whole does not wish to engage (the UFP and Klingon Empire among them). Discovery and exposure are the greatest sins these privateers can commit; the Romulans accept their depredations as long as they remain hidden from view. Plausible deniability rules the day.

Others: A few other races employ privateers on a regular basis, most notably the Breen. Federation-Breen relations remain fairly stable in the wake of the Dominion War, but the decentralized Breen government makes incidents hard to avoid. Breen privateers have plagued the UFP since first contact was made. The Nausicaans also work as privateers, since their quasifeudal government does not allow them to compete with more powerful navies. Nausicaan privateers are usually limited to Romulan and Klingon space. The Son'a make occasional use of privateers as well, raiding for medical supplies to continue their ghoulish life-prolonging techniques.

FIFTEEN MEN ON A DEAD KLINGON'S CHEST: THE BUCCANEER'S LIFE

The life of a pirate can be fraught with peril and adventure. There's nothing like coming about a Klingon cruiser, your starboard warp nacelle aflame, and arrogantly telling its crew to lower the shields.

Let Starfleet have its planetary surveys and diplomatic envoys. Pirates have the life.

THE PIRATES' CODE

The life of a pirate can be fraught with peril and adventure. There's nothing like coming about a Klingon cruiser, your starboard warp nacelle aflame, and arrogantly telling its crew to lower the shields. Let Starfleet have its planetary surveys and diplomatic envoys. Pirates have the life.

Most buccaneers in the *Star Trek* universe follow the basic tenets of the life. They refuse to live by society's rules, trading the comfort and security of their native governments in exchange for the freedom to make their own way in the galaxy. They consider themselves part of a loose-knit brotherhood of fellow rogues, who bend no knee and claim no loyalty save to themselves.

Because of this, almost all buccaneers follow a rough code of ethics, a "pirates' code." This code doesn't exist in permanent form, being passed on orally from captain to captain. As such, it varies widely depending on the sector of space in which you hear it and the particular buccaneers espousing it. It can be broken down, however, into three basic tenets:

For those in the life, the law does not exist.
Obeying the law implies acceptance of the government which created it, which in turn implies acceptance of creature comforts over freedom. Laws exist to be broken; law-abiding people become victims or opponents.

Respect one another's territory. It's a big galaxy and there are enough fat, unguarded merchant fleets for everyone. If a pirate band has staked out an area of space to hunt in, other bands should find someplace else to practice their trade. This is a simple economic truism, as a given shipping lane can support only so much piracy before it dries up or someone installs a permanent military presence. Canny pirates know better than to make enemies where they don't have to, and can eke out their own territory if a fellow buccaneer has the one they want. Those who don't often find themselves ostracized by other criminals, unable to sell their booty, receive reliable intelligence, or find a safe place to hide. Those who insist on clashing over "turf" might even be hunted down and killed by pirates, or turned over to the authorities for reward money.

Never prey on a fellow pirate. Going hand in hand with the above stipulation, buccaneers know better than to attack their own kind. It's counterproductive, and it creates tensions that may take years to ease. There are easier marks out there, and no one in the life benefits when fellow Lifers target each other's throats. Disputes between pirate bands are usually settled by duels (see below) or by a neutral third party—the Orion Syndicate, for example, or a powerful fence employed by both. Only when two bands are politically opposed (on different sides during a war, for instance) or otherwise at direct odds with each other is fighting considered acceptable.

Most pirates follow the general tenets of their code. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule, since desperate or vicious individuals often act out of circumstance, necessity, or just plain malice. Each buccaneer ship differs from its fellows; each consists of unique individuals, and each governs its crew according to its own code of morality. Some may expand the code aboard their vessels, while others pay only lip service to its tenets. It all depends on the individual band.

Pirates vary among species as well, since each species brings its own particular perspectives to the life. A Klingon pirate obsessed with vengeance won't follow the same rules as a flashy human who lives for thrills. Generally speaking, interspecies bands function well only if their races are predisposed toward similar goals. Ferengi pirates rarely appear on Klingon vessels unless the Ferengi in question is particularly bloodthirsty. The watchword of the life is freedom; the wide degree of ethics and unique codes of conduct among each group of buccaneers ultimately reflects that.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Almost every major species has spawned buccaneering or pirating sometime in its past, and each harbors its own particular thoughts on the matter. These days, all major starfaring powers condemn piracy in at least some respects, but room remains for broad variations. A brief list of thoughts and opinions follows.

Humans: Mankind has a long history of piracy stretching back thousands of years, which reached its apex among the European empires of the 17th and 18th centuries. Legends of pirates have always been popular, and even in the 24th

century humans still read swashbuckling holonovels of Captain Blood and his spacefaring descendants. Because of these romantic notions, the majority of pirates in the Federation tend to be human. Clever pirates play up the charming swashbuckler image to curry favor among UFP citizens; of course, swashbuckling or not, Starfleet does its utmost to hunt these lawbreakers down.

Andorians: The violent Andorian culture embraced piracy early in its development. Buccaneers were rampant during the Age of Lament, when loose-knit groups would prey upon each other for food and supplies. Most Andorians today see buccaneers as a throwback to those times and treat contemporary pirates with faint distaste. Those who don't feel that way embrace the freewheeling passions of the life, and see pirates as an expression of those passions. Andorian pirates tend to solve things through challenges and duels rather than extended conflicts.

Cardassians: The Cardassians view pirates as sad examples of potential gone wrong. They believe that pirates lack discipline, that they lack the benefits of strong leadership. If only these wayward souls had been instilled with the proper duty, or been inspired by a firm hand to guide them. Pirates in the Cardassian Union are hunted and destroyed with firm dedication, but not without a sense of loss. Imagine what those wayward souls could have accomplished. State-sponsored privateers exist as an exception to this view; these freelancers serve the Union as all good Cardassians should.

Ferengi: Of all the species in the Alpha Quadrant, the Ferengi are perhaps most inclined toward piracy. To them, violent deeds committed in the name of profit are entirely justifiable; piracy just represents commerce without all the red tape. Since every ship in the Ferengi "navy" is essentially a privateer, their entire fleet depends upon buccaneers. Publicly, they claim to discourage piracy, since it drives away plenty of paying customers. Privately, buccaneers form a vital part of their society.

Klingons: The Klingons scorn pirates of all stripes, viewing them as dishonorable men who abuse their warrior skills for profit. No honorable Klingon will have anything to do with them.

Orions: The Orion Syndicate has used and harbored pirates and raiders of every type for centuries. It sees pirates as a means to an end and accepts them as the price of doing business. To Orions, a pirate is no more exciting than a cargo manifest—but just as useful.

Romulans: Piracy stains every era of Romulan history. Romulans view pirates as barbaric and disorganized, but also as useful tools if handled and manipulated properly.

Vulcans: Vulcans have almost no history of piracy, either on their native planet or among the stars. The sense of adventure and derring-do that attracts most races to piracy conflicts with Vulcan tenets of logic, and they spurn all forms of buccaneering as frivolous and destructive practices. The infamous Tal Mok, currently operating in Romulan space, may be the only Vulcan pirate in history.

ENTERING THE LIFE

Becoming a pirate requires a combination of motivation, happenstance, and pure old-fashioned kismet. Some desire it all their lives, while others find themselves thrown into the life through sheer dumb luck.

While a few pirates aspire to such a career from an early age, most enter the life because of unfortunate circumstances. Unpaid debts may force someone into employment on a pirate ship, or a shameful past may lead him to an anonymous life amid a band of raiders. Some enter the life even less voluntarily when they become the victim of a press gang: Crews in need of more men will find a bar with several promising candidates, drink them into a stupor (or simply beat them senseless) and drag their unconscious forms back to the ship. By the time they wake up, they're hundreds of light-years away and sporting a brand-new neural agonizer to ensure they stay in line. These sorts of pirates tend to lead brutal, miserable lives—bullied by their commanders and fellow pirates, they are forced to commit criminal acts to stay alive. Desperation often breeds more effective criminals than enthusiasm.

Then there are those who are neither willing nor unwilling to become buccaneers, but who simply fall into it. Perhaps a legitimate operation (such as free trading) goes sour, or a crew realizes that it can use the onboard phasers for more than just defense. Whatever the reason, it usually doesn't *start* like a

pirating career—they tell themselves that they'll only do it until business improves, or until a particular rival no longer threatens their company. Like any bad habit, it becomes easier and easier as time goes on, until the crewmembers finds themselves actually *preferring* buccaneering over more legitimate occupations.

Pirates from these backgrounds tend to be curt and professional, more concerned with doing the job than acting flashy or sadistic. Oddly enough, they usually last longer than buccaneers with less mundane origins.

Of course, generalizations like these can spawn dangerous assumptions. Like every aspect of piracy, the particulars vary widely between individual crews, and can be as simple or complex as the pirates themselves.

LIFE ABOARD A BUCCANEER SHIP

THE CREW

Buccaneer crews employ a fairly loose command structure, one less formal than that of Starfleet or most other legitimate armed forces. While some pattern themselves after the military, they lack the large numbers and logistical difficulties facing a widespread starship fleet, and thus do not need to maintain a strong chain of command. If the buccaneers have only one ship, the crew will remain fairly close-knit and can execute orders without a great deal of fuss. With more than one ship, things get more complicated, requiring a more and more formal command structure. The biggest pirate bands require a defined hierarchy to maintain control, or else their organization splinters and falls apart.

The captain or leader rests at the top of any buccaneer command structure. He is usually an intelligent, charismatic individual with a knack for tactics and an understanding of the pirates beneath him. Some rule by fear and intimidation, others with praise and earned loyalty. All hold the ultimate power to plan and make decisions. Sometimes several individuals will share leadership responsibilities, but this is uncommon in buccaneer bands. Multiple leaders tend to create a "coalition" effect of several distinct entities working together for a common cause.

Beneath the captain come the mates or lieutenants. Their job is to carry out their captain's orders, advise him, and ensure that the rank and file crewmen are doing their jobs. In a band with more than one ship, these lieutenants will usually have

their own commands. They take orders from the captain's flagship, but generally receive the authority to run their vessels as they see fit. In buccaneer bands with a single ship, they form the command staff and hold important positions such as Flight Control and Tactical. Mates often vie for the leadership position if the captain dies.

Beneath the mates come junior officers, fulfilling a variety of roles based on their skills and dispositions. They serve at Tactical, Engineering, Medical, and all of the other positions necessary to run a starship. "Officers" is a nominal term: The positions are earned through competence and rotate often among the crew. The staff beneath each of these positions normally remains small and loosely organized, usually numbering no more than two or three. All crewmembers are expected to obey the mate above them and bring any problems they have to him. Beyond that, organization tends to be rough and *de facto* at best.

One position that is very different for buccaneers is that of quartermaster. Quartermasters in Starfleet and its counterparts tend to remain at bases and supply depots, away from the front lines. Pirates don't have that luxury. They need to procure supplies without stopping at a central location, and

often depend on on-the-spot negotiating for dilithium crystals, replicators, and other vital materials. While a few pirate quartermasters remain at some centralized base, most travel with their crews, scrounging supplies and bartering for the crews' needs. They are often accomplished bargainers, and can procure supplies from the most unlikely places. Quartermasters also take charge of making supplies last, a crucial responsibility along the frontier—the quartermaster rations out food and other materials as appropriate. Most double as weapons officers as well, issuing phasers and other hand-held weapons to crewmembers as necessary.

Officers appointed by the captain earn their positions through loyalty and other qualifications. Like Starfleet, experience plays a large part in determining position; the longer someone has served with a particular band, the more responsibilities he receives. Again, crew positions are roughly defined, based more on experience and intuitive sense than any formal chain of command. Most buccaneers prefer this freewheeling form of organization, citing it as one of the advantages of the life.

Newly formed pirate bands often elect their captains democratically. This gives the crew a say in whom they follow and tends to increase camaraderie among the rank and file. Older pirate crews tend to follow an established captain, proven through time and blood as their leader. The more ruthless buccaneer bands often form a cult of personality around their captain, who leads through sheer force of will.

Murdering one's captain is abhorred among most pirates, but has happened in the past. Mutinies against brutal captains or power plays among the mates for leadership simply become hazards of the profession—rare but inevitable among the criminal element comprising most pirate crews. Intelligent buccaneer captains take care to keep their crew satisfied so they'll never have to face such a grim situation.

A Day in the Life

Life aboard a pirate vessel isn't dissimilar to life aboard a Klingon bird of prey or a Starfleet *Saber*-class starship. Each crewmember possesses assigned duties, doled out by the captain or his mates. Crewmembers work in shifts, usually longer and harder than their Starfleet counterparts, but with less formality to stifle their time. The bridge crew navigates and scans for threats and potential victims, while Engineering keeps the warp core running and weapons crews man the phaser banks and torpedo bays. Shift changes must be reported to the mate, but little formality exists beyond that.

Several crewmen normally live together, assigned to sparse and minimal crew staterooms. Larger buccaneer ships sport a central recreation room, where off-duty pirates can meet and relax. Smaller ships make do with a cramped cafeteria. Holodecks and other luxury entertainment almost never exist on a buccaneer ship; these are criminal raiders, not cruise ships. Crewmembers entertain themselves with cards, tongo, and an occasional dabo table on the bigger ships. A rest stop at a clandestine resort planet is common for pirates following a successful raid.

Sensor watch stands out as far and away the most important duty on a pirating vessel. The crew must stay alert for patrolling military ships, potential targets, or anything else that could merit immediate attention. Pirates are always hunted, and few have the resources to support long-term engagements. Staying alert and keeping a close eye on surrounding space are often all that keeps them alive.

The casual discipline and loose command structure end the instant an alert sounds—whether it be a patrolling Starfleet vessel or a fat Ferengi merchant trader ripe for the plucking. Command becomes tight and all eyes turn to the captain for his orders. Disobedience may mean the difference between life and death.

No crew members remain "off duty" during an attack. Those without shift assignments serve in boarding parties, helping to capture the other ship once it has been rendered immobile. Pirate crews rarely run alert drills; the perpetual danger they face keeps them more or less constantly ready, and pirates consider it a point of pride not to badger their men into doing what's best for ship and shipmates.

Ship's Articles

The conduct of affairs on a pirate vessel is often governed by the *Ship's Articles*. Like the charter of a government, a ship's articles define a band's purpose, setting parameters for everything from the chain of command to the division of booty. The articles essentially comprise the constitution for the ship, detailing such things as the voting process for a new captain, the way shares are divided when apportioning plunder, and the often harsh punishments for various transgressions and insubordination. Every long-term group of buccaneers has ship's articles, and most adhere to theirs with religious devotion.

Ship's articles vary from band to band and may contain a wide variety of edicts and stipulations. Privateers' articles are usually drafted by their supporter and signed by every member of the crew. Pirates and raiders draft their own articles. Most Ship's Articles break down into individual Articles (sometimes referred to as Rules). Several sample articles follow; combine these or invent your own to arrive at a complete set of articles for a particular vessel.

ARTICLE 3: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

"The crew shall restrict its incursions to Cardassian and Ferengi ships only. At no time will Klingon or Romulan ships be engaged, except in self-defense. Neutral or unaligned ships may be engaged, provided they are doing business with the Cardassian Union or Ferengi Alliance."

"Civilian casualties from any race are to be avoided if at all possible. All crewmembers will attack to wound or disable, never to kill, except in self-defense. Personnel transports will never be targeted for a raid."

ARTICLE 7: APPORTIONMENT

"Booty shall be divided according to seniority among the crew. The captain receives five shares of any profit made. Mates and officers receive three. Founding members of the band (captain and mates include) receive two. Crewmembers receive one. Bonus shares shall be provided if recipient performs exceptionally. Such shares shall be determined by democratic vote."

ARTICLE 12: ELECTION

"The Captain shall be elected by democratic vote among the standing members of the crew. The Captain shall serve for a period of three years, upon which time another election shall be held. Such elections may be tabled and the existing captain allowed to continue for another three years by a two-thirds majority vote. Any crewmember may call for a vote of no confidence to remove the captain at any time; the vote must pass by a two-thirds majority to take effect. Such votes may be called only once every six months."

THE DUEL

When disputes arise within buccaneer bands, the potential exists for great chaos. Pirates don't follow strict codes of conduct like Starfleet officers and can't settle their differences through chain of command. In such cases, ship's articles usually provide for a "civilized" way of correcting the problem, which over the years has become a time-honored buccaneer tradition: the duel.

Pirates use duels to settle disputes between two crewmen without destroying the entire crew. They stem from the long history of one-on-one dueling from numerous species, particularly Andorians and humans.

The specifics of duels are outlined in the particular ship's articles, describing the rules and circumstances under which one can occur. They almost always involve combat, and can last until first blood, to unconsciousness, or to the death, depending upon the crew and combatants.

Rules regarding duels are very stringent; violations merit horrible punishment. The captain or arbiter of the duel chooses a neutral site, such as a recreation room or cargo bay, for the duel. Only two individuals may participate; if the argument exists between two larger groups, each selects a champion to represent it. Once a duel has begun, no one may interfere.

Rules are enforced by the captain or—if the captain is a participant—by a mutually determined third party. The ship's article determining the duel serves as the ultimate authority and rulebook, deciding when a duel can begin, what constitutes a violation of the rules, and how precisely a duelist can claim victory. Once a combatant has won the matter is settled, and all crewmembers are expected to abide by the decision. Failure to do so constitutes mutiny, leading to some of the most horrible punishments imaginable.

Dueling weapons vary from species to species. Melee weapons are often used, although that doesn't have to be the case. Klingons will use *bat'leth* or *d'k tagh* knives, while Andorians use *chaka* or other ancestral dueling weapons. Humans typically use knives or swords. Phasers and other projectile weapons are sometimes used, although phaser duels are mercifully short. Most projectile duels follow a "ten paces, turn and fire" approach, which can be quite nasty with some of the more powerful weapons.

Ferengi pirates rarely use weapons for their duels at all, preferring games like tongo to determine who has the biggest lobes. While other pirates mock such nonviolent approaches, the Ferengi always honor the outcome of the these contests, which prevents bad feelings and bloodshed from progressing any further.

Interspecies duels allow the participants a choice of weapons, provided they belong to the same basic class (knives, longer blades, beam weapons, and so forth). Some of most legendary pirate duels have taken place under these circumstances. In 2289, human captain Takashi Sukai defeated his Klingon lieutenant Gar'reth in a battle for leadership of their vessel.

Sukai used an ancient Japanese katana against Gar'reth's *mek'leth*; the battle lasted almost an hour and ended when Sukai removed his lieutenant's hand. Other apocryphal dueling tales similar to this have circulated in the buccaneer community for generations, enhancing the duel as a means of settling disputes and elevating it to something resembling an art form.

Once a captain has obtained a ship and assembled a pirate or raider crew, all that remains is to attack targets and acquire loot—"plunder", in the old pirate vernacular. How a pirate crew locates its "marks" or "prizes", plans and conducts its missions, and obtains and disposes of its loot does as much to define it as any ship's articles or term applied by Starfleet Intelligence.

DAMN THE TORPEDOES: PIRATE MISSIONS

Raiders and their ilk typically refer to an attack on a target, or "mark," as a "mission" in a sort of grotesque satire on Starfleet and similar organizations. Before the actual attack can commence, though, a raider must find a mark. Then they subdue it, board it, and take whatever strikes their fancy.

FINDING THE MARK

Although tales of piracy from time immemorial have focused on the fight between raider and target and what happens after, missions of piracy actually begin with careful planning—at least for the most professional and successful raiders. Few raiders have enjoyed any lasting success by simply flying around hoping to find a rich prize. Planning a mission consists of two things: first, finding a mark; second, deciding how to subdue the mark with minimal damage to ship and cargo (not to mention to the pirates themselves). Of these two, most pirates will tell you that finding a good mark is the more difficult. Any good ship's captain can figure out ways to attack a mark, but finding the richest marks demands a certain subtle effort.

Information gathering and analysis becomes the key to locating rich prizes. Pirates must constantly keep their "ears to the ground," listening for word of ships carrying valuable cargoes. Several tried and true methods for doing this exist.

First, pirate crews try to frequent places that also host merchants and traders. Like members of most professions, merchants often enjoy the company of their fellows in bars, hotels, vacation resorts, and similar places. When together, they talk shop, and in doing so may let slip details which a pirate crew can use. A casual, innocent remark about some other merchant's new contract, when a comrade plans to leave a space station, or how the rising price of Spican flame gems in the Boradas Sector has attracted many free traders is all a clever pirate needs to plan a profitable mission.

Second, pirates with the appropriate bureaucratic skills often gather valuable information by reviewing the flight plans, cargo manifests, and other documents which most merchants must file. The 24th century is an information society, and someone who knows how to exploit that information can get ahead—legitimately or illegitimately. Of course, this doesn't help pirates find marks who are smuggling or not filing flight plans, but underworld contacts usually help a pirate track down those types of prizes. Furthermore, since such marks engage in illegal activities themselves, they're not likely to run to the authorities to file charges in the wake of a pirate raid.

Uncovering and analyzing manifests and planned trade routes usually requires a little bit of computer skill, since many mercantile firms and free traders try to keep those sorts of records confidential (to prevent competitors as well as pirates from analyzing them). A criminal with good data mining skills can easily earn his place on a pirate crew by doing this sort of work.

Third, a few strips of latinum placed in the right hands can buy a pirate all the information he needs to plan the perfect raid. While Federation personnel remain above such squalid practices, people in other parts of the quadrant often welcome a good bribe. An operations clerk, cargo bay worker, or low-ranking security officer may want to supplement his salary by telling pirates which ships are heavily laden, or who just contracted to carry Anjoran bio-mimetic gel to Casperia Prime.

Among many pirate crews, including the most professional and competent bands, the crewman who locates a mark earns a bonus of some sort. This may take the form of a payment from the ship's treasury, or the right to a greater share of loot from the mark once it's taken. Whatever the reward, the existence of such incentives helps motivate pirates to work hard to gather information on potential prizes.

SUBDUING THE MARK

Once raiders select a target, they must determine how to capture it without damaging it significantly. Every disruptor blast or explosion reduces the value of the booty, so most pirates prefer a swift, bloodless capture (and thus often prefer to target shield generators and weapon systems, rather than cause general damage). Of course, circumstances may prevent them from achieving this goal. Some typical subdual and capture techniques include:

Ambush: A favorite of many pirates, ambush requires some sort of "stellar cover" or camouflage to hide in or behind: an asteroid belt, the

atmosphere of a gas giant, a nebula, or an area of high radiation which interferes with the mark's sensors and communications systems. Knowing that the mark will pass through or near this sort of area, the pirate ship conceals itself there and then swoops down by surprise to capture the mark before it can fire a shot.

Attack: Why be subtle? Some pirates rely on a straightforward one-on-one attack to subdue a target, counting on their skill and (typically) greater firepower to carry the day before they damage too much of the loot. Others prefer "swarming," using a group of ships to overwhelm a single target (or take on multiple targets, such as the ships in a cargo convoy).

Blockade: A group of pirate crews, or a single crew large enough to use several ships, may establish a *de facto* blockade of a space station or planet. Hiding nearby, they observe commercial traffic and strike at the most likely prizes. Of course, unless the pirates are more powerful than the local law enforcement or military organizations, this tactic works only for a little while, since authorities will figure out what's going on and send the appropriate personnel to deal with the situation.

Q-ship: This tactic involves a special ship, or extensive preparations on the part of the pirate crew. A "Q-ship" is an armed pirate ship disguised to look like an ordinary, unarmed, or lightly armed ship. The disguise favored by most pirate Q-ships is that of a merchant vessel or free trader ship. Using this disguise, the pirate crew gets close to the mark and attacks from surprise before the mark even knows what's going on.

U-ship: Some pirates prefer to lurk behind their prey, following it undetected until they find the right moment to strike. Typically they use ships, known in the vernacular as "U-ships," designed for just such a strategy. They use cloaking devices, sensor-reflective hulls, energy sheaths, or other methods to remain undetectable, or hard to detect, with sensors. This allows them to sneak up on the mark at the best possible moment-such as when the mark has moved furthest from help or is in an area where it can't send a distress signal, or after it suffers damage from an ion storm.

TAKING THE MARK: BOARDING ACTIONS

When pirates attack, they attack to disable. Destroying a mark does them no good (except, perhaps, for privateers). Once the mark floats dead in space, all the pirates have to do is board her and take the loot.

Boarding actions are not, however, simple matters. In many cases, they pose as much danger for the pirate crew as the attack on the mark itself, for many merchants carry weapons and will fight to defend their livelihood. Boarding parties—the piratical equivalent of a Starfleet away team—must prepare for determined resistance. If the targets capitulate without a fight, so much the better.

Some of the ways in which pirates board their marks include:

Breaching: This involves blowing a hole in the mark's hull (usually with the ship's weapons) and then traveling through it by some means to get at the goods. The drawback to it is the possibility of damaging the plunder. However, it has one significant advantage: Any merchant personnel waiting near the breach point to attack boarders will be injured or killed by the breaching action, thus clearing a safe way into the ship for the boarding party.

Related to breaching is *ramming*, but it's even more likely to damage not only the mark, but the pirate ship as well. Most pirates avoid ramming because of its unpredictability and danger, but some have developed special ships with sharp, reinforced noses specifically for conducting ramming attacks.

Clamping: Pirates can use this boarding action only on marks whose propulsion systems are completely disabled. The pirate ship flies up alongside the mark, matches speed with it (since even if it can't fly under its own power, it will drift), then attaches itself to it with docking clamps or a tractor beam. Once the two ships are linked, the pirates can use disruptors or other tools to cut through the mark's hull and board her.

EVA boarding: Some boarding parties prefer to use EVA suits to get on the outside of a mark and find access to the ship's interior via an airlock; alternatively, specially modified tools such as plasma torches can be used to literally cut through the prize's hull. This usually requires a clamping

maneuver or use of a transporter or shuttle. Aside from transporting inside a mark, EVA boarding is less likely to cause damage to the mark and its cargo than any other method.

Shuttle boarding: Similar to clamping, this method involves flying a shuttlecraft close enough to the mark either to enter the mark's shuttlebay (if possible) or attach it to the mark's hull and cut into the interior of the vessel. It's less likely to damage the mark's ship than clamping, but also requires the boarding party to cut itself off from the help of its crewmates.

Transporter: The easiest, and often safest, way to board a mark is to transport aboard her. Of course, this requires the mark's shields to be down, but that's usually not a problem. However, some merchants use transporter scramblers to prevent pirates from boarding their ships this way.

BOARDING PARTIES

Different pirate crews assemble their boarding parties in different ways. The harshest, most brutal pirates simply send over several raiders armed to the teeth, with instructions to phaser down anyone who fights back or offers any resistance. Pirate crews who want to take hostages or do as little damage to the mark as possible put together different boarding parties. They use not only pirates who have good aim, but also those skilled at manipulating computers and ships' systems to assist with subduing the ship. A free trader who's hiding out in his well armored cargo hold won't last very long if the boarding party shuts off the life support to that area. Some pirate crews even carry members skilled at inventory control and cargo evaluation, so that they can locate and identify valuable loot as quickly as possible and get it off the ship easily.

PIECES OF EIGHT AND GOLD DOUBLOONS: PIRATE PLUNDER

Except for those few souls in it for the adventure and excitement, pirates do what they do for one reason only: profit. Whether they call it booty, plunder, or "the prize," they want what the ship carries in its cargo holds and computer banks—and perhaps even the ship itself!

TYPICAL PIRATE LOOT

Although the days of wooden chests full of gold coins and precious gems exist now only as historical memory, pirates still look for certain types and categories of plunder. These include:

Collectibles: Unique, original items such as artwork and certain craft items often possess high intrinsic value. Many a wealthy collector has ransomed his treasures back from a group of raiders for as much as he paid for them in the first place, or more.

Currency and latinum: Raw currency always beckons. Since so many transactions occur electronically, it takes a skilled hacker to download credits or other "data currency" from a merchant ship's computers. Pirates can simply take latinum and other forms of specie the way they would any other physical object.

Data: Knowledge is power, and there's always someone willing to pay for information on his enemies or competitors. Merchant ships' computer systems often contain valuable data about product development, marketing plans, supply sources, or customers which pirates can sell to unscrupulous corporations or the Orion Syndicate. Some pirates keep the data and use it for blackmail.

Materials in high demand: Certain materials, normally of little value to pirates, become desirable booty when the demand for them increases. Ordinary medicines turn into valuable commodities when epidemics strike planets, for example, and hytritium is worth a great deal to a world whose water has been poisoned with tricyanate. Of course, for such substances to have value, they must not be replicable.

Precious metals and gems: Many merchants trade in precious metals such as Ludugial gold, or gemstones like kiva or Bolian crystals. Although in many cases it's possible to replicate virtually identical items, some persons prefer the "real thing," which makes such substances valuable to traders and raiders alike.

Technology: Newly developed technology, technological advances not yet released to the general public, and strange alien devices all carry considerable price tags. Some boarding parties are

- What's more valuable or useful?

- What's easiest to move?

- Do we need special equipment or planning to take or keep this item?

- How quickly can we dispose of this loot?

- How easily can security personnel trace this loot?

Being decisive people, pirates make their choices and take the loot that makes the most sense relative to their current situation. A raider being pursued by security or naval forces will probably forego easily traceable plunder, while a pirate vessel with a damaged impulse drive might stick with information or data plunder only, allowing it to "run light" for a while (or might take parts to repair the drive). In a similar vein, raiders must be able to dispose of plunder in order for it to maintain any value at all—good captains keeps this consideration in mind at all times when deciding on a particular haul.

Once a mix of plunder has been chosen, raiders must get the loot back to their ship. Transporters provide the easiest way to effect the transfer, of course, but sometimes their use becomes impossible. For example, pure hytritium is too unstable to transport, so it must be moved in other ways. Antigrav cargo carriers, tractor beams, and shuttlecraft all represent methods for pirates to get their hands on untransportable loot.

highly experienced at stripping a mark of virtually every important piece of equipment it has, leaving it to drift helplessly.

Hostages and slaves: Last but not least, there's the possibility of living loot—taking the mark's crew or passengers for ransom or slavery. This isn't a common practice—it's inconvenient, difficult, and dangerous for the pirate crew. But if one of the mark's passengers happens to be, say, the child of a wealthy political figure or merchant, many pirates will be hard-pressed to resist the opportunity to earn a few more ill-gotten bricks of latinum.

Taking the Loot

Finding the loot is one thing. Actually getting it off the mark's ship is another thing entirely. Many merchant cargoes are big, bulky items which pirates have trouble moving. Since merchant ships typically have larger cargo holds than pirate vessels, pirates have to make hard decisions about what to take. When making these decisions, pirates take several factors into account:

Prizes: Captured Ships

Of course, the best loot of all may be the vessel itself. Pirates refer to captured ships as "prizes" (though they may also use that term generally for stolen goods). Most pirates seem content simply to deprive the mark of his cargo and wealth, but some of the more vicious or greedy pirates feel no compunction about seizing a captured ship. In such cases, the pirates typically maroon the crew or transport them out into open space to die.

A pirate crew has three options for disposing of a prize. First, it can keep the ship, using it for future pirate raids. Pirates whose ships suffer irreparable damage during a raid often take a prize to replace their lost ship; other pirates do this as a way of building a pirate "fleet" (like the infamous DaiMon Fog). Second, they can sell the ship on the black market. Plenty of people, ranging from other pirates to mercenaries to unscrupulous governments, are

glad to take such a ship off a pirate band's hands and won't ask too many questions about the phaser scoring along some of the ship's corridors. Last but not least, a pirate crew with the right technical skills, or which knows someone who has them, can break a ship apart and sell the pieces.

APPORTIONMENT: DIVIDING THE LOOT

Having taken a mark and deprived it of its cargo, a pirate crew must confront another dilemma: how to divide the loot among themselves. To prevent quarrels, duels, and brawls over this issue, most crews write into their ship's articles a method of apportionment. The standard division is two to five shares for the captain, one and a half to three shares for each officer, and one to two shares per crewman (depending upon seniority and other factors). The captain usually has the right to allot additional shares to crewmen who accomplished notable deeds, such as finding the mark or locating a cache of latinum which the mark had hidden.

Other pirate crews aren't quite so formal about the matter. The least professional crews sometimes employ the simple method of "you keep what you take," which results in frenzied boarding parties tearing the mark apart, taking every last trinket. If necessary, crewmen fight duels or play games of

chance or skill to determine who's entitled to a disputed item. If a pirate ship is run by a heavy-handed, tyrannical captain, he often decides who gets what, and shoots anyone who argues with him.

DISPOSING OF THE LOOT

Unless plunder from a particular mark consists entirely of currency and items they can use themselves, pirates must convert their loot into latinum. Pirates with extensive commercial contacts, such as many Ferengi raiders, often sell directly to a customer themselves. In effect, they're conducting a distribution business—they simply happen to have a very unorthodox source of supply. This also becomes the preferred method when the loot consists of something that only a few people consider valuable (such as a hostage, a rare art object, or scientific data encompassing a researcher's life's work). It's also likely to earn the pirates more money than using a fence. Of course, making the exchange with the customer often poses a danger for the pirate; his buyer may have called in security forces, or may be planning to pull a disruptor and a double-cross to get away with the loot *and* the latinum for himself.

A better option for large amounts of loot, or items in wide demand, is to employ a black-market buyer, or "fence." See page 43 for more information on fences.

Wealth. Possessions. Excitement. These things which drive thieves and gamblers, rogues concerned with the acquisition of wealth and material goods, sometimes for personal gain, sometimes merely for the thrill of the game. These rogues often view their involvement in the life as nothing more than a game—one where they compete with the law and Lady Luck in a test of skill and confidence.

THIEVES IN THE NIGHT

In the 24th century, thievery has become almost an art form among those who still practice it. There is considerably less to steal, but the remaining targets are often the most precious and valuable items in the galaxy. How can a true thief resist such a prize?

ENTERING THE LIFE

In the Federation, modern technology such as replicators has largely eliminated material needs. Most Federation citizens don't even use money in their daily lives. Many other interstellar civilizations enjoy similar advantages, although they are usually more restrictive than the Federation. Even in the Ferengi Alliance, there's little need to steal for mere survival; an individual's most basic needs are supplied entirely by technology. The concept of "petty theft" is nearly nonexistent in the Federation and its neighbors. It is found only on isolated colonies and other places where infrastructure has broken down (or was not even built in the first place). On these worlds, people still steal in order to survive. Elsewhere, thieves possess other motivations.

Individuals become thieves for a variety of different reasons. The most common include to support a cause or ideal, because one lacks any other useful skills (common among thieves originally from poor societies), to obtain restricted or unique items (such as for a collection), working as a thief for an employer or patron, and merely for the thrill and excitement of theft and competing with the legal authorities.
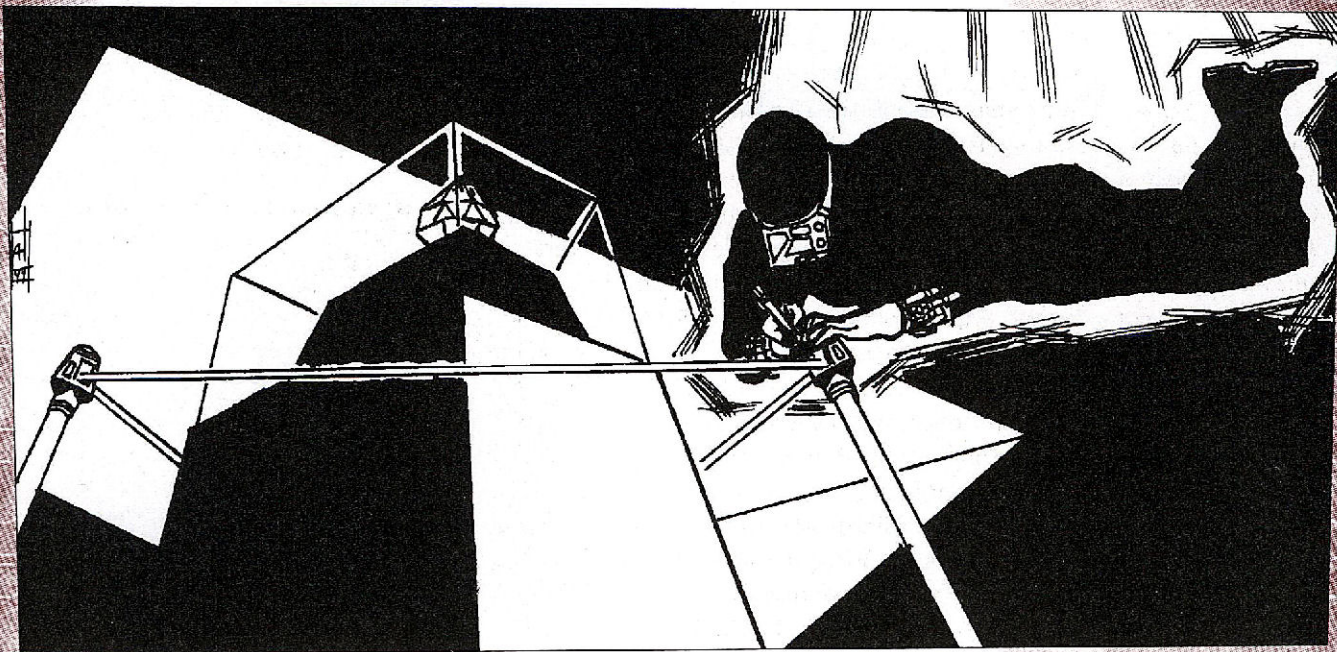
FOR THE CHALLENGE

The last reason remains the most common in the Federation itself. Thieves steal for the excitement and the challenge of planning and executing a theft. The actual material gain becomes almost irrelevant (although many skilled thieves do become quite wealthy); it is the thrill, the rush of successfully pulling off a job, that really matters. Such thieves often think of themselves as romantic figures and may rationalize their behavior behind a cause of some sort. In the end, however, they steal for the sake of stealing.

Thrill-seeking thieves often engage in complex "games" with the legal authorities. In fact, many thieves refer to their profession as "the game," a competition between their skill and cleverness and the skills of those who would keep them from their quarry. Possessed of tremendous egos, these thieves often leave some sort of "signature" proclaiming their accomplishments for others to see.

This may involve leaving some kind of "trademark" item at the scene of a crime (a flower, for example, or a personal symbol), or it may prompt them to send clues, riddles, or taunts to authorities or victims so they know who committed the crime. Authorities rely on such behavior to help them capture thieves. Sooner or later, even the most skilled thief makes mistakes, and a master thief's ego often won't allow him to carry out "the perfect crime" if no one else is going to know who did it.

FOR THE CAUSE

Some thieves steal to support a particular cause. For some, this is mere lip service, covering up a deeper desire to steal for excitement or challenge. For others, support of the cause is sincere. They may steal to deprive an enemy of valuable materials or information, to supply their cause with the same, or sometimes both at once. For example, members of the Maquis have been known to steal Cardassian and even Federation equipment, supplies, and ships to aid their cause, while at the same time depriving their Cardassian enemies of valuable materials. Bajoran freedom-fighters often did the same thing during the Cardassian occupation of Bajor, stealing military equipment from the Cardassians to supply their own fight against them, and stealing food and medical supplies to help Bajorans in need. These thieves often do not see themselves as "thieves" at all. They do not see their actions as immoral, even if they are technically illegal.

Thieves driven by a cause tend to be the least skilled but also the most daring, because their cause gives them courage to attempt things more sensible thieves would avoid. Those who survive for long in their profession tend to gain skill quickly. Sometimes, as the thief becomes more and more capable, or as his idealism wanes, the challenge of stealing becomes more important than the cause itself. Other thieves, once their cause has been won, find themselves unable to return to "normal" society, either because they have no other skills or because they have become too acclimated to a life of thievery.

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

FOR THE MONEY

Many thieves from frontier areas of the Federation fall into "the life" because they lack any other marketable skills—it's the only way they've ever made a living. These thieves either come from a society where thievery exists as a common outlet or survival necessity, or else were thieves for a cause and are left with no purpose once their cause is won. For example, a thief may hail from a failed colony or a primitive society lacking in basic technology. Forced to steal in order to survive, the thief eventually manages to find a way off-world, but lacks a means of support. If they remain in the life, such thieves usually find their way into the employ of organizations like the Orion Syndicate, local organized crime groups, or sometimes even intelligence organizations. Some manage to make a success of themselves as independent operators, while most end their operations caught by the authorities or choose to reeducate themselves and find another way of life. A lucky few, once captured, have the chance to turn their talents toward defeating their former brethren by becoming security officers and consultants.

For a Patron

A powerful patron—an individual or an organization—can make life easier for a thief. Independent "freelance" thieves do exist, but they tend to be rare. They're usually either skilled master thieves good enough to operate on their own, or small-timers who haven't managed to acquire a patron or get caught yet. The rest work for patrons like the Orion Syndicate, local crime lords, or even eccentric and wealthy individuals (such as obsessed collectors).

The patron provides the thief with resources, material support, a means of disposing of booty, and often legal protection of some kind. The patron also protects the thief from threats from other criminals. For example, a criminal syndicate may exercise control over all major thefts on a planet. Thieves working for the syndicate enjoy its protection when dealing with fellow rogues, while freelance thieves are fair targets for other criminals. In return, the thief provides the patron with skilled services. Such arrangements invariably favor the patron, and thieves often find it difficult to leave a patron's service. Some organizations kill members who attempt to leave out of fear that they will inform the authorities.

For Themselves

Lastly, some thieves steal in order to possess restricted, unique, or difficult to obtain items they desire. This may be as simple as a thief addicted to a particular drug or

TYPES OF THIEVES

Broadly speaking, one can divide thieves into several categories, based on their preferred methods of operation. They include:

Cat Burglars: The type of thief most Federation citizens think of when they hear the word, cat burglars are highly skilled professionals who use their athletic and technical prowess to penetrate secured areas, defeat antitheft systems, steal valuable objects, and escape without being detected. Cat burglars typically specialize in items of great value, such as artwork, archaeological treasures, gems and jewelry, or restricted data files.

Con Artists: Also known as "grifters," con artists steal through treachery and deception. They masquerade as deposed royalty, people down on their luck, long-lost relatives, people with "can't miss" business propositions, or someone similar and convince victims to give them money or valuables. They target the mentally vulnerable—those who, due to emotional need, greed, or other psychological factors, remain vulnerable and easy to trick.

Pickpockets and Cutpurses: Usually found only on more primitive or impoverished worlds, pickpockets and cutpurses use sleight of hand to filch items off a victim's person. Pickpocketing rarely leads to great riches, but may find them if the thief gets lucky and obtains, say, valuable data or computer access codes when he was just hoping for some quick cash. On the other hand, plenty of stories revolve around a generally good-hearted thief who accidentally steals an item of great value and then has to deal with the repercussions—such as dangerous people who want their stolen property back...

Robbers: Robbers use threats and violence to take valuables from their victims. They range from crude and unsophisticated muggers (common in some societies, but not in the Federation or most states of similar cultural level) to highly skilled thieves who meticulously plan and execute bank robberies and similar jobs.

other substance who steals in order to obtain more (or to obtain the wealth needed to purchase more). More commonly, the thief obsesses over collecting particular items of value and steals to obtain them. This can range from rare jewels to archaeological artifacts, forbidden technology, rare lifeforms, or even baseball cards. Wealthy or influential collectors may employ thieves to steal for them rather than doing so themselves; the black market thrives on the vices of various wealthy "collectors" interested in acquiring rare items.

TRAINING

Skilled thieves aren't born—they're made, usually in trials by fire. Thieves who don't learn their craft well end up arrested, imprisoned, or dead. Those who survive go on to learn more and become better thieves.

The vast majority of thieves are self-taught, at least at first. They become involved in the life for whatever reason and begin learning how to steal. The successful ones learn what works and what doesn't, refining their skills through practice. They may pick up some things from fellow thieves willing to share their secrets, but most learn by trial and error. On a rare occasion, a skilled thief may take a novice on as an apprentice, teaching him the skills of the craft, but most thieves prefer to avoid such entanglements since they make capture more likely. Some thieves take advantage of time spent in prison to learn tricks of the trade from incarcerated veteran thieves—"prison education," as it's called.

Eventually, most capable thieves come to the attention of an organization. It may be a member of a cause who demonstrates a talent for thievery, chosen by the cause's leaders to train further, or it may be a petty thief on the frontier who draws the interest of the local crime lord, who wants the thief in his employ. A few rare individuals avoid joining organizations, preferring instead to continue on their own. The rest join up and further refine their skills under the guidance of their new "patrons." How much assistance a patron provides varies greatly. Sometimes more experienced thieves will train the novice; other times it is entirely "sink or swim"—the novice continues to operate alone, but with the support of the patron (and often a substantial penalty for failure to motivate him).

Sometimes the organization which recruits and trains the thief is not a criminal syndicate, but a government or corporate organization, such as an intelligence agency. Narrators and players interested in thieves working as spies should consult *The First Line: The Starfleet Intelligence Handbook*.

METHODS

Training regimens and methods vary greatly, depending upon a thief's natural talents, his preferred *modus operandi* and targets, and the like. A thief who works as a con man learns different skills from those of a cat burglar, for example. The former concentrates on developing social interaction skills and other abilities which help him deceive people (in game terms, skills like Charm, Disguise, Fast Talk, and Persuasion), the latter on athletic prowess and circumventing security (Acrobatics, Athletics, Security, Systems Engineering).

However, a few skills serve as common ground for most thieves. First, they learn how to pick the right targets. For most jobs, regardless of how the theft is actually accomplished, this requires the ability to research the target, typically using the Computer skill to troll through relevant records (and perhaps access records not available to the general public). Thieves who specialize in a particular item (art objects, for example) usually have a relevant Knowledge skill or two. Second, they learn how to judge the value of what they've stolen and dispose of it properly. In game terms, this usually requires Streetwise (Locate Contraband) to find the black market and Merchant (Appraising/Selling Stolen Goods) for the actual business of selling.

Thanks to holosuites, training to be a thief is not difficult. The thief-in-training simply has to have access to the proper holoprograms and the privacy to run them. Naturally, thief training programs are available only on the black market, and are extraordinarily expensive.

TARGETS

Thieves steal items of value. The exact definition of "value" varies from place to place and from one thief to another. Thieves understand better than most that an item's value depends largely on what other people think it's worth. Certain characteristics help to define an item as valuable: uniqueness, usefulness, and significance.

UNIQUENESS

In an era when nearly anything can be created in seconds using a replicator, truly unique items have

value. An item is unique either because it is an original and has some particular significance (see below), or because it cannot be replicated.

Some items (such as many organic compounds, which would require quantum-level replication) possess structures too complex to replicate. Thus, lifeforms, and many advanced biotechnology drugs and materials, are valuable, particularly if they are otherwise rare or restricted. Examples include rare or near-extinct animals (laplings, Corvan gilvos, and so forth), materials like biomimetic gel, and DNA samples from particular individuals which can be used for cloning or other medical experiments.

Some substances and items don't work properly if replicated, thus making them valuable. For example, dilithium crystals must be mined and processed in order to function properly as a channel for matter-antimatter reactions. Since replicated dilithium cannot perform this function, dilithium remains valuable. The same holds true of rare mineral substances such as pergium and latinum. That makes these materials targets for theft or (more commonly) piracy. Many complex technological items (such as starships and many weapons) also are not widely replicated, either because they are assembled using other means or because the replication patterns for them are restricted (or both).

Finally, some items defy conventional replication technology altogether. This includes many items of advanced alien technology, such as the Bajoran Orbs and most Iconian technology. These items are truly unique, since they cannot be reproduced, and generally have major value because of what they can do in addition to their uniqueness.

Note that "items" are not always physical objects. Information is a particularly valuable commodity in the 24th century. Unique information includes nearly all secret data, from government security files to restricted replication patterns, personal logs and journals, and cutting-edge research information.

USEFULNESS

Items that can be put to use, either by the thief or an interested buyer, tend to be more valuable than items that merely serve "decorative" purposes. For example, a Varon-T disruptor is valuable because it is rare (it is banned in the Federation, and only five were ever manufactured), but it also has value because it's an effective and vicious weapon. Dilithium is valued primarily for its use in antimatter engines and warp-drive systems. A simi-

lar amount of latinum is worth less because, while latinum is rare, it has no use other than as a means of exchange.

Nearly any useful item or information holds some degree of value, regardless of its uniqueness or significance. The issue for a thief centers on whether it's necessary to steal in order to obtain the item, and whether the result makes the risk worthwhile. A thief is far more likely to acquire an illegal weapon, like a phaser, on the black market than to try stealing one from a Starfleet arsenal, unless the thief has a particular interest in testing Starfleet security measures.

SIGNIFICANCE

An item's significance dictates the value ascribed to it based on certain intangible qualities, usually social, political, or religious in nature. Original works of art serve as the prime example here. Van Gogh's *Starry Night* is not made from valuable material, merely canvas and pigment. It can be easily scanned and replicated. Its value stems from its quality as a work of art and, more importantly, as a unique *original* work of art. The Bajoran Orbs hold considerable value as unique items of alien technology, sent through the wormhole by the Prophets, but they become priceless when one considers their religious significance to the Bajoran people.

Significant items hold interest for thieves because others value them, even if the thief may not. A Ferengi thief might consider a 250-year-old bottle of Earth wine the most disgusting thing he's ever tasted, but it's still valuable to certain connoisseurs of fine wines (human and otherwise).

TECHNIQUES

To thieves in the life, stealing becomes more than just a profession—it assumes the mantle of an art form of sorts, a craft refined through experience, skill, and technique. There are several different ways a thief can relieve someone of his possessions. These methods break down into three broad categories: physical theft, data theft, and trickery.

PHYSICAL THEFT

There are a number of ways for a thief to steal something physically, depending on the item's size, composition, and the security surrounding it. Something as small and portable as a piece of jewelry or an isolinear chip can be snatched using the

ancient art of picking pockets, still practiced by many thieves. A simple combination of misdirection and sleight of hand allows a thief to seize the item without its bearer being any the wiser.

For larger or better-protected items, the theft generally must rely on breaking into the place where the owner keeps the item and physically removing it. He can most easily accomplish this with a transporter, and some thieves are quite adept at jury-rigging transporter systems, or even related systems like replicators or holosuites, to beam into (or out of) a secure location. Since people can foil transporters with force fields and transport inhibitors, more traditional intrusion methods still remain in common use. In fact, in some thieves' view of "the game," using a transporter constitutes a form of "cheating."

A thief with the correct equipment and technical skills can overcome even the most sophisticated locks and security systems. Antigravity fields or tractor beams can overcome walls, fences, and pressure plates. The right equipment (proximity detector decoys, for example) can overload or block sensors or force fields. A thief can go even further with access codes gleaned from the victim's data files, or a little help from the inside.

The careful preparation and planning needed for a successful theft usually requires the thief to research and examine the target location carefully, a practice referred to as "casing" by many thieves. A map or first-hand knowledge of the location's layout becomes vital, as does information about the security measures the thief will likely encounter. A skilled thief may pose as someone else, particularly as a security operative, in order to acquire this information.

Data Theft

Physical objects constitute only a portion of what thieves steal in the 24th century. In many cases data is more valuable, more portable, and more vulnerable than physical property. "Hacking" involves breaking into a computer system to extract data. Many of the most successful data thieves have dataport implants installed, allowing their brains to interface with computers directly. Dataports help a thief avoid security programs, hack into systems, and sift through data with extreme efficiency and speed, but are also very dangerous, since computer security programs are sometimes powerful enough to damage the

thief's brain. Using one is usually referred to as "porting."

Data thieves are always finding new ways of accessing computer systems illegally, usually from secondary terminals and junction points, where they're less likely to be noticed. Large, interconnected computer systems—like most of those found throughout the Federation—are the most vulnerable to porting because thieves have many different access points to choose from.

Trickery

Sometimes it's simply impossible for a thief to reach a target. Either the target is too well protected, or it's simply impossible to steal physically. Examples include the mineral rights to a valuable asteroid field or some forms of title to property. In these cases, thieves rely less on stealth and technology and more on charm and the art of deception—the "con game."

Using trickery, the thief tries to get the victim, or "mark," to turn over possession of the target willingly. For example, a thief might approach the owner of a deed to asteroid mining rights by posing

as a wealthy entrepreneur. He knows the asteroids contain rich pergium deposits, which the victim doesn't have the resources to mine. The thief offers to supply funding and equipment, in exchange for a "partnership" in the mining rights. All the victim has to do is sign over control of the rights. Then the thief disappears and arranges to mine out as much pergium as possible before the victim alerts the authorities to his activities.

Con games often become quite elaborate, involving many confederates of the con artist. Some con artists use holotechnology as part of their bag of tricks. In fact, some bold con artists use modern technology to give them apparently "magical" powers, such as the woman who posed as the mythical Ardra of Ventax II. She nearly convinced an entire population that she was an omnipotent being whom they were obligated to serve.

DISPOSING OF THE LOOT: FENCES

Unless a thief steals only latinum, he needs a way to sell the stolen goods in order to see a profit. Some thieves steal strictly for themselves, usually to fill out their own "collection" of items. Most, however, need to deal with fences to sell their booty.

A "fence" deals in the purchase and sale of stolen merchandise. Many fences pose as "legitimate businesspeople" and may, in fact, be just that. It's just that they deal in stolen merchandise on the side. Most fences possess extensive networks of contacts, allowing them to locate buyers for almost any item. The fence finds a buyer, arranges a price, and takes a cut of the take before passing the rest on to the thief. Some fences buy items outright, then turn around and sell them for a profit.

Generally speaking, a fence pays only a fraction of an item's value, since crime breeds a buyer's market and the fence must maximize his own profit. A base of around 10-20% of the market value represents a fair assumption. A thief may have the power to bargain for more, depending on how rare or in demand the item is, how "hot" (sought after by the authorities) it is, and his reputation. A thief with an extremely hot item may not be able to sell it at all if the risk to a fence would be too great— he would be forced to dispose of the item himself, or to hold on to it until things "cooled down" a bit.

AVOIDING THE LAW

Often the greatest challenge a thief faces is not dealing with security systems or guards, but avoiding the authorities *after* carrying out a theft. The technology available to law enforcement personnel in the 24th century allows them to pick up minute DNA traces, transporter signatures, energy readings, molecular displacement traces, and more-all of which adds up to the ability to reconstruct a crime scene in exacting detail. Thieves must remain exceedingly clever and careful to avoid detection by the law.

Excess information often provides the confusion necessary to overcome most forensic and scanning techniques. A theft carried out in the midst of a crowd, for example, may leave only a morass of conflicting traces and information, too complex to yield any useful data. By the same token, a crime that goes undetected long enough may not leave any useful traces behind—DNA fragments break down, energy traces dissipate over the course of a few hours, and so on, leaving little information for the authorities to gather.

Thieves can also use technology to their advantage. Technology conceals or erases lingering forensic traces, leaves false clues to mislead investigators, and so forth. A replicated copy of the stolen item, left in its place, may fool the owner long enough for the thief to be long gone before anyone even begins investigating. Of course, the fake may provide some clues to a diligent investigator.

Social means of blocking or impeding an investigation also exist. Victims with their own secrets to hide may not contact the authorities, or may cooperate with them only reluctantly. (Of course, dealing with an enraged, powerful crime lord may be even worse than dealing with the law.) Thieves can also use blackmail and threats of damage to a prized possession to delay a victim from contacting the authorities long enough for the thief to make good his escape.

COURTING LADY LUCK

Species throughout the galaxy believe in the elusive quality known as luck, chance, or fortune. Some believe they are especially favored (or cursed), while others think they have found the means to beat the whims of chance. Most people in the 24th century looking to tempt fate find their challenges in careers

like Starfleet or as pioneers on the new frontier. But some choose to play a different game.

WHY WORK WHEN YOU CAN PLAY?

Gambling and games of chance exist in nearly every culture in the Alpha and Beta Quadrants, and in many beyond them. There seems to be something inherent in humanoid lifeforms that makes them want to challenge the odds.

Many humanoids play games of chance and skill for fun and recreation. This is considered a harmless pastime in the Federation, where various kinds of games, from Earth poker to tongo, are played on a regular basis. Wagers constitute the key difference between playing a game and gambling. In games throughout the Federation (such as poker), betting simply becomes a means of keeping score and betting tokens do not represent any particular monetary value.

In gambling, bets use money (commonly latinum) or other forms of exchange. Gamblers often claim that betting on games provides the true thrill or excitement of the activity.

GAMBLING IN THE GALAXY

Different species regard gambling in different ways. Humans are generally quite fond of games of chance. They make some of the best (and worst) gamblers in the galaxy. Tellarites and Bolians both enjoy gambling, although Tellarites are notorious for arguing about their losses, much like everything else. Both Vulcans and Andorians are well known for having "poker faces," making them difficult to read. Fortunately, they are also less interested in gambling. Telepathic species like Betazoids rarely gamble with nontelepaths, since their abilities give them an unfair advantage. A game played among a group of telepaths, however, often contains many unseen layers of strategy.

Outside the Federation, the Ferengi are naturals at anything involving money, but they generally prefer to be on the "house" side of gambling. When they play, Ferengi prefer games with at least some degree of skill and cunning, like tongo or poker. Ferengi are also well known for their skill at cheating; many people assume a Ferengi is cheating unless they can prove otherwise. With their militaristic societies, Klingons, Cardassians, and Romulans do not make great gamblers. Of the three, Cardassians enjoy gambling the most; among other events, they

like to bet on "blood sports" such as vole fights. Klingons tend to prefer games of physical prowess and skill. They look down on gamblers of all stripes as cowardly, trying to recreate the grand thrills of the hunt or battle in something as foolish as a game. Romulans tend to prefer games of skill to chance. A Romulan would generally prefer chess to a game like poker.

PROFESSIONAL GAMBLERS

While most of the patrons of a gambling establishment are merely enjoying a recreational activity, there are some for whom gambling is a way of life. These "true" gamblers, often known as "players," "sharks," or "hustlers" in human parlance, make gambling the primary focus of their lives. Professional gamblers fall into two main categories. The first believes he can actually win a fortune through gambling, making himself wealthy. The second gambles for the excitement and challenge of the game itself. Betting merely serves to heighten that excitement.

Gamblers in the first group are delusional, since gambling is far from the most efficient means of

earning money in the 24th century. Anyone in the Federation can make a living at far easier pursuits, without ever needing money or personal wealth. Even outside the Federation there are opportunities for people on colony worlds, space stations, and all manner of outposts. Gamblers usually prefer to avoid "honest" work; they claim their gambling activities will eventually "pay off" and allow them to avoid meaningful work altogether. They ignore the fact that, even if they were to win a vast fortune, they would likely end up gambling it away sooner or later. Whatever rationalization they use, they actually gamble for the excitement and the opportunity to ignore the less pleasant aspects of life.

Some gamblers realize this and even revel in it. To them, the game is everything. They are interested in wealth only insofar as it allows them to continue gambling and as a way of "keeping score." Playing—and, more importantly, winning—the game is all that matters. These gamblers are often quite skilled at "fleecing" novice players, either through skill or by cheating, in order to win money from them. This allows them to continue gambling. Some, however, scorn all forms of cheating, regarding it as unnecessary for one of their skill and honor.

Many gamblers can sustain this kind of lifestyle for years—but, sooner or later, luck tends to run out. Professional gamblers generally end up either broke or deeply in debt to powerful criminals who loaned them money. Others become involved in increasingly dangerous betting activities, even risking their own lives to heighten the thrill. Either path can lead to injury or death; the life of a professional gambler is often a short one.

WHERE THE ACTION IS

Starfleet regulations forbid gambling for Starfleet personnel, either on duty or on board Starfleet vessels and facilities (though they're certainly free to play games of chance when there's no money at stake). Gambling is also generally restricted throughout the Federation to various "pleasure planets" like Risa, or to specific zones on various planets. On the frontier, gambling restrictions are very loosely enforced (if they're enforced at all). Many colony worlds allow gambling and even have casinos where organized gambling takes place. Gambling establishments appear on board space stations and in ports visited by starships. Of course, gambling can become addictive; if this happens to a Federation citizen, treatment for the problem is readily available.

GAMES WITHIN GAMES

In most *Star Trek* episodes, the Narrator can sum up the effects of any particular game with the Gaming skill. Each player makes a Gaming test, and the highest test result wins the game (see page 77 of the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook). This method is sufficient for most games of chance and skill during the course of a normal episode.

In a rogue series, however, the Narrator may wish to use a more detailed resolution system for games and gambling. In this case, have each of the involved parties make Gaming tests as normal, but allow factors such as cheating and the length of time a character has been gambling to modify the tests. The Narrator may wish to have players make a Gaming test for each round (hand, play, or the like) of the game instead of the entire game.

If a character cheats, make a secret Gaming test for that character. If it succeeds, lower the Difficulty for that character's Gaming test to win the game or a round of the game by one level (from Challenging to Moderate, for example). Make secret Gaming tests for the other players to see if they notice the cheat. They must beat the cheater's test result in order to notice. A cheater gains the bonus until he is caught or the game ends, whichever comes first.

If a character has been gambling for an extended length of time, the Narrator may wish to increase the difficulty of the character's Gaming test, to simulate the way luck fluctuates. A character who's been on a winning streak all night who decides to bet it all should have a higher Difficulty than a character who's just starting out. It creates more tension and better reflects the way luck tends to run out eventually.

When dealing with a known game, such as poker, the Narrator may even wish to have the players actually play a hand or two of the game in character. Dealing out cards and letting the players roleplay their ship's weekly poker night can serve as an excellent teaser scene to set the mood for an episode and get players into character. The Narrator can also run similar roleplaying scenes by having some players play supporting characters while one or two of the series regulars gamble with them.

PLEASURE PLANETS

There are worlds in the Federation which permit organized gambling and casinos. "Pleasure planets" like Risa and New Manhattan, where Federation citizens vacation and enjoy themselves, serve as popular tourist destinations. The casinos and gambling parlors on these worlds support high-class play, carefully run under the watchful eye of the local authorities; their sanctioned status keeps them free of crime and criminal influence. Betting limits on individual games prevent abuse, and the staff keeps an eye out for patrons who seem to be hitting the gaming table a bit too hard. Hard-core gamblers tend to "graduate" from the Federation pleasure planets to more "serious"—and seedy—gambling establishments along the frontier or beyond the metes of Federation space.

COLONY WORLDS

Some Federation colony worlds along the frontier play host to gambling establishments and casinos. These range from small, rough frontier places, similar to the saloons and gambling parlors of the American Ancient West of Earth, to full-fledged casinos catering to the needs of hundreds of patrons. Local law enforcement tends to be looser on these colony worlds, allowing gamblers to play as long as their luck (and money) holds out. Gamblers also find no lack of marks to fleece among the tourists and visiting starship crews, although a gambler can quickly wear out his welcome in a small colony once word gets out.

OUTSIDE THE FEDERATION

Outside the Federation, of course, gambling varies depending on local laws. For example, gambling remains perfectly legal throughout Ferengi space. Many worlds in the Ferengi Alliance host lavish casinos featuring nearly every type of game in the galaxy, where gamblers of every species and proclivity play to their hearts' delight. The Ferengi encourage tourism, since tourists mean profits. Likewise, many Orion worlds and colonies feature elaborate pleasure palaces which offer gambling along with their other services. Naturally, gamblers who win too often from the house are encouraged to go and play elsewhere, and those who are caught cheating are dealt with harshly (or occasionally offered a job as an expert dealer or player!).

Many other interstellar societies pay little or no attention to gambling. Few or no laws against it exist in the Cardassian Union or the Klingon Empire, though the social taboos prevent many from participating; the Romulans, conversely, seem to forbid it or regulate it extensively. As far as the Federation knows, the Tholians have little or no interest in gambling; it seems to run counter to their precise nature. Some alien cultures greatly value gambling. The Wadi from the Gamma Quadrant apparently base many of their social rituals around games of skill and chance. The Providers of Triskelion existed for many years solely for the purpose of conducting gladiatorial games between their champions. Some alien forms of gambling are bizarre and dangerous to the citizens of the Federation. They may involve death sports or other risky activities.

THE GREEN FELT JUNGLE

A casino is any establishment which permits gambling involving games run by the casino itself (the "house"). (Establishments which take a cut of the winnings from games played on the premises, but which they do not run themselves, are usually known as "cardhouses" or "gaming houses.") A

casino may exist as part of a larger recreational business, such as a hotel, bar, holosuite parlor, or restaurant. Some casinos include all these facilities and more.

Casino games generally occur between a player or players and the casino. The house covers the players' bets and takes their losses as profits. It also pays the players their winnings, if any. Since the odds of most games of chance ultimately favor the house, a casino's losses usually remain small compared to its gains. Many casinos help ensure this by running rigged or fixed games which favor the house even more. Fixed games are illegal in the Federation (even where gambling is permitted), and usually in other societies as well.

Since they deal with large amounts of money, casinos normally support some sort of private security force to protect their interests. This may involve hired guards, surveillance equipment, the cooperation of local authorities, or some combination of these. Casinos serve as common hangouts for thieves, gamblers, and other rogues—since most undergo constant surveillance, they rarely play host to overt illegal activities.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

There are literally thousands of different games of chance known and played throughout the Alpha Quadrant. Nearly every civilization plays and follows its own games, and contact among different species has led to the development of numerous crossbreeds and variants.

TABLE GAMES

Gambling usually takes place at the gaming table, and the most popular betting games are those that can be played on a tabletop.

Dabo is a Ferengi game exported to casinos and gambling parlors throughout the galaxy. Similar to the Earth game of roulette, it is played with a spinning wheel. Players bet on the outcome of each spin, with various possible betting combinations affecting how much they win. Winnings can increase rapidly, but a player can just as quickly go bust from an incorrect bet. Some gamblers believe they can defeat dabo with mathematical strategy, but most consider that merely a hopeful fantasy.

Dom-jot is a table game that developed from a version of an Earth game known as billiards. It features an irregularly shaped table with various "bumpers." Players use sticks ("cues") to knock small balls around the table, trying to place them into particular pockets or locations, depending on the variation. *Dom-Jot* is widely considered a game of skill rather than luck, and it is popular at many Starfleet recreation facilities. It is also popular with hustlers who play games for money or other stakes.

Poker is the quintessential human card game, found in hundreds of variations throughout the Federation. The general purpose of the game is to collect a highly valued hand of cards. Betting takes place before the players' hands are revealed, and a significant element of poker is one's skill at bluffing an opponent into withdrawing or "folding" rather than betting against you. Many have claimed that poker sharpens the interpersonal skills needed by a Starfleet officer.

Roladin Wild Draw is a card game similar to poker in some respects, although there exists a greater element of risk. Players must bet on the outcome of a hand of cards before the final card is dealt, so a certain amount of risk-taking becomes necessary. Many gamblers consider wild draw a more "daring" game than poker.

Strategema is a complex holographic game of skill and strategy. Two players control icons on a three-dimensional grid to gain control of an opponent's territory while protecting their own. Fast-paced and requiring high intelligence to play or observe, it is not a game for the faint of heart to bet on. It is popular with species like Vulcans and Zakdorn, who are given to logical and tactical thinking.

If poker embodies the quintessential human game, *tongo* constitutes the Ferengi equivalent. *Tongo* represents a stylized model of an economic marketplace, where each player works to accumulate profit, limit risk, and increase his holdings. It is played with two decks of cards (one circular, one square) and a tongo wheel, which sports compartments to hold the players' bets; the outcomes of spins of the wheel represent the random factors of the marketplace. *Tongo* is an extremely complex game involving skill, strategy, the ability to bluff, and a small amount of luck. Most of the best tongo players are Ferengi, but the game has become popular with many other species.

SPORTING EVENTS

The other games popular with gamblers are primarily sporting events, contests of athletic ability between players or teams. Gamblers often bet on the outcome of these events, either legally on worlds where gambling is permitted, or in illegal or informal

"betting pools." Criminal organizations such as the Orion Syndicate control or influence most sports gambling. Nearly any sport can become the subject of a bet, provided the game has a clear winner.

In some frontier areas various types of "blood sports"—games (such as Cardassian vole fighting) which involve actual combat between two or more participants (whether sentients or animals)—are popular. The combat may be to first blood or something similar, or actually to the death. Klingons and Cardassians consider blood sports legitimate entertainment. Although some effort is usually made to limit the lethality of the contest when humanoids are involved, "accidents" do happen.

You'll find the same story in the early history of almost every species with a tradition of warfare: Not long after the first farmers filled jars and baskets with the food they'd gained by learning to cultivate the land, the first raiders appeared to take it from them by force. Sometimes the farmers lost out to these violent former hunters and were conquered; raider chieftains became the first kings. Sometimes, though, the farmers were clever and offered to share their food with other hunters, provided they would fight the raiders. In so doing, they created the earliest mercenaries and became the first in a long line of clients willing to pay specialist warriors to engage in violent action.

Although these beginnings now belong to the distant pasts of the 24th century's starfaring civilizations, the mercenary remains very much a fixture of the present. Especially active in the lawless border zones between civilizations, mercenaries fight not for their homelands, their honor, or their ideals. They pick up their phasers and pilot their battle cruisers for cold, hard latinum. Not that they're picky—Cardassian leks or Klingon darseks will do just fine. For that matter, the Gorn tokbar is a strong currency these days, and eminently untraceable. When the money is right, arrangements can always be made.

THE DOGS OF WAR

No one chooses to become a mercenary on a whim. Most cultures look down on mercenaries. The average mercenary career lasts no longer than five years; the leading cause for abandonment of the profession is death. The typical mercenary assignment subjects team members to long periods of discomfort, deprivation, and mind-numbing boredom, punctuated by brief episodes of terrifying violence. In general, mercenaries share a fatalistic tolerance of risk, a high degree of professionalism, and a disdain for conventional morality. They believe in themselves, in

their luck and skill; each mercenary figures he's the one who's going to beat the odds. Mercenaries act for their own reasons and follow no one's rules but their own. They declare themselves masters of their own destinies—even if those destinies point, more often than not, to an early grave.

ENTERING THE LIFE

Though most active mercenaries share a handful of basic, common traits, each took his own unique road to his current lot in life. Despite—or, in rare cases, because of—the predominant morality of his culture, he chose this life, trained himself in the arts of war, and joined a mercenary band.

Cultural attitudes toward mercenary activity invariably affect each individual's decision as he contemplates becoming a warrior-for-hire.

THE FEDERATION PERSPECTIVE

Ask a Federation citizen what he thinks about mercenaries and he'll probably tell you that they're abhorrent quasicriminals who coldly exploit and inflame situations of conflict for their own gain. After all, most Federation residents view the profit motive in and of itself as a relic of the unenlightened past. Although they resist the urge to judge other cultures which sanction mercenary activities, they assume that anyone raised on a Federation world who becomes a mercenary must suffer from some terrible psychosocial disorder.

However, there are plenty of well respected, upstanding Federation citizens who make a vocation out of their combat skills. Many civilian organizations, from trading concerns to fraternal societies, employ private security teams. On the frontier, the distinction between a civilian security specialist and a mercenary becomes elusive. Where Starfleet resources are stretched thin, civilian security teams may, instead of waiting for trouble to them, launch proactive raids against presumed threats. They may engage in intelligence-gathering operations against these threats or target them for sabotage. Two crucial distinctions separate the civilian security specialist from his mercenary counterpart: He refuses to undermine the interests or policies of the Federation, and he acts out of loyalty to his organization rather than a desire for material reward.

That said, it must be noted that a few societies within the Federation take a different view of the mercenary tradition. Andoria represents perhaps the most notable example.

THE ANDORIAN PERSPECTIVE

Andoria's proud warriors view the Federation's stated loathing of violence with a mixture of puzzlement and amused tolerance. To them, the warrior life remains an almost holy vocation. They see nothing wrong with hiring out their hard-won abilities to third parties, as long as their assignments are compatible with Andorian and UFP values. Andoria serves as home base to a variety of civilian mercenary companies. Most members of these companies, known as *pra thal*, are Andorian; a few belong to other Federation species. Renowned *pra thal* leaders

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

earn celebrity status for their well publicized exploits. Andorians expect *pra thal* mercenaries to follow a code of honorable conduct (see below). The reaction of individuals of other Federation species to Andorian mercenaries varies widely; some accept this practice as integral to Andorian culture, while others can't help finding it distasteful.

THE BAJORAN PERSPECTIVE

Questions concerning the ethics of mercenary activity arouse conflicting passions among Bajorans. Fighters for the Bajoran resistance occasionally relied on outside mercenaries during the late stages of their struggle with Cardassia, when they'd captured enough resources to pay fighters-for-hire. Some resistance leaders accepted the practice of hiring mercenaries because it worked; the mercenaries may not have cared a whit about the cause, but they got results nonetheless. However, some idealists found it hard to fight side by side with soldiers who reduced their righteous war of independence to a business transaction.

After the resistance had won, a few guerrillas found it difficult to return to civilian life. Hooked on the adrenaline and camaraderie of a combatant's life, they left Bajor in search of new fights, eventually drifting into mercenary work. Again, Bajoran reaction to their activities is mixed. Some believe that these heroes of the resistance can do no wrong and look up to them as a new breed of swashbuckling heroes, answerable to no one. Others consider their current actions as a cheapening of every ideal the resistance stood for, and fear that their sons and daughters will grow up wanting to be like them.

THE BREEN PERSPECTIVE

The enigmatic Breen stand forever ready to exploit any conflict for their own gain. If they can't sell their high-powered weaponry, they'll offer their services as mercenaries. Breen share a utilitarian morality: If an action benefits the group, it is good. If a mercenary contract pays well relative to its risks, it is good. Breen usually display utter indifference to the broader consequences of their war profiteering, though their recent alliance with the Dominion may presage a move on the part of the Breen to become a galactopolitical power in their own right. How this will affect their traditional attitude toward mercenary operations remains to be seen.

THE CARDASSIAN PERSPECTIVE

No Cardassian mother wants her child to grow up to become a mercenary. Proper Cardassians with military ambitions dream of becoming guls. Only outcasts and exiles become mercenaries. Cardassians see mercenaries as lawless, untrustworthy ne'er-do-wells unable to submit to the discipline required of a Cardassian soldier.

Non-Cardassian mercenaries don't face the same prejudices. Cardassian authorities may hire them to complete certain operations that their own officers are unable to undertake, either for tactical reasons or because the action must remain free of Cardassian fingerprints.

THE FERENGI PERSPECTIVE

A Ferengi mercenary can expect to be regarded by his compatriots as foolish at best and insane at worst. It's not that there's anything immoral about profiting from war, mind you; Ferengi have always done so proudly. It's just that the average Ferengi looks for clever ways to avoid actual, personal involvement in combat. A Ferengi who seeks out battle must be a little touched in the lobes, or at least a poor judge of risk-reward calculations. Much better to hire a mercenary than to be one. Still, if a Ferengi boasts a big store of latinum gained with disruptor in hand, who's to say anything he did was wrong?

THE KLINGON PERSPECTIVE

Klingon mercenaries do exist, but they are without honor. Although it is better to fight for money than never to fight at all, the true Klingon fights only for the glory of his house and the Empire. However, a warrior who is shamed and ostracized from Klingon society has little choice but to seek further battles; suicides don't get into Sto-Vo-Kor, the Klingon warrior's heaven. Not all shamed warriors become mercenaries; some find new causes to fight for. Nonetheless, it remains a natural choice; most mercenary companies are only too happy to recruit a Klingon warrior.

Honorable Klingons refuse to associate with the dishonored, lest they be dishonored themselves. The Klingon code of honor forbids the hiring of mercenaries of any species; to hire a Klingon would be doubly shameful.

The Romulan Perspective

Officially, Romulans despise mercenaries, for reasons not unlike those of the Cardassians and Klingons: Mercenaries are dishonorable, unpatriotic, and unreliable. At the same time, the feared Romulan intelligence organization, the *Tal Shiar*, frequently hires mercenaries to act as proxies in its multifarious Machiavellian schemes. Numerous Romulan mercenaries, operating either with others of their own kind or with warriors of other species, comb the frontiers in search of interesting conflicts in which to involve themselves. Knowing the *Tal Shiar*, the wise observer must assume that a certain percentage of these Romulan mercenaries aren't in fact mercenaries at all, but deep-cover operatives acting under the umbrella of plausible deniability. However, in order to provide this cover to their operatives, the *Tal Shiar* must tolerate—or maybe even encourage—the existence of a certain number of genuine Romulan mercenaries. Few Romulan warriors may aspire to the mercenary life, but a surprising number of them find their way into it regardless.

MOTIVATION

Federation sociologist Ryma N'ci interviewed hundreds of self-proclaimed mercenaries during his ground-breaking 2367 study of the phenomenon and discovered certain common answers to the question "Why did you become a mercenary?"

5.1% of respondents who could articulate an answer to the question said that they'd fallen into it more or less by chance. They met other mercenaries, became personally attached to some of them, either as friends or lovers, and ended up fighting alongside them.

7.3% claimed to have a death wish; they'd done something terrible and sought to punish themselves by continually placing themselves in harm's way. (N'ci points out that some of his respondents seemed to be pulling his leg, while others who may really have had death wishes wouldn't—or couldn't—answer the question this way.)

12.4% explained that they'd been trained as soldiers or security officers in their cultures of origin, but for various reasons were unable to continue in their careers. They'd become mercenaries because there was "nothing else to do" with the only useful skills they had. (N'ci notes that a much higher percentage of his respondents had military or security training, but most of them claimed to have become mercenaries for material reasons.)

16.8% professed a love of excitement, danger, and adrenaline. These types compulsively sought danger as a substance addict hunts for his drug of choice. Military organizations weed out reckless sorts who pursue risk for its own sake; mercenary careers offer them the freedom they seek, as well as the constant action. N'ci included in this category members of cultures, like the Andorians, who believe that participation in warfare is inherently noble, fulfilling, or otherwise worthwhile.

19.9% identified themselves as rebels unable to subject themselves to the constraints of civilization. They liked thinking of themselves as outlaws, answerable to no authority but their own. Many had been exiled or ostracized by their governments, or were escapees from various justice systems. The few of them able to return home claimed no interest in doing so.

However, the biggest segment of the sample, 38.5%, said they were in it for material reasons. Almost invariably they claimed that one big score was just around the corner, that their next assignments would yield them all the latinum they could ever spend. They dreamt of retirement in various exotic locations, knee-deep in luxury items, forever gorging on fine food and drink, surrounded by compliant representatives of the preferred sex. Like compulsive gamblers, these fortune-seekers blind themselves to the real odds. Never mind that for every mercenary who retires gloriously there are five hundred who die in action or end their lives in squalid deprivation. Each one thinks he's the exception to the rule.

TRAINING

Once an individual decides to become a mercenary, he must train himself for life as a professional soldier. Poorly trained persons pose a threat to themselves and to their comrades; only the shabbiest mercenary companies accept untrained applicants.

The most common training derives from prior legitimate experience in a military or quasimilitary organization, which might be anything from Starfleet to the *Tal Shiar*, depending on the individual's background. Alternatively, he may have been trained as a civilian security officer. Thoroughness and discipline characterize these sorts of training programs. However, their graduates must learn to forget certain assumptions about fair tactics and accepted behavior while serving on mercenary vessels.

Small, rag-tag mercenary teams can't always recruit the best. They must resort to on the job train-

as K. Vope's program is illegal in the Federation and some other societies.

MERCENARY TRAINING CAMPS AND SCHOOLS

Seasoned mercenaries distrust new applicants whose training consists entirely of holosuite exercises. No computer program laden with fail-safe mechanisms can teach the necessary instinctive reactions which mark the difference between life and death in a combat situation. Serious prospective mercenaries who can't train in real-life contexts with legitimate organizations must tap into the system of underground trainers which has sprung up to serve their needs.

Proprietors of mercenary training camps situate their installations in the frontier backwaters of the Alpha and Beta Quadrants, moving frequently to avoid detection. They have to; every interstellar power with an insurgency problem treats these camps as a breeding ground for terrorists, and targets them accordingly. Smart camp leaders employ rigid security protocols to ensure that new applicants aren't undercover agents. They also worry about sabotage attempts executed by competitors; personal grudges run rampant in the black-market training industry, and more than one dispute between rivals has been resolved through force of arms.

A prospective mercenary must first track down someone who knows someone who knows someone else who can contact the head of such a camp. He must submit an application, usually an audio-visual recording of himself explaining why he wants to be trained by the particular mercenary instructor. Assuming the recording passes muster, double-blind arrangements lead to a rendezvous with agents of the camp, who convey the applicant, blindfolded, to an undisclosed location for an interview. There his instructor will decide, usually based on pure, gut instinct, whether he's on the level or not. If not, he may be harmed or even murdered.

If accepted, the mercenary packs his bags for a journey to the camp on a craft flown by installation employees. They mask the camp's precise coordinates from the applicant throughout the journey. Camp agents reveal its location only after the student completes a probationary period to establish trust. These camps don't win beauty contests; they're rugged, comfort-free complexes of prefab manufacture, often constructed from surplus or salvaged materials. The best camps spare no expenses where it really counts: in the hiring of skilled combatants as tutors and in the purchase of the latest in

ing: experienced team members take greenhorns and try to build them into halfway reliable warriors, often while en route to their next engagement. While certainly haphazard, this method does offer a major compensating advantage: it molds the neophyte so that he owes his continued survival, and thus his loyalty, to the efforts of his trainers, members of that specific mercenary company. Where most mercenaries, as peripatetic freelancers, switch allegiances at the drop of a darsek, individuals trained in this way tend to stick with their benefactors until the bitter end.

A self-motivated individual with access to a holosuite can avail himself of several holographic training programs designed to simulate various modes of combat, from the use of primitive weaponry to advanced starship tactics. The most popular program set, produced and distributed by a Ferengi named Vope, allows students one-on-one training time with holographic equivalents of the quadrant's finest nonaligned warriors. They learn to swing a *bat'leth* alongside Klingon mercenary T'kar, discover the fine points of starship evasive maneuvers while renegade Zakdorn Eerba Kavlastin stands by to correct their errors, and practice bomb placement at the behest of a masked Bajoran known only

weaponry. These arsenals typically include items banned by most conventions of interstellar war, such as biogenic weapons.

Tutelage at a mercenary camp costs anywhere from ten bars to a brick of gold-pressed latinum, depending on the reputation of the proprietor and the range of facilities he offers. This price does not include a trainee's supplies, equipment, upkeep costs, and the like, which he must also pay for out of his own pocket. It generally takes about six months to turn a fit, eager applicant into a prepared, professional soldier. Refresher courses, sought out by experienced mercenaries interested in brushing up on their techniques or acquainting themselves with new weapons, take one or two weeks and cost just a bar or two of latinum.

Many applicants, unable to afford the steep tuition, enter into indenture arrangements in order to pay off their debts. The applicant agrees to perform a predetermined number of missions for the camp operator in exchange for a fee waiver. Camp operators sometimes sell these service contracts to brokers or other third parties at a handsome profit. Well advised applicants carefully read the fine print; camp operators stack these contracts heavily in their own favor. In no position to turn down work, the neophyte can expect to face his most dangerous missions during the terms of his indenture. About forty percent of mercenaries who enter into these agreements die still indebted to their tutors. These extremely exploitative arrangements serve in fact as purchases of expendable, sentient lives, and at bargain prices.

Would-be mercenaries with serious underworld connections apply to the Yoshitoni Institute, a highly secret installation run by the Orion Syndicate. Located on an obscure asteroid in the Kellinan Reach, the Institute—jokingly named after a notorious killer and saboteur famous for his brutal role in the formation of the Syndicate—offers individually tailored training programs for aspiring mercenaries, assassins, insurgents, torturers, and bounty hunters. Its dean, a green-skinned Orion named Ellefrin Vrax, runs Yoshitoni as a winking parody of legitimate educational institutions, complete with a cap-and-gown graduation ceremony. His perverse sense of humor aside, Vrax offers a rigorous and complete training program, exposing his students to the most advanced tactics and the newest equipment and weaponry.

Large mercenary corporations (see below) establish known locales for their training institutes, usually in places it would be difficult or impolitic to attack, such as Andoria or Ferenginar. Their well manicured, sparkling campuses proclaim the legitimacy of their corporate owners. In order to protect themselves from hostile governments, they train only their own future employees. Students who make these institutions their gateway to the mercenary life pay much lower tuition fees, but must sign longer-term contracts. The average contract duration is ten years. On the other hand, they're less likely to die like flies during their initial missions. Corporate board members see a trained warrior as a valuable personnel resource in whom considerable company training time has been invested, as opposed to yet another in a long line of expendable rubes.

MERCENARY GROUPS

A staggering array of mercenary companies call the frontiers home. From corporate-sponsored counterterrorist units to government-sanctioned insertion teams, mercenaries of every stripe ply the backwater spacelanes and dusty starports on the fringes of Federation space. The following sections explore the structure, motivations, and support enjoyed by these latter-day soldiers of fortune.

OWNERSHIP

Intelligence analysts find that most mercenary groups belong to one of three ownership arrangements: independent, corporate, or cooperative.

Approximately 65% of mercenaries serve in independent units. A single, charismatic captain owns and operates his own mercenary unit, usually consisting of the crew of a single ship. He hires and fires, decides which assignments to accept, and makes all policy aboard his own ship. He usually owns the ship, although it may be mortgaged to the nacelles.

30% of mercenaries find themselves in the employ of corporations. These business enterprises own and operate fleets of ships, paying overhead not only on ships and soldiers but on a network of offices staffed by legions of managers and administrators.

Cooperatives comprise the smallest ownership sector; only about 5% of mercenaries belong to them. Cooperatives grant equal ownership rights to all crewmembers aboard a mercenary vessel. All decisions, large and small, are made by consensus or democratic vote. While working for independents or corporations, many mercenaries idealistically dream of getting out and starting a cooperative with their

best comrades. However, when actually given a shot at running a ship, these same individuals generally become instant autocrats, preferring to bark orders with no interference from squabbling fellow soldiers.

STRUCTURE

Most mercenary groups likewise fall into one of three structural categories: quasimilitary, commercial, or gang.

Quasimilitary groups model themselves on one of the bona fide naval forces of the Alpha Quadrant. Depending on the values, backgrounds, and goals of the group, they may emulate Starfleet or the military of the Cardassian, Klingon, or Romulan empire. Their uniforms and ships may be different, but their operational manuals borrow almost without modification from the chosen model. Incentives for good performance include commendation, promotion, and decoration. Punishments include demotion, formal reprimand, and court-martial.

Commercial groups style themselves as civilian businesses. Instead of a captain, a ship is commanded by a manager. Reporting to him are an array of department heads, each of whom oversees the efforts of a pool of employees. Employees seek

bonuses and promotions and fear pay cuts and pink slips. While commercially structured groups are almost always owned by corporations, only a minority of corporations use this structure. Most still prefer the discipline and pomp of the quasimilitary model.

Mercenary groups structured as gangs operate in the lawless, dog-eat-dog environment of organized crime. The captain, referred to by one of a number of local criminal slang terms that mean the "Big Man," rules over an ever-shifting band of lieutenants. The lieutenants fear the violence and power of the Big Man at the same time as they enforce his reign of terror on the gang members below him. Beatings solve minor discipline problems; death awaits the truly disobedient. Despite the ruthlessness of the environment, gang members identify strongly with one another, regarding loyalty to the group as the highest (and only) virtue. Though engaged in continual power struggles with one another, they band together when outside forces threaten.

Some gang leaders exercise control over their soldiers through sheer coercion. In order for this to work over the long term, the leader must have access to some extraordinary means of control over his crew, such as the neural servos used by mercenary captain Arctus Baran on his crew. The servos delivered a powerful, painful shock when Baran activated a remote device; his crewmembers followed his orders in fear of being hurt.

The average mercenary company consists of a dozen crewmembers. An unusually large mercenary group would be composed of 40-50 members. The biggest corporations employ thousands of soldiers and boast double-digit fleet sizes, though none of them flies ships as big as, say, a Starfleet *Nebula*-class vessel.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

To be a mercenary is to wait. Unlike military officers, mercenaries spend much of their time cooling their heels planetside or on a starbase, waiting to be called into action. True militaries keep their ships and crews on active duty at all time; there's always a patrol or exploratory mission to complete, no matter how routine. Mercenaries fly only when there's a client to pick up the tab; every unpaid day in space represents a debit in the owner's spreadsheet. Ships in dry-dock cost less than those in flight; standby wages for the crew represent a savings, compared to mission pay. Smart mercenaries keep themselves occupied with hobbies, sports, or other activities; the really astute ones operate side

businesses to earn extra money during lean times. Alas, the basic mercenary isn't the clearest dilithium crystal in the engine. He's most likely to spend his wait time in the seediest corner of whatever planet or base he's stuck on, gambling, getting into fights, killing brain cells, and seeking out fleeting companionship.

When a contract is signed and a mission flown, mercenaries glug down some *raktajino*, drag their carcasses to the launch site, and report for duty. While en route to the fight, they distract themselves from the inevitability of conflict—clients rarely hire mercenaries just to "look tough"—by applying varying degrees of enthusiasm to maintenance and other routine duties. They gamble, engage in relaxation exercises, or simply shoot the breeze with comrades. On an ill-disciplined ship, prebattle tensions can in a split second convert comradely banter into brawls between crewmates. These incidents range from good-natured dust-ups to murder attempts, again depending on the standards of control exercised by the ship's captain.

The trip to the fight always lasts much longer than the fight itself. During a battle, the mercenary fights to accomplish the mission goals, but tempers this necessity with a higher priority: keeping his own hide intact. A sensible mercenary never fights to the death (at least, not his own death). He cares about getting paid, not about the end results of any particular mission. And a mercenary can't get paid if his lifeless corpse is floating around the vacuum of space in a dented, naval-surplus coffin.

The above portrait reflects realities for most mercenaries; the elite few who belong to respectable outfits with solid morale enjoy lives of fulfillment and leisure, interrupted by the occasional dangerous, yet emotionally satisfying, mission.

On the other end of the spectrum one finds the down-and-outers, manning rust-bucket ships, crushed by debt, and passed over by clients. Failing mercenary groups "drum up business," a euphemism for more sinister activity. A well known Ferengi riddle puts it best:

Q: "What do you call an out-of-work mercenary?"

A: "A pirate."

SPECIES

As far as species composition is concerned, mercenary groups may be homogeneous or heterogeneous. Homogeneous groups include members of only one species or culture. Heterogeneous groups welcome members of several species or cultures. (A mercenary would laugh at you if you used these sociological terms in his presence; he might call his crew "pure" if he insisted on fighting alongside only his own compatriots, or a "mixed bag" if it included representatives of various species.)

Homogeneous groups tend to display better morale and group cohesion than heterogeneous ones; they identify with one another and avoid disputes arising from clashes of culture. However, they're also more likely to exhibit racist attitudes, which may cost them clients or get them into more than their share of barroom brawls. They also find it much harder to recruit, since the pool of qualified applicants shrinks dramatically when members of all other species are ruled out from the jump. This drawback has crippled more than one species-exclusive mercenary company. Only members of the few cultures that regularly turn out significant numbers of aspiring mercenaries, like the Andorians and Breen, can sustain homogeneous groups over the long haul. On the other hand, most mercenaries see their crews as temporary associations anyway, since most of them think they're only one mission away from striking it rich.

A CODE OF PROFESSIONALISM

If you believe what you experience in holosuite fiction, most mercenaries follow a strict code of professional conduct, which lends them a fascinating mixture of self-interest and nobility. Although this idea may intrigue holoprogrammers, reality tells a somewhat different story. A real mercenary code exists—several, in fact—but they're honored more in the breach than in the observance.

The two best-known codes of behavior are the *Pra Thal* Code and the ethical guidelines of the Association of Professional Combatants.

THE PRA THAL CODE

The *Pra Thal* Code defines the rules by which Andorian mercenaries (and other Federation citizens operating as mercenaries under the oversight of the Andorian government) reconcile their profession with Federation policy. Its major tenets are as follows:

• Clients may be drawn only from Federation or nonaligned worlds which have already made first contact with the Federation.

by mercenary operations registered in Andoria, but has neither the means nor inclination to pursue outsiders who falsely claim to uphold it.

APC ETHICAL PROTOCOLS

In addition to following their own code, *pra thal* mercenaries also adhere to the ethical guidelines of the Association of Professional Combatants, a trade organization for mercenary companies. A consortium of corporate mercenary companies created the APC about seven years ago as a means of distancing themselves from the more unsavory elements of the profession. The APC guidelines protect clients from exploitation and betrayal, serving as an effective selling point for mercenary companies which adopt it. The APC provides information on its members to prospective clients, carrying out investigations when guideline violations are alleged. This practice gives members who follow the guidelines a competitive advantage against those who do not. Today many independents who are not members of the APC claim to abide by the guidelines; this is not to say that all of them in fact do so when the chips are down.

The main elements of the guidelines are as follows:

- The mercenary company must fulfill the terms of its contract, even in the face of higher bids from the client's enemies.

- All information provided by the client to the mercenary company during an offer of employment must be held confidential, even if that offer is not accepted. The mercenary may not approach the target of the requested operation in search of a competing bid.

- All confidential information provided by the client must remain so in perpetuity.

- The mercenary will not commit war crimes on the client's behalf.

- The mercenary company absolves the client of legal and moral responsibility for any war crimes committed by errant employees.

- Mercenaries will not commit crimes in jurisdictions in which APC member companies are incorporated. (Because Andorian companies belong to the APC, this includes the entire Federation.)

- Operational targets may not include citizens of Federation worlds, its allies, or prewarp civilizations.

- Clients may not include aggressors against other powers.

- Wherever possible, the mercenary must use nonlethal means of defeating his enemies.

- The mercenary must make reasonable efforts to adhere to the Prime Directive.

Opponents of the *pra thal* movement within the Federation point out that the last clause has a hole in it large enough to pilot a runabout through. Advocates reply that *pra thal* operations are private concerns; while Starfleet, as an official arm of the Federation, may indeed be correct in bending over backward to interpret the Prime Directive in the most literal possible fashion, private groups and individuals should be held to a more relaxed standard.

Some other mercenary companies, especially those run by current or former citizens of the Federation, profess to follow the *Pra Thal* Code. Andorian law criminalizes offenses against the code

The Golden Rule

While most mercenary companies tell their clients that they abide strictly by the APC code, three out of four of them in fact follow the Golden Rule: "Do unto to others, then put up your shields and go to warp." Most switch their loyalties when faced with a sufficiently juicy competing bid. A rule of thumb: If you want a mercenary to stop hunting you, pay him twice what the original client offered. If you want him to turn around and go after the original client, make it quadruple the initial asking price.

Mercenaries who pretend to possess functioning consciences generally try to justify such betrayals by pointing to supposedly poor treatment or bad faith on the part of the client. Mercenaries keep their ears perked for slights that may come in handy if they ever need to create a rationalization for betrayal. Clients experienced in the hiring of mercenaries quickly learn to treat these touchy contractors with verbal kid gloves.

Seasoned clients understand that it's hard to do anything about breach of contract when it occurs. Jurisdiction poses the first hurdle to any sort of legal remedy against mercenaries: Corruption runs rampant in the few governments which permit mercenary activity. (Andoria operates a legitimate court system, but *pra thal* companies are honest to begin with.) If a client does somehow manage to secure a legal judgment against a mercenary crew, he faces problem number two: enforcement. Even the most stubborn client soon realizes how difficult it is to collect damages from a band of heavily armed, highly mobile, essentially lawless warriors. Clients certainly can't rely on Starfleet, or its counterparts from the various empires, to chase down defaulters against civil court rulings. They can hire a second band of mercenaries to go after the first, but this method poses the obvious risk that the pursuers might decide to turn coat as well.

The only real protection afforded to a client arises from the mercenary company's reputation. The interstellar grapevine of arms merchants, smugglers, and soldiers of fortune gossips energetically about mercenary activities, and word of betrayal gets around. The more colorful the treachery, the quicker the story travels. It only takes a couple of well known betrayals to earn a bad reputation. A mercenary company known for burning its clients finds quality contracts hard to come by. A vicious spiral ensues: The company must settle for ever less trustworthy clients, each one of which it is increasingly likely to have to betray.

Mercenary companies face a couple of choices when effectively blackballed for disloyalty to clients. They can disband, or head off to distant corners of space in search of clients who haven't heard of them. Both choices pose distinct drawbacks. Reputations cling not just to companies, but to individual mercenaries—captains especially. And the further into unexplored space a crew must travel in search of willing clients, the more likely it is to find itself out of its depth, far from the civilizations its members are familiar with and from conflicts it understands how to exploit. The endless frontier makes itself far less welcoming to hard-luck mercenary fighters than to explorers and diplomats.

Doing the Job

Without willing employers anxious to exert force on their rivals, there would be no mercenaries. To quote a recent interview with the notorious Betazoid mercenary Aria Thir, "Most mercenary actions are won and lost before a single shot is fired—at the negotiating table, when terms are set between contractor and contractee."

Employers

There are as many different kinds of employers as there are different sorts of conflicts. Client types include governments, private individuals, commercial ventures, political parties, insurgents, religious organizations, philosophers, arms merchants, scientists, and explorers.

Nonaligned governments engaged in conflicts with neighbors often call on mercenaries as a stop-gap measure when their own military capabilities prove insufficient. Mercenary ships may function as irregulars in the government's own fleet, or engage in small-scale, independent operations. Governments not at war may hire mercenaries to patrol their borders or suppress piracy—although some people would compare this latter choice to hiring a fox to guard the henhouse.

Private individuals may employ mercenaries to help them settle grudges, steal desirable objects, or take prisoners. Although many operations requested by private individuals are criminal in nature, that isn't always the case: Mercenaries may be engaged to find missing persons who disappeared in dangerous locales, recover stolen merchandise, or rescue hostages.

Merchants hire mercenaries to protect their goods and personnel from the hostile actions of commercial rivals, pirates, and enemy regimes. Mercenary ships often perform convoy duty, guarding interstellar caravans traversing unprotected trade routes. Some respectable firms specialize entirely in this sort of mission; they don't even refer to themselves as mercenaries, instead preferring the term "private security firms." Shady merchants pay for equally shady missions: Their mercenaries may attack rival convoys, or sabotage factories, warehouses, and other facilities belonging to their competitors.

Many political parties, espousing the maxim that warfare represents the continuation of politics by other means, hire mercenaries to engage in actions designed to further their agendas. Mercenaries may directly assault the party's political rivals, but are just as likely to engage in acts of terrorism meant to implicate their clients' enemies in wrongdoing.

An insurgent group is simply a political party that uses violence as one of the primary means of achieving its goals. These groups hire mercenaries to carry out acts of terror or to fight the national governments they're attempting to overthrow. They may call upon their mercenaries to fight government ships, attack garrisons, or commit atrocities against the civilian populace. Some rebels are admirable freedom fighters battling oppressive regimes. Others are crazed ideologues determined to impose their bloodthirsty wills on innocent populaces. Some mercenary companies seek out only the first type of insurgent as clients; less scrupulous ones don't care how unsympathetic their employers may be.

Only a tiny minority of religious believers or philosophers would ever dream of furthering their cause through the use of mercenaries. Unfortunately, fanatics can find reason for violence in almost any belief about the way people should behave. If sufficiently well financed, the fanatical faithful may seek out mercenaries to attack their real or imagined enemies. These types sponsor violence not so much to achieve a hard and fast objective as to make a point. The targets of these missions may therefore be symbolic in nature: Mercenaries may be asked to destroy a church, library, or monument. Some fanatics fervently believe they're entitled to specific territory now occupied by someone else and hire mercenaries to drive off its current occupants and claim it on their behalf.

Arms merchants may, as interested third parties, insert mercenaries into preexisting conflicts, equipping them with the latest in high-tech killing gear. They aim to promote their products by showing how much damage they can do in a genuine war, when handled by trained professionals. They may arrange the demonstration for the benefit of one of the sides in the conflict, or may be selling to a buyer completely uninvolved in the skirmish at hand. Mercenaries like these deals because they usually get free training from the arms dealers, and often get to keep the demonstration models of the weapons they've been hired to show off.

Scientists and explorers embarking on missions into dangerous or disputed territory sometimes hire mercenaries to transport them to their work sites and protect them while they're there. Although far from standard procedure for Federation scientists, researchers from less-enlightened societies may engage in this practice, especially if backed by financiers expecting to profit heavily from their discoveries.

LIES EMPLOYERS TELL

Clients may misrepresent their identities or motivations. The supposed private individual or insurgent negotiating for a mercenary group's services may in fact be an agent of a government intelligence agency, like the Romulan *Tal Shiar*. A member of one party or ideological group may pose as a member of an opposed group, hiring mercenaries to do something abhorrent in the name of his rivals.

Mercenaries refer to themselves as trained paranoids, with good reason: If a client lies about who he is and what he wants, he's just as likely to lie about the difficulties of the mission. Frame-up jobs, for example, frequently call for the capture, interrogation, and trial of the mercenaries, all in order to discredit the client's enemies properly.

THE CONTRACT

Although each contract between a mercenary and a client differs from all others, certain standard clauses and arrangements save time around the negotiating table. The most common of these are as follows.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

The longest section of any contract is also the most specific to any given mission. The rules of engagement section lays out exactly what the mercenaries must accomplish. It provides a time frame, if appropriate, and lists any constraints on the mercenary group's behavior in the accomplishment of the

mission. The rules of engagement must be clearly laid out, so that at the end of the mission no dispute remains as to whether the mercenaries have fulfilled the victory conditions necessary to collect their fee.

Contact Protocols: This subset of the rules of engagement specifies exactly how, when, and where the mercenaries may contact the client. They may be required, or forbidden to, contact him during the actual operation.

Signing Bonus: Specifies what portion, if any, of the fee is to be paid to the mercenary upon signing of the contract. A standard signing bonus equals 5% of the final fee. It may or may not be refundable if the mission fails.

Advance Structure: Specifies what portion, if any, of the fee is to be paid to the mercenary before undertaking the mission, and when that fee is to be paid. Advances are highly negotiable but seldom exceed 50% of the base fee. They may or may not be refundable if the mission fails. The client's insistence on refundability increases in direct proportion to the size of the advance.

Full Med (Medical): The client agrees to arrange for the provision of complete medical care for any member of the mercenary team who suffers any kind of injury or infection in direct pursuit of the mission goals. The client is not required to pay in the event that team members suffer injuries from actions which do not arise from the rules of engagement. For example, if the mercenaries are attacked by pirates en route to their target, the clause kicks in. However, if mercenaries encounter pirates on the way to the target and choose to attack them in hopes of doing a little looting on the side, the client is not obligated to pay.

Half Med: As per the above, except that the client agrees to pay only 50% of medical expenses.

Material Provided: The client agrees to supply the mercenary company with weaponry and other personal equipment needed for completion of the mission. The contract generally stipulates the exact gear to be provided. Related clauses specify which equipment, if any, the mercenaries get to keep after the mission.

Material Liability: The mercenary company agrees to use its own equipment, but extracts a promise from the client that he will repair or replace any items lost or damaged during the course of the mission. This clause generally places a specific cap on reimbursement.

Ship Provided: The client agrees to secure a ship for the use of the mercenaries on their mission. No client in his right mind lets the mercenaries keep the ship afterward.

Ship Liability: The client agrees to pay for repairs to the mercenary company's ship, up to a specified point. Clients are generally reluctant to pay for serious repairs, which can be very expensive.

Legal Liability: The client agrees to pay any legal expenses incurred by the mercenaries as a result of their performance of the mission, provided that they acted within the bounds of the rules of engagement.

Spoils: Specifies the split of any valuables looted by the mercenaries in the course of their mission. Sometimes the mercenaries get everything, in other cases they must split the proceeds with the

client. Some contracts, under "rules of engagement," forbid looting of any kind.

Hazard Bonus: Specifies bonuses to be paid to each member of the company in the event that they come under enemy fire or face the direct threat of serious bodily harm in the course of the mission. Bonuses (including the ones listed below) scale up with rank, so that the captain earns a bigger hazard bonus than a junior officer.

Hurt Bonus: Specifies bonuses to be paid to mercenaries injured or otherwise harmed in the course of the mission, broken down into category of injury and scaled to rank.

Rack Bonus: Specifies bonuses to be paid to mercenaries tortured by enemies during the mission. Bonuses increase with the amount of time spent under torture and triple if no mercenaries reveal information about the client to their torturers (although this can be difficult to prove unless the tortured mercenary submits to a telepathic scan).

Jail Bonus: Specifies amounts to be paid when mercenaries are imprisoned as a result of their performance of mission duties. Amounts increase with time spent behind bars and are scaled to rank.

Funeral Bonus: Specifies amount to be paid to the mercenary's heirs if he is killed in the course of the mission.

Play or Pay: This clause states that the mercenary company will be paid in full should the client choose to cancel the mission before its goals can be reached.

TYPES OF JOBS

Certain common mission types recur in the résumé of the experienced mercenary.

Acquisition: The mercenaries penetrate enemy defenses to seize a person or object, which they then hand over to the client. The client invariably wants the person or object delivered in good condition.

Buccaneering: A client hires the mercenaries to harass shipping in a particular region or area. The mercenaries may be called upon to harry all ships, or just those of a specified government or corporation.

Counterinsurgency: The mercenaries hunt down and apprehend or destroy guerrilla units fighting to overturn a political regime.

Dress Duty: The mercenary may be hired for ceremonial purposes: He wears a fancy and/or threatening-looking uniform and stands at attention in the company of his client, contributing to the client's prestige. Most mercenaries mock this kind of work, but it can be lucrative, especially for famous warriors who are past their prime but still able to regale the client's wealthy friends with stirring anecdotes.

Guard: The mercenaries protect the safety of a person, place, or thing. They may act as security officers at an installation or bodyguards protecting an individual, or pilot armed vessels protecting other ships in the course of a journey.

Insurgency: The mercenaries participate in a guerrilla strike against a political regime, either on a one-time or extended basis.

Patrol/Interdiction: The mercenary ship patrols an area of space, warning off intruders and engaging with them when necessary.

Reconnaissance: The mercenary ship travels into an area of space and performs sensor sweeps, reporting or transmitting all findings back to the client. The subjects of the sweeps may not take kindly to being spied upon in this way.

Sabotage: The mercenaries destroy or damage a specified base, installation, ship, or other component of enemy infrastructure. Deaths and injuries arising from the damage may be acceptable to the client but do not form the primary objective.

Training: Mercenaries train other soldiers under the client's command.

Transport: In what is sometimes known as an "armed taxi" mission, the mercenary ship transports a person or object to a specific destination. Clients do not hire mercenaries to perform this duty unless they are worried that other armed individuals might try to prevent the person or object from reaching its destination.

Warfare: The mercenary ship takes part in a full-scale military engagement against opposing military units.

BLOOD MONEY

Pay for mercenary services varies widely depending on the nature of the mission. Simple guard duty as a low-echelon security officer at a base or installation can net the mercenary as little as 50 latinum slips per week. Training detail pays anywhere from 1 to 2 strips per week, depending on the mercenary's level of expertise.

For other missions, clients are likely to pay a lump sum to the company, which the captain or an administrative officer disburses to the various soldiers under his command. A simple convoy mission can cost a client 50 to 150 strips, or more, per mercenary per week, depending on the size of the ship and crew deployed. Any mission in which the mercenaries reliably expect to come under fire costs 10 to 20 bars per week if the forces they'll face are inferior to their own, 20 to 30 if they'll face an equal threat, and 30 to 100 bars against superior forces. The more difficult the mission, the more leverage the mercenaries enjoy in negotiating extra benefits as outlined in the "Contract" section, above.

Certain variables can alter these fees considerably. Inexperienced mercenaries get jobs only by under-bidding more reliable competitors. Famous ones can command double these rates but price themselves out of the market for routine duties. Supply of services affects demand. Some sectors of space veritably crawl with out-of-work mercenaries, decreasing base prices. Most of the frontiers of Federation space were glutted with mercenaries a few years ago. But demand also affects supply: During the Dominion War, many far-flung Federation colonies, unable to rely on an overtaxed Starfleet to act as their sole protectors, swallowed their misgivings and hired mercenaries to provide minimal defenses against enemy attacks. Vicious warfare thinned the ranks of the quadrant's mercenaries, just as it has decimated Starfleet personnel rolls. Prices are once more on the upswing as good mercenaries become harder to find.

The final factor in determining price is the perceived reliability of the client. Mercenaries take bigger risks when they work with unproven clients and thus demand better contracts from them. A client known to pay promptly and to fulfill conscientiously the med clauses of his contracts is in a position to strike favorable bargains for himself.

As mentioned above, only foolish mercenaries take everything their clients say at face value. Any mercenary worthy of the name carefully researches his client's background, independently verifying any information the client provides him. This is not always possible; in highly sensitive missions, the client may be the sole source of mission information. The less independently verifiable information available to the mercenary, the greater the fee. Mercenary slang refers to this as a "say-so bonus," because the crew must accept information crucial to the success or failure of the mission purely because the client says so. Depending on the depth of unverifiable information and its centrality to the mission, the say-so bonus can add anywhere from 25 to 200% to the base price of the contract.

Unfortunately, not all societies enjoy the crime-free environment of the Federation. Criminals ranging from petty thieves to the most vicious murderers plague many states. Inevitably the existence of a substantial criminal population leads to a list of "wanted" criminals whom the authorities have not yet captured, or who have escaped from custody. A select group of professionals, bounty hunters, makes money by pursuing wanted felons and turning them in for offered rewards.

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

Bounty hunters require a particular environment in which to operate profitably. They need a steady supply of criminals, first of all. Secondly, they require an equally significant number of clients seeking the apprehension of said criminals. Thirdly, those criminals must be sufficiently difficult to catch that clients offer rewards for their capture.

All three preconditions for a healthy bounty hunting industry exist in spades in the various frontier regions of Federation space, and in many other societies, as well. Criminals flock to regions where government territories butt up against one another; escape always remains just a quick border-hop away. They also prefer sparsely populated sectors of space, where traditional law enforcement officials are few and far between. Into this breach leap the bounty hunters, to whom borders are but an inconvenience, and the absence of conventional authority represents a lucrative business opportunity. Resourceful, determined, and armed to the molars, they prove that mere lawlessness need not mean impunity for wrongdoers.

BECOMING A BOUNTY HUNTER

Few children grow up wanting to be bounty hunters. Most kids with cops and robbers dreams fantasize about becoming officers of their cultures' legitimate law enforcement or security
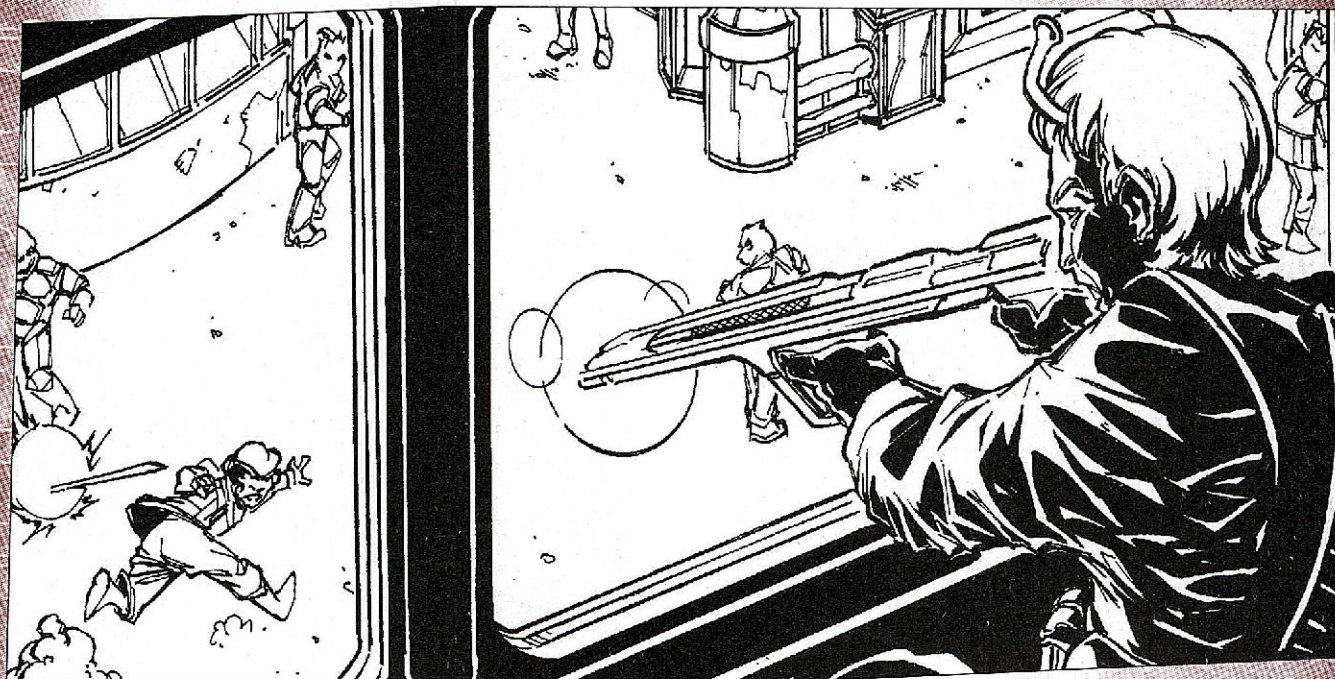
organizations. As these prospective constables and security officers grow up, the majority of them learn that the real point of police work is to protect people and uphold the rule of law. The wise-cracking, authority-bucking maverick officer of popular holonovels isn't actually welcome in a well run force. The officer who talks back to the head of his squad, or gets caught bending the rules in the furtherance of his own brand of justice, quickly finds himself cashiered.

Bounty hunting provides an ideal calling for those paradoxical individuals who believe in the law only if they get to make it or mold it themselves. Despite their belief in justice and morality, they themselves feel a speck of attraction to the outlaw's life. They can't help but sympathize a tiny bit with the restlessness and contempt for authority which drives the criminal mind. This sympathy helps lead them to their prey and is what makes them better at finding crooks than some of their more righteous colleagues on the official side of the fence.

Most bounty hunters get into the trade as a second career, transferring skills gained in other professions to the apprehension of fugitives. The majority once served as legitimate law enforcement officers. Others claim ex-military credentials, often as security or intelligence officers. Mercenaries and pirates sometimes try their hand at bounty hunting when pickings are slim in their own fields, or when opportunity knocks in the form of information on a nearby fugitive with a particularly seductive price on his head. A small cadre of reformed criminals rounds out the ranks of the quadrants' bounty-hunting contingent.

Untrained individuals wishing to become bounty hunters face sparse opportunities for learning. A few retired bounty hunters offer brief training courses aimed at complete greenhorns, but these rarely do more than present a basic overview of the trade and its tricks. Seasoned professionals laugh at job applicants brandishing diplomas in bounty hunting. However, some practicing bounty hunters from time to time take on especially intense, intimidating-looking, or dogged young men and women and provide them with on-the-job training. Some exploit these arrangements, taking little care for the new hireling's safety. Others enjoy playing mentor and molding young up-and-comers into the famous fugitive-hunters of tomorrow.

THE BOUNTY HUNTER'S JOB

To perform his job well and profitably, the bounty hunter must be aware of his role in the various societies he operates in and understand the extent of his authority. He needs to know how to deal with clients and other reward-givers, and must choose the types of assignment he's willing to undertake.

The bounty hunter's role in society and the justice system varies from one civilization to the next. Support for bounty hunting ranges from enthusiastic to grudging. No major jurisdiction outlaws the profession altogether, but most regulate it to one degree or another.

BAJORAN

The Bajorans provide an example of the attitude of most small, nonaligned worlds to the bounty hunter's trade. Although they might not like having to do so, Bajoran justice officials often have no better choice than to rely on bounty hunters for the apprehension of criminals who have fled Bajoran jurisdiction. Bajor can't afford to equip and finance a fugitive-apprehension force of its own. By offering rewards for escaped criminals, and paying out only for successful captures, it saves its limited resources for more vital endeavors. When they really want a particular criminal brought to heel, justice officials need merely increase the reward to the point where every bounty hunter in the quadrant will search for him. The exception to this rule occurs in the case of fugitives in possession of information that threatens Bajoran planetary security. Bajoran Intelligence Service operatives handle these cases.

Bounty hunters seeking suspects facing charges in the Bajoran court system enjoy considerable latitude when operating on Bajor. They need a license to practice as fugitive hunters on Bajoran soil and must have filed a form indicating an intent to pursue the suspect in question. If their documentation is in order, they wield the same authority as law enforcement officers. A suspect who chooses to flee from justice forfeits many basic rights; bounty hunters and security officers alike may forcibly break into any dwelling where they credibly believe the suspect may be hiding. However, if a bounty hunter mistakenly enters the wrong home or arrests the wrong person, he may be liable to that person for damages.

CARDASSIAN

Cardassia's attitude toward bounty hunters changes with its oft-shifting political winds. When more authoritarian leaders take power, they draw support from the people by using the brutal Cardassian justice system to bring a reassuring sense of vicarious power to the masses. Any fugitive from the law poses a threat to the leadership's image of authority and control. Justice officials thereby find it easy to extract large reward funds from the treasury, making Cardassia the quadrant's most avid consumer of bounty-hunting services.

When more enlightened regimes assume power, the people take solace in things other than the fre-

quency of public executions, and thus the demand for fugitive apprehension decreases. The acts of particularly notorious criminals, however, require action from even the most liberal administrations.

The Cardassian love for swift and unforgiving justice makes heroes of its most successful bounty hunters. However, because of their oft-brutal methods, Cardassian bounty hunters face prejudice outside their own territory, despite their collective record of success and any efforts individuals may make to distance themselves from the policies of their government or wanton acts of their brother bounty hunters.

As clients, Cardassians aren't picky; anyone who bring in a wanted criminal has done them a favor worthy of cheerful repayment. Non-Cardassian bounty hunters working for the Cardassians outside the Union avoid naming their clients. No matter what he might have done, a shackled fugitive being taken back to face Cardassia's stacked court system elicits considerable sympathy in most sectors of the Alpha Quadrant.

Outside bounty hunters pursuing suspects wanted by the Cardassian authorities face certain limitations on Cardassian soil. Cardassian security forces bitterly resent any intrusion onto their turf by private individuals, no matter how celebrated their exploits as bounty hunters. Foreign bounty hunters may operate only in space or on regions of Cardassian planets designated as underpoliced by the central authorities. In these areas, however, a properly licensed bounty hunter may legally do just about anything to his quarry and those abetting his escape. However, Cardassian courts, ever anxious for a show trial, pay more for live prisoners than for corpses.

THE FEDERATION

Federation policy strongly discourages, but does not outright forbid, the placing of rewards to encourage the apprehension of fugitives. Instead, law enforcement officials announce rewards for information leading to the capture and conviction of lawbreakers. What this means in practice is that bounty hunters seeking credits from Federation accounts must locate the target and then make arrangements for his arrest by Starfleet or local law enforcement. Most law enforcement types take a vaguely disapproving view of bounty hunters, but that doesn't necessarily stop them from accepting armed help when an arrest goes sour.

Bounty hunters operating on behalf of other governments receive no more leeway. They have as much right to travel in Federation space as any foreign citizen, but may not apprehend suspects, even if their clients have signed extradition agreements with the Federation. Again, procedure calls for Federation authorities to make the arrest, conduct the extradition hearing, and only then—assuming the judge rules against the prisoner—transport the suspect back to the client homeworld for trial there.

Any bounty hunter, regardless of species or origin, who wishes to operate in Federation space must be licensed by Starfleet to do so. The licensing process involves a lengthy and thorough background check. The rejection rate for applicants usually exceeds 50% in any given year; many bounty hunters regard a Federation license as a mark of distinction.

FERENGI

Most Ferengi would sooner hire a bounty hunter than be one. Certain Ferengi companies prosper as middlemen in the justice industry, connecting bounty hunters to clients, offering information services to help hunters track their prey, and even operating privatized prison facilities for worlds too resource-poor to run their own high-security penal colonies.

Liquidators, employed to enforce the laws of the Ferengi Commerce Authority, hire bounty hunters if the price is right, but are notoriously hard bargainers. They may use bounty hunters to fill out their own teams with menacing combatants or leave the apprehension of a fugitive entirely in the hands of a foreign team. Some liquidators go private-sector and become bounty hunters themselves, counting on their former colleagues for preferential contracts.

Bounty hunters wishing to pursue suspects, Ferengi or otherwise, in Ferengi territory may file a request with the Office of Fugitive Affairs, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ferengi Commerce Authority. The hunter chooses which civil rights he would like to be able to suspend in the course of his pursuit of the target and submits a bid to OFA officials. The hunter must meet a minimum bid, which escalates with the magnitude of the rights he hopes to violate. The right to perform summary executions costs much more than a modification to banking secrecy laws, for example.

The bounty hunter then faces a ten-day moratorium during which he can't pursue the suspect even if

he accidentally bumps into him at the tongo table. During this time, the OFA advertises the fact that a Tender of Rights Suspension has been made against the suspect. The target may then contact the OFA with a counteroffer. Depending on the size of the suspect's offer, the hunter may be charged nothing but be forbidden to pursue the suspect at all, charged part of his bid and allowed to violate only lesser rights, or permitted to pay the full amount in exchange for the termination of all requested rights. The suspect is forbidden to leave the planet during the moratorium period, but, if unwilling or unable to lodge a competing bid, can otherwise use the ten days to hide as best he can from his pursuers. The OFA does not discriminate between Ferengi and non-Ferengi citizens—just between rich suspects and poor ones.

KLINGON

Klingons have little use for bounty hunters. When a Klingon commits a shameful, criminal act, the members of his house track him down and kill him to prevent the stain of his dishonor from contaminating the whole house. (Depending on the crime, the stain may be too great to remove in this way,

but the house is still obligated to deal with the law-breaker.) If the members of a house need assistance, they seek it not from paid help but from loyal friends of the family.

Klingons pursuing a family wrongdoer, or a Klingon who insulted them or their house, in Klingon territory enjoy no special legal privileges, except that they're allowed to kill him when they catch him. However, they can expect considerable extralegal aid from other Klingons if they explain what they're doing and why. The pursuers can't break into a private home with impunity just because they think their quarry hides within, but if they explain the situation and ask the master of the house for permission to come in and deal with the malefactor, he's very likely to agree. He might even assist in the killing. Any Klingon encountering a family on a blood hunt imagines himself standing in their boots.

Foreign bounty hunters may not pursue Klingon suspects into Klingon territory. They may report the crime to the victim's family. If it is a crime of dishonor, they send the bounty hunters on their way and commence a blood hunt. If, according to Klingon mores, it is a crime of no consequence, the hunters have no further legal recourse while the suspect remains on Klingon soil. The Empire typically does not extradite its citizens.

Bounty hunters pursuing non-Klingons in Klingon territory may not break Klingon laws. On the other hand, foreigners have virtually no recourse to Klingon law if their rights are violated (unless a Klingon vouches for him by making him an honorary member of the house; this hardly ever happens).

Rogue or exiled Klingons may gravitate toward bounty hunting work as the least dishonorable way to make a living by force of arms. Conscientious Klingon bounty hunters pursue only criminals they believe deserve punishment; less scrupulous ones chase the offenders with the biggest rewards on their heads.

NAUSICAAN

While Nausicaans don't hire bounty hunters—their violent, feudal culture barely recognizes the concept of criminality—many become bounty hunters. All-Nausicaan bounty-hunter crews tend to fare badly; their growling, fangs-bared disinterest in the social niceties of other cultures makes them poor investigators. They perform impressively, however, as specialists in rough tactics on a mixed team.

Nausicaan society is virtually lawless; what bounty hunters can do on Nausicaa depends on how strong they are.

ROMULAN

Romulans do not make use of bounty hunters to capture their fugitives. Any suspect who flees Romulan jurisdiction automatically adds treason to his list of crimes, qualifying him for pursuit by the much-feared *Tal Shiar*. To advertise the deeds and past histories of its fugitives would be to admit that there is crime in the Star Empire, and to violate the Romulan mania for secrecy. Self-respecting Romulans do not work as bounty hunters; they see it as a distasteful activity unsuitable for well bred, Empire-serving warriors.

Foreign bounty hunters are not permitted to enter Romulan territory. If caught operating as bounty hunters within the boundaries of the Star Empire, they face lengthy prison terms or even the death penalty.

EMPLOYERS

Bounty hunters may contract with a client to apprehend a particular fugitive. Alternatively, they may simply respond to a general reward offer, meeting their paymasters only when they drag the target into the booking facility of the appropriate legal authority. They may work for governments or private individuals.

GOVERNMENTS

Every government which hires bounty hunters does so under different conditions and places its own set of restrictions and requirements on its contractors. Here are some examples.

BAJORAN MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Bajor finds the need to hire bounty hunters to do its enforcement work vaguely embarrassing; its justice officials therefore do their best to shield these perfectly legal transactions from public scrutiny. They do not post general rewards for fugitives, but instead approach highly trustworthy fugitive retrieval outfits. Typically they work with a circle of about a dozen such companies. Discretion occupies a high place of honor on the list of qualities Bajoran justice officials look for in a bounty-hunting firm. New teams find it hard to learn that this cozy arrangement even exists, much less break into it. However,

officials might approach a team with esoteric expertise suitable for a particular, unusual mission. For example, a group with a record of success in the Gamma Quadrant might be engaged to search for a fugitive known to have fled there.

Many nonaligned powers that use bounty hunters because they lack the resources to chase their own fugitives follow a similar pattern when they dole out contracts.

CARDASSIAN MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Cardassian Justice Ministry officials regularly announce rewards for fugitives but directly hire bounty hunters to pursue them only when the fugitive's crimes resound with political or strategic significance. The Ministry of Justice doesn't care who brings in a much-wanted fugitive, as long as someone does so. It will happily pay the full reward to a team other than the one it hired, if need be.

FEDERATION STARFLEET INTELLIGENCE

Officially, Starfleet Intelligence does not hire bounty hunters. Unofficially, it might arrange for a price to be placed on the head of an enemy particularly dangerous to Federation security. It would hire bounty hunters only through agents or go-betweens, so that the arrangement appeared to be a private matter.

FERENGI COMMERCE AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF LIQUIDATION

While some FCA liquidators grind their teeth in delighted anticipation of an opportunity to hunt down and sadistically punish violators of Ferengi commercial law, others profit by subcontracting their duties out to third parties. The Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Liquidation determines an operating budget for the capture of each fugitive, then assigns the case to a particular liquidator. That liquidator may in turn hire bounty hunters to capture the errant Ferengi and deliver him to a prearranged drop point. The liquidator pockets the difference between the budget and the amount disbursed to the bounty hunters. He does so with full knowledge of the CFO; the practice encourages liquidators to come in under budget. Other FCA departments use similar incentives to keep costs down.

ROMULAN TAL SHIAR

Although the Star Empire forbids bounty hunting, Romulans may covertly hire bounty hunters to harass enemies from other societies. This trick, a favorite of the *Tal Shiar*, involves the creation of falsified records implicating the target in a crime committed in a third party's jurisdiction. *Tal Shiar* operatives have used it on more than one occasion against troublesome Starfleet personnel. They use non-Romulan agents to approach bounty hunters, so that their involvement in the subterfuge remains unprovable. Bounty hunters, now wary of being duped in this way, have forced *Tal Shiar* agents to adopt ever more sophisticated deceptions against them.

OTHER EMPLOYERS

Private individuals or organizations may from time to time offer rewards for the capture of fugitives or use their own resources to increase an already offered reward. If they must call on bounty hunters frequently, they might keep especially trusted bounty hunters on retainer, giving the hunters extra incentive to pursue a given target.

Groups and individuals involve themselves with bounty hunters when they have a special stake in a fugitive's apprehension. They may do so to recover objects or information in the fugitive's possession, out of revenge, or in an effort to deter future crimes of the same sort. A commercial venture might up the ante against an embezzler or betrayer of its trade secrets. Political parties may post rewards for fugitives whose capture and testimony at trial would torpedo the popularity of rival groups. Religious or philosophical organizations might pay to avenge crimes against their believers, churches, or holy relics.

HIRING A BOUNTY HUNTER

Many bounty hunters never meet their employers until they have a prisoner ready to exchange for latinum. They merely scan the latest update of Hado's Database of Fugitives and Bounties, the trade's single most essential information resource, for likely targets. It serves as a compendium of information on all fugitives known wanted by governments and individuals throughout the Alpha Quadrant. Its entries contain full briefings on targets, made up not only of the information supplied by the client, but also of additional research performed by Hado's crack team of crime journalists. (Hado, an enigmatic Ferengi resident of the Gorn-Federation colony of Cestus III, publishes an entire range of updateable specialty databases.) Hado's entries even tell the bounty hunter where to drop off the prisoner when the time comes.

This open system serves the interests of clients willing to see a certain amount of attention focused on their fugitives and the crimes they commit. Competition for lucrative rewards increases the chances of a quick catch, as more than one bounty-hunting team scours the quadrant for information on the target's whereabouts.

Some reward posters don't want to see groups of bounty hunters all scrambling for the same target, no matter how much they want to see that target in a holding cell. They may consider it unseemly. More likely, they want the affair kept quiet for any number of reasons. They may be embarrassed by the fugitive's escape, or afraid that knowledge of their pursuit of the subject would be of intelligence value to their enemies.

In such cases, an employer contacts a bounty-hunting firm either directly (where such arrangements are legal) or in a clandestine manner, through a shady broker or middleman. In such direct hires, the bounty-hunting firm typically expects to have its expenses, usually in the 10-15 latinum bars per week range, paid during the operation, whether it apprehends the suspect or not. The bounty hunters keep the fee, which is only a fraction of the reward, even if they fail to capture their quarry;

however, the employer may pass them over when the next lucrative contract comes around. Only firms with impressive results records get hired directly on a regular basis. Even in a direct hire, the real money is paid upon the capture of the fugitive.

Employers base the size of rewards on the following factors:

- Severity of the crime. This factor usually determines how much the client wants to get the fugitive back, and thus his willingness to pay. A war criminal, assassin of a prominent individual, mass murderer, or perpetrator of other highly publicized and abhorrent acts might net as much as 250 bars of latinum, or more. A less notorious killer or kidnapper could fetch 125. A petty or white-collar criminal might be worth 25.

- Cultural differences. Cardassians, when they can afford it, pay a premium of about 30% on the going rate. Budget-conscious Ferengi pay about 25% less than the norm, taking into account all of the punitive fine print in their contracts.

- Danger. If the target is armed and dangerous, add a 25% premium. If he's surrounded by well armed confederates or allies, add anywhere from 50 to 150%, depending on the nature of the opposition.

- Quality of intelligence. The less that's known about the fugitive and his whereabouts, the higher the reward. This premium, which can increase the base price by anywhere from 10 to 50%, compensates the bounty hunter for time spent during the chase and the danger of dealing with unknown factors.

- Ability to pay. An employer of modest means may not be able to offer a competitive rate for the capture of his criminal of choice. Only bottom-feeding firms of questionable ability and ethics, or bounty hunters down on their luck, will pursue targets sought by such employers.

ONE SHOT, ONE KILL

Individuals achieving prominence in the dangerous politics of the frontier regions may face the threat of assassination. Agents of the *Tal Shiar* once hired Flaxian assassins to kill the Cardassian exile Elim Garak as part of a broader plot to forge a

Cardassian-Romulan alliance against the Dominion. The despotic Regent of Palamar died at the hands of a "purification squad" dispatched to kill him by his political rival, General Nassuc.

ASSASSINS DEFINED

Most authorities define an assassin as a murderer who sets out to attack and kill a specific stranger in the anticipation of a benefit of some kind. That benefit may be monetary, political, or spiritual. Murderers who kill to avenge a perceived wrong done to them personally aren't really assassins, even if they attack by surprise. Neither are serial killers, who murder victims of opportunity to satisfy their inner demons, or unpremeditated murderers, whose crimes arise from sudden eruptions of rage.

The following categories describe most types of assassin:

AMATEUR

The amateur does not think of himself as an assassin; he generally schemes to attack one target only, and the training he receives (if any) devotes itself entirely to the performance of that single mission. Neela, the Bajoran religious fanatic who tried to kill Vedek Bareil in hope that Vedek Winn would become kai, was a highly trained amateur.

FREELANCER

Freelancers make a living as professional killers, serving a range of clients throughout the course of their careers. Usually highly trained, they kill for the money and take pride in their work. Like mercenaries, they may or may not follow a strict code of ethics which protects their clients from being outbid for their services. Flaxian assassins are classic freelancers.

PATSY

The patsy is an individual manipulated by others into committing an assassination—or merely kept on hand so that the authorities can blame him for an assassination committed by another. The patsy may be loyal to an organization which considers him expendable, or may cooperate with his manipulators for motives entirely unrelated to theirs (but which usually involve deception by said manipulators).

SPECIALIST

A specialist trains to kill for an organization to whom he is bound in a relationship of mutual loyalty. He serves his superiors, and his superiors train, house, feed, and protect him. Specialists enjoy elite privileges in their organizations, because their skill and training represents a resource not easily replaced.

BECOMING AN ASSASSIN

The motivations which lead an individual to become an assassin vary widely, both from culture to culture and from one individual to the next.

Some societies respect and honor the assassin, provided he adheres to certain rules designed to curb his destructive effect on society. The Flaxians, for example, regard assassination as a perfectly honorable profession and celebrate the achievements of their most accomplished freelance killers. This attitude derives in part from unusual Flaxian beliefs about the sanctity of life. Believers in a perpetual wheel of reincarnation, the Flaxians claim that victims of violent death enjoy great luck in their

subsequent lives. While no Flaxian wants to be murdered, the death of another arouses less sympathy and concern than it would in most other societies. (More than one sociologist has described this "belief" as an elaborate psychosocial mechanism that allows the Flaxians to justify their murderous practices.)

Flaxians respect grace under pressure and steely professionalism, and take pride in the fear that their assassins strike into the hearts of alien species throughout the galaxy. Many Flaxians want to earn the respect which comes with being a successful assassin, although only a few aspirants turn out to have the right mix of qualities to achieve that status. Flaxian society tends toward anarchism in many respects, and thus Flaxians view assassination as a civilian pursuit, not a tool of government (ironically enough, their government forbids itself to use assassination as an instrument of foreign policy except in times of warfare with another society).

Other cultures view assassination as admirable only if it serves important societal objectives. Cardassians and Romulans, for example, share a belief in the primacy of the state over the individual. They see killings that maintain the prerogatives and power of the state as not only justifiable, but necessary. Members of official assassin units embody the awesome power of the state, arousing both fear and respect. Although state-sponsored assassins must typically conceal their identities, they enjoy their status and relish the thought that their acts protect and maintain the all-important state.

Some civilizations accept assassination as a necessary evil under dire circumstances. For example, Bajoran resistance fighters employed assassinations against Cardassians they identified as oppressors. Current Bajoran policy states that the government will carry out assassinations only in extreme circumstances. The Bajoran government does not maintain an assassination squad, but could doubtless find a number of potentially effective assassins in the ranks of its security forces if the need once more arose.

Klingons scorn cowardice and stealth; to kill by sneak attack represents the height of dishonor. If a Klingon wants someone dead, he challenges his target openly (thus, Klingons rarely make successful assassins). As always, though, Klingon culture turns out more than its share of rogues and renegades, and especially calm and cold-blooded Klingons might make effective freelance killers. Klingon assassins often use a special type of dagger, the *kut'luch.*

Likewise, Federation citizens abhor assassination, no matter what the killer's motives. Only misfits and oddballs grow up on Federation worlds dreaming of becoming assassins.

TRAINING METHODS

Despite the words of the infamous Flaxian assassin Detora Danan, who said, "Killing is like fine art; it can be learned but not taught," numerous ways exist to mold inexperienced aspirants into efficient killing instruments.

Assassin training varies little from instructor to instructor. No matter who's doing the teaching, the core skills of the trade remain the same: disguise, infiltration, weaponry, unarmed lethal combat, intelligence gathering, bribery, camouflage, and escape techniques.

APPRENTICESHIP

Freelancers aren't clubby types. They must keep a low profile in order to do their jobs effectively and evade arrest by local authorities. Most freelancers train at the feet of older colleagues who take them on as apprentices for personal training. To be a neophyte killer in the company of an experienced master poses some dangers; apprentices may find themselves the objects of collateral fire. Also, many freelancers are not above using their apprentices as patsies, leaving them behind to face the rap. Those lucky enough to be treated honestly by master killers learn on the job by emulating their instructors, often picking up tricks of the trade which would otherwise take them years, or even decades, to learn on their own.

SCHOOLS

Any planet which treats assassination as a legitimate profession hosts a range of vocational institutes to train the killers of tomorrow. Flaxian schools of killing range from high-priced, lavishly equipped private colleges to cut-rate correspondence schools that supposedly teach you to become a killer in your spare time, via the Flaxian computer communications network. (It is illegal to offer, or take, such courses in many societies, such as the Federation.) While even the best school can do little with a hopeless candidate, the worst instill bad habits in the most talented recruits. Many of the top Flaxian schools snobbishly discriminate against off-worlders,

but some quality middle-range schools willingly accept alien students.

IDEOLOGICAL GROUPS

Groups of like-minded fanatics sometimes train promising individuals to kill in the furtherance of their agendas. While some groups may operate legitimately in societies that encourage or tolerate violent zealotry, most exist underground, conducting their training beneath the guise of some more benign activity. The quality of training reflects this clandestine existence: Underground cells typically must make do with old and inferior equipment. What they lack in state-of-the art gear and training, killers emanating from these groups make up for in sheer determination and unshakable faith in the righteousness of their cause.

Because many fanatics seek out martyrdom, ideological cells turn out a large number of amateurs trained only for the completion of a specific mission. These plans treat the successful escape of the assassin as an afterthought, if they address it at all.

Rumors of an extremist sect dedicated to bringing about a return to the old caste system, by violent means if necessary, persist in Bajoran religious circles. If this group exists, it's no doubt busy training assassins at this very moment.

STATE AGENCIES

In societies which use government-sponsored assassination as a policy tool, the state trains killers through its military and security apparatus. As military and intelligence recruits go through basic training, recruiters from assassination squads keep an eye out for promising students. They look for self-control, self-reliance, concentration, patience, and a lack of empathy for others. The good state assassin exists as a paradoxical creature: able to work on his own, but at the same time unquestioningly subservient to the demands of superiors. Recruiters invariably reject applicants openly professing a desire for the job, considering them sadists or adolescent fantasists. The ideal candidate derives his satisfaction not from the act of killing itself, but from the necessary service he performs for the state.

THE METHODOLOGY OF DEATH

While assassins may differ widely in their motivations and cultural attitudes, they share the same basic methods. Standard relationships between free-lancers and their employers likewise remain consistent throughout the quadrant.

Many assassins, following the doctrines laid down by the pioneering educators of the first Flaxian assassination colleges, break down their operations into four phases: target research, on-site preparation, execution, and departure. Others act more casually: They learn of a target, head to his likely whereabouts, and improvise, usually attacking as soon as they can and then clearing out. These killers get caught far more often than their planning-oriented counterparts.

TARGET RESEARCH

In the oft-quoted words of Detora Danan, "There is no weapon deadlier than effective preparation."

During the target research phase, the assassin gathers and studies information on the target. He learns how well protected the target is, his habits, what places he typically frequents, and how tightly defined his routine is. The assassin researches the target's associates and companions, noting especially any capabilities they might have which could interfere with the completion of the assignment. The assassin acquires maps and holographic images of

the target's usual haunts, scouring them for the best vantage points, hiding places, and routes of escape. He researches local security and law enforcement. He acquires information on security protocols in place at likely sites of attack. He attempts to acquire necessary access codes or other means of defeating or bypassing these protocols.

Once he has assembled this information, the assassin constructs several plans of attack and runs through each one until he can choose the scenario most likely to succeed. In all likelihood, he programs holosuite simulations that enable him to rehearse the killing until he has perfectly honed his timing and prepared himself for surprise occurrences. He then gathers any weaponry or other equipment he may still require and heads to the scene of the crime.

ON-SITE PREPARATION

Once he arrives at the scene of the killing, the assassin readies himself for the big moment. He typically establishes a false identity (if he has not already done so), then secures a physical space where he can store his gear without fear of discovery. He double-checks the details of his research first hand, ensuring that the facts he's relied upon to create his plan remain valid. He places the target and his associates under surveillance. If possible, he tests the means by which he plans to deactivate any security systems. If his plan relies upon confederates, the assassin prepares those accomplices to do their jobs. This might entail anything from pep talks to intensive training in required skills. If the plan calls for local dupes or patsies, the assassin finds likely candidates and slowly insinuates himself into their lives, so that they'll perform as needed when the time comes. Most plans require the assassin to stash gear in various convenient hiding places; he does this as late in the process as possible, to lessen the chances that someone will accidentally stumble across his cache of crucial materiel.

During the prep phase, the assassin must always balance two competing risks: The more preparation he does, the greater his chance of attracting unwanted attention—but if he doesn't do enough preparation, he's leaving himself open to unwelcome surprises.

If satisfied that his plan will work, the assassin waits until the arrival of the ideal moment to spring his trap. If his scouting reveals flaws in the plan, the assassin eliminates them, changing either the situation or his scheme.

EXECUTION

In the course of a few split seconds, all of the killer's months or weeks of planning either justify themselves or go for naught: The target faces the killer's chosen mode of assassination and either is slain or escapes from harm. With exquisite care, the assassin has chosen the mode of death he deems least likely to fall prey to the whims of fate.

POISONS

Many assassins like poisons because they kill anonymously; the killer need never even meet his victim. Some poisons act by time-delay, so that the killer can be on a ship heading out of the sector by the time they take effect. Others act with the same immediacy as a phaser blast, killing instantaneously.

The downside of poison is that it is indiscriminate; the assassin must assure himself that the target, and not some third party, will be the one exposed to the poison. When an innocent bystander keels over and is diagnosed as a poison victim, the assassin knows that his target will now avoid drinking or touching anything that hasn't been sensor-swept for poison. If the assassin goes to the trouble of rigging a food replication unit so that it adds arsenic to the target's favorite beverage, he'd better hope that no one else orders up that drink before the target does.

The two main types of poison are contact poisons, which kill the victim when they touch his skin, and the more traditional ingested poisons, which must insinuate themselves into the victim's circulatory system through the digestive process before taking effect. Some assassins favor injected poisons, which they insinuate into the victim's bloodstream via a bladed weapon or hypospray.

The 24th century offers the assassin a copious array of exotic poisons. Biogenic substances are risky to handle, but kill quickly, lack antidotes, and instill terror in survivors. They are favored by ideological assassins, who seek not only to kill certain victims but to frighten anyone else who opposes them.

For the more discriminating kill, DNA-tailored poisons allow the assassin to flood an area safely with gas, or contaminate an entire food or water supply, while guaranteeing that only the chosen victim succumbs. The assassin must secure a sample of the target's DNA-not always an easy task. Unless he's a toxicologist himself, he must also locate a black-market chemist willing to use that sample to synthesize a substance he knows will be used to kill. Less highly targeted DNA poisons may kill any individuals with a particular blood type, every member

of a family, or all members of a single species exposed to the substance.

Some killers favor multiple-stage poisons. The victim dies after separate exposures to two (or more) different chemicals, each of which can be administered safely, on separate occasions, to large numbers of people. Only the victim exposed to all of the substances succumbs to the poison. Multistage poisons prove useful in extortion operations; the blackmailer informs the victim that he's already been exposed to the first part and can be killed at any time unless he cooperates. Assassins sometimes use these poisons to extort cooperation from unwilling accomplices.

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives represent another long-distance killing method. An assassin who places a bomb in a place frequented by the victim can set it to detonate and disappear before the blast goes off. Problems include verification and collateral damage.

To be sure that his bomb claims the desired victim, the killer must remain within visual range and trigger the detonator at the right moment. He can extend his visual range with surveillance equipment, but transmissions from the bug or camera to the assassin's hiding place add the risk of signal interception to his list of worries.

24th-century explosives can be extraordinarily destructive; an error of a few microns when measuring the active ingredient during bomb construction can result in a device which might destroy an entire ship or starbase. Some clients don't care about collateral victims—if they're waging a terror campaign, they may actively encourage mass murder—but most of them want to avoid complicity in a massacre. The assassin must rule out explosives in situations which demand subtlety.

When terror is the aim, certain exotic explosives prove their usefulness. Shrapnel bombs injure large numbers of bystanders as they kill the actual target. Incendiary bombs cause severe burns; if a crowd is affected, medical and emergency services personnel will be overwhelmed by the number of victims. The attendant confusion gives the assassin perfect cover under which to make his escape.

Radiation bombs, which do little damage to inanimate objects but cause all organic lifeforms in the blast radius to sicken and die, leave an empty installation open for looting or occupation when the radiation dissipates. Insurgents and pirates use this weapon more often than assassins, but especially ruthless killers may on occasion want their acts to look like they were committed by terrorists or bandits. Rogues normally employ such tactics far from the Federation core, where 24th-century medicine can quickly treat radiation poisoning.

DIRECT ATTACK

Some assassins prefer the direct approach. A direct attack, whether made with a beam weapon or a blade, or even while unarmed, poses none of the verification problems of long-distance methods. The killer squeezes the trigger, stabs his victim, or snaps his neck and completes the job. Direct killers accept the risks of exposing themselves to counterattack, identification, and/or capture, although they do their best to minimize such dangers by attacking from surprise, hitting the target on the first try, and having a ready means of escape. In the case of a sniper attack, they may have patsies in place to throw investigators off their own trails.

SABOTAGE

Many clients want the killings they order to look like accidents. They stand to gain from the victims' deaths and would face immediate suspicion in the wake of an obvious murder. Sabotage provides the key to disguising a murder as death by misadventure. Assassins who kill through sabotage draw on extensive knowledge of engineering and computerized control systems. They know how to rig everything from vehicles to airlocks in order to provoke lethal, finely timed system failures on demand. The saboteur needs to know not only how to cause such failures, but how to eliminate any traces of tampering, so that investigators rule that the deaths were indeed accidental.

PSIONICS

Assassins born with psionic attack capabilities, such as the Letheans, enjoy a special advantage. Their weapons are their minds, so they can go anywhere fully armed and are ready to kill at any moment. Societies unfamiliar with psionic abilities may be completely stumped by mental murders. Others view psionic capabilities as commonplace and maintain security systems that regularly scan for the distinctive energy signatures associated with them.

In addition to straightforward mental attacks, psionically adept assassins may influence their victims' minds to drive them to suicidal behavior. This becomes difficult in victims with powerful self-preservation instincts; in such cases the psionic assassin influences the victim into dropping his guard so that it's easier to kill him by conventional means.

APPARENT SUICIDE

It doesn't take psionic powers to disguise a murder as suicide. As part of his preparations for an operation of this type, the assassin manufactures evidence of the victim's motives for suicide. He commits the killing by a means the victim would credibly have at his disposal. He may use a beam weapon or a common drug lethal in large quantities; he might hang the victim or push him from a height. Then he alters the crime scene to conform to the suicide scenario. This *modus operandi* appeals both to employers who'd be logical suspects in a murder investigation and to ideological conspirators wishing to demoralize a group by making an influential member look like a suicide.

EXOTIC METHODS

A few assassins, twisted enough to see their work as an art form, prefer to use the most exotic possible methods of killing in order to build up their reputations and aggrandize their egos. Exotic killing methods include the placement of a creature with a lethal attack form in the victim's living or work environment, the use of transporter technology to beam unprotected victims into the vacuum of space, or exposure to the staggering variety of alien parasites and deadly spatial anomalies found in the frontier's most obscure corners.

DEPARTURE

Zealous authorities and bystanders can mar even the perfect killing. A well planned escape route forms the crucial end to any successful mission. In many cases, the assassin must make two escapes: the first, from the immediate area; the second, from the planet, ship, or space station on which the murder took place. He must ensure that his chosen route will remain unobstructed when he needs to use it, that any accomplices he's enlisted to assist his escape are reliable, and that his vehicle stays in top shape and ready to depart at a moment's notice.

The relative difficulty of escape plays a big role in deciding the means of death. In extremely secure facilities, such as ships and space stations, where security officers typically monitor every arrival and departure as a matter of routine, killers prefer to disguise their crimes as accidents or suicides. They can then depart before investigators even realize that they ought to be rounding up suspects.

Areas with loose or nonexistent security permit more direct killing methods. If law enforcement officers are unlikely to care about a killing or can be bribed into indifference, the killer may not need to leave at all. He can linger to buy a round for the house in the nearest dive and raise a glass in toast to his victim. He should, however, take care that his victim has no heavily armed friends to avenge his death.

EMPLOYERS

To hire freelance assassins, employers require money, motivation, and connections. In societies that permit freelance assassins to operate openly, such as on Flaxos, hiring a killer is no different than procuring any other kind of legitimate service. The client looks up assassination bureaus in a business directory, calls for standard pay rates and ranges of services offered, and can even comparison-shop from one company to the next.

In most regions of the quadrant, where assassination remains illegal, clients and contractors connect by more covert means. Members of the criminal underworld use the rumor mill to find brokers willing to arrange meetings with assassins, in exchange for a fee reflective of the legal risks involved. Assassins typically eschew the lengthy legalese favored by mercenaries in their contract dealings; they like to keep things clear and simple. Contracts are verbal, not written. The assassin conducts much of his target research before quoting a firm price for the assignment. The only assurance he offers the client is his word that he will not inform authorities or the intended victim. The client need not offer assurances; he knows the assassin will track him down and try to kill him if he reneges on the deal.

Common users of freelance assassination services include governments, private individuals, corporations, and criminals.

Governments typically want disguised killings; even when their targets are recognized enemies, they know that open assassinations usually provoke reprisals from the other side. Careful by nature, bureaucrats dislike the idea of being targeted for killing.

The motivations of private individuals vary widely. They may seek revenge for real or perceived past wrongdoing on the part of the target. They may wish to remove obstacles to their professional progress. Clients may fear for their safety and want those who threaten it rubbed out. Grudges and feuds within families and social groups inspire many murder contracts. The time-honored motive of mur-

der for inheritance remains popular in many 24th-century societies.

Commercial enterprises order murders to eliminate opposition to their policy goals. Discovery of a murder contract can be even more damaging to a corporation than to a government; many people who accept that the state has a limited right to kill do not extend the same right to private companies. Smart businessmen hire only the most discreet assassins, those who specialize in faked suicides and accidents and whose professional lack of willingness to expose their employers is well known..

Criminal organizations routinely murder informants, possible informants, witnesses, and infiltrators. Their members also engage in intermittent warfare against one another, bumping each other off in order to rise in the hierarchy. Groups like the Orion Syndicate take out more contracts in the course of a year than all the other types of client combined. As long as such organizations remain in business, the assassins of the Alpha Quadrant can count on continued demand for their services.

Practitioners of piracy, robbery, assassination, and similar "trades", like members of every other skilled profession, use specialized equipment to make their work easier. Having the right piece of gear for the job at hand can mean the difference between success and failure—or, on the seamy side of society, between life and death. Sometimes rogues, like carpenters, perform only as well as their tools.

Rogues' equipment ranges from ordinary items used in creative or illegal ways (such as using standard ropes and climbing gear to rob an office in a tall building) to blatantly illegal equipment designed specifically for illegal purposes (such as the Varon-T disruptor or magnetic seal bypassers). This chapter of *Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues* describes many different items of equipment which fall into the latter category.

ILLEGAL ITEMS

Each item's description includes a discussion of its legality in the major galactopolitical societies, such as the Federation, Klingon Empire, and Cardassian Union. While some pieces of equipment favored by rogues have legitimate uses, most of the ones detailed here remain illegal in some or all societies.

Having contraband equipment in the series presents many episode possibilities for enterprising Narrators. In a rogues' campaign (see Chapter Twelve, page 119), characters will have to obtain such items. That may involve making purchases on the black market, commissioning an underworld armorer to construct the item from scratch, stealing it from another rogue (or the military, an espionage agency, or similar group), or building it themselves (assuming they have the requisite skills and equipment). This may require them to steal the money or equipment needed to get what they're ultimately after, kidnap a noted scientist who has the skills to build the weapon they need, and so forth. Just trying to acquire a single piece of gear to pull a major job may provide material for two or three episodes!
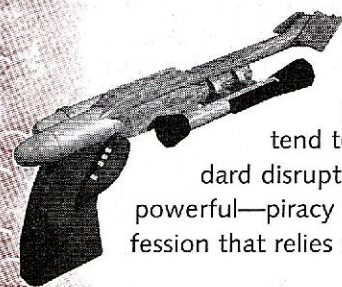
Of course, possessing an illegal item doesn't mean a character gets to *keep* it. If it's valuable or rare, maybe other rogues will try to steal it from him. If he stole it from someone, that person may come looking for it—with a few Nausicaan thugs in tow to "teach the character a lesson." If he's caught by the authorities, they'll confiscate the item (in fact, just possessing it may constitute a major criminal offense). Or he may have to leave it behind when he's surprised in the middle of some criminal caper. Getting the object back could fuel an episode or two itself.

If the device is a one-of-a-kind gadget or a highly advanced piece of equipment, it may have a tendency to break or malfunction. Not only can this give rise to additional episodes (the character has to have the device repaired somehow), but it can add a special element of tension—or humor—when it happens in mid-job.

WEAPONS

PIRATE DISRUPTOR

"Pirate disruptor" is a slang term referring to the cobbled-together weapons used by many raiders, especially out on the fringes where more technologically advanced weapons, and the parts to repair them, may not always be available. Thus, pirate crews work with what's available, jury-rigging parts from Klingon disruptors, Federation phasers, Romulan disruptors, and other weapons to create functioning, if inefficient and odd-looking, energy pistols. Pirate disruptors tend to be larger than standard disruptors, but also more powerful—piracy is not, after all, a profession that relies on subtlety.

Pirate disruptors can fire in continuous-beam mode, but not pulse-fire or wide-beam modes.

Legality: Much like the "zip guns" of 20th-century Earth, pirate disruptors are outlawed in most jurisdictions since the presumption is that anyone who would carry a homemade gun has some malicious and/or criminal reason for doing so. A few clever space corsairs have built pirate disruptors which they can break down into several seemingly innocent objects in just a few seconds' time.

PIRATE DISRUPTOR

Settings: 1-4
Range: 5/15/40/80
Size: 22-35 cm long, .8-1.4 l in volume
**Mass:** .7-1.3 kg
Energy: 1,000 charges
Damage: See table

ROMULAN SNIPER DISRUPTOR

Originally developed by the Romulan Tal Diann, this weapon has since been copied throughout the galaxy and come into fairly widespread use among assassins. Unlike most energy weapons, which are effective only over a relatively short range, this weapon uses special magnetic focusing lenses to compact its plasma beam, thus maintaining beam coherence over a much longer range. However, the lenses also prevent it from being used in pulse-fire or wide-beam modes. Continuous fire is still possible, though it runs the risk of causing a lens failure and weapons explosion (if a character rolls a Dramatic Failure on his Energy Weapons test when firing an RSD in continuous-fire mode, the weapon explodes, with the standard effects for such an explosion).
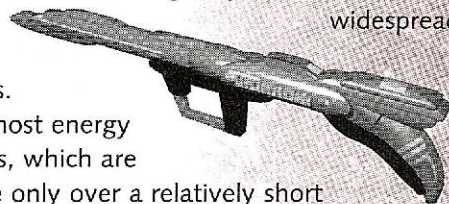
PIRATE DISRUPTOR DAMAGE

	Setting	Damage	Charge	Notes
1	Stun	(3 + 2d6)	3	Stun a human for 5 minutes, or a Klingon for a minute or two
2	Heavy Thermal	14 + 4d6	20	Cut a 1 m hole in 12 cm of steel or rock in 30 seconds; cut a 1 m hole in a duranium bulkhead in 8 minutes
3	Light Disrupt	25 + 6d6	45	Vaporize almost anything
4	Heavy Disrupt	170 + 14d6	150	Explode 600 cubic meters of rock into glowing rubble

Persistent rumors among the underworld say that "someone" is trying to develop a way to jacket the RSD plasma beam in an annular confinement beam to give the weapon even greater range. If so, this powerful advancement has not yet appeared on the battlefield.

Legality: Owning this weapon, a military-grade rifle with no legitimate civilian purpose, is illegal in all societies.

ROMULAN SNIPER RIFLE (RSD)

Settings: See below
Range: 50/150/300/600
Size: 1 m long, 1.5 l in volume
Mass: 1.1 kg
Energy: 500 charges
Damage: Use the Disruptor damage table (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 239). The weapon is rarely set on Stun; since most snipers prefer a "one shot, one kill" method of attack, they typically tune the RSD to a high setting (4-6).

SCORCHER

First developed by the Klingons in the mid-23rd century and later passed on to their sometime allies the Romulans, scorchers eventually reached the black market and can now be found throughout the Alpha and Beta Quadrants. Fearsome rifles employing superheated plasma discharges to burn and melt, targets not killed by a scorcher blast nevertheless suffer painful, debilitating wounds that leave horrid, ugly scars. Many rogues favor the scorcher because of its "intimidation factor."

Scorchers use standard, continuous, and wide-beam settings. Compared to most energy rifles they are large and clumsy, requiring a certain amount of training to use properly. In game terms, characters who do not know the Energy Weapon (Scorcher) skill and Specialization suffer an automatic −1 test result penalty to all tests when firing a scorcher.

Legality: Scorchers are illegal in the Federation; private ownership of one constitutes a capital offense in Klingon, Romulan, and Cardassian space.

SCORCHER

Settings: See below
Range: 25/75/150/300
**Size:** 1.68 m long, 2.6 l in volume
Mass: 2.9 kg
Energy: 500 charges
Damage: Very Light (6 + 3d6 damage; 5 charges); Light (9 + 4d6 damage; 10 charges); Medium (18 + 6d6 damage; 20 charges); Heavy (27 + 10d6 damage; 40 charges).

SLEEVE DISRUPTOR

So called because many rogues and gamblers hide this pistol up their sleeves as a "backup weapon," the sleeve disruptor is a small pistol—smaller than even a Type I phaser—whose value lies in its concealability. Capable of only standard firing mode and containing just a few charges of energy, the sleeve disruptor is primarily intended to stun, rather than kill, the target (thus allowing the user to flee before further violence becomes necessary).
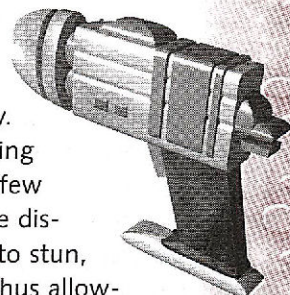
Legality: Because of their concealability and potentially lethal capabilities, sleeve disruptors are illegal in the Federation, the Cardassian Union, and the Romulan Star Empire. Although legal to carry in the Klingon Empire, Klingons regard the sleeve disruptor as a coward's weapon.

SLEEVE DISRUPTOR

Settings: 1-2
Range: 5/10/20/30
**Size:** 8 cm long, .15 l in volume
Mass: .1 kg
Energy: 50 charges
Damage: Sleeve disruptors have only two settings: Heavy Stun (5 + 2d6 damage, 5 charges) and Light Disrupt (20 + 3d6 damage; 20 charges).

STUNNER

Although it's possible to set most phaser and disruptor weapons to "stun" a target, it's also possible to cause injury accidentally with such weapons—by missetting the device or shooting someone at too close a range, for example. Also, they're not always dependable; some species, such as Klingons, have a much greater resistance to such attacks than others.

Rogues seeking a way around these problems—soft-hearted thieves and gamblers who, while more than willing to lie, cheat, and steal, have no desire to kill—often use a weapon known as a
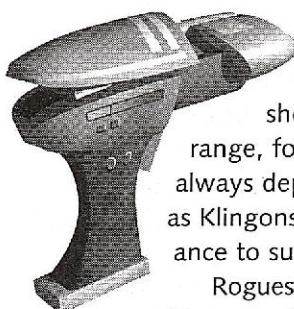
stunner. A stunner affects the neurophysical processes of most humanoids, instantly rendering them unconscious (typically for at least ten minutes, and often for hours).

Legality: Stunners are legal in the Federation and Romulan Star Empire if the owner has a license for the weapon. They are legal without a license in the Klingon Empire. They are technically illegal in the Cardassian Union, but any Cardassian with enough *vesala* could own or carry one without any problem.

STUNNER

Settings: 1
Range: 5/15/30/80
Size: 17 cm long, .49 l in volume
Mass: .4 kg
Energy: 50 charges
Damage: The stunner has only one setting, which does 8 + 3d6 Stun damage and costs 5 charges of energy. If the shooter wishes to conserve the pistol's energy, he can reduce the charge cost by up to 3 (to a minimum of 2), but each −1 charge reduces the damage done by that shot by 1.

VARON-T DISRUPTOR

This small, relatively easily concealed disruptor pistol was invented sometime in the late 2350's by the infamous Andorian armorer Sholest Varon. Never one to turn down potential profit, he was more than willing to put his talents to work for an as-yet unidentified member of the Orion Syndicate who approached him about designing a small, powerful energy pistol. He christened his invention the Varon-T disruptor.

Despite its small size and light weight, the Varon-T packs a fearsome punch. Its beam disrupts the body from the inside out, causing a slow, agonizingly painful death ("slow" in this sense becomes a relative term—death occurs mere seconds after the blast, but that's "slow" compared to the instantaneous death caused by the blast from a phaser or regular disruptor). The weapon has no settings; it's intended solely to kill, never to stun. Using a Varon-T sends a message to the shooter's other enemies—keep away, or you'll die writhing on the floor in agony, too.

Fortunately, Varon-T disruptors are extraordinarily rare. Sholest Varon only made five of them before his death, and never recorded any plans for the gun. Of these five, four were owned by a Zibalian trader and collector named Kivas Fajo as of 2366, when he was arrested for various crimes and turned over to

Federation authorities. The four weapons were confiscated, but several months later an unknown person or persons broke into the storage locker where they were kept and stole them. Since then, they have presumably fetched a king's ransom on the black market, though no security force has received word of them. The whereabouts of the fifth weapon have never been determined.

Legality: Ownership of this weapon is illegal in the Federation; anyone found in possession of one can receive a substantial prison sentence. The Klingons and Cardassians both make possession of a Varon-T disruptor a capital offense; the Romulan policy on them remains unknown.

VARON-T DISRUPTOR

Settings: None
Range: 5/15/30/75
Size: 15 cm long, .4 l in volume
Mass: .3 kg
Energy: 10 charges
Damage: 24 + 5d6

POISONS

Sometimes guns and explosives just aren't subtle enough. Many assassins prefer quieter, surer methods for dispatching their victims. Poison provides the ideal solution. Poisons can do anything from kill a victim to make him violently ill just long enough for a thief to get into a secured area while the victim can't see or stop him. If the poisoner can get close enough to the victim to take a reading on him with a tricorder or similar device, he can precisely match a toxin's effects to the victim's metabolism, thus ensuring that the victim remains unconscious or ill just as long as the poisoner requires.

The Icon System describes poisons using four characteristics: Type, Onset Time, Effect, and Compatibility. Type classifies poisons by how the user introduces them into the victim's system. Types include Ingested (poisons consumed in food or drink), Injected (poisons forcibly introduced into the system via hypospray, a coated blade weapon, or the like), Gaseous (poisonous gases which the victim breathes in), and Contact (the poison seeps through the skin when the victim touches it).

Onset Time describes how long it takes before the victim first feels the poison's effects. Some poisons work instantly, but most require anywhere from a few minutes to an hour or more before they take effect.

Effect describes what the poison does—anything

from causing damage (usually rated as a certain amount of damage per time period during a set time frame, like 3d6 damage per minute for ten minutes), to knocking a victim out or making him sick. Contrary to popular belief, not every poison is deadly; many simply incapacitate a victim in some way.

Compatibility describes which humanoid species the poison affects. Some substances are poisonous only to certain species—for example, cobalt diselenide is poisonous to Cardassians, but not to other species. Narrators are, of course, free to change a poison's Compatibility if doing so would improve a story; the listed Compatibilities are only guidelines.

Most poisons and poisonous substances are illegal, or heavily regulated, in all societies; under harsher regimes, such as Romulan or Cardassian, simple possession of many poisons can constitute a capital offense. Security organizations regularly exchange information about poisons so that they can keep up to date on the latest ones.

RESISTING POISONS

Poisons represent a challenge for the Narrator. Realistically, once a poison has been introduced into a person's system, there is little he can do to avoid its effects unless an antidote is available and he takes it during the Onset Time or Effect period. But that all too often makes poisons "instant death" weapons in a game—weapons which can easily spoil a story, or prompt characters to carry around kits full of poisons for every occasion (which completely violates most character conceptions and *Star Trek* genre precepts, even for a rogues' campaign). Keep these dramatic needs in mind when reading the following rules, so that you can adapt or alter them to suit the needs of your series. Furthermore, the Narrator must approve *all* purchases and uses of poisons by characters.

Typically, only the victim's natural Resistance affects the damage caused by poisons. External Resistance, such as that offered by armor or a personal force field, doesn't affect poison damage once the poison has been introduced into the victim's system (though it may prevent an attacker from getting the poison into the victim in the first place).

Especially fit, vital, or healthy characters may be able to resist poisons more easily than most people. When a character is poisoned, have him make a Moderate (7) Fitness test (modified by Vitality). If he succeeds, he may *double* his Resistance for purposes of decreasing the damage done by the poison.

A victim's total Resistance applies to poison dam-

age only once, not to every die roll made to determine a poison's Effect. For example, suppose that a victim with Resistance 3 is affected by anesthezine gas. The first round he takes 8 + 5d6 damage; the Narrator rolls a 23. The victim subtracts his Resistance of 3 and takes 20 points of damage. Since he's already applied his total Resistance to the poison, in later rounds he takes the full damage rolled. On the other hand, suppose he was poisoned with Keltara blue and takes 1 point of damage the first round. He applies his Resistance and takes no damage. That leaves him 2 points of Resistance which he has not yet applied to the poison. After the poison does another 2 points of damage in succeeding rounds, he will begin to take the damage in full.

Some characters are particularly resistant to a given type of poison. This is reflected by the advantage *Resistant* (see page 78 of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Players' Guide*). They have an easier time making their Fitness tests to resist a poison's effects. If they succeed, their Resistance quadruples for purposes of decreasing poison damage; even if they fail, their Resistance is double what it would ordinarily be.

Of course, the best way to resist damage from a poison is to take the antidote (if one exists). When a character takes an antidote, he stops taking damage (or suffering other effects) from the poison. Thus, taking an antidote during the Onset Time period prevents the poison from having any effect.

ANESTHEZINE/NEURAZINE

Type: Gaseous
Onset Time: Instantaneous
Effect: Victim takes 8 + 5d6 Stun damage the first round of exposure, then 3d6 per round of breathing the gas until he falls unconscious. Until removed from the affected area, he cannot wake up.
Compatibility: All

Commonly used on Federation starships and installations, including Deep Space 9, as a security measure, anesthezine is a sedative gas which renders anyone who breathes it unconscious. Most starships can flood all or selective parts of the ship with anesthezine in the event of a boarding action by an enemy.

The Dominion and Cardassian equivalent of anesthezine is neurazine. The effects of the two poisons are virtually identical.

(Note: This description revises and replaces the one for anesthezine in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game Players' Guide*.)

Flaxian Multistage Poison

Type: See text.
Onset Time: See text; typically 1d6 minutes.
Effect: 3d6 damage per minute for 10 minutes
Compatibility: Varies, but typically all

Well known throughout the Alpha Quadrant for their skills as assassins, the Flaxians count a plethora of poisons among their many sophisticated tools of death. This, the multistage poison, represents the height of the Flaxian poisoner's art. It comes in two or three "parts," no single piece dangerous by itself. Combining the parts, or administering them to the victim separately, creates a lethal poison.

Flaxian multistage poisons come in a variety of types. For example, the Flaxian assassin Retaya, who tried to kill Elim Garak on Deep Space 9 in 2371, posed as a perfume merchant. His "perfume samples case" contained three perfumes which, when mixed together, made a deadly gaseous poison. This poison would be Type: Gaseous and Onset Time: Instant. A multistage poison designed to work with food (one part in the appetizer, one in the main course, and one in the wine) would be Type: Ingested and Onset Time: 1 Hour. The Flaxians can even tailor multistage poisons to specific species if necessary, so that all the humans and Cardassians at the table could eat safely, but the Klingon would keel over and die after taking his first bite of dessert.

Keltara Blue

Type: Injected
Onset Time: Instantaneous
Effect: 1d6 damage upon injection and 1/2 d6 per round thereafter for the next 20 rounds
Compatibility: All

Used primarily by assassins who favor a knife and/or throwing blade, Keltara blue is an extremely lethal toxin. Its name comes from its distinctive blue color, which is easily visible when it's slathered on a blade. No known antidote for Keltara blue poisoning exists.

Neurozine

Type: Gaseous
Onset Time: Instantaneous
Effect: 5d6 damage per round of breathing the gas until victim dies or is removed from the affected area.
Compatibility: All

Not to be confused with the nonlethal neurazine gas, neurozine is a lethal gaseous poison developed by the Cardassian Central Command for use in riot suppression. For example, the antiriot systems on Terok Nor were equipped with neurozine in case the Bajoran slave workers got out of control.

Somnozine

Type: Injected or Ingested
Onset Time: 1d6 minutes
Effect: 2d6 Stun damage per round for 5 rounds, then per minute for 10 minutes.
Compatibility: Human, Bajoran, Centauran, Vulcan, Romulan; half effect against all other species

This common knockout poison was developed by an unscrupulous Ferengi pharmaceutical company when it tried to invent a better anaesthetic for certain surgical procedures. Sensing profit, the Ferengi began selling it on the black market when it proved unsuitable for medical uses. It can be fed to the victim, but more commonly is injected with a needle or weapon.

Thalazine

Type: Ingested or Gaseous
Onset Time: Instantaneous
Effect: Victim is incapacitated by retching and nausea for 5 + 3d6 rounds.
Compatibility: All

A regurgitant poison developed by the Bajoran resistance from the seeds of a native Bajoran plant, thalazine makes those who are exposed to it violently ill for a short period. While affected by it, most victims can do nothing but lie on the ground, moan, and retch—making them sitting ducks for attackers. An affected character may make a Routine (5) Fitness test (modified by Vitality) to act for one round, but suffers a –2 test result penalty on any tests attempted during that round.

Veraxa

Type: Ingested
Onset Time: 1 round
Effect: 2d6 damage per round for 20 rounds
Compatibility: All but Vorta

A Cardassian poison, veraxa is extremely lethal and has worked perfectly on all species on which it has been used (except Vorta). Because of its strong, distinctive odor and taste, it can only be put in similarly strong food or drink (such as kanar), or else the victim will easily detect it.

VERIDIUM SERIES POISONS

Type: Ingested
Onset Time: See text.
Effect: See text.
Compatibility: Klingon, Human, Cardassian

Invented by scientists in the Klingon Empire and still used primarily there, the veridium poisons (types One through Eight) are long-term, slow-working poisons which kill by gradual accumulation within the victim's system. Veridiums One through Six have Onset Times equal to one hour per numerical designation and do a number of points of damage equal to one per day for a number of days per numerical designation (for example, Veridium Five has a five-hour Onset Time and does one point of damage per day for up to five days). Thus, to accomplish their intended result, they must be placed in the victim's food and drink day after day or week after week for long periods of time, until eventually the victim collapses and dies from the accumulated damage. Detecting the presence of a veridium poison is difficult; the minimum Difficulty Number for Medical Sciences tests to determine if a person is suffering from veridium poisoning is Challenging (10).

Veridiums Seven and Eight are a little different. They are acute, rather than chronic, and cause 7d6 and 8d6 damage, respectively, with an Onset Time of one hour.

MELEE WEAPONS

Possession of any of the following items usually is not illegal, but may mark the owner as an undesirable or a threat.

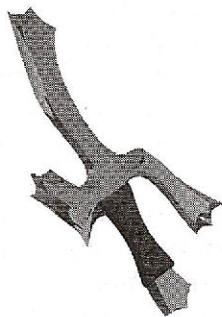### JULASA

Size: 7 cm
Mass: 05 kg
Range: 5/10/20/30
Damage: 1/2 d6 points + poison

The *julasa* is a small, extremely sharp throwing blade developed by the Flaxians. Shaped roughly like a capital H, it causes little damage itself, but usually carries poison.

KUT'LUCH

Size: 30 cm long (18 cm blade)
Mass: 0.28 kg

Accuracy: 7
Block: +0
Damage: 3 + 2d6

The *kut'luch* is the Klingon assassin's dagger. Its jagged and serrated blade causes large, ragged wounds which don't heal well (increase the Difficulty of any natural healing rolls the character makes by 1). Any Klingon found possessing or using one will be branded a coward and lose significant amounts of Honor.
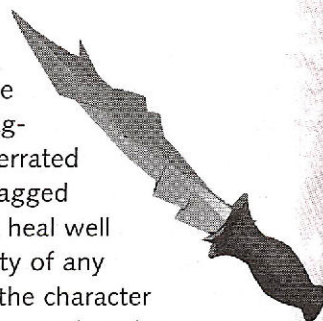
SURVEILLANCE AND INFILTRATION TECHNOLOGY

Rogues spend a lot of time obtaining data they're not supposed to have (like blackmail information, or the codes for a space station's computers) and getting into places where they're not supposed to be. The following equipment can prove helpful in a tight or dangerous situation.

PERSONAL MASKING/JAMMING TECHNOLOGY

These devices help a rogue defeat or trick senses and sensors.

CAMOUFLAGE FIELD

Size: Varies; typically at least .5 cubic meters in volume
Mass: Varies; typically at least 6 kg
Duration: Three hours + recharge

A camouflage field is a semiportable device used to hide contraband materials from sensors. It generates false sensor readings, indicating that the items it protects are ordinary, legal cargo. The field generator itself is typically disguised to look like an ordinary crate or container, and uses part of its field to disguise itself.

FORENSIC CLEANSER

**Size:** A rod 30 cm long and 5 cm in diameter
Mass: 1.1 kg
Duration: 3 minutes (see text)

A forensic cleanser helps a thief or other criminal eliminate all traces indicating that he was in a particular area—fingerprints, DNA and other biological

residues, unusual energy or biosignatures, and the like. It emits concentrated waves of epsilon radiation which break down such traces into their unidentifiable component elements, hopelessly muddle energy signatures, and so forth. The effects cover an area with a 10 meter radius. (Epsilon radiation is not dangerous to living tissue for short exposures, so it's safe for the user to turn it on as long as he quickly leaves the area.)

A forensic cleanser must operate for its full three-minute charge to be completely effective; if stopped before that time, traces of the criminal may be recovered in usable form. After completing its three-minute cycle, the cleanser fries its internal circuitry, making it untraceable as well.
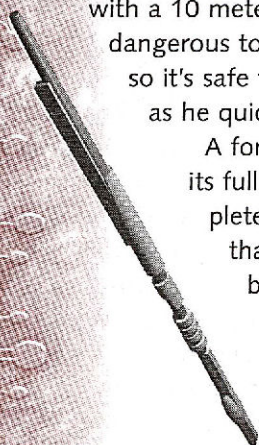
SENSOR/TRICORDER DECOY

Size: A cube typically about 15 cm on an edge
Mass: Typically 2.5-3.75 kg
Duration: 2 hours

This object is a cube-shaped device mounted on small antigrav units allowing it to float and "fly." The device itself contains sophisticated technology that emits energies mimicking those of any type of humanoid, thus acting as a decoy to lure pursuit away. The user can configure the unit to represent any type of humanoid—species, variables such as height, and the like can all be changed, depending on what the user wants the sensors to perceive. Of course, the object remains obvious to the naked eye and does nothing to hide the user's own sensor profile. If the character operating the sensors or tricorder thinks he's being tricked, he may make a Challenging (11) Shipboard Systems (Sensors) or Personal Equipment (Tricorder) test to determine that the decoy is just that.
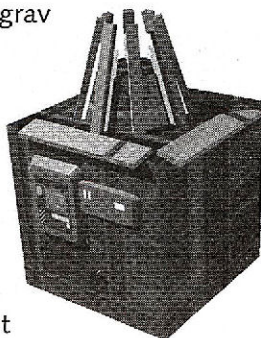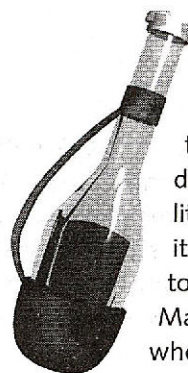
INFILTRATION TECHNOLOGY

These items are used to bypass security systems and break into secured areas. They are illegal in all societies.

MAGNESITE DROPS

Size: Varies depending on size of bottle which holds the liquid
Mass: Varies
Duration: Special

Magnesite drops are a highly concentrated liquid that eats through duranium, tritanium, and other metals (and just about anything else). When applied to a vault door, lock, or other object, each milliliter of it does 6 + 4d6 damage to it; it takes about a minute for the drops to finish reacting with the metal. Many rogues use magnesite drops when committing thefts.

MAGNETIC SEAL BYPASSER

Size: 10 cm x 7 cm x 3 cm
Mass: .35 kg
Duration: 3 + 1d6 rounds (plus recharge)

This device, known in some cultures as the "thieves' friend," temporarily cancels the magnetic charge used to seal most secured doors, deposit boxes, and the like. Its power cell doesn't allow it to cancel such powerful magnetic charges for very long, so it works well only for jobs where the user has to get through a sealed door quickly without having to worry about how he'll get out, or when he needs to have a door open for just a short period of time (say, long enough to steal something and get out again). If security sensors focus on the magnetic seal, they will detect the use of the bypasser.

PROXIMITY DETECTOR DECOY

Size: 12 cm x 8 cm x 5 cm
Mass: .5 kg
Duration: 30 minutes + recharge

Many alarms and other security systems are triggered by proximity detectors, which determine that an unauthorized person has approached the secured area or item. A proximity detector decoy, either worn on the belt or placed in a particular location, cancels out the "proximity signature" of certain persons so that the alarms don't activate. The decoy must be pro-

grammed with the biosignatures of anyone whom it is to "hide" (it can mask up to four persons at once, but all such persons must remain within 3 meters of it).
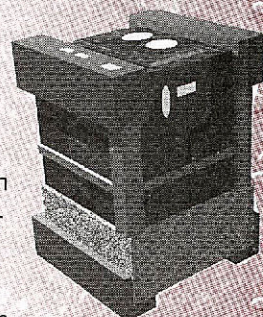
SECURITY BYPASS MODULE

Size: 8 cm x 5 cm x 3 cm
Mass: .30 kg
Duration: Indefinite

This device, when properly installed in a security system, allows the user to disable or circumvent a security system with a spoken or entered command, or even by remote control. The device also hides its own presence from security scanners; it must be discovered by sight and removed by hand.

COMPUTER INFILTRATION TECHNOLOGY

Sometimes it's not necessary to break into a facility—just into that facility's computer. By controlling someone's computer, you control everything linked to that computer and have full access to his data to boot. This technology is illegal in all societies.
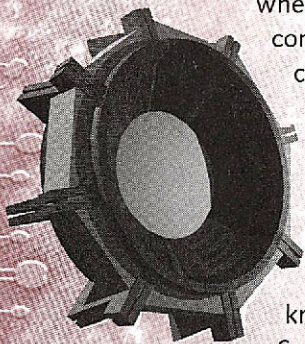
DATAPORT

Size: 1-2 cm diameter, 2 mm thick
Mass: Negligible

A dataport is a device inserted into a humanoid's head, with an opening in the back of the neck (and thus hidden by most humanoids' hair if necessary) where it can be connected to a computer system by a short cable. This allows the person to interface with the computer directly and manipulate it with his mind instead of a control console or similar device. To use a dataport, a character must know the Computer skill (any Specialization, though Data Alteration/Hacking is by far the most common) at level 1 or higher. The dataport effectively increases that level by 2, and allows any computer-related tasks to be performed much more quickly than normal.

However, using a dataport can pose dangers. By interfacing directly with a computer system, the user exposes himself directly to computer security programs. Such programs can cause him pain (thus forcing him to "jack out" from the system) or permanent brain damage. Inexperienced users can also suffer "information overload," preventing them from identifying the particular fact or data they desire.

ISOLINEAR INTERPHASE

Size: 22 cm x 14 cm x 5 cm
Mass: 1.3 kg

A dataport isn't the only way to break into and manipulate computers. Criminals can penetrate computers based on isolinear technology (such as those used by the Federation and Cardassian Union) with a device called an isolinear interphase. Consisting of a small viewscreen, control panel, and data connection, the interphase plugs directly into an isolinear computer console. Using the interphase's control panel, the criminal overrides the security protocols on the computer and can then do whatever he wants. Operating an isolinear interphase requires the Personal Equipment (Isolinear Interphase) skill, though characters with Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) can use one at a +1 Difficulty penalty to all tests.
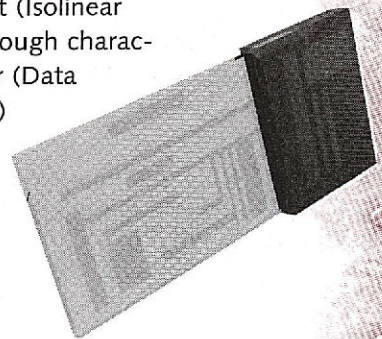
REMOTE SENSORS

Rogues sometimes have as much need to gather information as the security personnel they constantly seek to outwit. Two of the devices they use to do this are:

FERENGI EAVESDROPPING DEVICE

Size: 3-4 cm long, 1.5 cm wide, 1-2 mm thick.
Mass: Negligible
Duration: 100 hours + recharge

This tiny, oval-shaped device functions as a sound receiver and transmitter. When placed in a area, it picks up all sounds within 20 meters and relays them to a reception device within 100 meters. It cannot transmit through a shield or any form of jamming technology; its signal is too weak.

Ferengi eavesdropping devices are extremely expensive. In most advanced societies, including the Federation, Bajor, the Romulan Star Empire, Klingon Empire, and Cardassian Union, they remain illegal.

Pheromonic Sensor

Size: 5 cm x 3 cm x 1 cm
Mass: .03 kg
Duration: 50 hours + recharge
  This device detects the presence of a particular person or species, based upon his/its pheromonic signature. Pheromonic sensors are most often used to trigger transmitters or weapons (such as bombs or poison gas containers) when the intended quarry comes within range.

Miscellaneous Technology

Hunter Probe

Size: Typically 13-20 cm long, 8-14 cm in diameter
Mass: Typically .8-2.1 kg
Duration: 12 hours + recharge

A hunter probe, which can fly at the rate of 20 meters per round, is a long-range surveillance and attack device favored by certain assassins and mercenaries. It contains several useful components, including sensors (visual and other), hypospraylike attachments (for injecting poison, a microexplosive, or a similar device into a victim), and attachments for explosives. It can be remotely controlled by an operator using subspace signals, or programmed to perform a certain function or series of functions (such as to attach itself to a ship's hull, detach when the ship reaches a certain destination, scan that destination for a particular victim, fly to where the victim is, and then explode).

Hunter probes are illegal in all societies. A clever rogue can (usually) avoid this restriction by adapting any one of several different (and completely legal) industrial devices which serve similar functions to work as hunter probes.

Neural Servo

Size: Control unit is approximately 10 cm x 5 cm x 3 cm; implants are about 1 cm3.
Mass: Control unit, .6 kg; implants, negligible
Duration: Indefinite

Used by many slavers, tyrannical pirate captains, and similar rogues to control people, a neural servo consists of a control unit (usually carried in the hand or worn on the belt) and implants. The implants are installed beneath a victim's nuchal skin. When the user activates the servo, a victim feels intense pain. Typically this pain causes no lasting damage, but is so debilitating that it prevents the victim from taking any actions (at the Narrator's discretion, a Crewmember could make a Difficult (13) or higher Fitness + Vitality test to act despite the pain he feels, but all actions are at -2 test result). If the user turns the servo up high enough, the victim also suffers 3 + 3d6 damage per round until he dies.

Remat Detonator

Size: 2 mm^3
Mass: Negligible

Remat detonators are tiny devices which kill by altering transporter beams. When someone carrying one rematerializes during transport, the remat detonator scrambles the beam, causing the victim to suffer an agonizing, though mercifully quick, death. The victim takes 8 + 10d6 damage against which only his natural Resistance (not any Resistance from armor or the like) applies.

Remat detonators were invented by the Romulans, but are available on the black market throughout the Alpha and Beta Quadrants (they are, of course, illegal in all societies). Transporters are typically set not to work on someone carrying a remat detonator, but if the user knows the transporter's security protocols, he can program the remat detonator to avoid this effect.

Almost by definition, pirates require vessels to operate among the stars. A pirate band needs at least one ship with which to prey on marks and capture prizes; otherwise, it constitutes little more than a gang of frustrated criminals.

Similarly, many of the other types of characters described in this book, particularly mercenaries and bounty hunters, rely on ships to get their jobs done. Many mercenary bands use their ships, often known as "corvettes" for their speed and sleekness, not only to fight battles, but to travel from job to job. Bounty hunters need their own ships, typically small ones, to pursue their quarry across the stars.

ACQUIRING A SHIP

Unfortunately, obtaining a ship can be difficult. Ships cost a lot of money (even in the Federation, economic considerations play a part in building and distributing them), and those who own them guard them carefully. Some of the ways pirates obtain ships include:

PURCHASE

Unless a pirate happens to be wealthy, he normally can't afford to purchase his own vessel. Several disreputable ship-building companies do exist, their representatives willing to sell to the underworld—for the right price, of course. Buying a vessel is most common when a pirate crew borrows a ship and makes enough money to buy the vessel outright.

Bought pirate ships tend to be the most dangerous kind. Not only do their owners retain a certain vested interest in them, they often include custom features, such as special weapons, which make them more capable combatants.

Mercenaries often include in their contracts the right to keep or purchase (at greatly reduced rates) the equipment given to them for a mission, and that may include ships. In effect, these are purchases, since the mercenaries trade their services and/or some of the funds earned for the vessel(s).

THEFT

Not surprisingly, most pirates obtain their vessels simply by taking them. Those who use ships to steal generally have no compunctions about stealing the ship in the first place. All prizes kept by pirates for use in their own fleets also fall into this category.

Perhaps the most infamous pirate theft on record occurred in early 2374, when a partially completed *Galor*-class vessel disappeared from the Monac IV shipyards. The ship was about three-quarters finished and included standard systems for its class. The thieves, a group of pirates led by a renegade Cardassian gul named Nevel, infiltrated the shipyards disguised as soldiers of the Fifth Order, killed three guards, and escaped with the vessel after inserting a virus into the shipyard's computers to delay pursuit. Since then Nevel's band has used the ship to raid up and down the former Federation-Cardassian DMZ, though now that the war is over, the Federation will undoubtedly bring his depredations to a swift end.

LOANS OR GIFTS

Some pirates or mercenary bands receive ships as loans or gifts. Governments often supply their privateers with appropriate vessels; the same applies to mercenaries, who often require their employer to supply ships and weapons as part of the mercenary contract. Some of these contracts include detailed technical specifications so the privateers or mercenaries get exactly what they want.

RAG-TAGS

A pirate band sometimes builds its own ship from surplus parts and cast-off ship systems. Such ships are known in the vernacular as "rag-tags" (or "scraps"). As long as these vessels use standard civilian ship parts, such as those found in merchant ships and passenger transports, their construction remains legal. Most raiders, of course, would rather not limit themselves to civilian parts, and often raid military depots (such as surplus ship depot Zed 15 at Qualor II) for parts or buy restricted ship systems on the black market—obviously, such scraps are illegal.

SHIP TECHNOLOGY

Pirates, mercenaries, and bounty hunters often build their ships with special technology, making them more efficient for performing the types of tasks their owners undertake. Naturally, most of these items are illegal for civilians to own, and just having one installed in a ship may constitute a crime (regardless of whether it's used to commit an illegal activity).

OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

CLOSE-RANGE TRACTOR BEAM

Power: See below

Used for clamping-style boarding actions, the close-range tractor beam (CRTB) functions similarly to a standard tractor beam, except that it works more efficiently at close ranges and less efficiently at longer ranges. At distances up to 1 kilometer, the Power cost for using the tractor is halved. For ranges from 1.1 to 10 kilometers, the Power cost is normal. When used at ranges beyond 10 kilometers, the Power cost doubles.

WARP DESTABILIZER

Power: 15
Accuracy: 5/6/8/11

Pirates and bounty hunters use this weapon to prevent their intended targets from running away from them at warp speed. A successful hit upon a ship interferes with the proper functioning of the power transfer conduits connecting the warp engines to the warp nacelles, thus preventing the target from going to warp speeds (but not from providing power to his ship's systems). The effects last for 1d6 x 10 minutes.

SENSORY AND STEALTH SYSTEMS

ENERGY SHEATH

Power: None

An "energy sheath," more properly termed a sensor dissipation sheath, is a type of material which can be attached to starship hulls. A ship fully covered with an energy sheath has the equivalent of a Cloak 6 against long-range sensors. The sheath has no effect on ordinary sight or any short-range sensors (including lateral sensors).

Energy sheathing material is extremely expensive and classified by all known governments; it's illegal for civilians even to own. Unlike a cloaking device it costs a ship no Power, and thus is a good alternative for ships whose engines aren't powerful enough to support a standard cloak (or whose crews cannot obtain a cloak).

Power: 2 x ship's Size (minimum of 10)

This powerful, and illegal, device consists of special holoemitters implanted in a ship's hull. When activated, they can make the ship appear to be any other ship of the same Size or smaller. The holoemitters affect not only the visual senses, but standard ship's sensors as well. While an SHS is active, the ship using it cannot also use any weapons or shields, transport anyone off the ship, or use a cloaking device.

SHIPS

SMALL PIRATE SHIP

Class and Type: Small pirate ship (*Rendar* class)
Commissioning Date: Varies
Hull Characteristics
  Size: 3
  Resistance: 3
  Structural Points: 60
Operations Characteristics
  Crew/Passengers/Evac: 10/15/200 [5 Power/round]
  Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
  Transporters: 1 personnel, 1 cargo [1 Power/round]
  Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]
Propulsion and Power Characteristics
  Warp System: 5.0/6.0/7.0 (24 hours) [2/warp factor]
  Impulse System: .5 c/.75 c [5/7 Power/round]
  Power: 100
Sensor Systems
  Long-range Sensors: +0/14 light-years [6 Power/round]
  Lateral Sensors: +0/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
  Navigational Sensors: +0 [5 Power/round]
  Sensors Skill: 3
Weapons Systems
  Type V Phasers
    Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
    Arc: All (720 degrees)
    Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
    Damage: 10
    Power: [10]
    Weapons Skill: 3
Defensive Systems
  Deflector Shields
    Protection: 30/30 (45) [30 Power/shield/round]
Description and Notes
  Fleet data: This template represents a typical small pirate ship, one with a crew of no more

than about a dozen pirates. By increasing the vessel's warp speed capabilities slightly and adding a torpedo launcher, you can convert it into a small mercenary corvette. Decrease the size slightly and it makes a good vessel for a bounty hunter who prefers to operate solo.

Security and intelligence agencies typically refer to smaller pirate vessels like this one as *Rendar*-class ships, after a discontinued line of small ships produced by the Rendar Shipyards in the Rigel system. Rendar vessels eventually became a favorite of pirates, smugglers, and other such persons, and many remain in operation today.

MEDIUM PIRATE SHIP

Class and Type: Medium pirate ship (*Reaver* class)
Commissioning Date: Varies
Hull Characteristics
  Size: 4
  Resistance: 3
  Structural Points: 80
Operations Characteristics
  Crew/Passengers/Evac: 25/40/400 [5 Pwr/round]
  Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
  Transporters: 2 personnel, 2 cargo [2 Power/round]
  Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]
Propulsion and Power Characteristics
  Warp System: 6.0/7.0/8.0 (12 hours) [2/warp factor]
  Impulse System: .5 c/.75 c [5/7 Power/round]
  Power: 125
Sensor Systems
  Long-range Sensors: +0/14 light-years [6 Power/round]
  Lateral Sensors: +0/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
  Navigational Sensors: +0 [5 Power/round]
  Sensors Skill: 3
Weapons Systems
  Type VI Phasers
    Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
    Arc: All (720 degrees)
    Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
    Damage: 12
    Power: [12]
  Torpedo Launcher
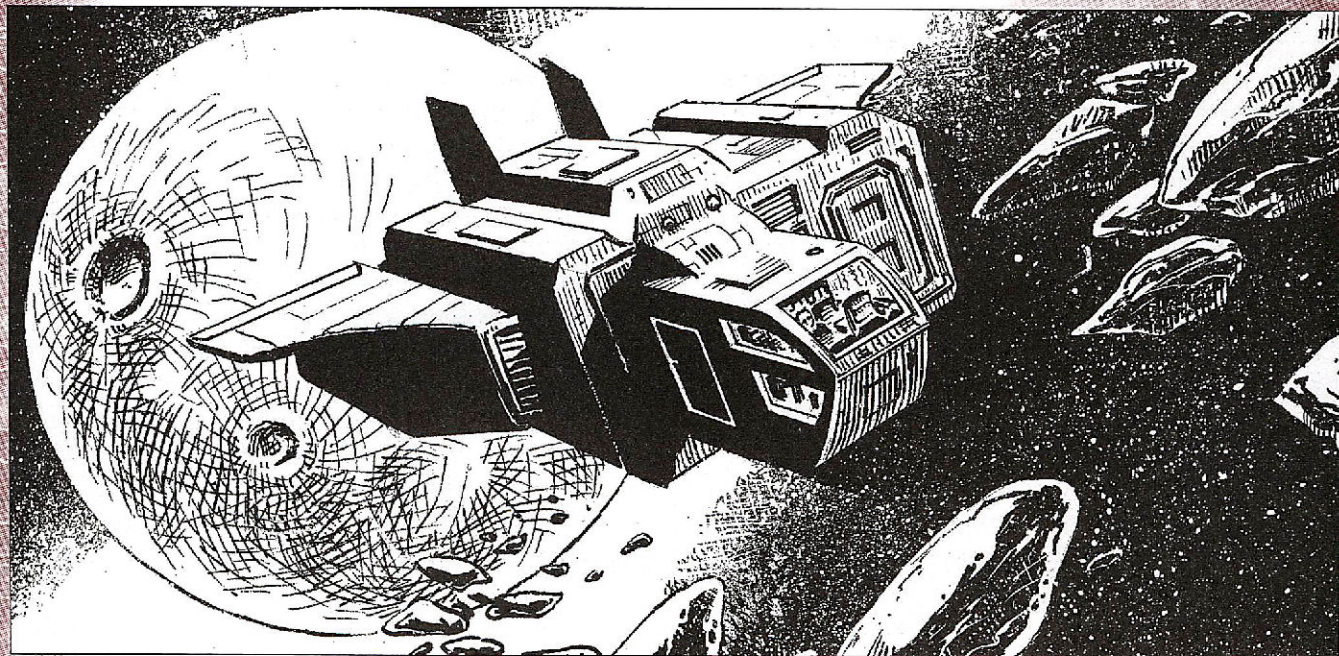   Number: 20
    Launchers: 1
    Spread: 3
    Arc: Forward, but are self-guided
    Range: 15/300,000/1,000,000/3,000,000
    Accuracy: 4/5/7/10

Damage: 20
Power: [5]
Weapons Skill: 3

Defensive Systems

Deflector Shields

Protection: 40/40 (60) [40 Power/shield/round]

Description and Notes

Fleet data: Known throughout the Alpha Quadrant as a *Reaver*-class ship, this medium-sized pirate vessel presents a definite threat to all but the largest merchant vessels. A group of *Reaver*-class ships can take on even large merchant convoys. With the addition of a better torpedo launcher, and perhaps stronger phasers, *Reaver*-class vessels make good personnel transports for mercenaries.

LARGE PIRATE SHIP

Class and Type: Large pirate ship (*Mithras* class)
Commissioning Date: Varies
Hull Characteristics

Size: 5
Resistance: 3
Structural Points: 100

Operations Characteristics

Crew/Passengers/Evac: 50/100/800 [6 Pwr/rnd]
Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
Transporters: 2 personnel, 3 cargo [2 Power/round]
Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]

Propulsion and Power Characteristics

Warp System: 6.0/7.0/8.0 (12 hours) [2/warp factor]
Impulse System: .5 c/.75 c [5/7 Power/round]

Power: 150

Sensor Systems

Long-range Sensors: +1/15 light-years [6 Power/round]
Lateral Sensors: +1/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
Navigational Sensors: +1 [5 Power/round]
Sensors Skill: 4

Weapons Systems

Type VII Phasers

Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
Arc: All (720 degrees)
Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
Damage: 14
Power: [14]

Torpedo Launcher

Number: 50
Launchers: 1 forward, 1 aft
Spread: 4
Arc: Forward or aft, but are self-guided
Range: 15/300,000/1,000,000/3,000,000
Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
Damage: 20
Power: [5]
Weapons Skill: 4

Defensive Systems

Deflector Shields

Protection: 50/50 (70) [50 Power/shield/round]

Description and Notes

Fleet data: Named after a famous pirate vessel from about a hundred years ago, the *Mithras*-class ship represents the largest pirate or mercenary vessel commonly encountered. Of course, larger pirate ships do exist, but they consist of custom designs or prizes captured

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

by raiders. With its strong shields, arsenal of weapons, and fast warp engines, the *Mithras* class can stand up to all but the largest capital ships with a reasonable chance of survival and/or escape.

"RAG-TAG" PIRATE SHIP

Class and Type: Rag-tag pirate ship
Commissioning Date: Varies
Hull Characteristics
    Size: 4
    Resistance: 3
    Structural Points: 80
Operations Characteristics
    Crew/Passengers/Evac: 15/30/250 [5 Power/round]
    Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
    Transporters: 2 personnel, 1 cargo [1 Power/round]
    Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]
Propulsion and Power Characteristics
    Warp System: 4.0/4.0/6.0 (24 hours) [2/warp factor]
    Impulse System: .5 c/.75 c [5/7 Power/round]
    Power: 105
Sensor Systems
    Long-range Sensors: +0/14 light-years [6 Pwr/rnd]
    Lateral Sensors: +0/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
    Navigational Sensors: +0 [5 Power/round]
    Sensors Skill: 3
Weapons Systems
    Type VI Phasers
        Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
        Arc: All (720 degrees)
        Accuracy: 5/6/8/11
        Damage: 12
        Power: [12]
    Torpedo Launcher
        Number: 10
        Launchers: 1 forward
        Spread: 1
        Arc: Forward, but are self-guided
        Range: 15/300,000/1,000,000/3,000,000
        Accuracy: 5/6/8/11
        Damage: 20
        Power: [5]
        Weapons Skill: 3
Defensive Systems
    Deflector Shields
        Protection: 30/30 (45) [30 Power/shield/round]
Description and Notes
    Fleet data: This vessel represents a typical "scrap" assembled from bits and pieces of other ships. Like most rag-tags, it requires a good bit of

engineering prowess to keep it running, since many of its systems weren't designed to work together: Its warp drive may be Cardassian or Romulan, its weapons stolen from a Starfleet weapons depot somewhere, its shields cobbled together from components taken from half a dozen scrapped ships.

Although only a little larger than a typical small pirate vessel, this rag-tag carries heavier armaments. However, its torpedo launcher was taken from a damaged Starfleet vessel and doesn't work quite right. Whenever the crew fires it, have the engineer make a Moderate (7) Systems Engineering (Weapons Systems) test. If he succeeds, the weapon fires normally. If he fails, the weapon fires, but the torpedo fails to detonate or detonates prematurely, causing no damage to the target. If he suffers a Dramatic Failure, the torpedo explodes in the bay before launch, causing full damage to the pirate ship.

ABRAXAS-CLASS MERCENARY CORVETTE

Class and Type: *Abraxas*-class Mercenary Corvette
Commissioning Date: Varies
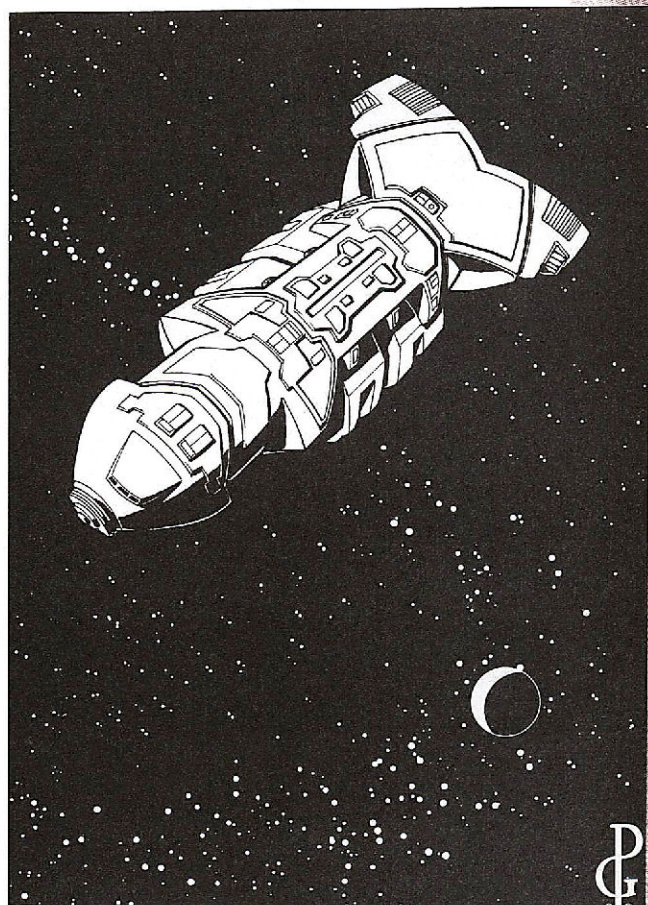
Hull Characteristics

Size: 4

Resistance: 4

Structural Points: 80

Operations Characteristics

Crew/Passengers/Evac: 4/50/450 [6 Power/round]

Computers: 4 [4 Power/round]

Transporters: 2 personnel, 2 cargo, 2 emergency
[3 Power/round]

Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]

Propulsion and Power Characteristics

Warp System: 6.5/8.0/9.0 (6 hours) [2/warp factor]

Impulse System: .7 c/.9 c [7/9 Power/round]

Power: 160

Sensor Systems

Long-range Sensors: +1/15 light-years [6
Power/round]

Lateral Sensors: +1/1 light-year [4 Power/round]

Navigational Sensors: +1 [5 Power/round]

Sensors Skill: 4

Weapons Systems

Type VIII Phasers

Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000

Arc: All (720 degrees)

Accuracy: 4/5/7/10

Damage: 16

Power: [16]

Torpedo Launchers

Number: 75

Launchers: 1 forward, 1 aft

Spread: 3

Arc: Forward or aft, but are self-guided

Range: 15/300,000/1,000,000/3,000,000

Accuracy: 4/5/7/10

Damage: 20

Power: [5]

Weapons Skill: 4

Defensive Systems

Deflector Shields

Protection: 45/45 (65) [45 Power/shield/round]

Description and Notes

Fleet data: The *Abraxas*-class mercenary corvette
represents the pinnacle of such vessels. Only
the best-funded or most well equipped merce-
nary groups use these expensive ships; most
mercenary bands have to settle for corvettes
which are somewhat slower and less well
armed. Some mercenary groups add more
weapons, or replace those the ship normally
has with even more powerful ones (though
this may strain the ship's power systems if the
engineers aren't careful). A few mercenaries

have tried to equip the *Abraxas* class with a
cloaking device, but the ship's engines are so
powerful for its size that a cloaking device
generally can't compensate for them entirely,
making it functionally useless.

SPECTER-CLASS SHIP

Class and Type: *Specter*-class Ship

Commissioning Date: 2371

Hull Characteristics

Size: 5

Resistance: 3

Structural Points: 100

Operations Characteristics

Crew/Passengers/Evac: 25/75/375 [5
Power/round]

Computers: 4 [4 Power/round]

Transporters: 3 personnel,1 cargo, 1 emergency
[3 Power/round]

Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating/round]

Propulsion and Power Characteristics

Warp System: 6.0/7.0/8.0 (6 hours) [2/warp factor]

Impulse System: .5 c/.75 c [5/7 Power/round]

Power: 140

Sensor Systems

Long-range Sensors: +1/15 light-years [6
Power/round]

Lateral Sensors: +1/1 light-year [4 Power/round]

Navigational Sensors: +1 [5 Power/round]

Ship Holoprojection System [10 Power]

Sensors Skill: 4

Weapons Systems

Type VII Phasers

Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000

Arc: All (720 degrees)

Accuracy: 4/5/7/10

Damage: 14

Power: [14]

Defensive Systems

Deflector Shields

Protection: 40/40 (50) [45 Pwr/shield/round]

Description and Notes

Fleet data: The ultimate Q-ship, the *Specter*-class
vessel was originally designed by Starfleet
Intelligence or the Obsidian Order (reports dif-
fer). Using its ship holoprojection system, it
can appear to be just about any other ship of
its size. With this camouflage, it can get close
to an enemy ship or a juicy merchantman
before its crew reveals the ship's guns and
opens fire.

The frontiers and seedy taverns of the *Star Trek* universe teem with some mighty dangerous customers. This chapter introduces a few of the most deadly or intriguing of them.

DaiMon Fog

DaiMon Fog, they call him. No one's sure about the legitimacy of the title; most in the underworld have learned to give him the benefit of the doubt. He seems, at first glance, like your typical Ferengi: short, scrawny, with that look of simpering greed mixed with a hesitancy born of cowardice which so often characterizes members of his species. But look more closely. His eyes gleam with more than just unalloyed Ferengi greed; it's a *predatory* gleam, like that of a piranha-worm right before it lashes forward to snatch a bite of its prey. No cowardly Ferengi, Fog is a tough, hard-bitten space pirate who's more than willing to face down thugs and killers twice his size. Even Nausicaans give him a wide berth.

According to underworld tales, Fog got started in life in the typical Ferengi fashion, but soon learned that buying, selling, and acquiring profit by legitimate channels wasn't for him. His aggression scared off customers, leaving him angrier still. He finally hopped a tramp freighter heading toward Cardassia and soon fell in with the worst element of the merchant trade. He eventually spiraled right down into unabashed piracy.

He served on some other pirate captains' vessels at first, but it didn't take long before he'd gotten a ship of his own by killing the last of them and taking over. That was about a dozen years ago. Since then, he's terrorized the spacelanes throughout the Alpha Quadrant, in the process assembling an infamous group of crewmen known to Lifers and law enforcement alike as "the Red Band" for their bloodthirsty ways. When Fog and the Red Band attack a ship, there are rarely many survivors left to tell the tale.

Fog's ship, the *Starving Gree*, is a *Mithras*-class ship custom-designed by Fog. It usually operates somewhere in the vicinity

of the Vertana Nebula, a stellar gas cloud along the border of UFP, Ferengi, and Cardassian space (part of it falls within the Draconis Outback). Fog has given lavish gifts of latinum to many residents of the region, creating a pool of underground support that he can tap to conceal his whereabouts from the authorities.

When not leading a raid or maintaining discipline among his crew, DaiMon Fog relaxes by cleaning his quarters (he's a notoriously fussy raider who demands that his men keep the *Starving Gree* spic and span), forcing his crew to lose games of tongo to him, or "playing" with his pet, Nooshak (a sort of cross between a housecat and a wolverine, supposedly native to Qo'noS). "Playing" often involves turning the creature loose on some disobedient crewman to teach him a "lesson"; more than a few of the Red Band carry scars from playing with Nooshak. He maintains no set haven, preferring the comfort of his ship, but allows his men frequent shore leave.

Most members of the Red Band are extremely loyal to Fog, despite the way he sometimes treats them, because he brings them a lot of latinum and other prizes. A few hate him bitterly and harbor secret plans to do him in and take control of the Red Band for themselves.

"DaiMon" Fog

Attributes
Fitness 3
  Strength +1
  Vitality +1
Coordination 3
Intellect 4
  Logic +1
  Perception +1
Presence 3
  Empathy −1
  Willpower −1
Psi 0

Skills
Athletics (Lifting) 1 (2)
Bargain (Weapons) 2 (3)
Command (Pirate Crew) 3 (4)
Culture (Ferengi) 2 (3)
Energy Weapon (Disruptor) 3 (4)
Fast Talk 2
Gaming (Tongo) 1 (2)
History (Ferengi) 1 (2)
Intimidation (Torture) 1 (2)
Language
  Federation Standard 1
  Ferengi 2
Merchant (Arms Market) 2 (3)
Personal Equipment (Communicator) 1 (2)
Planetside Survival (Swamp) 1 (2)
Primitive Weaponry (Knife) 2 (3)
Security (Security Systems) 2 (3)
Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) 2 (3)
  Tactical (3)
Streetwise (Locate Contraband) 2 (3)
  (Orion Syndicate) (3)
Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 2 (3)
World Knowledge (Ferenginar) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Excellent Hearing +2
Mathematical Ability +3
Telepathic Resistance +4
Vessel (the *Starving Gree*) +7 (large ship, superb resources)
Greedy −1
Shady Background −5

Courage: 4
Renown: 40
  Aggression: −3   Discipline: 9   Initiative: 8
  Openness: −6   Skill: 22
Resistance: 4

Lodus Kafrin

In a universe of thieves, one name consistently stands out when security officers talk about "the one that got away": Lodus Kafrin. A human who followed his parents, Federation diplomats, throughout the galaxy for most of his childhood, Kafrin somehow never learned the moral and ethical lessons that most Federation citizens cherish.

To the disappointment of his parents, he didn't apply to Starfleet Academy or embark on some similarly prestigious career. He simply dropped out of

sight and began drifting around the quadrant, working odd jobs. According to underworld legend, one day he saved an old man from being run over by a grav vehicle on Mars (or Earth, or Andoria, or Alpha Centauri, depending on who tells the story). That encounter changed his life.

ONLY AVAILABLE IMAGE

The old man was Unger Parkinson, known throughout the galaxy as a master thief *par excellence*. Grateful to the young man, Parkinson struck up a friendship with Kafrin. Sensing a kindred soul, he offered to teach Kafrin the tricks of his trade—though he was too old to pull heists anymore, he could still show Kafrin the ropes. Kafrin, at first intrigued and then genuinely excited about something for the first time in years, agreed.

He spent the next few years in training. Although he'd never been disciplined, he took to the task like a fish to water, soon surpassing even Parkinson himself. Then he embarked on a career which today has left him at the pinnacle of his profession. Thieves and con men throughout the quadrant revere his name the way Klingons revere ancient warrior-heroes. They say there's no job too difficult, no security too tight—Kafrin can steal anything.

The truth is, though, that Lodus Kafrin's talents lie not in stealing, but in self-promotion. The "Lodus Kafrin" of underworld legend is just that—a legend. Kafrin's a second-rate thief who uses his abilities with electronics, computers, and deception to make it *seem* like he's an incredibly skilled cat burglar. He pulls heists for the thrill of it, because they represent puzzles to solve. He ends up donating much of his loot to charity using various cover identities.

Lodus Kafrin

Attributes
Fitness 2
Coordination 3
Intellect 4
Presence 4
Psi 0

Skills
Athletics (Climbing) 2 (3)
   (Leaping) (3)
Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) 3 (4)
   (Research) (4)
Culture (Human) 2 (3)
Disguise (Human) 3 (4)
Dodge 1
Fast Talk 4
History (Human) 1 (2)
Knowledge (Art History) 3
Language
   Federation Standard 3
Merchant (Appraising/Selling Stolen Goods) 2 (3)
Personal Equipment (Tricorder) 1 (2)
Physical Sciences (Holography) 3 (4)
Search 3
Security (Security Systems) 2 (3)
Sleight of Hand (Pick Pocket) 1 (2)
Stealth (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Streetwise (Locate Fences/Black Market) 2 (3)
Systems Engineering (Burglar Equipment) 4 (5)
World Knowledge (Alpha Centauri) 1 (2)
   (Earth) (2)
   (Risa) (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Dataport +1
Wealth +4
Shady Background −4
Thrill-seeker −1
Wanted −4

Courage: 5
Renown: 38
   Aggression: −3   Discipline: 9   Initiative: 8
   Openness: −6   Skill: 22
Resistance: 2

TAGHRON

Those who romanticize all Klingons as "honorable warriors" would change that opinion if they ever had the misfortune of meeting Taghron. Although of average size and strength for a Klingon, he never took to the *bat'leth* like other Klingon youth; instead, it was the *kut'luch* which seemed to fit his hand well. Where other Klingons value an aggressive frontal approach and a willingness to challenge anything and anyone to fight, Taghron scorned such tactics; to him, stealth and treachery came naturally—"Like a Romulan," as his father, Vortog, sneered.

Eventually Taghron's dishonorable conduct became too great for even his family to tolerate. Vortog cast him out and exiled him from the Klingon Empire forever. To this day Taghron returns to Klingon space only by the stealthiest means; to be caught there would mean his instant death at the hands of enraged Klingon warriors. But he has no qualms about taking jobs which mean killing his brothers; indeed, he seems to relish such bloody tasks.

Taghron drifted around the frontiers for many years, honing his skills as a killer, mercenary, and smuggler, seeking only good pay and the chance to exercise his bloodlust. He found both and soon became a prized employee among certain underworld circles for his ability to "get things done" and leave no living witnesses.

Taghron owns a small vessel, the *Taa'vehk*, which he uses to smuggle small, valuable cargoes (including passengers). However, he prefers jobs that involve an element of violence and bloodshed; he becomes frustrated and angry if forced to hold his temper too long.

Recently rumors have begun circulating that Taghron is not the *real* Taghron any longer. Some people say that the Dominion killed the genuine Taghron a couple of years ago and replaced him with a shapeshifter. No one has gotten close enough to the feared killer to verify the truth of these persistent rumors.

TAGHRON

Attributes
Fitness 4
    Strength +1
    Vitality +2
Coordination 4
Intellect 2
    Logic –2
Presence 4
    Empathy –2
    Willpower +1
Psi 0

Skills
Assassination (Deadly Blows) 3 (4)
    (Stealthy Attacks) (4)
    (Traps and Snares) (4)
Athletics (Running) 1 (2)
Concealment (Weapons) 2 (3)
Culture (Klingon) 2 (3)
Demolitions (Booby Traps) 2 (3)
Dodge 3
Energy Weapon (Disruptor) 3 (4)
History (Klingon) 1 (2)
Language
    Federation Standard 1
    Klingon 2
Merchant (Smuggled Goods) 3 (4)
Personal Equipment (Hunter Probe) 1 (2)
Primitive Weaponry (*Kut'luch*) 4 (5)
Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) 3 (4)
    (Tactical) (4)
Streetwise (Locate Contraband) 1 (2)
Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 3 (4)
    (*qel'Qa* [Klingon Boxing]) (4)
World Knowledge (Qo'noS) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
High Pain Threshold +2
Organ Redundancy (*brak'lul*) +2
Vessel +4 (small ship, excellent resources)
Bloodlust –2
Exile –2
Shady Background –5
Wanted (Klingon Empire; Federation) –4

Courage: 3
Renown: 19
    Aggression: 8   Discipline: –2   Initiative: 2
    Openness: –2   Skill: 5
Resistance: 6

GIDEON "LONGSHANKS" TAMERLAINE

Spy. Lover. Traitor. Killer. Information broker. A 24th-century renaissance man, Gideon Tamerlaine embodies them all.

In his youth, Tamerlaine, a native of Alpha Centauri, was a loyal Federation citizen—so loyal, in fact, that he joined Starfleet after he finished his secondary education. While there he displayed an aptitude for intelligence work, and was recruited by Starfleet Intelligence. After graduating from SI's Intelligence Operations School with flying colors, he

moved out into the field to gather intelligence. He performed his job flawlessly, proving to be an excellent asset for the Federation.

Gradually he lost his youthful idealism. Perhaps it was years of daily exposure to the greed, depravity, and selfishness so common outside the Federation. Perhaps he simply decided that the Federation's principles were hollow platitudes designed to keep people like him servile and happy. Or perhaps it was the beautiful *Tal Shiar* agent, Shalara, with whom he fell in love. Whatever it was, he grew more and more dissatisfied with his life.

One day, after conducting a secret, passionate love affair with him for months, Shalara revealed that she was an intelligence agent herself and wanted to recruit him to work for the Romulan Star Empire. Tamerlaine was shocked; a passionate argument ensued, with both agents realizing that they had allowed emotion to cloud their professional judgment. When Shalara went for a concealed disruptor, Tamerlaine had no choice—he fired first, killing his former love. He realized then that he didn't want to go back to Starfleet Intelligence, even if it were still possible. He decided he could put his skills to use on his own behalf.

Taking all the valuable data and equipment he could quickly lay his hands on, Tamerlaine disappeared into the Federation-Tholian frontier and didn't surface again for years. Rumors indicate that he moved around a lot during that time, criss-crossing the quadrant in smugglers' ships as he sold information and established what would one day become his almost matchless web of informants. Whatever he did, he did it well—he ended up with enough latinum to his name that he was able to buy a small planetoid in the Gamma Regulasa system.

There, unknown to the Federation, he makes his home. Reports and data flow to him from across known space, and he makes a fortune selling that information to anyone who can get in contact with him. Whatever an employer wishes to know, con-

firm, or find, about anyone or anything, Tamerlaine can tell you—for a price, of course.

As his nickname indicates, "Longshanks" appears as a tall, lanky man. His blond hair is now turning slowly to gray, and his face remains clean-shaven, as it has always been. Unless threatened in some way, he remains affable and polite at all times, and his enormous intelligence becomes apparent after even short discussions with him. His passions include Centauran history and philosophy, and his conversation contains so many references and allusions to these subjects that his train of thought can be difficult to follow. Only when someone threatens, insults, or cheats him does his more vicious side show through.

Tamerlaine lives by himself on his planetoid home, attended only by his loyal Hupyrian butler Faroadep and a few other servants. Most transactions with him take place via encrypted subspace communication channels; he dislikes hosting visitors.

GIDEON "LONGSHANKS" TAMERLAINE

Attributes

Fitness 3
    Vitality +1
Coordination 3
    Dexterity +1
    Reaction +1
Intellect 5
    Logic +1
    Perception +2
Presence 4
    Empathy +1
    Willpower +2
Psi 0

Skills

Artistic Expression (Cooking) 2 (3)
Athletics (Running) 1 (2)
Behavior Modification (Resistance) 1 (2)
Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) 3 (4)
    (Programming) 4
Concealment (Weapons) 2 (3)
Culture (Centauran) 4 (5)
Disguise (Centauran) 1 (2)
Dodge 2
Energy Weapon (Phaser) 3 (4)
Espionage (Starfleet Intelligence Techniques) 4 (5)
History (Centauran) 4 (5)
    (Federation) 5
Intimidation (Bluster) 1 (2)
Knowledge (Centauran Philosophy) 5

Language
    Centauran 4
    Federation Standard 3
Personal Equipment (Tricorder) 1 (2)
Search 3
Security (Security Systems) 2 (3)
Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) 2 (3)
Streetwise (Locate Contraband) 4 (5)
Unarmed Combat (Starfleet Martial Arts) 2 (3)
Vehicle Operations (Shuttlecraft) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (Alpha Centauri) 3 (4)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Contact (dozens, if not hundreds, of highly
    placed contacts throughout known space) +20

Haven (very large; very luxurious accommoda-
    tions) +8
Sexy +2
Arrogant −1
Shady Background −4
Wanted (Federation) −3

Courage: 4
Renown: 39
    Aggression: 5   Discipline: 8   Initiative: 7
    Openness: −4   Skill: 15
Resistance: 4

Involvement in the life carries its own conse- quences. Sooner or later—probably sooner—the authorities will come looking for you if you're a pirate, thief, killer, or other type of rogue. If you want to avoid the "heat" you need a hideout—a place where you can lie low, maybe even con- duct a little business, without Starfleet Intelligence, Bajoran Security, or the IKDF breathing down your neck. In the parlance, places like this are typically known as *havens*.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD HAVEN?

Any useful haven possesses several characteristics. Pirates and rogues look for these things when evaluating whether a particular port or region of space would make a good place to hide out.

First and foremost, a haven must be secret. If every- one and his brother knows where it is or can find it easily, it becomes effectively useless to most underworld types. Obviously *some* people have to know about it—like the trusted fences, front men, and crime bosses who tell the character about the place (and let him use it, if they own it). But if its location or existence are widely known, no smart rogue will go near it.

Second, good havens restrict access. Sometimes this means the outpost is physically difficult to reach, but it can also mean an extensive series of evaluations and checks by other underworld types before they'll tell you where it is or let you in. In some instances, a place truly difficult to get to does- n't have to remain entirely secret. For example, the Badlands makes a perfect haven for many rogues, ranging from the Maquis to smuggler-merchants like Razka Karn. Everyone knows not only the location of the Badlands, but that rogues hide out there—the region is so large, and the natural environ- ment makes it so difficult to find anything inside the area, that hiding out there becomes feasible (assuming you can manage to survive the environment yourself).

Third, a good haven needs to be defensible and/or easy to escape from. No matter how well hidden a haven might be, there's always the chance that the authorities—or some enemy the character has made among his underworld cronies—will come crashing through the door in an effort to apprehend the character. When that happens, any rogue hiding out there must fight for his freedom or run. The haven needs to help him do one or both of these things. Most good havens, for example, possess at least three entrances/exits; many rogues refuse to stay in a place that doesn't offer them at least that many options for flight.

Fourth, the haven needs to provide the basic amenities of life. Hiding out isn't usually the same as taking a luxury vacation, but it shouldn't require deprivation, either. Either the place itself must contain replicators, computers, communications equipment, and the like, or someone else must provide food and the other necessities of survival. Only in the most extreme situations will most rogues tolerate sitting in a spartan environment for days on end.

Types of Havens

Broadly speaking, several types of haven exist on the frontier.

Boltholes: Small, temporary havens, boltholes generally appear in law-abiding cities and regions. Usually they're located in rundown buildings on the bad side of town, the cellars or attics of inhabited buildings (often buildings owned or occupied by members of the underworld who masquerade as legitimate citizens), or similar places. The cellar in which Kira Nerys, Elim Garak, and Damar hid during the Cardassian rebellion against the Dominion serves as an example of a bolthole.

Strange Locations: In some societies, such as the Federation, just going someplace where he's not known—another city, for example—and not causing a disturbance constitutes a good way for a rogue to find a haven. He simply blends in with the other citizens and keeps a weather eye out for the security men. In more tightly controlled societies, such as the Cardassian Union or Romulan Star Empire, the authorities monitor citizens' movements much more closely, making this method of hiding out unfeasible.

Frontier Locations: Out on the frontiers of explored space, where it's not always clear who has jurisdiction and life remains lawless, rogues can hide out in settlements and on space stations without attracting too much attention. As long as a new arrival doesn't make trouble, the other inhabitants may not care where he comes from or what he's done in his life. On the other hand, the relatively low population in such settings may make a newcomer stand out too much. Rogues often use these sorts of havens as temporary hideouts—places to let things "cool off" for a bit before they move on to another place or go into hiding for good. Deep Space 9 itself fits into this catego-

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

ry, with so many people passing through the station in any given week, it's easy for a rogue on the run to show up, get quarters for a little while, and then leave when he's ready. As long as he doesn't attract any attention coming or going, bump into someone who might know him (like Odo or Quark), or cause any sort of disturbance, no one's ever likely to tumble to the fact that he's there.

Beyond the Frontier: Beyond the borders of the various societies, out in unexplored space, many rogues find havens. The extreme isolation imposed on them by such places (and the resulting lack of amenities or services) balances against the high levels of anonymity and safety they afford—since they're beyond the jurisdiction of most law enforcement organizations, rogues feel secure in them. Gorkon's Retreat, in the Draconis Outback (see below), represents a perfect example of this sort of place. No galactic society wields any real authority there, so it makes a perfect hideout. Rogues sometimes call these places "true havens" because of the total security they offer (relatively speaking, of course).

LOCATING A HAVEN

When a character's desperate to escape whatever trouble he's just gotten himself into, finding just the right haven can be an adventure in itself. Here are a few suggestions.

CREATE YOUR OWN

The easiest way for a character to find a haven is simply to create one (either by purchasing the Haven advantage or through roleplaying). But that begs the question of *where* he'll create it. Good locations for havens don't just pop up on every street corner, even in the most lawless societies—and in heavily enforced regimes (like Cardassia) or well settled, crime-free planets (such as Earth), it can be downright impossible to find a place to hide out.

Streetwise becomes the most important skill for finding a place to establish a haven. A successful Streetwise test tells a rogue what criminal elements control which parts of a given city or region, what territory they claim, and how he can either find unclaimed territory for himself or remain hidden within someone else's territory. With additional rolls, he can make contact with people who'll keep him supplied with food and equipment without arousing suspicion.

Three other skills—Knowledge, Culture, and World Knowledge—can also help characters find places to set up havens. The Knowledge skill applies when bought to reflect a character's knowledge of a particular city or neighborhood, such as Knowledge: Gorana Tevar for the Cardassian capital. A Routine (4) test against that sort of Knowledge skill allows the character to find a place suited to his hideout needs (within reason, of course; few cities possess large supplies of abandoned luxury resort suites). World Knowledge works similarly, but since it focuses more on knowledge of a particular planet as a whole, it usually doesn't provide nearly as precise information as an appropriate Knowledge skill. World Knowledge will, however, help a rogue determine which parts of the planet are the least traveled or populated (in case he really wants to get away from it all for a while). Culture may provide a character with information that will help him set up his haven. For example, if members of a particular culture tend to have a phobia about underground places, a hideout established in a deep basement, abandoned sewer tunnel, or similar place has a greater chance of remaining undiscovered.

FIND ONE

In many cases it's easier for a rogue to find an existing haven instead of trying to create one on his own (especially if someone's hot on his trail). Finding a haven typically involves the Streetwise skill. Characters can either use underworld contacts to find a haven or find one on their own.

For most rogues, underworld channels provide the quickest and safest route to a good haven. Fences and other members of the criminal element already have havens set up, and characters can use them (for a price, of course). The base Difficulty for a rogue trying to find a haven through underworld contacts is Routine (5); the Narrator should adjust this Difficulty depending on the power of the local underworld, the diligence of police or security forces, the nature of the locale or environment (havens are usually easier to find in large cities, for example), and so forth. Success on the Streetwise test means that one of his contacts has a haven he can use. The drawback to this is, of course, that at least one person knows where the character is hiding out.

If a character prefers to find an acceptable haven on his own, so that no one else knows where he hides, he must make a Routine (5) Streetwise test (applying the same modifiers as those described above). Success indicates that he's found a seedy hotel room, abandoned building, cheap flophouse apartment, or similar location where he can lay low for a while. (Of course, a rogue with enough latinum might be able to go the opposite route and hide out in a luxury apartment somewhere.) Whether he attracts the attention of any local residents (some of whom might be far more roguish than he), and what happens if he does, is up to the Narrator.

SECURING A HAVEN

Some rogues will want to take steps to ensure that their havens remain secure. This can range from physical security measures at the haven itself (multiple escape routes, elaborate alarm systems) to altering computer records regarding the haven's location, to "eliminating" anyone with knowledge of the haven's whereabouts.

The nature of the location determines what security measures are reasonable and appropriate. A rogue hiding out at a camp on a planetoid in the Badlands will probably have to content himself with setting up some sensors and keeping his disruptor handy. On the other hand, one at a bolthole in the Bajoran capital can rig up elaborate physical security, up to and including lethal security measures.

SAMPLE HAVENS

The following sections illustrate a few sample havens that Narrators can use in their episodes. If necessary, change the locations and other specifics to make them fit your series.

KARRON'S ROOMS TO LET

In the Cardassian Union, citizens often find it necessary to travel to the capital of Gorana Tevar. Many of them are too poor to afford lavish accommodations during their stay and must turn to hotels and similar facilities in the more run-down parts of town. One such place is Karron's Rooms to Let, which rents one- and two-bedroom "suites" for one or more weeks. The rooms aren't comfortable, and there's no maid service, but they're cheap.

Eldrom Karron, the proprietor of this fine establishment, is a greedy, unprincipled Cardassian who cares nothing for the glory of Cardassia or obeying the law; he only wants to line his own pockets and keep himself safe. He works on the side as a petty smuggler and fence, doing business out of a back room on the first floor of his building.

He also makes money renting rooms, no questions asked, to other less-than-loyal Cardassians: thieves, cutthroats, members of the underground movement or the True Way, you name it. As long as they spend their leks and can keep their mouths shut about his place, he's happy to rent to them. Along the way he picks up a little blackmail information when he can, in case he ever gets the chance to use it. The Gorana Tevar underworld knows Karron's place as a good haven where no questions are asked.

None of the suites in Rooms to Let has any security beyond a basic door lock. Karron doesn't mind if a guest sets up his own security measures, provided that the guest compensates him for any damage done to his building. Each suite has a basic computer and communications unit, but there's only about a 50% chance that any given unit works properly (good luck trying to get Karron to repair it).

Karron himself is an old, sour-faced Cardassian with too great a fondness for kanar and women other than his wife. He's a coward, but if push comes to shove he keeps an old Cardassian phaser where he can reach it quickly. He'll fight rather than

submit to capture; fortunately for him, the authorities aren't aware of his "side business"—yet.

GORKON'S RETREAT

Located in the Draconis Outback (see the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 20), Gorkon's Retreat rests in the shell of an old Klingon military base abandoned decades ago by the Empire. Seven years ago a canny Orion pirate named Bardeck Gorales tracked down the base and began using it as a haven. Since then he's allowed many of his brothers in the life to take up residence there as well, creating a veritable pirate's paradise. But the more crimes its residents commit, the more attention they're likely to attract, and eventually someone's bound to come after them.

THE COMING OF GORALES

The Draconis situation today is much worse than it was seven years ago. Back then the Outback suffered from some piracy and raiding, but nothing too significant or frequent. That changed when Bardeck Gorales, the feared Orion pirate, came to the region in 2367 looking for a place to hide out from Federation and Klingon authorities.

Setting his course away from systems with colonies or other settlements, Gorales finally came to the Altanis Idrilon system. He was looking for a planet where he could land, set up a basic shelter, and wait until things cooled down back in more civilized sectors. What he found was something completely unexpected: an entire station, floating abandoned in the space between the system's third planet and one of its asteroid belts.

He hailed the station and received no response. He cautiously approached it and finally connected with it at one of the few docking ports which still functioned. Equipped with an EVA suit and his disruptor, he carefully made his way onto the station. He soon found that it wasn't much more than an abandoned hulk: The weapons had been stripped out, all but the most basic computer systems had been taken, and the power plant had been turned to its lowest possible setting (just enough to keep life support functioning). He reactivated the power plant and got the place lit and warm before he began exploring further.

By looking through the remaining computer archives and examining the place, he soon learned the station's previous identity: a long-abandoned Klingon forward observation post and military stag-

ing ground. Built approximately 70 years ago during the Betreka Nebula incident, the station was apparently deserted by the Klingons following the conclusion of that war, since it was neither financially nor logistically feasible for the Empire to continue its maintenance.

Realizing that he'd been hit by an incredible stroke of luck, Gorales claimed the station as his own and set about making it livable. He didn't have much to work with, but he got the remaining computer systems functioning and made what repairs he could. When he was ready, he sent out word to a few of his comrades, asking them to come join him at what he christened "Gorkon's Retreat"—a clever jibe aimed at his hated Klingon enemies.

It only took a few years for pirate wealth to make Gorkon's Retreat vibrant once again, and even in some senses powerful due to newly installed weapons systems. Among those who live the life, it became known as a superb hideout, provided one could afford Gorales' fees. Eventually, less-than-honest merchants, including many Ferengi, started docking there as a stopover while traveling through the Outback, to trade with the station's residents or to help the residents smuggle contraband back to settled worlds. The colonists in the area soon came

to fear raids from the Retreat pirates, but lacking allegiance to any established government they had no one to call on for assistance.

Today, Gorkon's Retreat remains a classic "true haven" and place where honest men dare not set foot. Gorales rules it with an iron hand, killing anyone who questions his commands or cannot pay his bills. But the depredations of his "subjects" have become so great that, jurisdiction or no, the Federation, Klingon Empire, or Cardassian Union will undoubtedly dispose of him and his "kingdom" once and for all—as soon as they find out exactly where it is.

GORKON'S RETREAT

Type: Miscellaneous (pirate haven)
Location: Altanis Idrilon system, Draconis Outback
Commissioning Date: 2291 (est.)
Hull Characteristics
  Size/Structure: 5/A thick cylindrical central column to which are attached at the top and bottom a series of trapezohedral units; projecting out between these units are curved docking arms ("buttresses").
  Resistance: 5
  Structural Points: 375
  Docking: Docking facilities are available for up to a dozen *K'Vort*-class cruisers or smaller ships.
Personnel Characteristics
  Crew/Inhabitants/Capacity: 212/113/15,000 [8 Power/round]
  Entertainment: 4 [12 Power/round]
Systems Characteristics
  Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
  Transporters: 4 personnel, 6 cargo, 4 emergency [7 Power/round]
  Tractor Beams: 6 spaced evenly around base's midsection [2 Power/rating/round]
  Power: 300
Sensor Systems
  Long-range Sensors: +0/14 light-years [6 Power/round]
  Lateral Sensors: +0/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
  Sensors Skill: 3
  Internal Security: 3 (this reflects how difficult it is to get away with activities not sanctioned by Gorales, not the existence of an organized security force)
Weapons Systems
  Type VI Phasers
    Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
    Arc: 180 degrees each (see text)
    Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
    Damage: 12
    Power: [12]
    Weapons Skill: 3
Defensive Systems
  Phased Deflector Array
    Protection: 60/60/60/60 (75)
    Power: [60]
Ships: None
Notes/Description: Gorkon's Retreat shows its age in many ways. The systems, run-down and prone to malfunctions, lag years behind the times; only the round-the-clock services of various underworld engineers keep the place running at all. It is unlikely that the station would withstand a strongly pressed attack by Federation or Klingon forces (most residents would flee instead of fight). In fact, the station mounts just two Type VI phasers; each only covers a 180-degree arc, and the arcs overlap somewhat. Because of this, it becomes possible to approach the station while completely avoiding the station's weapons. Gorales keeps this fact secret while he desperately tries to obtain more weapons for the outpost.

BARDECK GORALES

Attributes
  Fitness 3
    Strength +1
    Vitality +1
  Coordination 4
  Intellect 3
    Perception +1
  Presence 3
    Willpower +1
  Psi 0

Skills
  Athletics (Running) 1 (2)
  Charm (Seduction) 1 (2)
  Command (Pirates) 3 (4)
  Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) 1 (2)
  Culture (Orion) 2 (3)
  Dodge 2
  Energy Weapon (Phaser) 3 (4)
  History (Orion Syndicate) 2 (3)
  Language
    Federation Standard 1
    Klingon 1
    Rigelian 2
  Personal Equipment (EVA Suit) 1 (2)
  Planetside Survival (Forests) 1 (2)
  Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) 3 (4) (Tactical) 4
  Streetwise (Klingon Underworld) 3 (4)

(Orion Syndicate) 4
Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 2 (3)
Vehicle Operations (Shuttlecraft) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (Rigel VII) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Eidetic Memory +3
Haven +4
Quick-draw +2
Diminished Social Status −2 (convicted criminal)
Shady Background −4 (major criminal activity)

Courage: 5
Renown: 18

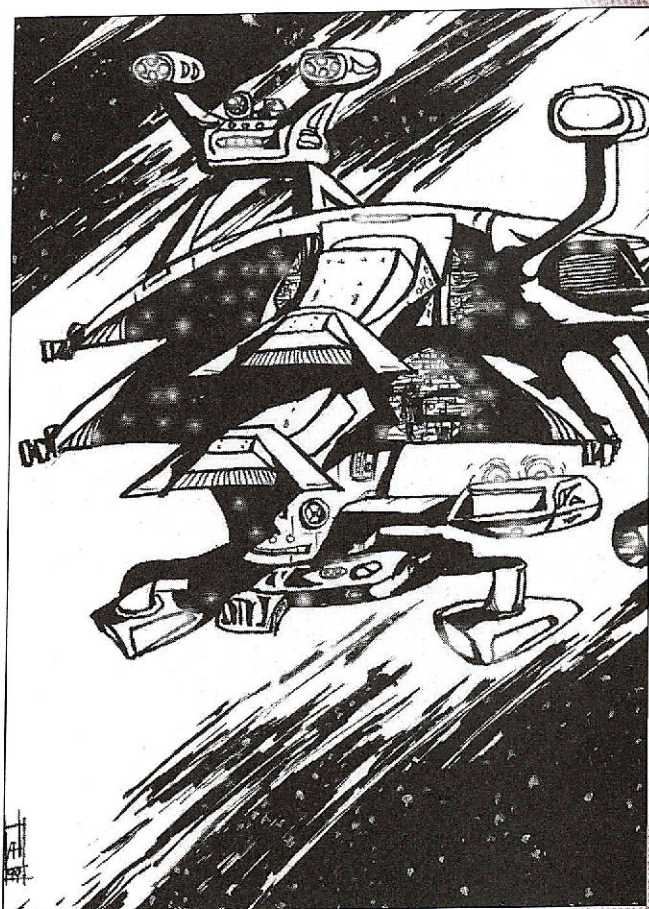|		
Aggression: 5	Discipline: 3	Initiative: 3
Openness: −4	Skill: 3	

Resistance: 4

THE SCRAPYARD

When most people think of havens, they think of stationary places—starbases, backroom hideouts in cities, caves on barren planetoids. But there's at least one haven that doesn't live up to this stereotype. It's an enormous assemblage of cast-off ship's hulls and hull sections known affectionately among the brothers and sisters in the life as "the Scrapyard."

The Scrapyard began well over a decade ago as the pet project of an aggressive, clever Ferengi merchant named Gurek. Never one to follow the strict letter of the law if he could make more profit doing otherwise, he quickly tired of having authorities on so many worlds hounding him and of spending so much of his precious time and latinum traveling from one backwater black market to another. He finally decided that he'd rather bring the black markets to *him* and avoid the law in the process.

He decided to acquire an enormous ship for use as a "floating marketplace" beyond any society's jurisdiction. Unable to find a single ship suitable for his purposes, he bought hull sections from several *D'Kora*-class ships and other Ferengi vessels and had them reengineered together into an ugly, but functional, "ship." Then he sailed out beyond Ferengi space and announced to a select group of "interested parties" whom he'd met during his career that he was open for business.

Attracted by his facilities, black market merchants, pirates, and smugglers with contraband to unload, and thieves and assassins from all over the nearby sectors, began arriving on his "doorstep." They paid their fees and went about their business, free from worry about either Federation or Cardassian Central Command interference in their deals and schemes.

Eventually the demand for Gurek's services outgrew the size of his ship. He had to attach more hull sections, making his ship even more ungainly-looking (not to mention harder for his engineers to work with). The Scrapyard, as it was soon christened, now includes parts from Ferengi, Bajoran, Federation, and Klingon vessels and includes facilities ranging from trading rooms to holosuites to just about anything else Gurek's "guests" might desire. Its location at any given time, and the safest approach and departure vectors from it, remain carefully guarded secrets.

Although quite large and well suited for its intended role, the Scrapyard is neither very fast or maneuverable, nor very well armed. Gurek normally keeps it inside areas such as the Badlands or various nebulae, where it's difficult to find; he knows he can't outrun or outfight any authorities who might come after him.

Gurek himself is big (for a Ferengi) and outspoken; he doesn't hesitate to voice his opinion directly, and can back it up with a well aimed phaser blast if necessary. He runs the Scrapyard tightly but fairly, and makes his fortune by taking a "cut" of every deal negotiated on it. "Security" personnel hired by

Gurek—big, nasty Nausicaans, mainly—help ensure that tempers aboard ship don't get out of hand.

THE SCRAPYARD

Class and Type: N/A

Commissioning Date: 2363

Hull Characteristics

Size: 9

Resistance: 3

Structural Points: 160 (has fewer Structural Points than normal for its size due to its unusual construction)

Operations Characteristics

Crew/Passengers/Evac: 412/3,500/9,350 [8 Power/round]

Computers: 4 [4 Power/round]

Transporters: 8 personnel, 12 cargo, 6 emergency [13 Power/round]

Tractor Beams: 1 fv, 1 fd, 1 ad [2 Power/rating/round]

Propulsion and Power Characteristics

Warp System: 2.0/3.0/4.0 (3 hours) [2/warp factor]

Impulse System: .33 c/.5 c [3/5 Power/round]

Power: 125

Sensor Systems

Long-range Sensors: +0/16 light-years [6 Power/round]

Lateral Sensors: +0/1 light-year [4 Power/round]

Navigational Sensors: +0 [5 Power/round]

Sensors Skill: 3

Internal Security: 2

Weapons Systems

Spiral-Wave Disruptor

Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000

Arc: Forward (540 degrees)

Accuracy: 4/5/7/10

Damage: 12

Power: [12]

Weapons Skill: 3

Defensive Systems

Deflector Shield

Protection: 40/40 (60) [40 Power/shield/round]

Ships: None

Notes/Description: Gurek's creation represents the ultimate "rag-tag" vessel. Patrons like to joke that only a Ferengi could coax such a hulking hodge-podge of systems and mismatched components through space. For all of the jibes, however, Gurek maintains a firm hold on the Scrapyard—business is normally thriving. The Scrapyard makes its home in a region just beyond the core-

ward rim of the Ferengi Alliance, in a cluster of sectors known as the Hinterland. Many rogues from every frontier look forward to their infrequent stops at the "Yard," knowing that dull moments are few and far between.

GUREK

Attributes

Fitness 2

Vitality +1

Coordination 3

Intellect 3

Logic +1

Presence 3

Empathy –1

Willpower –1

Psi 0

Skills

Bargain (Marketplace Haggling) 3 (4)

Computer (Programming) 1 (2)

Culture (Ferengi) 2 (3)

Dodge 3

Energy Weapon (Phaser) 2 (3)

Fast Talk 2

History (Ferengi) 1 (2)

Language

Cardassian 1

Federation Standard 1

Ferengi 2

Merchant (Gemstones Market) 2 (3)

Personal Equipment (PADD) 1 (2)

Planetside Survival (Swamp) 1 (2)

Propulsion Engineering (Impulse Drive) 1 (2)

Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) 2 (3)

Systems Engineering (Computer Systems) 2 (3)

Vehicle Operations (Work Bee) 1 (2)

World Knowledge (Ferenginar) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages

Excellent Hearing +2

Haven (small moon somewhere) +5

Mathematical Ability +3

Telepathic Resistance +4

Vessel (very large, excellent resources) +7

Greedy –1

Courage: 3

Renown: 15

Aggression: 3   Discipline: 3   Initiative: 3

Openness: –3   Skill: 3

Resistance: 3

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

This chapter provides Templates, Overlays, and Background Histories for rogue characters. If you want to create a Nausicaan assassin, Lurian pirate, or human mercenary, this chapter shows you how to do it.

Like the characters in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, this chapter describes civilian characters. This means they're built on fewer points than characters trained by Starfleet (or some similar military or quasimilitary organization, like the Romulan Star Navy). The Overlays presented in the following sections use fewer points than Starfleet Overlays. If your campaign features a mixture of Starfleet-trained and non-Starfleet-trained characters—for example, a Crew including a Starfleet defector like Lt. Tom Riker—this means that some characters will generally be more skilled than others. If you prefer to maintain player character balance in your *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* series, give civilian characters another 18 Development Points to spend on their Overlay skills (to increase the skills' levels or buy more Specializations). At the Narrator's option, players can also spend the extra points on skills related to, but not belonging to, a character's Overlay.

TEMPLATES

FLAXIAN

For information about Flaxians and their homeworld, refer to the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 259.

LURIAN

Attributes
Fitness 3 [5]
    Vitality +1
Coordination 2 [5]
Intellect 2 [5]
Presence 2 [5]
Psi 0 [5]

Skills
Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Bargaining (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Culture (Lurian) 2 (3)
History (Lurian) 1 (2)
Language
    Lurian 2
Planetside Survival (Swamp) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (Luria) 1 (2)

Typical Advantages/Disadvantages
Organ Redundancy +2
Resistance +4
Obligation -2 (various family obligations)

NAUSICAAN

For information on the Nausicaans, refer to the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, pages 274-75, and *Planets of the UFP, Vol. 1*, pages 95-100.

NAUSICAAN

Attributes
Fitness 3 [6]
    Strength +2
    Vitality +1
Coordination 2 [6]
    Reaction +1
Intellect 1 [5]
Presence 1 [5]
Psi 0 [5]

Skills
Culture (Nausicaan) 2 (3)
Gaming (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
History (Nausicaan) 1 (2)
Language
    Nausicaan 2
Primitive Weaponry (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Unarmed Combat (Brawling or native Nausicaan style) 2 (3)
World Knowledge (Nausicaa III) 1 (2)

FLAXIAN

Attributes
Fitness 2 [5]
    Vitality +1
Coordination 2 [5]
Intellect 2 [5]
Presence 2 [5]
Psi 0 [5]

Skills
Athletics (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Culture (Flaxian) 2 (3)
History (Flaxian) 1 (2)
Language
    Flaxian 2
Primitive Weaponry (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Science, Any (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Stealth (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (Flaxos) 1 (2)

LURIAN

For more information on the Lurians and their culture, refer to the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 261.

OVERLAYS

Use the following Overlays for characters in rogue series or for characters who come from roguish backgrounds. Discussions of the professions themselves appear elsewhere in this book. As in typical *Star Trek RPG* series, you should consult with the Narrator before choosing an Overlay for your character.

Assassin

Assassination (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Concealment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Demolitions (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Dodge 1
Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Language
   Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Primitive Weaponry (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
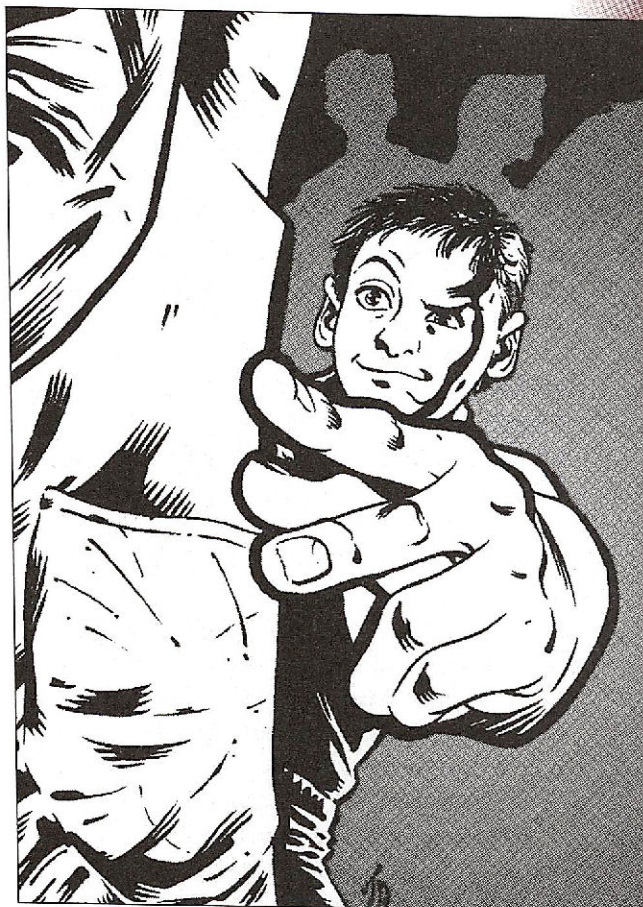Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Bounty Hunter

Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Dodge 1
Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Language
   Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Planetside Survival (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Security (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Vehicle Operations (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Gambler

Charm (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Computer (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Dodge 1
Fast Talk 2
Gaming (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Language
   Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Streetwise (Locate Gambling) 1 (2)
Vehicle Operations (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Thief

Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Computer (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Dodge 1
Fast Talk 2
Language
   Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Search 1
Security (Security Systems) 2 (3)
Sleight of Hand (Pick Pocket) 1 (2)
Streetwise (Locate Fences/Black Market) 1 (2)

BACKGROUND HISTORIES

The following Background History packages apply to rogues from all over the Alpha and Beta Quadrants. Use the "Universal Background List" (and the attribute and trait lists from other stages) from the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook with these stages.

Of course, the Background History packages presented here don't represent the only ways to enter the life. A character could have a perfectly ordinary childhood (*Normal Upbringing* from the core rulebook, to take one example) and then drift into crime when he gets older. As long as the Development Points remain

the same and your Narrator approves, you can mix and match packages from various sourcebooks to create just the sort of character you want.

If you prefer not to choose a package for a particular stage of your character's Background History, refer to pages 52-59 of the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook for broad lists of the attributes, edges, and traits available during each stage.

Rogues obviously can learn skills that the Federation frowns upon. Ignore the icons indicating inappropriate skills in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook when building rogue characters.

EARLY LIFE

The character receives 5 Development Points to spend during Early Life.

Fagin's Child: Your parents, or whoever raised you, put you to work on the streets picking pockets and committing petty thefts.

Sleight of Hand (Pick Pocket) 1 (2), +1 Dexterity Edge, increase any Template Specialization by 1 (or add one Specialization)

Family of Assassins: You were raised in a society, such as among Flaxians, where groups of assassins exist, and your family was (or was part of) one such group. Since that in itself made you a target for other assassins, you also learned to watch your back.

Assassination (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Alertness +2

Gang Upbringing: You grew up as part of a gang (for example, a press-gang on Turkana IV). You learned how to fight with your fists, knives, and anything else you could get your hands on. Being raised this way has made you cold and tough, making it difficult for you to sympathize with others or see beyond your own wants and needs.

Primitive Weaponry (Knife) 1 (2), Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 1 (2), -1 Empathy Edge

Juvenile Delinquent: Despite enjoying a relatively normal childhood, as you aged you fell in with the wrong crowd and began committing petty crimes.

Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2), +1 Perception Edge, increase any Template Specialization by 1 (or add one Specialization)

Mercenary Parents: Your parents (or whoever raised you) were professional warriors, and you traveled from one combat zone to another with them.

Any one Military Skill (see the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 53) 1 (2), Bargaining (Mercenary Contract Negotiation) 1 (2), Sworn Enemy −1 (some mercenary you somehow offended)

Netboy/Netgirl: You spent a large part of your unfortunate adolescence working as a virtual prostitute under the tender mercies of the Orion Syndicate or some similar organization.

Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) 1 (2), +1 to Logic Edge, Dataport +1

Pirate's Child: Your parents (or whoever raised you) were pirates, privateers, or raiders, and you grew up on their ship. You learned how to work some of the ship's systems and fire a pistol, and inherited a generous portion of your parents' greed.

Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Shipboard Systems (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Greedy −1

Street Urchin: You're not entirely sure just who your parents were. As early as you can remember you were living on the street, scrounging or stealing food and, when necessary, fighting others to survive. Unfortunately, lack of health care early in life has left you a little scrawny.

Fast Talk 1, Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2), −1 Vitality Edge

Thief's Life: Your parents (or whoever raised you) were skilled thieves who used you to help them commit burglaries.

Security (Security Systems) 1 (2), +1 Dexterity Edge, +1 Perception Edge

Wrong Side of the Spaceport: You grew up on the wrong side of town. Lacking any natural gifts or talents that would earn you a ticket to a better life, it was almost inevitable that you'd drift into a life of crime.

Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Vengeful −1

ADVANCED TRAINING

The character receives 9 Development Points to spend on Advanced Training.

Assassin Mentorship: You were trained in the fine arts of assassination by a mentor of extensive skill and reputation.

Assassination (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2), Physical Sciences (Chemistry) 1 (2), Quick-draw +2

Computer Crime: You drifted into the shadowy world of computer crime and spent years learning its ins and outs both on your own and with the help of various mentors (some of whom you've met in the flesh; some you only know by their computer identities).

Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking and one other Specialization) 1 (2) and (2), Espionage (Cryptography) 1 (2), Systems Engineering (Computer Systems) 1 (2), +1 Logic Edge, Intolerant (Authority) –2

Con Artist Mentorship: You had the benefits of learning your grifting skills from one of the best ever to ply the trade.

Artistic Expression (Acting) OR Charm (Influence) 1 (2), Disguise (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Fast Talk 2, Persuasion (Guileful Manipulation) 1 (2), Pacifism –3

Flaxian Assassination College: You managed to enroll at one of the Flaxian assassin colleges. Besides learning the basics of the assassin's art, you met someone who will be a good contact during your career.

Assassination (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2), Espionage (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Security (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Contact +1, Dark Secret –2

Gambler Mentorship: You developed your "card sense" and skill at games of chance under the tutelage of an older master gambler.

Gaming (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Sleight of Hand (Card Tricks) 1 (2), Knowledge (Professional Sports) 1 (2)

Government Assassin: A government or government agency trained you in the finer points of killing, mayhem, and destruction.

Assassination (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2), Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Contact +2

Intelligence Agency Washout: You were recruited by a government to become a spy. Unfortunately, spy school just wasn't for you, and you washed out. Now you're trying to find some way to put your hard-earned spy skills to good use on the open market.

Computer (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Espionage (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Security (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Law Enforcement Training: You studied to be a police officer or security agent of some kind. (This form of training is popular among future bounty hunters; it may even be required if the character wants a license to hunt bounties within a given jurisdiction, and usually leads to the "Law Enforcement Officer" career).

Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Security (Law Enforcement) 1 (2), Streetwise (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Military Academy: You were shipped off to school to learn how to be a soldier, and learn you did. But you have no intention of using your skills to get into some government's army or navy ….

Any one Military Skill (see the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 53) 1 (2), Command (Combat Leadership) 1 (2), Law (Military Regulations) 1 (2)

Pirate Crew: You served on board a pirate vessel, performing odd jobs and learning the skills necessary for a pirate's life.

Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Shipboard Systems OR Systems Engineering (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 1 (2)

Prison Education: Your youthful criminal life landed you in prison. There you befriended other convicts and learned how to survive in that sort of harsh environment by keeping out of sight—or, when necessary, by viciously attacking anyone who challenged you.

Concealment OR Stealth (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Streetwise (choose Specialization relating to specific underworld group) 1 (2), Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 1 (2)

Starfleet Academy Washout: You made it into the Academy, but you weren't good enough to stay there. The workload was too much, the competition too fierce, you weren't emotionally equipped to handle it all—whatever. But you've decided not to let the skills you *did* learn there go to waste…

Law (Starfleet Regulations) 1 (2), Shipboard Systems (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Space Sciences (choose Specialization) 1 (2); OPTIONAL: Energy Weapon (Phaser) 1 (2) and Intolerant ("Those know-it-alls in Starfleet") -3

Thief Mentorship: You were trained to steal by a mentor of extensive skill and reputation.

Fast Talk 2 OR Security (Security Systems) 1 (2), Merchant (Appraising/Selling Stolen Goods) 1 (2), Stealth (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Yoshitoni Institute: You used your underworld connections to gain admittance to the infamous "Yoshitoni Institute," an academy for mercenaries

located in the Kellinan Reach and run by the Orion Syndicate (see page 54).

Any two Military Skills (see the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, page 53) 1 (2) and (2), Streetwise (Orion Syndicate) 1 (2)

CAREERS

The character receives 10 Development Points to spend on his Career.

The Big Con: It took a long time to set up and plan, and there were some tense moments there where you were certain the mark had tumbled to what you were doing. In the end, what may be the biggest, most profitable con game you'll ever be involved with went off perfectly. With your victim none the wiser (or at least unable to do anything about it), you've stolen enough money to keep yourself set for life.

Artistic Expression (Acting) OR Persuasion (Storytelling) 1 (2), Fast Talk 1, Guileful +1, Wealth +3

The Big Heist: A long time (perhaps years) went into planning this theft. You devoted a lot of effort to studying the target's computer systems and security. When the time came, it went without a hitch—almost. Unknown to you, one of the people on your team planned a double-cross. It didn't work (barely), but it led to the death of one of your closest friends, and you've sworn to hunt the traitor down and make him pay for the betrayal. Fortunately for you, the job paid off in spades; you're rich now.

Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking) 1 (2), Security (Security Systems) 2 (3), Wealth +3, Sworn Enemy −1, Thrill-seeker −1

Brush War: You spent a few months, or a year or two, fighting dirtside in a war on some backwater planet.

Heavy Weapons (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2), Planetary Tactics (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Planetside Survival (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Forgery: You spent time working with a master forger, learning how to create fake works of art, money, and the like, and then how to dispose of the goods.

Artistic Expression (choose Specialization in a forgeable art form, such as painting) 1 (2), Fast Talk 1, Forgery (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Guileful +1

Fugitive Tracking: You worked as a professional bounty hunter, tracking down wanted criminals, capturing them, and returning them to the authorities for rewards.

Computer (Research) 1 (2), Law (choose two Specializations in criminal law of jurisdictions you worked in) 1 (2) and (2), Security (Law Enforcement) 1 (2)

Government/Guild Assassin: You put your skills as a professional killer to work for a government, assassins' guild, or similar organization, doing their dirty work for them.

Assassination (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Demolitions (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Espionage (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Contact +1

High Space Piracy: You served aboard a pirate vessel, seeking ships to capture and plunder. You learned where to find rich prizes and how to use your ship to take them with a minimum of effort and danger.

Knowledge (Pirate Havens) (Trade Routes) 1 (2) and (2), Shipboard Systems (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Starship Tactics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

High Roller: You lived the high life of a gambler, spending most of your time in casinos on Risa and other pleasure planets, sitting in daily on the highest of high-stakes poker games.

Gaming (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2), Intimidation (Bluffing) 1 (2), Physical Sciences (Mathematics) 1 (2)

Law Enforcement Officer: You worked as a policeman, security guard, or similar functionary for a local, national, or planetary government. You learned all about the relevant laws in your jurisdiction, how to find your way around the local underworld, and so forth.

Law (criminal law of specific jurisdiction) 1 (2), Security (Law Enforcement) 2 (3), Shrewd +1

Mercenary Contract: You signed your services as a professional soldier over to someone with pockets deep enough to pay you.

Energy Weapon OR Heavy Weapons (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Planetary Tactics OR Starship Tactics (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Shipboard Systems (Flight Control) OR Vehicle Operation (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Bold +1

Privateer's Commission: You served on a ship that received letters of marque from a government, entitling the ship and crew to "legally" capture enemy ships and loot them.

Contact (government official who granted you letters of marque) +3, Shipboard Systems (Flight Control or other Specialization) 1 (2), Starship Tactics (choose Specialization in species you accepted letters of marque to pursue) 1 (2), Innovative +1

Quartermaster: You served a mercenary band or similar organization as a quartermaster, ensuring that they had enough of the right equipment to keep fighting. Along the way you skimmed a little money for yourself

Administration (choose appropriate Specialization) 1 (2), Energy Weapon OR Heavy Weapons (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Merchant (Arms Dealing) 1 (2), Wealth +1

War of Assassins: You worked for a group or government engaged in a war of assassins with some other group. You survived, even thrived, and improved your killing skills in the process, but the other side began to take your attentions a little too personally. Now, even though you're no longer involved in the war, they've singled you out for revenge, and you've decided to return the favor.

Assassination (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Dodge 1, Espionage (Counterintelligence) 1 (2),

Stealth (choose Specialization) 1 (2), Sworn Enemy (rival assassin group) −2

Additional Careers: Typically rogue characters don't serve "multiple tours of duty" like characters with Starfleet training. If the Narrator wishes to allow them to buy "additional careers," they should receive 5 Development Points for each one, to be spent on skills and abilities from, or related to, the packages listed above.

SKILLS

The following sections provide Narrators with some notes on existing skills, as well as a few new skills, for use with rogue characters. Nonrogue characters should not take any of these skills (or Specializations) unless they have the Narrator's permission.

ADMINISTRATION

While this skill ordinarily applies to bureaucracies, militaries, governments, and other "legitimate" organizations, rogues use it in some unusual ways. The first is *Administration (Conspiracy)*. Maintaining a large, far-flung conspiracy requires skill and intelligence, and this Specialization takes care of the skill element. A rogue could make an Administration (Conspiracy) test to keep his conspiratorial assets properly organized, maximize their effectiveness while preventing their efforts from overlapping, and so forth.

Similarly, *Administration (Organized Crime Family)* allows a character to keep an organized crime group, gang, or house functioning at peak efficiency. Gang bosses, advisors to gang bosses, first officers on pirate ships, and similar characters often learn this skill.

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

One Specialization of this skill, *Acting*, serves as a mainstay for many con artists, who adopt various roles and personas to pull off their elaborate scams. Of course, if they need to change their physical appearance as well, they must use the *Disguise* skill or undergo cosmetic surgery.

ASSASSINATION (INTELLECT)

Category: Other

This new skill confers knowledge of, and the ability to use, the methods and tools of assassination to

kill a specific person or persons. Assassination trains characters in the use, service, and construction of lethal devices (such as hunter probes), poisons, lethal traps (such as pheromonic sensor-triggered bombs), and similar devices. It also provides knowledge of killing blows and strikes, weak and vulnerable points on the humanoid body, and so forth. However, Assassination does not teach a character how to use weapons or explosives; that requires other skills, such as Energy Weapon, Primitive Weaponry, or Demolitions. In many cases Assassination is effective only when it complements such skills; on its own it's often somewhat academic.

The Difficulty for an Assassination test depends on the method of assassination used and the circumstances. The Narrator should use the suggestions below as guidelines. Successful Assassination tests do *not* automatically kill an intended target; they simply indicate that the character has properly prepared his tools and chosen the best method for his assassination attempt. However, at the Narrator's option, a character may make a Moderate (7) Assassination test before making an attack (this constitutes a Timed Action); for every two points by which the test succeeds, he may add +1 to the damage caused by the attack (if the attack succeeds).

Most Assassination tests use Intellect, since they involve preparing devices, traps, and similar objects. In situations where a character uses Assassination to improve a direct attack, the Narrator may choose to apply Coordination instead.

Specializations: Assassination Devices, Deadly Blows, Deadly Sabotage, Poisons, Stealthy Attacks, Traps and Snares
Routine: Preparing standard poisons in a controlled environment; preparing or servicing a standard assassination device or trap
Moderate: Preparing poisons in the field; preparing an assassination device or snare in the field or from inappropriate components; operating a hunter probe; planting a remat detonator on someone without his knowing it; attempting a killing blow on someone when the element of surprise favors you
Challenging: Preparing a new poison which will evade standard sensors; operating a hunter probe under dangerous or stressful conditions; preparing a remat detonator
Difficult: Smuggling a known poison past sensors; preparing a new and highly complex poison in the field without proper equipment; attempting a

killing blow in combat when the target is aware of your skills
Nearly Impossible: Constructing a hunter probe or remat detonator in the field from raw components; creating a lethal poison quickly in the field from ordinary foodstuffs

FORGERY (COORDINATION)

Category: Other
This new skill, which substitutes for Espionage (Forgery) for most rogue characters, allows a character to create convincing, but fake, versions of artwork, hard currency, identification documents, and the like. In many cases it requires one or more additional skills to function. It doesn't confer any ability to paint, for example; that requires Artistic Expression (Painting). However, at the Narrator's option, characters with Forgery possess sufficient knowledge of engraving and printing techniques to falsify documents and paper money without having to know Craft (Printing).

Characters with Forgery also know how to dispose of their creations—how to "pass" false money, who in the underworld needs false identity papers (and the going rate for such papers), and how to contact the underground art market (or even to fool people in the legitimate art market).

Characters attempting to detect a forgery can pit their own Forgery or Search skills, or an Intellect test, against the forger's Forgery in an Opposed Test.

Specializations: Currency, Identity Documentation, Specific Type of Art, Specific Type of Currency
Routine: Creating a convincing fake copy of a moderately well known artist's work under controlled conditions with sufficient time
Moderate: Creating a convincing fake copy of a moderately well known artist's work without either controlled conditions or sufficient time; forging standard identity documents; forging most forms of hard currency
Challenging: Creating a convincing fake copy of a moderately well known artist's work with neither controlled conditions nor sufficient time; creating a convincing fake copy of a famous artist's work under controlled conditions with sufficient time
Difficult: Creating a convincing fake copy of a famous artist's work without either controlled conditions or sufficient time; forging identity documents which have to withstand intense scrutiny
Nearly Impossible: Creating a convincing fake copy of a masterwork in a day

INTIMIDATION

Gamblers often take an unusual Specialization, *Bluffing*, for this skill. Intimidation (Bluffing) allows a character to convince other gamblers that he has the best cards (or the advantage in other games of chance) and that they'd better get out of that round of the game.

To use Intimidation (Bluffing), the character engages in an Opposed Test against his opponent's Gaming or Search skills. Success indicates that he's convinced his opponent that he has the best position in the game, and that he (the opponent) should give up on this round of the game to cut his losses. Failure indicates that the opponent remains unconvinced, Dramatic Failure that he believes the character's bluffing and ups his bet accordingly.

A rogue can also use Intimidation (Bluffing) to resist more stereotypical uses of Intimidation-to convince an interrogator that he's telling the truth, for example.

MERCHANT

This skill isn't one often associated with criminals, but when taken with the Specialization *Appraising/Selling Stolen Goods*, it provides thieves with the valuable ability to analyze the value of their loot and figure out how best to dispose of it. This skill doesn't allow them to find the black market—that's Streetwise—but it teaches them how to negotiate with black marketeers, where to get the best prices for stolen goods, how to deal with fences, and so forth.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook and other products from Last Unicorn Games (such as the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game Player's Guide*) contain a wide range of advantages and disadvantages useful for rogue characters: Battle-hardened, Dark Secret, Diminished Social Status, Greedy, Marked Man, Resistance, Wrongfully Accused, and many more. Some, such as Shady Background and Wanted, virtually define those who follow the life. The following sections describe several new advantages and disadvantages which apply mainly to rogues, as well as notes on special applications of existing traits.

ADVANTAGES

CONTRABAND (VARIES)

The character owns something illegal. No record exists of the character owning the item, and until he displays it or uses it people generally won't know that he has it. The cost of this advantage (which is similar to *Asset*, from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game Player's Guide*) depends on how illegal and dangerous the item is.

Typically an item of Contraband is something a character can use again and again (like an illegal weapon) rather than a nonrenewable resource (such as a case of Romulan ale), but it can be whatever the character wants (the Narrator may let him take a *large* amount of nonrenewable Contraband—say, an entire cargo hold full of cases of Romulan ale—if it won't unbalance the series). A character can sell, lose, or break his Contraband; if so, he does not get a new one (he just loses the Development Points he spent on Contraband, unless the Narrator decides to create a way for him to obtain a replacement during the game).

CONTRABAND

Cost	Item
1	Illegal item (Romulan ale, *maraji* crystals, many controlled substances, camouflage field)
2	Illegal dangerous (or highly sought-after) item (Varon-T disruptor, many poisons, hunter probe, biomimetic gel, tallonian crystal)
3	Illegal highly dangerous (or very highly sought-after) item (remat detonator, extremely lethal poisons)

HAVEN

Cost	Haven
2	Bolthole
3	Medium Haven (a large apartment, a house)
4	Large Haven (a mansion, a skyscraper, a space station)
5	Very Large Haven (your own small moon)

Cost	Accommodations
+1	Fine accommodations (replicators, advanced computer systems)
+2	Luxurious accommodations (holosuites, luxury furnishings)
+3	Very luxurious accommodations

VESSEL

Cost	Vessel
2	Small Vessel (up to Size 3)
3	Medium Vessel (Size 4)
4	Large Vessel (Size 5)
5	Very Large Vessel (Size 6 or higher)

Cost	Resources
+0	Standard Resources (average quality communications, sensors, transporters, and replicators; no weapons; shields of up to 20 points of protection)
+1	Good Resources (above-average quality communications, sensors, transporters, and replicators; 1-2 beam weapons causing no more than 10 points of damage; no torpedoes; shields of up to 30 points of protection)
+2	Excellent Resources (high-quality communications, sensors, transporters, and replicators; 1-3 beam weapons causing no more than 14 points of damage; one torpedo launcher; shields of up to 40 points of protection)
+3	Superb Resources (very high-quality communications, sensors, transporters, and replicators; 2-4 beam weapons causing no more than 16 points of damage; two torpedo launchers; shields of up to 50 points of protection)

DATAPORT (+1)

The character has a dataport (see Chapter Seven, page 85)—a device built into the back of his head which helps him access computer systems more easily. Assuming he can properly connect himself to a computer system (which usually poses no problem), he gains a +2 bonus on all Computer tests (and, at the Narrator's option, on similar tests that involve computers or computerlike systems, such as using Security (Security Systems) to defeat some electronic locks). Of course, if authorities catch the character using his dataport for illegal purposes, they will usually have it removed or permanently plugged. UFP officials remain nervous about the widespread use of dataports and their implications—a casual observer can't help but compare the sockets to Borg cybernetics.

DEPARTMENT HEAD; PROMOTION

Among many pirate crews, rank exists as an informal thing which depends in part on the captain's desires (whom he appoints to a position) and in part on how well a person holding a position can defend his right to the job (if another crewman can kill him, usually that crewman gets to take over his position). On such ships the only recognized "ranks" are First Officer and Captain. Therefore it's common for many pirate characters to buy Department Head (indicating that the character is in charge of a particular area of responsibility) rather than Promotion. Any pirate character can buy Department Head without satisfying a minimum rank requirement—all he needs is the Captain's approval and the ability to hold on to the job.

Of course, exceptions exist. As described elsewhere in this book, some pirate crews follow rigid organizational or pseudomilitary structures (as do many mercenary groups). These groups can use the Department Head and Promotion advantages more or less as written, though the Narrator may wish to reduce the cost because the characters do not belong to large or influential organizations.

FALSE IDENTITY (DEEP COVER) (+2)

False Identity constitutes an underworld version of the Deep Cover advantage possessed by some intelligence agents (see *The First Line: Starfleet Intelligence*, page 92, for more details). It means the character has a well developed, well documented alternate identity (a very handy thing for hiding out or escaping from the authorities). Of course, the character can blow his

cover identity if he's not careful; if so, he does not get the Development Points back.

GUILEFUL (+1)

The character is particularly good at deceiving others. He receives an extra Courage Point to spend whenever he tries to fool, trick, or deceive another character (this includes using Fast Talk, some uses of Charm or Persuasion, using Gaming to cheat or Intimidation (Bluffing) to win a game of chance, and the like).

HAVEN (VARIES)

The character owns, or knows about, a haven or hideout. No one besides him is aware of this haven (except, of course, anyone he's willing to tell about it, or who discovers it during the course of the game). The cost of this advantage depends on the size of the haven, modified by its accommodations (havens are assumed to have no more than minimal accommodations).

The player chooses the exact location of the Haven, but the Narrator must approve it. If the player wants his character to have a Haven in a particularly useful location (like inside the Great Hall on Qo'noS), the Narrator may charge him +1 Development Point (or more) for the privilege.

NO RECORD (+1)

Despite a long and checkered criminal career, the character has managed not to acquire a criminal record—or perhaps he's somehow arranged to have all traces of his criminal activities removed from official records.

In either case, someone searching for information on him will come up dry (other than the standard biographical data). However, the character can lose the benefit of this anonymity if he's captured by the authorities during game play or otherwise manages to acquire a record during the series.

VESSEL (VARIES)

The character owns a ship, which he can use for legitimate purposes (transportation, carrying cargo) or illicit ones (piracy, escaping from the law). The cost of the advantage depends on the size of the vessel and its resources (see pg. 116).

The player and Narrator should work together to create a Starship Template for the vessel; the Narrator must approve all vessels.

DISADVANTAGES

CODE OF HONOR

Strange as it may sound, rogues do sometimes follow their own peculiar codes of conduct. Such codes aren't required for any given roguish career, but having one often signifies a professionalism that helps a rogue obtain employment.

Code of the Mercenary (–2): Do not renege on a contract; keep working until the contract has been fulfilled or circumstances make it impossible to do so. Do not betray your employer, even under pain of death, or reveal his identity; once you've taken his money you must serve him honorably until the job is done. Treat other mercenaries who follow this code fairly, and outside of what your contract requires do not subject them to hardships or travail; they're in the same boat as you.

Code of the Assassin (–2): Similar to the Code of the Mercenary, this code applies to professional killers instead.

Honor among Thieves (–2): Another rare Code of Honor, this signifies a thief's refusal to steal from, or otherwise betray, other thieves. In particular, an "honorable" thief will never cooperate with the authorities in any way.

Pirate's Code (–2): As described in Chapter Two (page 25), this code governs the behavior of more "honorable" pirates.

Pra Thal Code (–4) or APC Code (–3): These codes, detailed in Chapter Five (page 57), are more advanced and ethical versions of the Mercenary Code. The *Pra Thal* Code includes the tenets of the APC Code.

THRILL-SEEKER (–1)

Ordinary excitement and entertainment aren't enough for this character; he wants real thrills. He might find them by playing in high-stakes card games, participating in dangerous sports like orbital

skydiving, getting into fights, committing crimes, going into combat, or practicing similar extreme diversions. However he gets his thrills, it tends to be expensive, dangerous, and inconvenient. When confronted with an opportunity to do something thrilling, risky, and/or dangerous, the character must spend one Courage Point to resist the temptation, or else he succumbs to it. Attempts to dissuade the character from seeking thrills are made at a -1 die penalty.

A *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* series can focus on many aspects of the *Star Trek* universe, including those roustabouts and ne'er-do-wells immersed in the life. The rough-and-tumble nature of existence on the frontier leaves plenty of opportunities for characters to become involved in roguish activities, either directly (as rogues themselves) or indirectly (as Starfleet or security officers trying to stop them). Numerous *Deep Space Nine* episodes involve the characters in the shady underworld dealings of rogues like Quark and his confederates. Security officers like Odo also spend considerable time dealing with thieves, gamblers, raiders, and other rogues.

MIXING ROGUE AND STARFLEET CHARACTERS

Although Starfleet operates as a law-abiding (indeed, law-enforcing) organization, occasions arise when Starfleet officers must interact with the underworld on the fringes of the Federation. Numerous examples of this appear in the various television series, including Captain Picard's masquerade as a criminal on board Arctus Baran's ship of rogues (*TNG*, "Gambit, Parts I and II"), Commander Riker's questioning of a Ferengi arms merchant (*TNG*, "Unification, Part II"), Gul Dukat's guerrilla war against the Klingons (*DS9*, "Return to Grace"), Michael Eddington's defection to the Maquis (*DS9*, "For the Cause"), Captain Sisko's use of underworld figures and illegal actions to trick the Romulans into entering the Dominion War on the side of the Federation (*DS9*, "In the Pale Moonlight"), and many others.

Narrators can provide a change of pace in a regular *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* series by running an episode or two where the characters get a chance to leave behind the safety and security of a Starfleet uniform and enter the seamier side of the frontier. Characters' superiors can send them to secretly infiltrate a pirate or mercenary band or a rebel

organization like the Maquis, or to conduct a sting operation against smugglers or thieves.

ROGUES IN A STANDARD STAR TREK SERIES

While it might seem unusual at first, rogues often turn up as regular characters in Starfleet- oriented *Star Trek* series. The Ferengi bartender and "entrepreneur" Quark from *Deep Space Nine* provides the best example. Although Quark isn't a member of Starfleet, or even a great friend of the Federation, he's a fixture on board Deep Space 9. Characters like Quark provide ideas for incorporating rogues into a regular crew of *Star Trek* characters. Garak, the "humble Cardassian tailor," serves as another example—he is in truth a master spy and exiled member of the Obsidian Order.

Life on the frontier often makes for strange bedfellows, and Starfleet characters can find themselves allied with some interesting characters. What about a roguish wanderer who offers himself as a guide to a Federation ship exploring or patrolling the frontier (like Neelix on *Star Trek: Voyager*)? A "reformed" rogue like Tom Paris might assist Starfleet in exchange for a lighter sentence. A former member of the Maquis might agree to help Starfleet put an end to violence in the Demilitarized Zone. Are they really trustworthy? A disgraced Romulan spy might pose as a "Vulcan merchant" on a space station or colony world to earn the Star Empire's good graces again.

The most important thing about including a regular rogue character in a Starfleet series is not to limit the rogue too much. Sometimes Starfleet officers look the other way when it comes to small indiscretions in the name of the greater good, and sometimes rogues can accomplish things outside of official channels which a Starfleet officer could never condone (at least not openly). Of course, if a rogue *does* step over the line, then Starfleet has to take action, like when Captain Sisko imprisoned Garak for trying to use the *Defiant's* weapons to obliterate the Founders.

Rogues can also appear as supporting characters or adversaries in a regular *Star Trek* game series. Star Trek episodes teem with roguish characters who cross the paths of Starfleet crews, people like Captain Okona (*TNG*, "The Outrageous Okona"), Martus Mazur, and countless other supporting characters from *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. Rogues can provide a change of pace and an interesting challenge for a Crew of Starfleet officers.

THE ROGUE SERIES

A Narrator may also wish to run an entire series centered around the life. The galaxy is a big place, with plenty of opportunities for people willing to take them, especially if they don't mind breaking a few rules along the way. This section describes several different frameworks for rogue series and includes special considerations Narrators should take into account when preparing to run a rogue-centered game.

THE CREW

A rogue series focuses on the adventures of a single Crew. They can be part (or all) of the crew of a

pirate ship, a group of smugglers, a loose alliance of thieves and con artists, a mercenary company, or even a squad of assassins for hire. The characters may even "freelance" in different areas, such as the crew of a ship that engages in the occasional pirate raid but spends most of its time smuggling cargo across the Federation border. One of the Crew might be a wanted thief, while her lover is a notorious, but charismatic, con man. The latest addition to the crew, a mysterious Andorian, is actually an assassin on the run from his enemies.

As you can see, it's possible to mix and match a wide range of different character types. The Narrator should help the players create a group of characters who can conceivably work together without immediately wanting to kill each other. A little tension among rogues goes with the territory and can add drama to the game, but it shouldn't be so great that the characters simply can't coexist peacefully.

THE BASE OF OPERATIONS

Next, a rogue Crew needs a base of operations. This may be a starship, a space station or other outpost, or a planet. Each option has its own advantages and drawbacks. For more information on outposts and their design, consult the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* core rulebook, pages 172-178.

A Ship

A ship gives the Crew the greatest degree of mobility. In a pirate or smuggler series, the Crew normally requires a ship. Other rogues may or may not have access to a ship. Of course, there's nothing that says the characters *own* their ship. The captain could be a supporting cast character, or a powerful syndicate or wealthy patron might hold title to the vessel. A common theme in many rogue series is earning enough money to pay off debts owed on a ship in order to keep it from being taken away.

The ship used by a group of rogues isn't likely to measure up to the top-line ships used by Starfleet or other interstellar powers. Pirate and smuggler ships tend to be smaller, faster, and more maneuverable than bulky cruisers and warships. They often possess nonstandard equipment, such as shielding against sensor systems. A cloaking device, even a bad knock-off of a Romulan design, quickly pays rich dividends aboard most pirate ships. A raiding vessel's weapons and shields often pack more punch than its size would suggest, but still remain outmatched by those found on Starfleet or military starships.
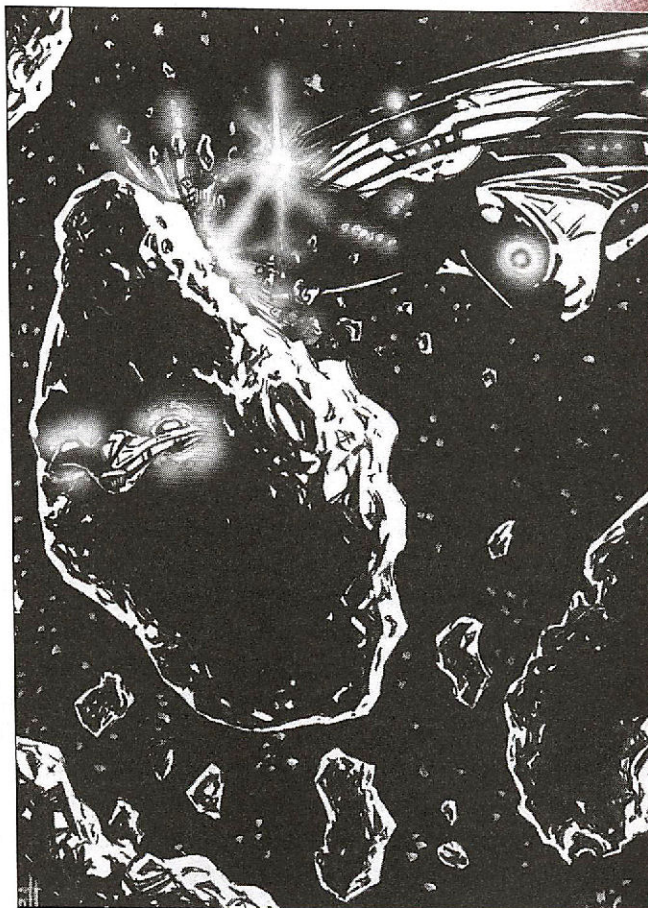
Rogue ships use small profiles, requiring far fewer crewmembers than a Starfleet or military vessel. A group of six rogues might constitute the entire crew of their ship, or there may be a few supporting characters involved. This means the Crew has to be more self-reliant in handling problems on board ship. There are no security officers to call for help, no medical officers to treat injuries, and no engineers to fix problems that the characters can't handle. Their ship also can't simply dock at a starbase for repairs or maintenance. Rogue ships are often held together with nothing more than hope and clever engineering. The Narrator should work with the players to design a suitable ship for the series, using examples from the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* core rulebook, this book, and other Last Unicorn *Star Trek* gaming products as guides.

Mobility becomes the most important consideration for the Narrator when dealing with a rogue vessel. Unlike Starfleet, a crew of rogues does not operate under orders. They can travel anywhere they want. So the Narrator must keep the series focused to prevent the characters from simply wandering around the galaxy aimlessly. The Narrator can do this by limiting the players' choices somewhat. For example, begin an episode with the Crew already en

route to deliver a cargo when they run into trouble; their destination appears clear from the start. You can also limit the Crew's options using navigational hazards and patrols ("You don't want to go anywhere near Relva VII—Federation sensors would pick you up in a second").

A STATION OR OUTPOST

A space station or similar facility—either in orbit around a planet or star, or located in deep space—offers numerous opportunities for a Crew of rogues. Many outposts on the frontier of the Federation serve as "galactic crossroads" where species from all over the galaxy meet and mingle. Anywhere large numbers of people are found, you'll find rogues seeking to take advantage of them in one way or another.

Station or outpost series support more "peaceful" rogues like thieves, gamblers, and con artists. These rogues operate without disturbing their environment or drawing attention to themselves, especially if they have a "cover" as legitimate business-owners on board the station. For example, a Crew of rogues could all operate out of an outpost's central marketplace, like the Promenade on Deep Space 9. They might be partners in a single business (like a bar or casino), or they might operate separately, with interests that occasionally coincide and force them to work together. The station's other personnel make up the supporting cast, with opportunities for all manner of guest stars and visitors. (*The Star Trek: DS9 RPG Narrator's Toolkit* contains additional suggestions for station- or outpost-based series.)

The Narrator must first consider the nature of the outpost. Generally speaking, a Starfleet station or starbase is too orderly and well maintained to serve as a base for a rogue campaign. Frontier stations like Deep Space 9 constitute exceptions, because they are not truly Starfleet facilities. Deep Space 9 is technically a Bajoran-owned station, which Bajor allows Starfleet to administer. Thus, activities like gambling occur on board, even though they probably wouldn't be allowed on a Starfleet facility.

Starfleet may have similar arrangements with other space stations and outposts along the Federation frontier—a Starfleet crew administers and helps maintain the outpost, but it remains under the rule of local law enforcement. In this type of series, the players can assume the roles of Starfleet personnel or local station inhabitants, some of whom may be rogues. See the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* and its *Narrator's Toolkit* for more information about this type of series.

An outpost or station under the control of another interstellar power presents different opportunities. Imagine a Ferengi station located on the border of Alliance and Federation space (in or near the Draconis Outback, probably) and used as a stopover for traders and merchants of all types. A DaiMon and his Ferengi crew administer the outpost, but many different species call its airlocks home. The Ferengi also "subcontract" much of the station's maintenance and security to other parties, giving it a diverse and multispecies crew. Such an outpost would serve as a thriving center of commerce, as well as a haven for rogues able to play within the Ferengi's rules and not get caught. Stations administered by the Klingons, the Cardassians, and the Romulans offer other possibilities, as do civilian stations manned by Federation citizens, such as Andorians or Tellarites.

In an outpost campaign, characters generally don't go seeking things; instead, things come and find them. Stations become foci for all kinds of activity, with ships and visitors coming and going all the time. Characters can also get away from the outpost from time to time aboard a ship, for a change of pace. Visiting a station or outpost can also be an interesting episode for the crew of a pirate or smuggler vessel, and the Narrator can create a station as a regular "stopover" point in a ship-based campaign.

A PLANET

A rogue series set on a planet features similar trappings to one set on a space station, with some additional factors to consider. Planets suited for rogue series fall into three basic categories: colonies, established worlds, and homeworlds.

A colony is a recently settled planet where life is rougher and less safe than on the core worlds of the Federation. Colonies of all types dot the frontier and often play host to rogues as they congregate and practice their "trade." Rogues may visit colony worlds, or set up shop on a particular colony. The Narrator can run some interesting episodes by giving the rogues a stake in the success or ongoing development of the colony. Although many of their activities are illegal, the rogues also find themselves involved in building something lasting. Failed colonies, such as Tasha Yar's homeworld of Turkana IV, also serve as excellent "homes" for rogues.

Established worlds are colonies that have developed into fully mature societies in their own right. Well policed and generally secure, established worlds host rogues and rogue operations of every stripe.

Pleasure planets like Risa attract gamblers, thieves, and con artists looking for opportunities and easy, gullible marks.

Homeworlds are planets home to a native species, such as Earth, Vulcan, and Andoria. The homeworlds of Federation members aggressively discourage illegal activity and generally make inhospitable (not to mention dangerous) bases. Still, operations on Federation homeworlds do sometimes occur. The Vulcan Isolation Movement counts members on Vulcan; some other homeworlds possess similar extremist organizations. The Maquis, for example, maintain contacts and sympathizers on several Federation worlds. Rogues trying to operate in the heart of the Federation must remain very skilled and very cautious in order to remain out of the hands of the law.

THE OPPOSITION

Even in the most lawless areas of the frontier, rogues do not go about their business unopposed. In a rogue campaign, the opposition the characters must deal with falls into two main categories: the forces of law and government, and other rogues.

POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES

Federation planets bear the responsibility for maintaining their own police and security forces. Such police forces enjoy only limited jurisdiction when pursuing criminals offworld. Starfleet deals with other interstellar crimes and also wields the authority to police its own facilities, vessels, and starbases.

Planetary police forces range from highly efficient and well trained, to inefficient and even corrupt on some frontier worlds. On space stations and small colonies, a small security force or a local "constable" often handles police and security work. It's up to the Narrator to decide what sort of police force exists on any given world, and up to the characters to know what sort of opposition they're dealing with.

On non-Federation worlds, police and security forces range from eminently corruptible (criminals can get out of almost any crime on Ferenginar with sufficiently large bribes) to crushingly totalitarian (such as the brutally efficient Romulan security forces). Militaristic societies, like the Klingons or the Cardassians, often draw no noticeable divisions between their military, security, and police forces. Soldiers patrol and enforce the law, and criminals gain formidable opponents to contend with.

Rather than making police characters faceless opponents for rogues, Narrators should consider the value of police as supporting characters. Take the relationship between Odo and Quark on *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* as an example. Odo is a security officer and Quark "a gambler and a thief" (according to Odo's own words). Still, the two of them enjoy a strange kind of friendship. Another recurring police character is the security officer willing to follow the rogues across the galaxy, if need be, to capture them.

OTHER ROGUES

Any of the various rogues described throughout this book can serve as adversaries for the Crew. Rogues often contend for the same booty, so the characters may need to deal with rival pirates and thieves. Thieves may try to steal from them, while gamblers and con artists try to win away the characters' wealth in other ways. Enemies may hire bounty hunters to track down the characters, or assassins to kill them. Pirates raid smugglers, while smuggler or pirate allies sometimes betray rebels.

EPISODE SEEDS

The following episode seeds allow Narrators to jump right into a rogue series. The Narrator should adjust the characters and events described in each to suit his series, adding recurring adversaries and supporting characters, changing place names, and so forth. With some adjustments, several of these concepts could work for Starfleet characters operating on the frontier (on a station like Deep Space 9) or working undercover as rogues to carry out a mission for Starfleet.

A SMALL FAVOR

The Hook: A Ferengi asks the rogues to smuggle a "package" as payment for a favor they owe. They're just not told what's in the package.

The Job: A Ferengi contact named Jolla gets in touch with the characters regarding a "small favor" he needs done. He asks the characters to rendezvous with his ship inside the Romulan Neutral Zone, where he will explain everything. He indicates that the characters will be well paid for their efforts. (The Narrator can replace Jolla with another character the rogues owe or are likely to work for.)

Jolla's small trading ship meets the characters at the appointed time and place. Jolla explains that he wants the characters to take on a cargo container and transport it along the outskirts of the Federation border to the Attican system. There they will rendezvous with a Vulcan transport that will take the cargo on to its final destination (which Jolla does not mention). The characters are not to tamper with the cargo in any way; he says its is "quite fragile." In exchange, the Ferengi offers to forget about the characters' debt to him and offers them a handsome sum of latinum on top of it (the Narrator should choose an amount sufficient to make the offer tempting).

Complications: What the characters don't know is that the cargo container beamed aboard their ship holds a high-ranking Romulan senator who has decided to defect to the Federation. If you own *The Way of D'era* boxed set, use Senator Merek as the defector; he's seeking Federation aid in dealing with a plague that has broken out on his homeworld of Tigelis VII. Otherwise, feel free to create a suitable Romulan character or to use an established one.

The Senator was placed in stasis inside the cargo container in order to smuggle him out of Romulan space. Ambassador Spock arranged for contacts of his on Vulcan to meet the characters outside the Neutral Zone to retrieve the container. If the characters awaken the Senator (requiring a Routine (4) Medical Sciences test), he will explain the situation to them and do whatever he can to assist.

Unfortunately, the *Tal Shiar* caught wind of the Senator's defection, but too late to prevent him from leaving Romulus. Their pursuit has forced a change in plans, which is why Jolla contacted the player characters. He doesn't say anything about the *Tal Shiar* because he doesn't want the characters to turn him down and he figures the transfer will throw the Romulans off the trail. He's mistaken.

Not long after they leave their rendezvous with the Ferengi trader, the characters pick up indications of a cloaked ship following them. Have the characters make Shipboard Systems (Sensors) tests and inform the player with the highest result of a strange "subspace sensor echo" he cannot account for. It appears to match the ship's course and speed exactly. It might be a problem with the sensors, but a check of them reveals nothing unusual.

The Romulans have decided to follow the rogues in hopes that they will lead them to their confederates, allowing the Romulans to expose the operation and accuse the Federation of espionage. If the Crewmembers are suitably paranoid, they will quickly figure out that someone is following them and try to lose him. Let the Crew come up with suitable tactics to try and give them a reasonable chance of success. Possibilities include navigating through an asteroid belt or charged plasma field, or hiding inside a nebula to confuse the Romulan sensors.

The Payoff: If the characters make it to the Attican system, they meet up with a Vulcan transport ship ready to take the Senator to safety on Vulcan. If the Romulans haven't shown themselves by now, they do so at a critical moment, before the Crew can beam the Senator to the other ship. A Romulan warbird decloaks near the two ships and demands the return of the Senator and the surrender of the vessels.

A warbird heavily outclasses virtually any type of ship the Crew is likely to possess, as well as the Vulcan ship. If the characters are to escape capture, they must use cleverness and quick thinking to outwit the Romulans. They may be able to come up with some sort of ruse to trick

the Romulans into believing that they (and the Senator) have been destroyed, or even some means of disabling the warbird long enough for them to escape. Let the players come up with a plan on their own. The Vulcans and the Senator will cooperate however they can, provided there seems to be a reasonable chance of success. If they seem completely at a loss, you can have the Vulcan captain or the Senator make a suggestion.

For an interesting twist, the Vulcan ship might be accompanied by two cloaked Klingon birds of prey as "escorts." The Vulcans can play this "ace in the hole" to convince the Romulans to back down. Reserve this as a last resort to keep the characters from being unfairly annihilated if they are unable to come up with any other means to survive. Alternatively, you can simply let the isolinear chips (and the characters) fall where they may. Nobody said life as a smuggler was easy, or long.

TO CATCH A THIEF

The Hook: It seemed like a simple job, but when Starfleet Intelligence gets involved, simplicity often flies out the airlock.

The Job: The characters form a group of thieves or various rogues. While pulling off a job, they get caught by Starfleet and thrown into the brig. Things look grim until they get a visitor, a man called "Mr. Smith," who offers the Crew a deal: If they assist him in handling an operation, and survive, they're free to go. Otherwise, it's a likely 20-30 years in a Federation penal colony. Not a difficult choice to make.

Mr. Smith, actually a Starfleet Intelligence operative, needs suitable agents for a difficult mission. Starfleet Intelligence has learned that a powerful Orion crime lord named Thoren has gotten hold of the technical specifications for Starfleet's *Sovereign*-class starship. He plans to sell them to the highest bidder at a secret auction. Starfleet doesn't know the location of the auction, or who the potential buyers are, although they can make some educated guesses. The plans would be worth a great deal to most of the other powers in the Alpha Quadrant and quite a few others. The Romulans and the Cardassians are almost certain to have representatives on hand.

Smith wants to set the characters up as buyers to get them into Thoren's auction. Starfleet Intelligence has intercepted a communication between Thoren and a representative of the Orion Syndicate. Starfleet has arranged for the Orion representative to be "delayed indefinitely." As it happens, one of the characters vaguely resembles the Orion, which is one of the reasons Smith picked them. The characters are to assume the identity of the Orion and his entourage. They will travel to Risa and meet with one of Thoren's agents, who will give them the time and place of the auction. They can then pass the information on to Smith and let Starfleet Intelligence handle the rest.

Complications: Unfortunately, the characters don't get an opportunity to communicate with Mr. Smith. When they meet with Thoren's agent, a fat Tellarite named Drell, they are immediately "escorted" to the auction on board Thoren's orbiting yacht, the *Ice Maiden*, which leaves the Risa system and goes into warp. In attendance are representatives from all over the Alpha Quadrant, including Romulans, Cardassians, Breen, Ferengi, and even Tholians. The characters mingle with the other "guests" for a while, maintaining their cover. If desired, the Narrator can throw in a supporting character who might recognize one of the Crew and blow their cover if they're not careful.

The Crewmembers must figure out how to get a signal to Smith without being detected. They can also try to acquire the technical data before it is sold. Thoren's security systems should present a challenge to the characters. Of course, they can also simply try to buy the data by outbidding the other representatives, but they have no money to back up their bids, so they'll have to be clever to pull this plan off.

The Payoff: If the Crew manages to contact Smith, a Starfleet vessel intercepts the *Ice Maiden* and forces its crew to surrender (possibly with some help from the characters). If you want to liven up this final encounter, make the intercepting ship *Sovereign* class and let Thoren use the technical data to figure out weaknesses in the ship's defenses, making it more of an even match until the characters intervene and cripple the *Ice Maiden* from within. This is a good opportunity to include some guest stars. Perhaps the Starfleet ship is the *Enterprise*!

If the Crewmembers manages to get hold of the plans, they may be able to escape the *Ice Maiden* using a shuttlecraft. Then it's up to them whether to turn the plans over to Starfleet or try to sell them themselves, earning the wrath of the Federation in addition to that of Thoren.

If the Crewmembers carry out the mission well, Mr. Smith arranges for all charges against them to be dropped. They are sent on their way with a warning to stay within the law. Whether or not the characters heed it is up to them. For a change to the series, the Narrator can have Smith try to recruit the characters as Starfleet Intelligence operatives.

HIGH STAKES

The Hook: A mysterious stranger expresses interest in playing against the characters in a game with very high stakes.

The Job: A group of rogues is enjoying the hospitality of a casino or resort on a pleasure planet like Risa. They may be relaxing and taking advantage of the booty from their last successful job, or they may be there in order to gamble or find easy marks for a theft or con game.

While enjoying the casino one evening, one or more of the characters is approached by a mysterious woman who joins the game. She plays skillfully and wins several bets, collecting a considerable sum from the characters. No matter how well they seem to do, she does better. She is happy to engage the characters in conversation, but she reveals nothing about her own background—not even her name.

After winning a considerable amount, the mystery woman gets up to leave. She pauses and asks the characters if they are interested in winning back all they've lost, plus more, by playing another game. If the characters accept, she smiles, nods, and the world around them disappears in a flash.

Complications: The mystery woman is actually a member of the Q Continuum (her name, naturally, is "Q"). She is fascinated by the concept of gambling and games of chance, and likes to play them with mortals she encounters. When the characters accept Q's challenge of another game, she transports them from the pleasure planet to another setting, such as a desert planet under the light of twin moons. There, dressed like an Arabian princess, sitting under an elaborate tent, she explains to the characters that she will challenge them to different games. If they win, they get back all of their money, plus a "substantial bonus." Q doesn't say what that is, but the characters immediately notice the gems, art treasures, and bars of latinum stacked in the tent behind her.

Q's games can be practically anything the Narrator wants. There could be one game or a whole series of them, making this suitable for a miniseries of several episodes. The games always represent tests of skill and luck involving the characters' skills. Some possibilities include:

- Carrying off the theft of some valuable item in a fantastic setting. Places like Baghdad from the Arabian Nights, ancient Qo'noS during the time of Kahless, Ferenginar, and pre-Surak Vulcan are all good 'possibilities. Q can also place the characters into a fictional context, from Camelot to Chicago of the 1920s.
- Navigating a maze of booby-traps and other challenges.
- Escaping from a famous prison like Alcatraz, Elba II, or Rura Penthe.
- Any favorite adventure or setting from another roleplaying game the players are familiar with. Q either tells them that she made the place up or that she "borrowed it from this amusing idea they had on 20th-century Earth prior to the development of holosuites."

The Payoff: If the characters manage to beat Q's games successfully, she is as good as her word and returns their money to them, along with some token of her esteem. This could be some additional money for the characters to enjoy the rest of their trip with, fixing a problem the characters have with their ship or something else, or providing them with a clue to a new opportunity for adventure and booty. If the characters played well, Q also promises that she'll stop by for a visit the next time she's passing through their part of the galaxy.

There are some people you don't want to meet in a dark starship corridor...

Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues takes you into the shadowy corners of the *Star Trek* universe where Starfleet officers rarely tread—the underworld, the black markets, the back alleys, the pirate hideouts. This book takes you beyond the shadowy divide that separates the legitimate citizens of the Federation and other societies from those people in "the Life." Pirates, privateers, raiders, gamblers, thieves, con men, mercenaries, assassins, bounty hunters—*Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues* introduces them all.

If you've ever wanted to play a *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game* character on the other side of the law—a "rogue with a heart of gold," a mercenary selling his military skills to the highest bidder, or a con man who can't resist the opportunity to profit while making others look like fools—you'll find everything you need within this book. If you're on the other side of the Narrator's screen, *Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues* shows you how to integrate characters like these into your episodes and series, whether as Crew members or shady individuals standing between the Crew and its goals.

Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues includes:

- A detailed discussion of "the Life": what it means to be an outlaw or rogue in the universe of *Star Trek*.

- Three new Templates, four new Overlays, dozens of new Background History packages, and new skills, advantages, and disadvantages—plus extensive discussion of what these characters do and how they do it.

- Six new ships (including new ship technology), along with information on how rogues obtain less-than-legal "scrap" vessels.

- Rules for havens and hideouts: how to find or make one, along with complete descriptions of two sample havens and the rogues who run them.

- Four detailed rogue NPCs for use by the Narrator, and guidelines for creating and running rogue series.

No matter which side of the law you're on, *Raiders, Renegades, and Rogues* is a must-have guide to the shady underside of the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game*!

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RAIDERS RENEGADES & ROGUES

Icon Links

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Arms Dealers

At any given time, wars are being fought all over the Alpha and Beta Quadrants: nation fights nation, oppressed rebel strikes at oppressors, one planet or system tries to conquer another. This constant state of conflict creates a booming market for weapons. A large part of this market is perfectly legitimate; corporations run by Klingons, Ferengi, and many other species supply weapons to combatants in accord with all applicable laws.

However, not everyone who wants weapons can go to a licensed dealer. Some can't tolerate the publicity which attends such purchases, some can't afford the prices, and some are criminals who can't legally buy arms. As seen in the episode "Business As Usual," people like this turn to the black market, where plenty of dealers stand ready and eager to take their money in exchange for the latest armaments which "just happened to fall off of the back of a freighter on Altros IX."

Black market arms dealers run the gamut from relatively trustworthy and competent businessmen who simply prefer to avoid standard market restrictions, to outright criminals who have no scruples about selling substandard merchandise. All of them have one thing in common: they're happy to make money by indirectly causing suffering and misery. They can ruthlessly evaluate a client's needs based on how many casualties he wishes to cause, providing just the right weapon for the desired effect—for a substantial sum, of course.

Since black market arms dealing is illegal in almost every society (even the Ferengi Alliance has some regulations governing the arms trade), arms dealers have to find ways to attract customers without attracting the law as well. Many set up shop in frontier regions where law enforcement is, at best, lax. Then they put out the word through the invisible network of generals, soldiers, mercenaries, bounty hunters and others that they're open for business. Soon clients with accounts full of latinum are knocking on their doors.

Illegal arms dealers tend to invest heavily in security—everything from bodyguards to tamper-proof vaults. They know that many of their clients are larcenous, violent, temperamental, or even mentally disturbed, and they try to prepare for every eventuality.

Here are a few technological items that one might acquire from an arms dealer:

WEAPONS

Compressed Tetryon Beam Pistol

Compressed tetryon beam pistols are relatively small energy weapons favored by many rogues and covert military units. Although not as powerful or flexible as a standard personal phaser or disruptor, they have one important benefit: standard security sensors, such as those on Deep Space 9, cannot detect them.
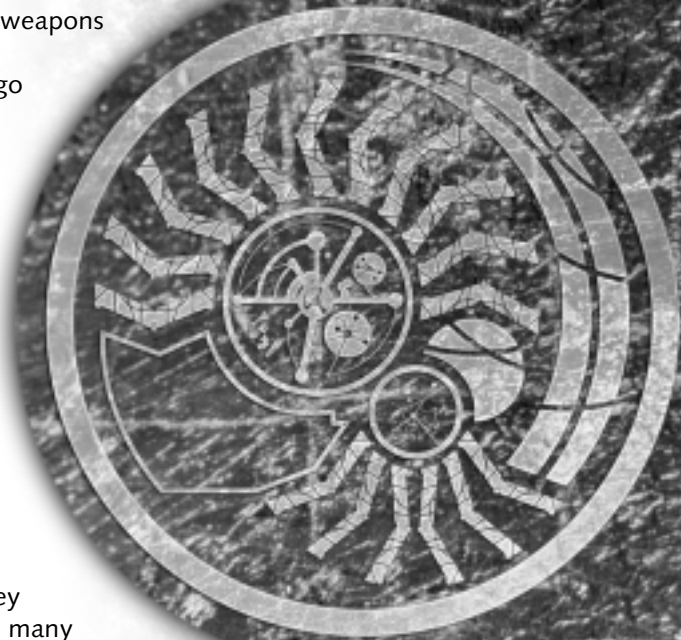
Compressed Tetryon Beam Pistol

Settings: 1-6 (see table)
Range: 5/20/50/100
Size: 17 cm long, .5 L in volume
Mass: .5 kg

Pirate Disruptor Damage

	Setting	Damage	Charge	Notes
1	Light Stun	(3 + 2d6)	3	Stun a Human for 5 minutes, or a Klingon for a minute or two
2	Heavy Stun	(6 + 4d6)	8	Stun a Human for 15 minutes, or a Klingon for 5 minutes
3	Light Thermal	9 + 3d6	14	Cut a 1 m hole in 10 cm of wood in 3 minutes
2	Heavy Thermal	14 + 4d6	25	Cut a 1 m hole in 12 cm of steel or rock in 30 seconds; cut a 1 m hole in a duranium bulkhead in 8 minutes
3	Light Disrupt	25 + 5d6	40	Vaporize almost anything
4	Heavy Disrupt	130 + 10d6	100	Explode 600 cubic meters of rock into glowing rubble

Energy: 400 charges
Damage: See table

Nausicaan Razor Club

Size: 60-80 cm long
Mass: 2.5-4.5 kg
Accuracy: 6
Block: +0
Damage: 5+2d6

This weapon resembles a flanged mace from ancient Earth, but the shaft and flanges are much thicker and heavier, and the flanges themselves are sharpened. This gives the weapon both cutting and crushing power, making it a fearsome and brutal tool of destruction. However, it's so large and heavy that only the strongest people can wield it properly (apply a –1 Test Result penalty to all Tests made to use the weapon unless the wielder has a Fitness + Strength of 4 or higher).

EXPLOSIVES

Sometimes the best way to make sure you eliminate an enemy or target is to eliminate the entire area he occupies. This requires explosives, a favorite not only of military personnel and mercenary types, but of the non-subtle assassin as well. Many thieves also use tiny, precisely-prepared amounts of explosives in shaped charges to break into secured areas. In addition to the explosives and bombs listed in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game Players' Guide*, here are a few favored by the assassins, mercenaries and thieves of the Alpha and Beta Quadrants.

Angrosite

Blast Radius: 5 meters
Dropoff: 12 points of damage per meter
Blast Radius Damage: 25 + 10d6

Although not as stable (and thus as safe) as commercially manufactured explosives, angrosite is popular with the criminal element because it's relatively easy to make with certain common and legally available substances. With the right materials, plus the recipe and a kitchen to work in, even a Pakled could brew up a batch of angrosite. But the older it gets, the more unstable it becomes; for every week after being made, subtract –1 from the Test Result of any Demolitions Test to work with it. Failure (of any degree) indicates that it explodes while the character is working on it.

Hiladium

Blast Radius: .5 meters
Dropoff: 20 points of damage per meter
Blast Radius Damage: 10 + 10d6

Although relatively weak when compared to many explosives, hiladium is perfect for the small, controlled explosions which many thieves and assassins prefer. It's a resinous chemical compound distilled from certain minerals. Manufacturers combine it with special plastics to make it stable and easy to handle or mold into a particular shape. When combined with shaped-charge technology, it creates precisely-shaped and modulated explosions.

Microexplosive

Blast Radius: .5 meter
Dropoff: None; damage does not affect area beyond Blast Radius at all
Blast Radius Damage: 6 + 5d6

This tiny explosive device, usually not more than 1-2 cubic millimeters in volume, is used as an instrument of assassination and sabotage. Small enough to be implanted beneath the skin of a sleeping victim without waking him, it can be set to detonate after the passage of a certain period of time. Typically assassins implant it behind the ear, virtually ensuring that the explosion will kill the victim.

VORASITE

Blast Radius: 15 meters
Dropoff: 3 points of damage per meter
Blast Radius Damage: 60 + 8d6

This powerful explosive, initially developed by Tellarite engineers for use in mining and construction work, has since been adapted for a wide variety of military applications. Although laws carefully control vorasite supplies on most planets, some of it has, inevitably, made its way into the hands of less savory elements. Its enormous destructive power makes it a favorite among those who don't care how much collateral damage they cause, as long as they get their target.

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

BOARDING SUIT

Often, when pirates take a ship, it's not a quiet or peaceful affair. The target ship will use shields, transport inhibitors and similar technology to keep pirates from simply beaming aboard, forcing them to cut their way into the ship with weapons or sneak in through some airlock or hatchway. For work like this, pirates rely on what's known as a "boarding suit." Adapted from a standard EVA suit (see the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, page 232), a boarding suit provides typical EVA protection, but is armored as well. They also incorporate "stealth" technology to prevent their energy signatures from being easily detected (the minimum Difficulty for finding someone wearing a boarding suit with a tricorder or ship's sensors is Moderate (8)).

Armor: 6
Size: 14 L volume (plus boots and helmets)
Mass: 15 kg
Duration: 25 hours' worth of air and water

SENSOR DECEIVER BELT

Size: 5 cm wide, .5 cm thick, and at least 70 cm long.
Mass: 0.16 kg
Duration: 12 hours + recharge

An inferior version of the elaborate Anti-Sensor Belt used by many espionage agencies (see *The First Line: Starfleet Intelligence*, page 40), the Sensor Deceiver Belt allows the wearer to make himself look like someone else—at least as far as sensors and tricorders are concerned. The belt doesn't change his actual appearance; rather, it changes his sensor profile. He can program the belt to make him seem to be any race, height, and so forth. If he has previously taken a tricorder or sensor reading of a specific individual, he can "download" that sensor profile into the belt to make it seem to sensors as if he is that person (the belt can hold up to a dozen such profiles).

GENERIC ROGUES

The following character sheets can be used to create rogue NPCs of various types. Each represents a "typical" gambler, thief, or what have you, and is a complete, ready to play character (assumed to be a Human, but easily altered to reflect another species). Notes or options for customizing them are in each character sheet.

ASSASSIN

Attributes
Fitness 3
Coordination 3
Intellect 3
    Perception +1
Presence 2
Psi 0

Skills
Assassination (Poisons) 2 (4)
    Stealthy Attacks (3)
    Assassination Devices (3)
Athletics (Running) 2 (3)
    Leaping (3)
Concealment (Weapons) 1 (2)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Demolitions (Booby Traps) 1 (2)
    Shipboard Demolitions 2
Dodge 1
Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Espionage (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Language
    Species Language 2
    Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Physical Sciences (Chemistry) 1 (2)
Primitive Weaponry (Knife) 1 (2)
Streetwise (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2)
Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Quick-draw +2
Shady Background -4
Wanted -2

BOUNTY HUNTER

Attributes
Fitness 3
Coordination 2
    Reaction +1
Intellect 3
    Perception +1
Presence 2
Psi 0

Skills

Athletics (Running) 2 (3)
  Lifting (3)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Dodge 1
Energy Weapon (choose two Specializations) 2 (3)
  and (3)
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Language
  Species Language 2
  Federation Standard 1
Law (choose two criminal law Specializations) 1 (2)
  and (2)
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Planetside Survival (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Search 1
Security (Law Enforcement) 2 (3)
  Security Systems (3)
Streetwise (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and
  (2)
Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Vehicle Operations (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Disadvantages

Shady Background -2
Wanted -2

GAMBLER

Attributes

Fitness 2
Coordination 3
  Dexterity +1
Intellect 3
Presence 2
Psi 0

Skills

Athletics (Running) 2 (3)
Charm (Influence) 2 (3)
Computer (Research) 1 (2)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Dodge 1
Fast Talk 2
Gaming (choose two Specializations) 3 (4)
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Intimidation (Bluffing) 1 (2)
Knowledge (Professional Sports) 1 (2)
Language
  Species Language 2
  Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Physical Sciences (Mathematics) 1 (2)
Sleight Of Hand (Card Tricks) 1 (2)
Streetwise (Locate Gambling) 1 (2)
Vehicle Operations (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

MERCENARY

Attributes

Fitness 3
Coordination 3
  Reaction +1
Intellect 2
Presence 2
Psi 0

Skills

Choose any three Military Skills at 1 (2)
Athletics (choose two Specializations) 2 (3) and (3)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Dodge 1
Energy Weapon (choose two Specializations) 2 (3)
  and (3)
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Language
  Species Language 2
  Federation Standard 1
Law (Starfleet Regulations) 1 (2)
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Shipboard Systems (Tactical and one other
  Specialization) 2 (3) and (3)
Space Sciences (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Starship Tactics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Vehicle Operation (choose Specialization)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Advantages

Bold +1

PIRATE/RAIDER

Attributes

Fitness 3
  Vitality +1
Coordination 3
Intellect 3
Presence 3
  Willpower +1
Psi 0

Skills

Athletics (choose two Specializations) 2 (3) and (3)
Command (Pirate Crew) 1 (2)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Energy Weapon (choose Specialization) 1 (3)
Espionage (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Fast Talk 1
Gaming (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Knowledge (Trade Routes) 1 (2)
  Pirate Havens (2)
Language
  Species Language 2
  Federation Standard 1
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

RAIDERS, RENEGADES, AND ROGUES

Primitive Weaponry (Knife) 1 (2)
Security (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Shipboard Systems (choose two Specializations) 2 (4) and (3)
Starship Tactics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Streetwise (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Disadvantages
Shady Background -3
Wanted -2

Thief

Attributes
Fitness 2
   Vitality +1
Coordination 3
   Dexterity +1
Intellect 3
   Perception +1
Presence 3
Psi 0

Skills
Athletics (choose two Specializations) 2 (3) and (3)
Computer (Data Alteration/Hacking and one other Specialization) 1 (2) and (2)
Culture (choose Specialization) 2 (3)
Dodge 1
Fast Talk 2
History (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Language
   Species Language 2
   Federation Standard 1
Merchant (Appraising/Selling Stolen Goods) 1 (2)
Personal Equipment (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Search 1
Security (Security Systems) 3 (4)
Sleight of Hand (Pick Pocket) 1 (2)
Stealth (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Streetwise (Locate Fences/Black Market) 1 (2)
World Knowledge (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Advantages/Disadvantages
Wealth +3
Shady Background -2
Sworn Enemy -1
Thrillseeker -1
Wanted -2

DETAILING HAVENS

GORKON'S RETREAT

SYSTEM DATA

ALTANIS IDRILON SYSTEM

System Name: Altanis Idrilon
Affiliation: System located on the fringes of the
Draconis Outback and the Klingon Empire
System Type: Type M5 V (red dwarf) star
Inhabited Planets: None
Other Planets: Four other planets, one Class J gas
giant, one Class H planetoid, and two Class J
worlds.
Other Stellar Objects: Low density silicate asteroid
field between the third and fourth planets.
Artificial Objects: Derelict Klingon observation
post. No longer functional.

IDRILON III

Planet Name: Idrilon III
Class: H
System Data: Idrilon III has one small moon
Gravity: 1.1 G
Year and Day: 254/20
Atmosphere: Thin nitrogen-oxygen atmosphere with high concentra-
tions of sulfur dioxide.
Hydrosphere: Less than 10% surface water with no appreciable concentrations.
Climate: Arid and hot
Sapient Species: None
Tech Level: None
Government: None
Culture: None
Affiliation: Planet is located on the fringes of the Draconis Outback and Klingon
Empire
Resources: No known resources. Essentially a barren world.
Places of Note: An equatorial rift spans some 100 kilometers across on the largest
continent. Sulfuric ash and pyroclastic particles spew forth during the planet's
closest approach to the red dwarf, causing a brownish-red band in the planet's
atmosphere near the equator.
Ship Facilities: None

THE SCRAPYARD

FINDING THE SCRAPYARD

Gurek's floating marketplace isn't difficult to find—to those who know where to
look. Many of Gurek's contacts who deal with him on a regular basis are willing to share
the last known location of the Scrapyard for a small fee. Rumors always abound as to
the next port of call for the monstrosity, but many times those are just red herrings to
keep the authorities busy.

Streetwise

Difference	Information
Critical failure	No information is found, but shortly thereafter "associates" of Gurek show up to dissuade the characters from inquiring further!
-5 or more	No information is found, but authorities begin making inquires as to the character's interest!
-3 to 4	Player is unable to find out any information.
-2	Player receives a false set of coordinates with nothing there.
-1	Player determines last known location of the Scrapyard.
0	Player is able to determine the current location of the Scrapyard or someone who knows.
+1 to 3	Player determines the current and next planned location of the Scrapyard.
+4 to 5	Player determines location of the Scrapyard and receives a package to be delivered to Gurek for a small fee.
Critical success	Player not only determines the next location of the Scrapyard, but also a "preferred docking code" that waives all docking and transfer fees!

Skill: Streetwise

Using a character's Streetwise skill is one way to try to find the Scrapyard. Have the player make a Streetwise (Locate Fences/Black Market) Test with a Difficulty of 10. Compare the difference of their roll against 10 on the included chart.

Advantage: Haven

If the player is willing to spend four Development Points, they may purchase Haven (The Scrapyard) to be one of Gurek's elite contacts that are always kept apprised of his ship's location. The character then has the option to sell said information, if he or she so desires. As long as the player isn't too obvious about doing so, or inadvertently leads the authorities to the Scrapyard, Gurek has no objection.

Bribery

The most obvious of all the methods, if the characters are able to find someone who knows the location of the Scrapyard they can purchase information on its next location. This can cost as high as 50 strips of latinum, but a successful Merchant (Haggling) could lower that by as much as ten strips.

PATROLS & SECURITY VESSELS

PATROLS

Rogues of various stripes have to contend with ships patrolling interstellar borders and trade routes. Starfleet is the first and most common type of patrol rogues are likely to encounter in a Federation-based campaign. Starfleet ships respond to reports of piracy and raiding, and they do their best to deal with smugglers. Still, Starfleet is spread quite thin across the Federation, especially along the frontier, so a clever group of rogues can manage to avoid attracting Starfleet attention. Interstellar space is vast; there are many places for a small ship to hide.

Rogues also have to deal with border patrols. These range from planetary defense ships protecting a single planet or system to powerful vessels patrolling sensitive areas like the Romulan Neutral Zone or the Cardassian Demilitarized Zone. Relatively open borders, like those of the Federation, the Ferengi Alliance and most colony worlds, can be passed without any trouble. More tightly defended borders may require secret routes, stolen passcodes, or healthy bribes to cross. The most carefully guarded borders (like the Neutral Zone) may require outright trickery or a cloaking device to pass unchallenged.

SAMPLE SECURITY VESSELS

Here are statistics for two common types of ships for rogues to encounter: the *Berlin*-class security cutter, and the *Heron*-class security ship. The Narrator should use these as guidelines for designing similar vessels from other civilizations in the Alpha Quadrant.

BERLIN-Class Starship

Class and Type: *Berlin*-class security cutter
Commissioning Date: 2359
Hull Characteristics
Size: 3 (95 x 20 x 18 m; 50,000 metric tonnes; 4 decks)
Resistance: 2
Structural Points: 60
Operations Characteristics
Crew/Passengers/Evac: 12/5/200 [5 Power/round]
Computers: 2 [2 Power/round]
Transporters: 1 personnel, 1 cargo [1 Power/round]
Tractor Beams: 1 av [2 Power/rating used]
Propulsion and Power Characteristics
Warp System: 6.0/8.0/9.0 (6 hours) [2/warp factor/round]
Impulse System: .7c/ .90c [7/9 Power/round]
Power: 150
Sensor Systems
Long-range Sensors: +1/16 light-years [6 Power/round]
Lateral Sensors: +1/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
Navigational Sensors: +1 [5 Power/round]
Sensors Skill: 4

Weapons Systems
  Type VI Phaser:
      Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
      Arc: All (720 degrees)
      Accuracy: 5/6/8/11
      Damage: 12
      Power: [12]
  Weapons Skill: 4
Defensive Systems
  Deflector Shield
      Protection: 40/40 (50) [40 Power/shield/round]

HERON-Class Security Ship

Class and Type: *Heron*-class Security Ship
Commissioning Date: 2363
Hull Characteristics
    Size: 2 (45 x 10 x 5 m; 28 metric tonnes; 2 decks)
    Resistance: 2
    Structural Points: 40
Operations Characteristics
    Crew/Passengers/Evac: 2/10/60 [4 Power/round]
    Computers: 1 [1 Power/round]
    Transporters: 1 personnel [1 Power/round]
    Tractor Beams: 1 av, 1 fd [2 Power/rating used]
Propulsion and Power Characteristics
    Warp System: 1.5/3.0/5.0 (24 hours) [2 Power/
        warp factor/round]
    Impulse System: .7c/ .90c [7/9 Power/round]
    Power: 120
Sensor Systems
    Long-range Sensors: +1/15 light years [6 Power/
        round]
    Lateral Sensors: +1/1 light-year [4 Power/round]
    Navigational Sensors: +1 [5 Power/round]
    Sensors Skill: 4
Weapons Systems
  Type V Phaser
      Range: 10/30,000/100,000/300,000
      Arc: All (720 degrees)
      Accuracy: 4/5/7/10
      Damage: 10
      Power: [10]
  Weapons Skill: 3
Defensive Systems
  Deflector Shield
      Protection: 40/40 (50) [40 Power/shield/round]

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Special Dedication: We would like to apologize to our faithful fans and appreciate their patience in waiting for this material. Last Unicorn Games strives to provide the highest standards in content and regrets the delay in distributing this information to you.

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