

# STAR LOG.EM-003

## COLLATERAL CHARACTERS





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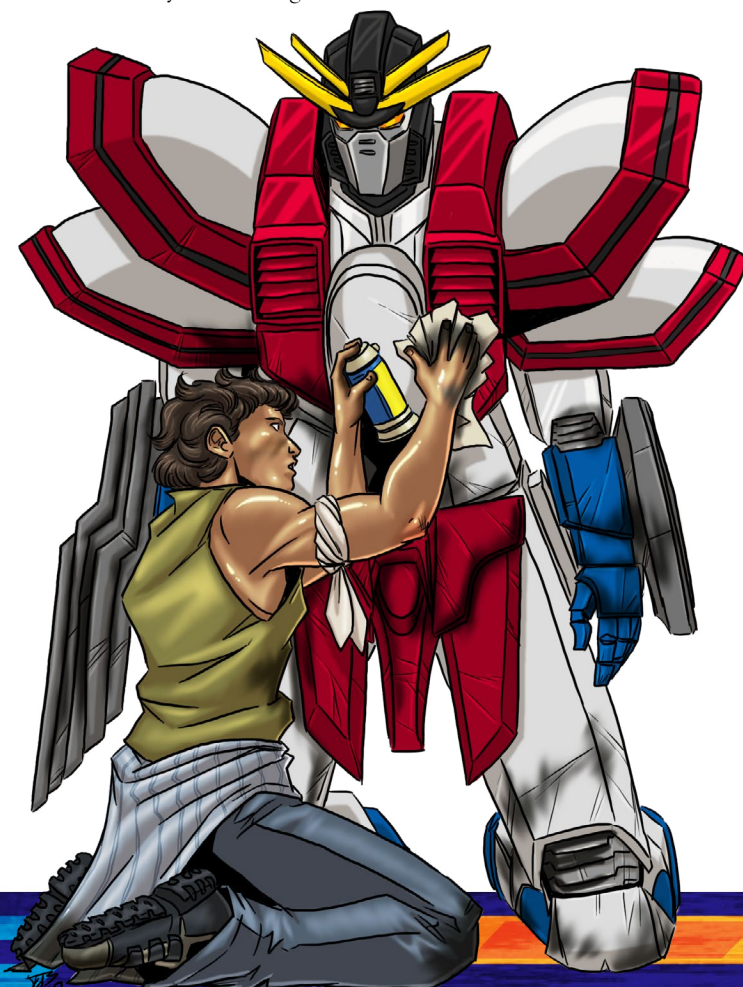
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~ Alexander Augunas  
Publisher & Crunchmaster of Everyman Gaming LLC

## ACCESSING ARCHIVES QUERY: COLLATERAL

Hello, and thank you for purchasing *STAR LOG.EM003: COLLATERAL CHARACTERS*! While this product is useful for any character who was a former slave and survived, it has particularly profound implications for the Xa-Osoro System. (See *BLOOD SPACE AND MOON DUST* and the *STARFARER'S COMPANION* for more information about this setting.)

Although three centuries have passed since, the Xa-Osoro System underwent a system-changing catastrophe called the Regicide when one of its binary stars, Osoro, suddenly imploded into a miniature black hole. The aftershock of its violent supernova had many consequences throughout the system, including the formation of a gory nebula called Blood Space and the destruction of Azan, seat of the system's centralized government, the Radiant Imperium. With the destruction of Azan, the Radiant Imperium found itself unable to enforce its stringent laws across the system, and pirating became rampant. A common trend for pirates (and even some corporations) is to slay all adults on a ship and take any children captive to be sold as slaves—these children are commonly called "Collateral" because they're seen as forfeited payment by the deceased for any expenses paid in capturing their ship and its cargo (such as ammunition rounds, lives lost, damage to their ship's hull, and so on). Once captured as spoils of war, collateral are considered property even by the Radiant Imperium's laws, and freeing them legally is exceedingly difficult.





## THEMES

A character theme represents a focus for your character, which may be a result of your background, upbringing, tradition, or mystic destiny. You select a character theme at 1st level, gaining special benefits that reflect major aspects of that theme at 1st, 6th, 12th, and 18th levels. All abilities are extraordinary abilities unless otherwise noted.

### COLLATERAL; +1 CON

When the Radiant Imperium collapsed during the Nova Age, dubious corporations were left to decide what constituted as lawful and orderly behavior. One of the foulest practices that began in the wake of the Regicide is the reemergence of slavery in the Xa-Osoro System for the first time in millennium, specifically the enslavement of orphaned adolescents and children acquired during starship raids. These children are wryly called “collateral” because their freedom and futures are taken by so-called rescuers as payment for “saving” them from certain death in the depths of space. Collateral are usually enslaved for life, taught that if they ever left their owners they’d just end up dead and that no one else in the system would even be bothered to help them. As a result, most collateral don’t try to leave, and ultimately live dismayingly stressful and short lives, as they are often forced to work under conditions that even the most stalwart workers find reprehensible and are sometimes used as child soldiers or worse throughout the Xa-Osoro System. A character with this theme is assumed to have escaped slavery, but the experience has had a lasting impact on the direction of their life.

**Theme Knowledge (1<sup>st</sup>):** Choose a Profession skill. You were encouraged to practice your chosen profession for the betterment of those who enriched themselves at your expense. Reduce the recall knowledge DC by 5 with the appropriate skill to know about hierarchies, practices, personal, and illicit dealings involving your profession. Additionally, either Athletics or Piloting becomes a class skill for you (your choice), and if either is already a class skill, you gain a +1 bonus on checks with that skill.

**Back to the Wall (6<sup>th</sup>):** Your harsh upbringing has taught you to fight to last, adrenaline surging through your body whenever you’re in danger of dying. You gain a +1 morale bonus on Piloting checks and on damage rolls whenever you have 0 Stamina Points remaining or when a starship or similar spacefaring craft that you are piloting has 0 hull points remaining.

**Hardy (12<sup>th</sup>):** You are surprisingly resilient, refusing to go down without a fight. You gain 1 additional Hit Point and Stamina Point per character level you possess.

**Flower That Never Wilts (18<sup>th</sup>):** You are significantly harder to kill than most. You gain a pool of Collateral Resolve Points with a number of points equal to your Constitution bonus (minimum 1). You cannot spend these Resolve Points except to stabilize while dying. If you have no Resolve Points remaining you instead lose 1 Collateral Resolve Points each round, and do not die until you have no Resolve Points or Collateral Resolve Points remaining.

## COLLATERAL DIEHARD

A tragic number of enslaved younglings are forced into hazardous occupations where their status as living assets means that their deaths are considered a cost of business by their heartless captors. Nowhere are these expendable youths more valued than within the ranks of illicit mercenary companies looking to use purchased or captured collaterals as expendable warriors. From a young age, collateral mercenaries are taught that their lives are worth less than the weapons and armor they wield or the vehicles and starships that carry them into battle. Knowing full-well that they’ll be left for dead if they’re seriously injured and often sacrificed on the field of battle like pawns, these younglings quickly learn to lose themselves in a haze of gore and adrenaline in desperate hopes of surviving until their next meal, but ultimately content in the knowledge that they might not.

Nowhere is this more apparent than among the collateral diehards, those youths who have managed to survive long enough to see dozens of conflicts and ultimately steel themselves against the tragedy that surrounds them. Even long after they gain their freedom, collateral diehards have been trained all too well that their lives are expendable; in fact, they revel in it. Storming the battlefield in a haze of gore amidst a field of corpses, make the knowledge of their expendability their armor and clad themselves into it, wading into battle with an unbreakable will and determination that unnerves even the most seasoned of soldiers. For as many question, how does one break a soul who exists only in the revel of battle, who has nothing to live for outside of the death and carnage that war brings? The answer, most find, is that they cannot.

The Collateral Diehard is an archetype for characters who are (or were) children or adolescents taken as slaves. PCs with this archetype are always assumed to have found freedom, but NPCs might still be enslaved at the GM’s decision.

## ALTERNATE CLASS FEATURES

The collateral diehard gains alternate class features at 2nd, 6th, and 9th levels.

### IRON FLOWER (EX); 2ND LEVEL

When you spend a Resolve point to stay in the fight after stabilizing, you can heal an amount of Hit Points equal to 1d8 + your Constitution modifier as a reaction. The amount of healing that you receive increases to 3d8 Hit Points at 4th level, 5d8 Hit Points at 7th level, 12d8 Hit Points at 10th level, 16d8 Hit Points at 14th level, and 20d8 Hit Points at 17th level. After using this ability, you must spend 1 Resolve Point to regain Stamina during a 10-minute rest before using it again.

### BLOODED FRENZY (EX); 6TH LEVEL

You gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against fear effects. Whenever you have 0 Stamina Points, you gain a morale bonus on weapon damage rolls equal to ¼ your level. If you have 0 Stamina Points and less than half of your total Hit Points remaining, this morale bonus increases to half your

level. If you have the collateral theme, these morale bonuses stack with those from the cornered rat theme ability.

### **FIRM AGAINST THE TIDE (EX); 9TH LEVEL**

Whenever you have 0 Stamina Points remaining, you can grant yourself temporary Hit Points as a move action. The amount of temporary Hit Points that you gain from using this ability is equal to the amount of healing that you gain from using the Iron Flower alternate class feature (5d8 + your Constitution modifier at 9th level, 12d8 + your Constitution modifier at 10th level, and so on). After using this ability, you must spend 1 Resolve Point to regain Stamina during a 10-minute rest before using it again.

### **WHERE IN XA-OSORO?**

Although many would prefer to think they didn't exist, collaterals can be found all across the Xa-Osoro System. Most slavers are pirates or small corporations with little sway or pull, but several large corporations and governments dabble with collateral as they see fit. The following lists several common corporations and factions that make heavy use of collaterals for their own ends, as well as several worlds where the buying and selling of collateral is disturbingly commonplace.

**Dragonheir Concordance (Corporation):** The kobold leaders of the Dragonheir Concordance, a mining corporation based in the Belt of Azan, are well-known for their cruel business practices, to the extent where many of their kobold employees suffer extreme cases of anxiety and depression. Hardly one to let a good business venture go unexploited, the Dragonheir Concordance is perhaps the largest purchaser of collateral in the Xa-Osoro System, with the majority of those taken ending up on any one of its thousands of mining asteroids. Cruel labor conditions and ceaseless toil often spells the end of any collateral sold to work for the Dragonheir Concordance, and the threat of selling off a collateral to some nameless asteroid is a constant and persistent threat often used by collateral owners..

**Dwhalli-Gor (Faction):** During the Regicide, an angry red nebula of reality-twisting gore called Blood Space descended upon countless worlds in the Xa-Osoro System, Eogawa among them. Upon making contact with the moon's atmosphere, the nebula mutated into a deadly airborne strand of lycanthropy that infected most of Eogawa's population, trapping them perpetually in hybrid form thanks to Ulo's ever-visible presence, which refracts the Empress's light onto Eogawa like an ever-present full moon. Although most Blood Mad lycanthropes are little better than rabid beasts, one faction originally descended from the Radiant Imperium's ambassadors retained their intelligence. Calling themselves the Dwhalli-Gor, this coalition of predominantly weregorillas seeks to best Eogawa's native population, the vanaras, and spread their lycanthropy across the stars. As part of accomplishing this goal, the Dwhalli-Gor often force collaterals into their ranks by purchasing (or simply taking) them and infecting them with their strand of lycanthropy.

**Helix (Corporation):** Chief among the deoxyian

industries are gene-traders, professionals who specialize in the harvest and wholesale of genetic material that deoxyians need to further augment and supplement their physical forms. Helix is a deoxyian corporation that specializes in biomedical services, gene therapy, and genetic engineering. As a result, Helix is also a large supporter of the so-called 'gene trade,' and often purchases collateral with high-quality gene stock for replication and wholesale. The fate of a collateral purchased by Helix (or any gene-trading corporation) varies; some are whisked away to resort-like facilities to live in the lap of luxury, their only worries being their own physical and mental upkeep to ensure the health of their genetic stock. Others aren't as lucky, fated to be used in a variety of experiments, including anti-aging and physical regression experimentation, genetic sampling and augmentation, or even genetic crossing experimentation.

**Reclamation (Faction):** The Reclamation is a group of adventurers and archaeologists that harbor the dream of piecing together the Xa-Osoro System's shattered past. Around the same time that Osoro, one of the system's binary stars, suddenly went supernova, space-time fluctuated dramatically, causing all living and written records of roughly a millennia surrounding the event to suddenly vanish, become encoded in alien tongues, or befall similar fates. The Reclamation seeks to reclaim the grandeur that the Xa-Osoro System once possessed, and for some members within the faction, this desire includes the peace and stability that the system once enjoyed. For this reason, private members of the Reclamation often seek to free collateral from enslavement, either by purchasing them outright or stealing them away in the dead of night. All freed collateral are given their freedom, but most are inexperienced younglings suffering from extreme psychological trauma with few skills outside of those pertaining to combat or menial labor. As a result, the Reclamation often offers counseling and resettlement services, free housing, and employment to the wayward youths they rescue, and while some within the movement are uneasy with the idea of employing children, most are committed to the notion that helping the downtrodden is the best work they can do towards reclaiming the glory of their star system's past.

**Uramesh (World):** Uramesh is a dead world that was once inhabited by the urame, the progenitors to the race that would one day augment itself into the deoxyians. The urame who stayed behind on Uramesh found their world lacking the basic resources necessary for life following this exodus, and turned to mummification in order to survive. Today, Uramesh is predominantly inhabited by the undead, but the mummified urame who call the planet home are wistfully nostalgic for the Uramesh of yesteryear and seek ways of replenishing their planet's natural resources in hopes of restoring it to its former splendor. To this end, the Council of Viziers has authorized the purchase of collateral, using the youths to perform the backbreaking work needed to redistribute the planet's resources. And when they inevitably succumb to hard labor and ceaseless toil, the urame gleefully bury their corpses, elated by the knowledge that their bodies will decompose into basic elements necessary for healthy, fertile soil.



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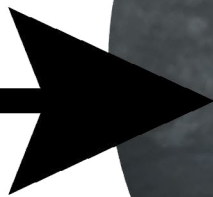
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