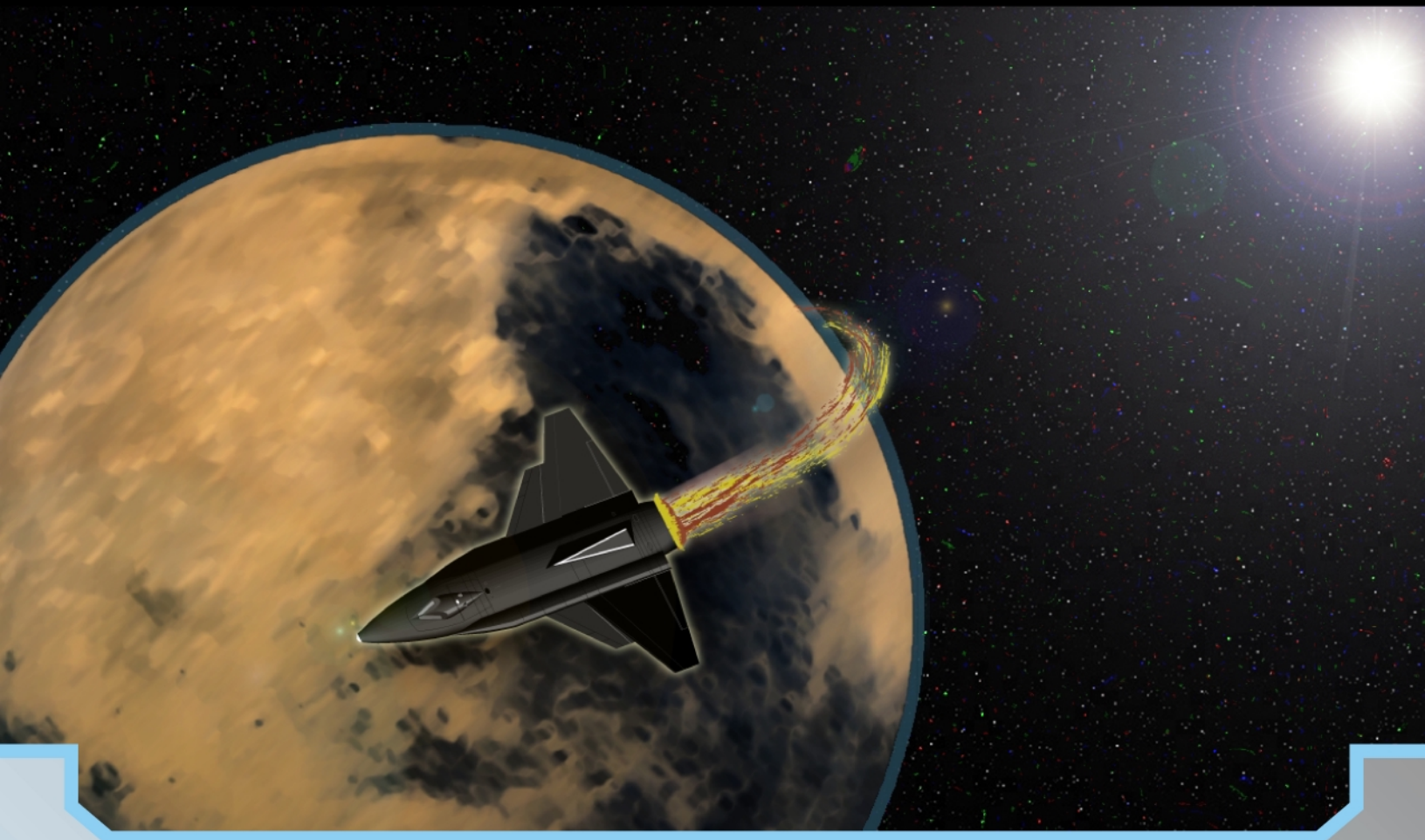




HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

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The rules in **HardNova: Space Opera Adventures** are designed to facilitate quick gaming for a single night's play, especially for those times when you need a quick fix or want to take a break from the tedium of extended campaigning. Within, you will find rules optimized for a fast-playing, movie-like experience with scenarios that can be played in a single session. It is assumed that at least one player has roleplaying experience.

Characters are created on a point-based system that allows you to design the type of character you want to play without restrictive classes and levels. As befits the concept, combat and action resolution is fast and everything in the game can be resolved with a single die roll of two or more dice. More advanced rules are also included if you wish to increase the level of detail. Additionally, **HardNova** comes complete with several game scenarios and a complete list of pre-generated and non-player characters that let you jump right into the action.

HardNova is predicated on the classic space opera epics found in movies, comics, television shows, and books from the last several decades. Characters can be interstellar adventurers on quests for fame and fortune among the stars, bold explorers seeking out new worlds, space pirates plying the shipping lanes in search of easy prey, mystical psions with mental powers, or just about anything else that comes to mind. The rules in **HardNova** will allow you to explore all the possibilities of good space opera fantasy, either through the use of the included scenarios or of those you design on your own. So suit up, initiate the hyperdrive sequence, and take to the stars!

CHARACTERS

Every character possesses primary traits, secondary traits, skills, and backgrounds. They are described below.

Primary Traits

Primary traits range from zero (0) to six (6) and cannot begin play at a rating higher than five (5). Ratings for primary traits signify the following:

PRIMARY TRAIT RATINGS

0	Below Average
1	Low Average
2	Average
3	High Average
4	Noteworthy
5	Gifted
6	Legendary

FITNESS is a wide-ranging trait which describes a character's size, muscle mass, hand-eye coordination, and physical grace. It affects how well a character can perform a feat of strength, fire a gun, or climb a rope.

EMPATHY represents a character's ability to sympathize with and express emotions to others. It also measures his intuitive ability and sensory facilities.

REASONING gauges how well a character can analyze information. It is the driving force behind skills that require study.

WILLPOWER describes a character's control over his mental and physical facilities. It allows him to press on in the face of danger, attempt a task with confidence, or even control his emotions.

Secondary Traits

Secondary traits are computed from primary traits.

REACTION measures a character's nerves, reflexes, and general speed. It is equal to twelve minus fitness and empathy.

STAMINA indicates a character's physical health and resistance to injury and illness. It is equal to the sum of the character's fitness and willpower multiplied by two. Starting from the bottom of the Stamina counter (on the character sheet), fill in one blank box from each group. When you get to the top, start at the bottom again. Repeat until the total number of filled boxes is equal to twenty-five (25) minus the stamina rating.

Skills

Skills represent knowledge and experience gained through study and practice. A skill may not be raised higher than double its related trait and characters cannot start the game with a skill higher than ten (10). Skill ratings signify the following:

SKILL RATINGS	
0	Untrained
1	Passing Knowledge
2	Undertrained
3	Basic Knowledge
4	Working Knowledge
5	Solid Ability
6	Highly Trained
7	Elite
8	Expert
9	Leader in Field
10	Master
11	Legendary
12	Legendary

Fitness Based Skills

ARCHAIC WEAPONS covers the ability to attack an opponent with knives, swords, clubs, and other primitive weapons.

ATHLETICS helps a character climb, swim, and perform gymnastic stunts.

BRAWLING covers the ability to punch, kick, grapple, and throw.

FIREARMS covers the use of any pistol or rifle.

FINESSE allows a character to pick pockets and locks, perform sleight of hand tricks, and override mechanical security systems.

GUNNERY allows a character to use starship weapons systems.

PILOTING is the ability to control and steer a starship.

STEALTH is the ability to sneak around without being seen or heard.

ZERO-G helps a character move and perform maneuvers in a zero gravity environment.

Empathy Based Skills

INTERROGATION is the ability to acquire information from individuals through subterfuge and intimidation, and even torture.

INVESTIGATION is the acquisition of data through examination, observation, inquiry, and research.

NEGOTIATION is the ability to barter, persuade, and even intimidate others.

PERFORMANCE is the art of oration, singing, and stage performances.

PSIONICS represents any one of a number of special abilities which are derived from psionic powers. Each ability counts as a separate skill (see Psionic Powers below).

SEDUCTION is the art of tempting others to do as you wish, particularly members of the opposite sex.

Reasoning Based Skills

ASTRONAVIGATION is the knowledge of plotting courses in order to traverse the vastness of space.

COMMODITIES allows a character to appraise gems, gold, jewelry, and other items of value.

COMPUTERS covers the operation, hacking, and basic repair of all computer systems.

DISGUISE covers impersonation and the art of changing one's appearance.

ENGINEERING is the knowledge of designing, building, and repairing advanced technological devices such as androids and starships.

GAMBLING allows the character to play most games of chance and have the unnerving ability to deduce the odds of winning in a given situation.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE provides the character with historical, geographical, political, social, and trivial information.

MECHANICS is the knowledge of designing, building, and repairing mechanical devices.

MEDICINE is the knowledge of healing and treatment.

SCIENCE is the general knowledge of science and math.

Willpower Based Skills

COMPOSURE is the ability to remain calm in the face of danger or temptation, and is a valuable asset, especially in a fight.

Backgrounds

Backgrounds serve to flesh out the character. Think of them in terms of special abilities and skill aptitudes, which allow your character to stand head and shoulders above regular galactic citizens. Backgrounds are entirely optional, so check with your gamemaster before choosing them. If permitted, you may choose one background for your character before the start of the game.

ANDROID. The character is actually a mechanically engineered entity called an Android. This background provides a permanent, one-time bonus of +1 to fitness and +1 to reasoning (this

may raise the traits to six). The downside is that the character must subtract two from empathy, to reflect its absence of humanity (this cannot be lowered to less than zero).

COSMIC BEAUTY. The character possesses unnatural flair or charm, and exudes sex appeal. All seduction and performance rolls receive +1.

CRIMINAL. The character is well known in the seedier parts of the galaxy. There are many people in the galactic underworld who are willing to assist him. The roll of a single die indicates how many underworld contacts are present on a given world. A roll of snake eyes on two dice indicates that a single contact is present on a given starship.

ELITE. The character has come into wealth, either through a lucrative business deal or an inheritance. The measure of newfound wealth equals 1,000 credits times the roll of two dice.

INTERFACER. The character has a neural interface implant which allows him to link directly with a computer system, thus improving his skill and efficiency with hardware. An interface jack gives the character a +1 bonus on all Computer task rolls.

MARKSMAN. The character is an expert at aiming firearms at distant targets. All firearm rolls which are aimed receive an additional +1.

NAVIGATOR. The character has the unnatural ability to envision hyperdimensional travel routes. All astronavigation rolls receive +2.

NOBLE. The character has been granted a noble title or has been born into a noble family. He is respected by those of the royal hierarchy or the men and women governed by it. All empathy rolls involving these people receive +1.

PSION. The character is able to bend reality to his will through the use of mind over matter. Once this background is taken, the character may choose a number of psionic powers equal to his empathy rating. Psionic powers may not be used by a character without this background. See Psionic Powers below.

BACKGROUNDS

Android

Cosmic Beauty

Criminal

Elite

Interfacer

Marksman

Navigator

Noble

Psion

Starship Captain

Trooper

STARSHIP CAPTAIN. At some point in the character's life, he has acquired the deed to a small starship, be it a starfighter, tramp freighter, or transport shuttle.

TROOPER. The character has unnatural intuitive ability which serves to prevent him from being surprised in combat. All reaction rolls receive +1.

Psionic Powers

Each psionic power is considered a separate skill and its use is dependent on the empathy trait. A successful task roll is required to gain the benefits of a power.

ALTER WEIGHT. The character can alter his weight so that he may walk on soft surfaces and over terrain without leaving footprints for a number of minutes equal to his fitness rating.

ALTERATION. The character can alter the short-term memories of a number of targets equal to his empathy rating. This roll must be contested against a composure roll made by the target(s).

BEACON. The character can imbue an object with illumination, thus creating a temporary light source for a number of hours equal to his willpower rating.

BIOWEAPON. The character can morph a single appendage (typically the arm) into a slashing melee weapon, with damage equivalent to a sword.

BLAST. The character can attack an opponent with this offensive telepathic power. If successful, the target is stunned and may not act for a number of turns equal to the character's empathy rating.

CLAIRAUDIENCE. The character can hear words in another location, although he must have visited the location previously.

CLAIRVOYANCE. The character can see things in another location. Like Clairaudience, the character must have visited the location previously.

CONFUSION. The character can place an individual into a state of bafflement and perplexity—the target is unable to perform actions with a modicum of accuracy. This roll must be contested against a composure roll made by the target(s). If successful, the target receives -2 on all tasks for a number of turns equal to the character's empathy rating.

CONTACT. The character can communicate with other creatures telepathically. The individual contacted cannot respond unless he also possesses this ability.

COSMIC SENSE. The character can use this power in place of astronavigation for the purpose of interstellar travel.

DETECTION. The character can detect psionic auras with this power, revealing the presence of other psions in the general area. A triumph allows the character to pinpoint their exact locations.

DIM. The character can dim ambient light in his immediate vicinity. The area is considered to be one of partial light.

DISCHARGE. The character can discharge an electric bolt from his body, causing 3 points of damage to an individual within five feet

EMPATHIC SENSE. The character can detect images and emotions which previously occurred in an area. The gamemaster may grant significant bonuses if the events were laced with especially heavy emotions.

FALSE SENSES. The character can falsify one of his target's senses. The subject thinks he sees, hears, smells, tastes, or feels something other than what is actually experienced.

GHOST WRITING. The character can cause writing to appear on the surface of a wall or a piece of paper.

GREMLINS. The character can immobilize a single android for a number of turns equal to his empathy rating. This roll must be contested against a composure roll made by the android.

HEAL. The character can heal a number of stamina points equal to his empathy rating once per day.

HEAVENLY PREDICTIONS. The character can accurately predict natural lighting and weather conditions for his present location, for up to 24 hours.

ILLUSION. The character is invisible to a number of people equal to his empathy rating. He is only invisible in their minds and can be detected on cameras and the like. If the target(s) make a successful investigation task, they see through the illusion.

LOCATIONAL SENSE. The character can locate an object or person with which he is familiar. The difficulty is determined by the distance.

up to 100 feet	trivial
up to 1000 feet	routine
up to 5000 feet	challenging
more than 5000 feet	impossible

MATERIAL SENSE. The character can read images and events from physical objects. This functions the same as empathic sense, but for objects instead of places.

MENTAL SHIELD. This power is a psychic shield that offers the character protection against other psionic powers and provides an early warning alarm system when other powers are being used in the character's vicinity. Any psionic task directed at the character is contested by the outcome of mental shield. The Mental Shield lasts for a number of turns equal to the character's willpower rating.

NIGHT VISION. The character can see well in low-light conditions (no penalties). In near-total darkness, he can see as if in dim light (penalties same as partial-light).

NULLIFY. The character can nullify the effects of any one psionic power used against another individual. Any psionic task directed at another character is contested by the outcome of nullify.

POWER OF SUGGESTION. The character can suggest something to the target, such as drop your weapon or hand me the keys. A failure indicates that the target has been alerted that someone is fooling with his mind.

PSYCHOKINESIS. The character can move and manipulate objects by sheer thought. The maximum weight (in pounds) of an object that can be manipulated is equal to his empathy rating times ten.

SIXTH SENSE. The character receives +1 on his reaction roll next turn.

PSIONIC POWERS

Alter Weight

Alteration

Beacon

Bioweapon

Blast

Clairaudience

Clairvoyance

Confusion

Contact

Cosmic Sense

Detection

Dim

Discharge

Empathic Sense

False Sense

Ghost Writing

Gremlins

Heal

Heavenly Predictions

Illusion

Locational Sense

Material Sense

Mental Shield

Night Vision

Nullify

Power of Suggestion

Psychokinesis

Sixth Sense

Suppress

Telepathic Sense

True Sense

Vigor

Zap

SUPPRESS. The character can suppress his opponent's ability to use psionic powers against him for one round.

TELEPATHIC SENSE. The character can read an individual's surface thoughts for one minute. A failure indicates that the victim has detected the act, but cannot pinpoint the source.

TRUE SENSE. The character can determine whether or not the target is being truthful. It will not allow the character to determine the extent of the lie, however. In addition, if the target honestly believes that what he is saying is true, this power will not register it as a lie.

VIGOR. The character can ignore a number of penalty dice due to injury equal to his fitness rating. This lasts for a number of turns equal to his empathy rating.

ZAP. The character can focus his power on electronic devices and cause them to freeze up for a number of turns equal to his empathy rating. This power can only be used on small personal devices, such as weapons and equipment. It will not allow the character to freeze a starship's or vehicle's power and computer systems.

Creating Characters

STEP 1. Choose background (optional)

STEP 2. Divide 11 points among the primary traits or determine traits randomly by rolling one die for each trait (sixes count as zeros). Ratings may be anything between zero and five.

STEP 3. Compute secondary traits.

STEP 4. Divide 30 points among skills. Ratings may be anything between zero and twice the related trait (a trait rating of zero is the same as one for calculating this). The amount of skills associated with each trait is limited to its rating. For example, a character can have no more than three fitness based skills if his fitness rating is three (again a trait rating of zero is the same as one for calculating this).

Fortunately, the character can ignore this rule for one skill per point in his willpower rating. Choosing the composure skill decreases the amount by one. For example, a character who has a willpower rating of three and chooses the composure skill can still choose two more skills above and beyond the maximum number of skills allowed per trait. This is applied to the overall number of exceptions, not the number of exceptions for each trait.

STEP 5. Determine starting wealth and purchase equipment. All characters begin the game with a random number of credits (¢) (the default currency standard in **HardNova**). To determine a character's starting wealth, roll two dice and multiply the result by 100.

Character Archetypes

Archetypes present a general view of the different types of characters you can play in **HardNova**. If you're pressed for time, simply use them as-is and forego the initial character creation process (you will still need to roll for starting wealth). Alternatively, you can use them as guidelines for generating your own.

Character Advancement

If your character survives an entire scenario the gamemaster should award you one to four experience points, depending on your heroism, performance, and participation. Traits may be raised by spending five points per desired level. Skills may be raised by spending two points per desired level. New skills cost five points.

ADVANCEMENT COSTS

Traits	5 points x new rating
Skills	2 points x new rating
New Skills	5 points

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

PLAYER NAME

POSSESSIONS, WEALTH,
& EXPERIENCE

CHARACTER NAME

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

- 1| Choose background. 2| Divide 11 points between primary traits or roll 1d6 for each trait (0-5; 6=0).
- 3| Compute secondary traits. 4| Divide 30 points between skills (maximum=2x related trait).
- 5| Determine starting wealth (2d6 x 100¢) and purchase equipment.

FITNESS

REASONING

EMPATHY

WILLPOWER

Archaic Weapons
Athletics
Brawling
Firearms
Finesse
Gunnery
Piloting
Stealth
Zero-G
.....
.....

Astronavigation
Commodities
Computers
Disguise
Engineering
Gambling
General Knowledge
Mechanics
Medicine
Science
.....
.....

Interrogation
Investigation
Negotiation
Performance
Seduction
Psionics
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Composure
.....

REACTION
12 - (FITNESS + EMPATHY)

STAMINA
(FITNESS + WILLPOWER) x 2

BEGIN INJURIES

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -1
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -2
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -3
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -4
☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ -5

BEGIN UNUSED (25-STAMINA)

	Trivial	Routine	Challenging	Impossible
Calamity	—	—	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0
Failure	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0	0-1	0-3
Success	0-1	0-3	2-5	4-7
Triumph	MORE THAN 1	MORE THAN 3	MORE THAN 5	MORE THAN 7

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

RANGE

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

RANGE

ARMOR

AREA OF PROTECTION

PENALTY DICE

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

PLAYER NAME

POSSESSIONS, WEALTH,
& EXPERIENCE

CHARACTER NAME

Slug Pistol, Knife, Tramp Freighter

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Starship Captain

Merchants are galactic traders who ply the space lanes of colonized systems, buying and selling all manner of mundane and exotic goods. Confrontations with space pirates are often par for the course, so knowing how to fight goes a long way.

2 FITNESS

Archaic Weapons
Athletics
Brawling **3**
Firearms **4**
Finesse
Gunnery
Piloting **4**
Stealth
Zero-G
.....
.....

2 REASONING

Astronavigation **2**
Commodities **4**
Computers
Disguise
Engineering
Gambling
General Knowledge
Mechanics
Medicine
Science
.....
.....

5 EMPATHY

Interrogation
Investigation
Negotiation **6**
Performance **3**
Seduction **4**
Psionics
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2 WILLPOWER

Composure
.....

5 REACTION

12 - (FITNESS + EMPATHY)

8 STAMINA

(FITNESS + WILLPOWER) x 2

BEGIN INJURIES

1
2
3
4
5

BEGIN UNUSED (25-STAMINA)

	Trivial	Routine	Challenging	Impossible
Calamity	—	—	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0
Failure	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0	0-1	0-3
Success	0-1	0-3	2-5	4-7
Triumph	MORE THAN 1	MORE THAN 3	MORE THAN 5	MORE THAN 7

WEAPON

Slug Pistol

DAMAGE

3

AMMUNITION

20

RANGE

19/38/75

WEAPON

Knife

DAMAGE

1

AMMUNITION

—

RANGE

—

ARMOR

AREA OF PROTECTION

PENALTY DICE

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

PLAYER NAME

POSSESSIONS, WEALTH,
& EXPERIENCE

CHARACTER NAME

Blaster Rifle, Slug Pistol, Kevlar Vest

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Marksman

Soldiers are formidable warriors due to their battlefield training and experience. Some are enlisted men, while others form bands of local militia able to scramble at a moment's notice. Some also fill the ranks of law enforcement agencies across the galaxy.

4	FITNESS	1	REASONING	2	EMPATHY	4	WILLPOWER
Archaic Weapons	.....	Astronavigation	.....	Interrogation	.....	Composure	6
Athletics	4	Commodities	.....	Investigation	.....		
Brawling	5	Computers	.....	Negotiation	.....		
Firearms	7	Disguise	.....	Performance	.....		
Finesse	.....	Engineering	.....	Seduction	.....		
Gunnery	.....	Gambling	.....	Psionics	.....		
Piloting	.....	General Knowledge	.....		.....		
Stealth	4	Mechanics	2		.....		
Zero-G	2	Medicine	.....		.....		
	.....	Science	.....		.....		
							

6 REACTION

12 - (FITNESS + EMPATHY)

16 STAMINA

(FITNESS + WILLPOWER) x 2

BEGIN INJURIES

X					-1
X	X				-2
X	X				-3
X	X				-4
X	X				-5

BEGIN UNUSED (25-STAMINA)

	Trivial	Routine	Challenging	Impossible
Calamity	—	—	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0
Failure	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0	0-1	0-3
Success	0-1	0-3	2-5	4-7
Triumph	MORE THAN 1	MORE THAN 3	MORE THAN 5	MORE THAN 7

WEAPON
Blaster Rifle

DAMAGE
5

AMMUNITION
150

RANGE
38/75/150

WEAPON
Slug Pistol

DAMAGE
3

AMMUNITION
20

RANGE
19/38/75

ARMOR
Kevlar Vest

AREA OF PROTECTION
Back, Chest, Stomach

PENALTY DICE
-1

TM

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

PLAYER NAME

POSSESSIONS, WEALTH,
& EXPERIENCE

CHARACTER NAME

'Mystic Robes'

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Psion

Psions are mystical men and women who have unlocked the secrets of mind over matter. Some are considered spiritual leaders on their home planets, while others use their powers for more nefarious schemes. Some psions are cast out or hunted by governments who regulate their use.

2 FITNESS

Archaic Weapons **2**
 Athletics
 Brawling **2**
 Firearms
 Finesse
 Gunnery
 Piloting
 Stealth
 Zero-G

2 REASONING

Astronavigation
 Commodities
 Computers **2**
 Disguise
 Engineering
 Gambling
 General Knowledge **4**
 Mechanics
 Medicine
 Science

5 EMPATHY

Interrogation
 Investigation
 Negotiation
 Performance **2**
 Seduction
Psionics
 Bioweapon **4**
 Power of Suggestion **8**
 Contact **6**

2 WILLPOWER

Composure

5 REACTION

12 - (FITNESS + EMPATHY)

8 STAMINA

(FITNESS + WILLPOWER) x 2

BEGIN INJURIES

X X X X X ①
 X X X X X ②
 X X X X X ③
 X X X X X ④
 X X X X X ⑤

↑ BEGIN UNUSED (25-STAMINA)

	Trivial	Routine	Challenging	Impossible
Calamity	—	—	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0
Failure	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0	0-1	0-3
Success	0-1	0-3	2-5	4-7
Triumph	MORE THAN 1	MORE THAN 3	MORE THAN 5	MORE THAN 7

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

RANGE

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

RANGE

ARMOR

AREA OF PROTECTION

PENALTY DICE

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

PLAYER NAME

POSSESSIONS, WEALTH,
& EXPERIENCE

CHARACTER NAME

Engineer Tools, Armored flight suit, Slug
Pistol

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Engineers are the heart and soul of space-faring vessels, since they're typically called upon to keep the ship at peak performance or push it to its structural limits. Engineers love to tinker with any technological device and many are often revered for their skills with mechanical and electronic devices.

2 FITNESS

Archaic Weapons
Athletics
Brawling **1**
Firearms **1**
Finesse
Gunnery
Piloting
Stealth
Zero-G
.....
.....

5 REASONING

Astronavigation
Commodities
Computers **6**
Disguise
Engineering **8**
Gambling
General Knowledge **4**
Mechanics **6**
Medicine
Science **4**
.....
.....

2 EMPATHY

Interrogation
Investigation
Negotiation
Performance
Seduction
Psionics
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2 WILLPOWER

Composure
.....

8 REACTION

12 - (FITNESS + EMPATHY)

8 STAMINA

(FITNESS + WILLPOWER) x 2

BEGIN INJURIES

X X X						-1
X X X						-2
X X X						-3
X X X X						-4
X X X X						-5

BEGIN UNUSED (25-STAMINA)

	Trivial	Routine	Challenging	Impossible
Calamity	—	—	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0
Failure	LESS THAN 0	LESS THAN 0	0-1	0-3
Success	0-1	0-3	2-5	4-7
Triumph	MORE THAN 1	MORE THAN 3	MORE THAN 5	MORE THAN 7

WEAPON

Slug Pistol

DAMAGE

3

AMMUNITION

20

RANGE

19/38/75

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

RANGE

ARMOR

Armored Flight Suit

AREA OF PROTECTION

Entire Body

PENALTY DICE

-2

This game requires at least two six-sided dice in order to play. Although one set of two is sufficient, you may want to provide additional dice for each player.

These dice are always rolled in pairs taking the sum of the two. This sum is called the **dice total**. Some special abilities or actions may also call for a number of **bonus dice** or **penalty dice** to be rolled with the pair. The two lowest dice are added together when using bonus dice, while the two highest are added together when using penalty dice. Bonus dice and penalty dice cancel each other out. Penalty dice are represented as **-1** and bonus dice as **+1**, with the actual number of dice in the circle.

Basic Task Rolls

During the course of a gaming session, you will want to accomplish tasks. Rolls of the dice are used to determine if these tasks succeed. Task rolls provide a balanced system which reflects a character's skill and ability levels. The more skilled a character is, the higher his chance of success will be.

A character accomplishes a basic task when his **dice total** is less than or equal to his **skill total**. The **skill total** is equal to the sum of the appropriate skill rating and its corresponding trait.

BASIC TASK PROCEDURE

1. Compute Skill Total (trait + skill)
2. Roll Dice and Compute Dice Total
3. Successful if Dice Total is less than or equal to Skill Total

Advanced Task Rolls

Advanced task rolls add realism by utilizing varying levels of difficulty assigned by the gamemaster. Varying degrees of success are also determined by the outcome of the roll. Advanced task rolls are optional.

Difficulties

Difficulties make it easy for the gamemaster to determine when and how to roll for tasks. They also affect the outcome of a task.

TRIVIAL tasks do not require a roll unless it is contested by another character. Trivial tasks represent mundane labors that usually require little or no training. We generally take them for granted.

ROUTINE tasks always require rolls and represent innocuous actions that must rely on training and experience. They also require minimal thought or effort.

CHALLENGING tasks require above average skill and represent some action unfamiliar to a character. They can also be fairly dangerous and require the **dice total** to be less than the **skill total** by at least three to be successful.

IMPOSSIBLE tasks cover all dangerous or improbable situations. Characters attempting such actions are either very brave or very stupid. They require the **dice total** to be less than the **skill total** by at least six to be successful.

Task difficulties may be increased or decreased by a character's actions or his environment. Difficulties may not be reduced less than **trivial** or increased greater than **impossible**. An increase in difficulty is represented as **1** and a decrease in difficulty as **-1**, with the actual number of difficulty levels changed in the arrow.

Outcome

To determine how successful a task is we must first compute the difference between the **skill total** and the **dice total** (skill total - dice total). This value is called the **margin**.

Once we know the margin, consult the **success table** located on the character sheet. Find the **margin** listed under the appropriate difficulty at the top and then look to the far left for the outcome.

There are four possible outcomes:

CALAMITY represents a horrible mishap or backfire. This could be missing an opponent and accidentally shooting a friend or a chase down a flight of stairs resulting in a serious fall. Trivial and routine tasks cannot result in calamities.

FAILURE represents a failed attempt at a task. Unlike calamities, it does not necessarily indicate a harmful outcome.

SUCCESS represents a typical successful outcome. This could be a gun shot to the chest or a forged document which looks real under standard inspection.

TRIUMPH represents a miraculous outcome. This could be incapacitating an opponent with one punch or convincing an enemy of your good intentions.

There are two special situations which overrule these outcomes. If the two dice used for the **dice total** are both ones (**snake eyes**), the task is a **triumph**. And, if the two dice used for the **dice total** are both sixes (**box cars**), the task is a **failure**.

ADVANCED TASK PROCEDURE

1. **Compute Skill Total (trait + skill)**
2. **Roll Dice and Compute Dice Total**
3. **Compute Margin (skill total - dice total)**
4. **Determine Outcome by referring to success chart on character sheet**

Untrained Task Rolls

All skills can be attempted without prior training unless otherwise noted. Such rolls are considered untrained tasks. In these cases the **skill total** would be equal to the associated trait only. This type of task roll would also be used in situations where a single trait would govern the outcome.

Contested Task Rolls

There will be situations that place two people at odds with each other in some sort of struggle. To resolve this conflict, both parties make task rolls and the character with the highest **margin** wins the struggle. If neither roll actually is successful, both parties fail.

ADVANCED. Some skills allow an effect to be contested by rolling against a difficulty of challenging if the original task was a success or impossible if it was a triumph. Contested rolls use the same trait and skill as the original task, unless otherwise noted.

Composure Rolls

There are times when even the most disciplined lose their nerve. Composure is both a skill and a condition. When characters remain composed, they may attempt tasks normally. Characters who have lost their composure, however, will either receive a penalty on the task or act in cowardice.

Composure rolls (willpower + composure) must be made each time a character is faced with a dangerous situation. The difficulty depends on the circumstances and the outcome is determined as follows:

Calamity

The character runs away and will be considered a coward if anyone is around to witness him.

Failure

The character backs down from attempting a dangerous task. He may try to talk his way out of it in order to save his reputation.

Success & Triumph

The character may attempt the task normally.

PERSONAL COMBAT

When combat occurs, characters perform actions in blocks of time called turns. Generally, one action may be performed per turn. The game turn is an abstract measurement of time and the actual length is determined by the gamemaster, but each turn can vary from five to fifteen seconds.

Combat is broken down into steps. First, all characters involved in the exchange declare their actions for the turn. They can attack, defend, use a special skill, or simply move or run away.

Once actions are declared, the gamemaster must determine the order in which characters may act. This is called the reaction order. The characters may then proceed to attack or use abilities in this order.

Each attack works like a skill task and damage is then subtracted from the character's stamina (if

successful). If a character receives an amount of damage equal to or greater than his stamina, he falls unconscious. Any further successful attacks directed at the character will kill him.

Once this process is completed, the other character(s) finish their actions, and then it repeats until all parties have ceased hostilities.

Declaring Actions

Each character that is present in the combat exchange must inform the gamemaster of his actions. These actions may be: **attack**, **defend**, **use skill**, **move**, or **aim**. Players need not know what the others have planned.

Each character then rolls two dice and adds his reaction rating to the sum. This is called the

reaction total and is compared to the other players' totals. The roll may also be modified by injuries and other factors (see below).

REACTION MODIFIERS	
Wearing 'Heavy Armor'	-1
Knocked Down	-1
Surprised Opponent	+2
Carrying Heavy Equipment	-1
Injured	-1 to -5

The players act in order from lowest to highest. If two or more characters get the same reaction total the character with the highest empathy rating goes first. If they have the same empathy rating then the highest fitness goes first.

All actions are affected by other characters' preceding actions in the same turn because they do not occur simultaneously. A character suffers a penalty on his actions if he has received enough injuries to do so before acting in a turn. Likewise, if a character was incapacitated before he gets to act, his action is forfeit.

COMBAT ACTIONS	
Attack	
Defend	
Use Skill	
Move	
Aim	

Declared actions can affect the way a turn plays out as follows:

ATTACK. The character must complete his attack.

DEFEND. The character must defend his position or wait in readiness. He may use the action to block, parry, or dodge an attack which then becomes a contested task against the defending character's outcome.

Weapons may be used to block all weapon and unarmed attacks, while only non-weapon attacks may be blocked by an unarmed character. The character may perform another action at the end of the turn if he has not been attacked.

USE SKILL. The character must attempt a skill task.

MOVE. The character must attempt to move or run to a specific area, duck, jump, or dive. Ranged Attacks may also be attempted while moving, but with -2 on the task roll, and they do not receive aiming modifiers.

AIM. The character must attempt to aim his ranged weapon attack, giving him +1 on the next turn. Being struck by an attack, causes a character's aim to be interrupted and he loses the use of the aiming bonus dice.

Personal Combat Tasks

There are different combinations of traits and skills used to make attack rolls. These are referred to as the attack total. There are also combinations used to make defensive rolls. The base difficulty for all non-ranged attack rolls is routine unless otherwise noted, while the difficulty for defensive rolls are determined by the outcome of the attack (a contested task).

The difficulty for ranged attacks is determined by the range. Each firearm has an associated range—this is the long range value. Medium range is half that number, short range is one-fourth that number, and point blank is almost within direct contact.

RANGE DIFFICULTIES	
Point Blank	Trivial
Short	Routine
Medium	Challenging
Long	Impossible

Fitness + Archaic Weapons Attack

This is used to attack an opponent by slashing or stabbing him with a knife, axe, club, or sword.

Fitness + Athletics Attack

This is used for all thrown weapons such as rocks, knives, and spears. The difficulty of the attack roll is based on range.

Fitness + Brawling Attack

This is used for punch, kick, and grapple attacks.

Fitness + Firearms Attack

This is used for pistol and rifle attacks. The difficulty of these rolls is based on range.

Empathy + Psionic Power Attack

This is used for psionic based attacks. Each successful attempt causes the character to receive -1 on all tasks for a number of turns equal to the roll of one die less his willpower rating. This is due to energy drain by the psionic power.

Fitness + Archaic Weapons Defense

This is used to block or parry archaic weapon attacks.

Fitness + Athletics Defense

This is used to dodge thrown weapons. Ranged weapons can also be dodged, but the difficulty is impossible.

Fitness + Brawling Defense

This is used to block punches, kicks, and grapples.

Empathy + Psionic Power Defense

This is used to defend against psionic based attacks.

Environmental Factors

Various factors can affect the outcome of an attack and are intended for use with advanced task rolls. They can be environmental or situational in nature. The gamemaster is free to add bonus/penalty dice or change the difficulty of the roll in order to simulate special actions and situations. A few examples are listed below.

TARGET MOVING. Ranged attacks targeting moving characters receive 1D.

COVER. Characters may take cover behind walls, and other obstructions for protection against ranged attacks. Characters shooting at targets taking cover receive 1D. Characters that are completely hidden from view may not be targeted.

PARTIAL LIGHT. Characters receive 1D on all combat actions attempted in partial light. Any attempt to attack in total darkness has a difficulty of impossible and only if the gamemaster even permits the attempt.

QUICKDRAW. A character may attempt to draw his weapon and attack with it in the same turn. The difficulty of the roll is 1D.

SECOND WEAPON. Two weapons may be used in fights at the same time. Each weapon must be rolled for separately and the difficulty of each roll is 1D.

SECOND ATTACK. Two attacks may be attempted at the same target. Each attack must be rolled for separately and the difficulty of each roll is 1D.

SECOND TARGET. Two attacks may be attempted at different targets. Each attack must be rolled for separately. The difficulty of each roll is 1D.

CALLED STRIKES. Characters may aim for specific body parts while attacking. The difficulty of the attack roll is 1D. Successful called strikes to the hand cause the target to drop his weapon. Strikes to the head can prove fatal for firearms if the gamemaster decides to play God, and he has every right to do so.

Armor Protection

Characters who wear armor can reduce their chances of being injured. Each type of armor adds a number of penalty dice to the attack roll (see equipment section). Only one type of armor can be used at a time and if a called strike is targeting an area which is not protected by armor, the attack roll does not receive a penalty die from the armor.

ARMOR MODIFIERS

Kevlar Vest	-1
Armored Flight Suit	-2
Power Suit	-3
Plasma Screen	-5

Determining Injuries

Damage is determined by the specific attack or weapon (see equipment section). Each time a character is injured he must check off a number of stamina points on his character sheet, starting on the left side. He receives -1 on all rolls for each complete block of stamina points sustained. The character will eventually die when all his stamina points are checked off.

If a character receives an amount of damage equal to or greater than his willpower rating in one attack, he stumbles backward and falls to the ground. He may not stand up until next turn. While down, the character receives -2 on all combat rolls.

UNARMED ATTACKS. All unarmed attacks inflict one point of damage per two points of the attacking character's fitness rating. Triumphs cause one point of damage per point of the character's fitness rating.

MELEE ATTACKS. All attacks from direct contact weapons such as a club or knife inflict the same amount of damage as unarmed attacks plus a modifier specific to each weapon (see equipment section).

THROWN ATTACKS. All attacks from thrown weapons such as a knife or rock inflict an amount of damage specific to each weapon (see equipment section). Triumphs inflict double this amount.

FIREARMS ATTACKS. All attacks from pistols and rifles inflict an amount of damage specific to each weapon (see equipment section). Triumphs inflict double this amount.

FIRE. Characters on fire lose a number of stamina points equal to the roll of one die. This occurs every turn until the fire is extinguished. Characters in enclosed areas must roll an additional die due to smoke inhalation.

ASPHYXIATION. Characters that are deprived of oxygen longer than they can normally hold their breath (willpower rating x 2), receive one point of damage per turn. Characters who are being choked are not in a position to hold their breath, so they receive 2 points per turn.

FALLS. Characters take damage equal to the roll of one die per eight foot drop if he has fallen more than six feet. For example, if a character falls 24 feet, he takes damage equal to the roll of three dice.

DAMAGE

Unarmed Success	Half Fitness
Unarmed Triumph	Fitness
Melee Success	Half Fitness + weapon mod
Melee Triumph	Fitness + weapon mod
Thrown Success	weapon mod
Thrown Triumph	weapon mod x 2
Firearm Success	weapon mod
Firearm Triumph	weapon mod x 2
Fire	1d6
Fire and Smoke	2d6
Asphyxiation	1 per turn
Choking/Strangling	2 per turn
Falls	1d6 x 8 feet (beyond initial 6 feet)

Healing Injuries

Stamina points are recovered at a rate equal to the character's willpower rating per day. Individuals with the Medicine skill may attempt to make a challenging roll in order to revive a character who has lost all stamina points. Once revived, the character is then unconscious and may heal normally. There is no way to revive a character once a failed Medicine roll is made.

Medicine rolls can also be used to help a character heal more quickly. The effects are determined by the outcome as listed below.

outcome	modifier
calamity	character loses 2 stamina
success	character heals +1 stamina
triumph	character heals +2 stamina

STARSHIP COMBAT

Starship combat is handled in much the same way as personal combat with a few exceptions. Like other aspects of **HardNova**, space combat is meant to be fast-paced and cinematic, so the following basic game mechanics will reflect that concept.

Starship Performance Traits

Unlike character traits, starship performance traits represent the amount of bonus or penalty dice added to particular task rolls. They can range from -5 to +5.

SPEED represents the ship's top velocity and acceleration. Although, it is not an actual speed, it affects the ability of a pilot to outrun or pursue another starship.

PERFORMANCE TRAIT RATINGS

-5	Abysmal Performance
-4	Dreadful Performance
-3	Poor Performance
-2	Poor Performance
-1	Below Average Performance
0	Average Performance
+1	High Average Performance
+2	Good Performance
+3	Good Performance
+4	Exceptional Performance
+5	Wonder of Engineering

HANDLING represents the maneuverability of the ship. It affects the ability of a pilot to perform a stunt such as establishing a formation, evading an attack, or making an attack run.

Starship Shields

Shields work the same way as personal armor. The shields rating ranges from zero to -5. Each time a ship takes a successful hit, the shields rating is reduced by one penalty die. Each turn that the ship does NOT take a successful hit, the shields rating increases by one penalty die until it reaches the original value.

Starship Hull

Starship hull works the same way as a character's stamina rating and determines how much damage a starship can take before being destroyed. When a starship's hull rating is reduced to zero, it has been breached and the ship is effectively destroyed. Small ships will most likely

STARSHIP HULLS

0-25	Fighters, Patrol Craft, Small Transports (Small Hulls)
26-50	Small Freighters, Yachts, Large Transports (Medium Hulls)
51-100	Cruisers, Corvettes, Large Freighters (Large Hulls)

explode instantly, while larger ships may break apart before being consumed by cinematic-like flames. All starship tasks involving the speed and handling traits receive **-1** for each complete block of hull points sustained.

Declaring Actions

This works the same way as personal combat, using the ship's speed rating as a modifier to the roll. One attack may be attempted per character manning a weapon station.

REACTION MODIFIERS

Hauling 'Heavy Cargo'	-1
Travelling in Nebula or Ion Storm	-2
Damaged	-1 to -5

Starship Combat Tasks

Again, these work the same as personal combat. Only the trait and skill combinations are different.

Fitness + Gunnery Attack

This is an attempt to fire or launch weapons at another starship. The task is modified by the attacking ship's handling trait.

Fitness + Piloting Attack

This is an attempt to ram another starship. The task is modified by the ramming ship's handling trait.

Fitness + Piloting Defense

This is an attempt to evade weapons fire, a missile targeting the starship, an incoming vessel trying to ram, or any other space object. The task is modified by the defending ship's speed and handling traits.

Starship Environmental Factors

Various factors can also affect the outcome of a starship attack and are intended for use with advanced task rolls. The gamemaster is free to add bonus/penalty dice or change the difficulty of the roll in order to simulate special actions and situations. A few examples are listed below.

NEAR ATMOSPHERE. The starship is scraping the outer edges of a planet's atmosphere. All tasks involving the ship's handling receive **-1**.

ASTEROID BELT. The starship is surrounded by asteroids. All tasks involving the ship's handling receive **-1**.

NEBULA & ION STORM. The starship is surrounded by ionic interference. All attacks receive **-1**.

CALLED STRIKES. Characters may aim for a target's engines, specific weapon, or shield generator while attacking. The difficulty of the attack roll is **-1** and the area is only affected if the amount of damage sustained is more than the number of penalty dice provided by the target ship's shields. Successful called strikes leave the affected systems inoperable (engines prevent a ship from maneuvering, weapons become useless, or shield rating becomes zero).

RAMMING. The starship rams another. Both craft receives damage equal to the other ship's hull rating. Both speed and handling can affect this task.

Starship Weapon Systems

All weapons systems are either fixed to fire in one direction or mounted on rotating turrets which are capable of targeting any object within multiple bearings. Half of all the turreted systems on a ship may target any given bearing. For example, if a craft has four turrets, two of them may target an enemy vessel immediately in front of it (or below it or in back of it, etc.). Since space is very big, these rules are not concerned with actual ranges. It is up to the gamemaster to decide which ranges are used (if using the advanced task rules).

LASER CANNONS. These are the most common of the starship based weapon system in the galaxy. Multiple cannons are often linked to fire at the same target, increasing their accuracy (**+1** for each cannon in the linked array beyond the first) and damage.

PARTICLE CANNONS. This weapon fires magnetically accelerated particles at its target, causing severe damage upon contact.

HUNTER-KILLER MISSILES. These are long range guided projectiles armed with highly destructive warheads.

ROCKET BATTERY. These are short range, small warhead projectiles which are launched in salvos.

WEAPON MODIFIERS / DAMAGE

Laser Cannon	—	4
Particle Cannon	-1	10
Hunter Killer Missile		
Long Range	-2	20
Rocket Battery		
Short Range	+2	10
Medium Range	—	8
Long Range	-4	5

HardNovaTM

Space Opera Adventures

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION

SPEED

☐ -5
☐ -4
☐ -3
☐ -2
☐ -1

HANDLING

SHIELDS

HULL

LARGE HULL MAX

MEDIUM HULL MAX

SMALL HULL MAX

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION

SPEED

☐ -5
☐ -4
☐ -3
☐ -2
☐ -1

HANDLING

SHIELDS

HULL

LARGE HULL MAX

MEDIUM HULL MAX

SMALL HULL MAX

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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

HardNaveTM

Space Opera Adventures

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION 1 man space superiority fighter

+4

SPEED

X -5

X -4

X -3

□ -2

□ -1

+3

HANDLING

2

SHIELDS

25

HULL

X-15 Starfighter

LARGE HULL MAX

X X X X X X X X X X
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X

SMALL HULL MAX

□ □ □ □ □
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□ □ □ □ □

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

2 Linked Laser Cannons (forward)

DAMAGE

8

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

+1

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION Common 2-4 man cargo transporter

-2

SPEED

X -5

X -4

X -3

□ -2

□ -1

0

HANDLING

2

SHIELDS

40

HULL

Courier Class Tramp Freighter

LARGE HULL MAX

X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X

↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □

SMALL HULL MAX

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□ □ □ □ □

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

Laser Cannon (turret)

DAMAGE

4

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-

WEAPON

Laser Cannon (turret)

DAMAGE

4

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

HardNaveTM

Space Opera Adventures

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION Small and quick ship of the line (5-20 crew)

+1 SPEED

☒ -5

☒ -4

☐ -3

☐ -2

☐ -1

-1 HANDLING

3 SHIELDS

50 HULL

Star Hopper Class Corvette

LARGE HULL MAX

X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

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SMALL HULL MAX

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-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

2 Particle Cannons (forward)

DAMAGE

10 ea

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-1 ea

WEAPON

2 Particle Cannons (aft)

DAMAGE

10 ea

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-1 ea

WEAPON

2 Particle Cannons (turrets)

DAMAGE

10 ea

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-1 ea

WEAPON

Hunter-Killer Missile Launcher (turret)

DAMAGE

20

AMMUNITION

5

MODIFIERS

-2 at long range

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION Fixed station attack cruiser (150 crew)

-4 SPEED

☐ -5

☐ -4

☐ -3

☐ -2

☐ -1

-3 HANDLING

5 SHIELDS

90 HULL

Dreadnought Class Battlecruiser

LARGE HULL MAX

X □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
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X □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □

SMALL HULL MAX

□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

10 Particle Cannons (turrets)

DAMAGE

10 ea

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

-1 ea

WEAPON

2 Hunter-Killer Missile Launchers (turret)

DAMAGE

20 ea

AMMUNITION

20

MODIFIERS

-2 at long range

WEAPON

4 Rocket Batteries (forward, port, starboard, aft)

DAMAGE

5 s / 8 m / 6 l

AMMUNITION

40

MODIFIERS

+2 short / -4 long

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

HardNaveTM

Space Opera Adventures

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION 1-4 man scout ship

+4

SPEED

X -5

X -4

X -3

X -2

□ -1

+2

HANDLING

1

SHIELDS

20

HULL

Horizon Class Scout

LARGE HULL MAX

X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X
X X X X X

SMALL HULL MAX

X □ □ □ □
X □ □ □ □
X □ □ □ □
X □ □ □ □
X □ □ □ □

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

2 Linked Laser Cannons (turret)

DAMAGE

8

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

+1

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

STARSHIP NAME

DESCRIPTION Exploration vessel (5-20 crew)

+1

SPEED

X -5

X -4

X -3

□ -2

□ -1

-1

HANDLING

2

SHIELDS

40

HULL

Frontier Class Scout

LARGE HULL MAX

X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X
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↑ BEGIN UNUSED (100-HULL)

MEDIUM HULL MAX

X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □
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X X □ □ □
X X □ □ □

SMALL HULL MAX

□ □ □ □ □
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□ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

WEAPON

2 Linked Laser Cannons (turret)

DAMAGE

8

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

+1

WEAPON

2 Linked Laser Cannons (turret)

DAMAGE

8

AMMUNITION

-

MODIFIERS

+1

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

WEAPON

DAMAGE

AMMUNITION

MODIFIERS

EQUIPMENT

The equipment presented here is merely a sampling of what the characters can actually purchase or happen upon during the course of their adventures. The gamemaster is encouraged to customize them to reflect the tone of his game.

Weapons

BLASTER PISTOL. This is the most common firearm found in the galaxy. It fires a high-powered laser beam via a small contained detonation of isotopic material.

BLASTER RIFLE. A more powerful version of the blaster, the rifle has increased range and power.

SLUG PISTOL. This is the low-tech equivalent to the blaster pistol. Slug pistols launch small projectiles through the contained detonation of gun powder.

SLUG RIFLE. A larger version of the slug pistol, the rifle has increased range and power.

PLASMA GRENADE. This is a hand grenade which releases a large blast of super-heated plasma when detonated.

VIBRO KNIFE. This is a small powered blade which uses sonic energy to disrupt the area which has been cut.

PLASMA SWORD. A magnetically contained blade of super-heated plasma, this sword is wielded by a select few.

ARCHAIC WEAPONS. This includes non-technological items which can be used as weapons—clubs, knives, and even broken bottles.

Armor

KEVLAR VEST. This is a simple protective vest designed to minimize injury during light skirmishes. It protects the back, chest and stomach only.

ARMORED FLIGHT SUIT This is a protective suit worn by starfighter pilots and on high risk zero-g missions. It protects the whole body and is considered 'heavy armor'.

POWER SUIT. This is a full body armored suit which utilizes hydraulics and electronic circuitry to lighten the burden on the wearer. If damaged, the suit becomes 'heavy armor'.

PLASMA SCREEN. This device creates a magnetically controlled force field around the user which protects him from projectile attacks. Melee and unarmed attacks are unaffected by the plasma screen.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Description	Damage	Range	Ammunition	Cost
Blaster Pistol	4	120 meters	75	100
Blaster Rifle	5	400 meters	150	350
Slug Pistol	3	75 meters	20	75
Slug Rifle	4	300 meters	50	250
Plasma Grenade	10	thrown	—	50
Vibro Knife	2	—	—	25
Plasma Sword	6	—	—	500
Club (lightweight)	1	—	—	5
Club (heavy/metal)	2	—	—	5
Knife	1	—	—	10
Sword	3	—	—	50

Description	Attack Modifier	Protection	Cost
Kevlar Vest	-1	Back, Chest, Stomach	200
Armored Flight Suit	-2	Entire Body	250
Power Suit	-3	Entire Body	500
Plasma Screen	-5	Entire Body from Projectiles Only	1000

SCENARIO 1 IN THE VOID

**IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO
GAMEMASTER THIS SCENARIO,
DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER!**

While on a routine salvage mission, the characters stumble across a lost scientific research vessel. Once on board, they discover that the ship is manned almost exclusively by androids and a research scientist who has been missing for the past ten years. His plan is to enter a nearby black hole in the hopes of discovering immortality.

Getting Started

This scenario assumes that the characters actually own a starship, preferably a tramp freighter, and are actively salvaging derelict ships for profit. If no one in the group possesses a ship, then feel free to assign them to a vessel. Alternatively, the characters can be independents who happen upon the ship while either exploring deep space or en route to another destination.

Into the Breach

Whether the characters are en route to another location or are actively searching for salvageable vessels, they will eventually come across a massive starship drifting aimlessly in deep space. Hailing the ship only garners dead silence and a scan for life forms provides inconclusive data. For all intents and purposes, the ship is dead. Docking with the vessel is easy enough, requiring only a successful computers task to locate the ship's exterior airlock door and then a successful piloting task to actually berth with it.

Actually breaching the airlock door is a bit more difficult, as it is magnetically sealed by the ships security overrides. Any character with the computers skill should be able to bypass the override (-1 on the roll).

Ghost Ship

The interior of the ship is left to your own designs, bearing in mind that this is a massive vessel, which easily dwarfs even the largest battlecruiser. With that in mind, the vessel does have several decks that serve to facilitate specific functions. The top deck is comprised solely of the bridge. The second and third primarily contain science and research labs. The fourth contains the crew quarters, the galley and several lounges. The last deck is mostly

reserved for engineering, cargo space, and computer subsystems.

First Contact

Allow the characters to explore the vessel for a while, making sure to focus on the quiet emptiness that seems to permeate its empty rooms and corridors. There should be absolutely no signs of any crewmembers, alive or dead. That is, until the party meets the ship's only human inhabitant—Dr. Charles Cygnus. The good doctor has been monitoring the party since the moment they boarded the ship, but he is reluctant to make his presence known until he can determine their intentions. When he does finally meet the crew, Cygnus will portray himself as a dedicated researcher cruising deep space in search of cosmic anomalies. If asked about the crew, Cygnus will state he is the only human aboard and that his vessel is crewed by a staff of robotic assistants.

The truth of the matter is that Dr. Cygnus and his robot servants actually murdered the ship's crew nearly a decade ago, once they discovered his plans to enter an actual black hole. In reality, Cygnus is a crazed, egotistical scientist bent on searching for immortality, which he believes he will locate on the other side of a black hole.

Won't You Join Us?

Dr. Cygnus will assure the characters that he is simply performing research and ask that he be

DR. CHARLES CYGNUS			
FITNESS	2	REACTION	7
Firearms	2		
		STAMINA	6
REASONING	5	BEGIN INJURIES	
Computers	6	X X X □ □	-1
Engineering	5	X X X X □	-2
General Knowledge	5	X X X X □	-3
Mechanical	5	X X X X □	-4
Science	7	X X X X □	-5
EMPATHY	3		
Performance	3	EQUIPMENT	
WILLPOWER	1	Slug Pistol	
Composure	2		

allowed to conduct his experiments in peace. Before bidding the party farewell, however, he will invite them to dine with him, as it has been years since he has had contact with other humans. If the characters decline, Cygnus will insist and prevent them from leaving, stating that his vessel is about to gather data from an approaching cosmic anomaly and any trajectory fluctuations will corrupt the data as it's gathered by his probes.

During dinner, the doctor will remain a cordial and gracious host, sharing his experiences aboard the vessel and his time spent among his robotic crew. A successful investigation task will prove his demeanor is a ruse, however, but the characters won't be able to discern his lies, just that he seems uncomfortable about something. When dinner is finished and the characters make their way back to their own ship, they will quickly discover that something is wrong with the docking controls, preventing the ship from disembarking from its berth. Dr. Cygnus will offer to provide quarters for the party while his robotic servants gather the necessary parts needed to replace the faulty docking clamp. A successful mechanics task will discover the faulty part and provide the characters with a sense that it was tampered with.

Something's Rotten

The characters will be lead to spacious living quarters that can fit up to six people very comfortably. It will become apparent that they are trapped inside their accommodations (a successful computer task can circumvent the door locks). Once the characters escape from their quarters they will feel the ship rumble and hear its hyperdrive kick into action as the vessel prepares to enter hyperspace. With their own ship disabled, the only way out of this mess is to take control of the bridge.

Cat and Mouse

When it becomes apparent that the characters are heading for the bridge, Cygnus will dispatch several robotic servants to deal with the party. The race for the bridge should be a harrowing one, complete with close calls and life-threatening battles with crazed robotic constructs. The characters should be allowed to reach their destination, but not without Cygnus' killer robots close behind. Upon reaching the bridge, the characters may barricade themselves inside while trying to override the vessel's astronavigational system. In the process, they discover the horrifying truth—the ship is on a set course for a nearby black hole and will arrive at its destination in just under five minutes.

End Game

Overriding the ship's navigational coordinates requires a successful astronavigation or computers task (-1 on the roll). The attempt should be completely nerve-wracking and the possibility of Cygnus' robots breaking through to the bridge is very real. In fact, just when they've managed to override the navigational controls, have the bridge doors buckle under the weight of Cygnus and his robots, allowing them to swarm into the room. Before the battle begins, Cygnus (like any good villain) will reveal his plans to the characters and assert that they won't be leaving the ship alive, as his quest for immortality will resume with their deaths. If the characters survive the battle, they'll be able to locate the parts needed to repair their ship. At this point, they may either begin their salvage efforts or leave the ship behind, to once more drift through the coldness of deep space.

ROBOTIC SERVANT					
FITNESS	6	REACTION	6		
Athletics	3				
Brawling	8	STAMINA	22		
Firearms	7	BEGIN INJURIES			
REASONING	5	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computers	2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Engineering	2	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mechanical	2	☒	☐	☐	☐
		☒	☐	☐	☐
EMPATHY	0				
WILLPOWER	5	EQUIPMENT			
Composure	6	Blaster Rifle			
		Armor -2			
The robots will usually travel in groups whose numbers equal that of the character's party plus one.					

SCENARIO 2 RESCUE ON RIGEL-7

**IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO
GAMEMASTER THIS SCENARIO,
DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER!**

The characters receive a distress call from a local sector government, urging them to undertake a dangerous rescue mission. Several political dignitaries are being held prisoner by a dictator on a planet devastated by war. Known as The Overlord, this dictator hopes to ransom the officials for weapons and supplies.

Getting Started

This particular scenario is fairly open-ended in terms of party make-up. Characters can be members of a sector patrol, bounty hunters, merchants, or even pirates. The point is, they'll receive a broadcast hail from a local sector official and get an opportunity to rescue some important political dignitaries, making some cash in the process.

Calling All Ships

At the start of this scenario, the characters will be hailed by a local planetary official broadcasting a distress message to all ships within the area. According to the official, pirates piloting advanced starfighters have ambushed a passenger liner cruising through the sector. After knocking out the ship's defenses, they managed to board the ship and proceeded to pillage the vessel and murder nearly all of its passengers and crewmembers. Three political dignitaries managed to flee in escape pods and now they need rescuing. And although their fate is as yet undetermined, the official offers 3,000 credits to any starship crew who can successfully locate the politicians and bring them back home, dead or alive. To accept the mission, the characters simply need to respond to the hail and gather the coordinates from the sector official. Then they'll be on their way.

Rigel-7

The planet where the dignitaries have escaped to is a world that was nearly destroyed a decade ago by an alien invasion force. Small pockets of civilization managed to survive the attack, but the world was left devastated and diseased. Warring factions of human settlements now battle for control of what is left, but a totalitarian regime led by a power mad half-human, half-cyborg construct

known as The Overlord has managed to rise to prominence and subjugate much of the population. All of this information is available to characters who make successful general knowledge tasks. A successful computers task will provide data on the best place to land the vessel—a small abandoned settlement located a safe distance away from any larger communities. If any of the players roll a triumph on a computers task, they will discover three faint life signs in the vicinity of the smaller community.

Strange Company

When the characters land, they will find the outpost deserted and in ruins, however. Several prefabricated structures have been damaged by heavy weapons fire and even more were completely destroyed. A successful general knowledge test will reveal that the outpost was raided recently.

While the characters search the ruins for signs of life, they will discover a lone survivor—a bedraggled colonist who goes by the name of Marek Antill. Antill is predictably apprehensive toward the party. If the characters approach him in a non-aggressive manner, he will eventually warm up and explain that the settlement was raided several days ago by a band of desert scavengers. If asked about the dignitaries or the life signs that the characters detected earlier (if applicable), Antill will explain that the three politicians had, in fact, received sanctuary at the settlement, but were captured by the raiders. The three life signs are actually Antill, his wife, and son, both of whom are clinging to life. Any characters with the medicine skill or heal power can certainly help Antill's family. In an effort to return the help, Antill will provide the party with the direction that the scavengers traveled.

Desert Striders

Armed with Antill's information, the characters begin the long trek through the desert wilderness. What was once a verdant landscape had been reduced to rubble in a matter of years after the alien assault. Describe the landscape as a blasted and dry wasteland with very little in the way of vegetation. Dry, stifling heat, rocky outcroppings, blowing winds, and a pervading sense of loneliness and despair are the order of the day. You can make the desert journey as eventful or unexciting as you like, either allowing the characters to move through the wilderness without incident or making it a harrowing journey fraught with danger. Desert

scavengers constantly roam the wastes in search of easy prey (use the Soldier archetype without the blaster pistol and Kevlar vests) and even the landscape can provide a challenge—landslides, falling debris, wind, and sand storms are frequent occurrences. When the party has had enough, allow them to stumble upon the desert scavenger camp.

When Darkness Falls

The layout of the camp is left to your imagination. All of the shelters are primitive looking pergolas arranged in a rectangular pattern. Both day and night are divided into three-hour watches comprised of four scavengers each; the blowing of a horn signals the end of each watch and it takes roughly two minutes for the next to begin their patrol, giving the characters a short window of opportunity if they wish to steal away inside. It will become apparent, however, that the political dignitaries are not located in the camp. In order to determine just where they have been taken, the characters can interrogate a scavenger. A successful interrogation task (–1 on the roll) will get him talking. If he is unwilling or the players don't think to interrogate someone, have them come across a midnight rendezvous between a group of scavengers and a squad of armed warriors (they are aligned with the planetary dictator). A successful investigation task will reveal that the scavengers are actually flesh peddlers, who provide slave labor to the neighboring regime. Perhaps this is where the political dignitaries were taken?

End Game

The characters need to be careful to avoid being spotted by the armed contingent as they make their way toward The Overlord's desert fortress—an expansive city-state home to thousands of subjugated people. If you're feeling particularly cruel, let the characters be captured and forced to fight in the dictator's gladiatorial pits. If they survive, the characters can find a way to enter the main compound during their stay in the gladiator pens. If you chose to not take this route, several successful investigation tasks will eventually put them into contact with someone that can provide them with the necessary information, for the right price.

Whatever method you choose, the characters should be directed toward the compound and its subterranean depths, where the dignitaries are imprisoned. The tunnels underneath the compound are a twisted maze of dead ends and dark corridors (possibly filled with traps and/or aggressive underground dwellers). The dignitaries will be found in a room behind a locked door, requiring a successful finesse task to unlock it. After the characters have rescued the dignitaries and they're on the verge of escape, they will be ambushed by The Overlord himself and several guards (one for each party member; use the Soldier archetype). The Overlord is an awe-inspiring half-human, half-cyborg construct who is mad with power. He will do everything in his power to prevent the characters' escape, hoping to capture them as well and subject them to a life of hardship and excruciating pain. If the characters survive, they'll have managed to rescue three important politicians and topple a cruel regime in the process.

THE OVERLORD					
FITNESS	6	REACTION	5		
Archaic Weapons	5				
Brawling	8	STAMINA	22		
Firearms	6	BEGIN INJURIES			
		↓			
REASONING	4				❶
Computers	6				❷
General Knowledge	4	X			❸
Mechanical	2	X			❹
		X			❺
EMPATHY	1				
Interrogation	2				
		EQUIPMENT			
WILLPOWER	5	Slug Pistol			
Composure	6	Plasma Sword			

SCENARIO 3 DEAD IN SPACE

**IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO
GAMEMASTER THIS SCENARIO,
DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER!**

The characters are members of an elite starfighter squadron assigned to sentry duty on an asteroid where crucial fuel ore is mined. They discover that the mining base is overrun by Tsothian mercenaries intent on stealing the ore to use for their war against humanity, which has been occurring for nearly a decade. The characters must stop the mercenaries at all costs, and prevent the alien menace from collecting the fuel ore supply.

The Tsoth are an alien hive race and are insectoid in appearance and manner. Adult Tsoth measure three to four meters in length and feature flattened, oblong carapaces. The head and upper parts of the thorax are covered with minute punctures, while six saw tooth-like projections rest on each side. The Tsoth are masters of bio-architecture; their ships, their cities, and even their very items of convenience are all, literally, living creatures.

Getting Started

The characters are all members of an elite fighting force made up primarily of hotshot starfighter pilots, serving aboard a massive battlecruiser. The people of Earth (or an Earth-like planet) have just entered the interstellar age and begun to explore outside the boundaries of their own solar system. Mankind is also embroiled in a war with an alien menace hell bent on destroying all of humanity at any costs. The characters' starfighters, as well as the battlecruiser can be found in the starship combat section.

Sentry Duty

The characters are called into the office of their commanding officer for a mission. The upper brass wants a squadron of starfighter commandos to secure and protect a large shipment of Helium ore at the Spartan He³ mining facility on an asteroid located in the York sector. The ore is vital to the war effort and must be protected at all costs. The characters are to travel by starfighter to the York system, contact the mining facility officials, and protect it while the helium ore is loaded onto two separate tramp freighters. Once loaded, the squad will then escort the tramp freighters out of the system toward Earth.

There are two ways to access the interior of the asteroid mine. The first is through an immense docking bay situated on the north side of the asteroid. The second is located on the surface and consists of a reinforced bunker that encloses an access hatch that leads directly to the asteroid's core. The bulk of the mining facilities and habitation modules are located in the center of the asteroid and are arranged around a central hub, nearly two miles in diameter. The actual mining of the Helium ore is done in the hub's center.

Dead Silence

When the characters arrive at the asteroid base and attempt to hail the facility, they will be greeted by dead silence. Efforts to enter the docking bay will prove fruitless as well, since they remain secured. The only way into the base is via the surface bunker. Landing on the asteroid's exterior requires a successful piloting task and there is enough of a surface to accommodate each of the players' ships. They will be required to wear their pressurized flight suits at all times, or at least until they can enter the central hub where artificial gravity and a breathable environment has been established. The access hatch is, of course, secured as well and requires a successful computers task in order for it to be opened. Once safely inside the central hub, the characters should become unnerved at the absence of miners and facility administrators. For all intents and purposes, the asteroid is a literal ghost town.

As the characters explore the base in search of inhabitants and workers, build up the tension one would experience in an abandoned mine. Feelings of claustrophobia are not uncommon, as the hub is cramped, dark, and constricted. Even more unnerving is the lack of any noise; the base is completely silent and there are no indications of machinery being used. If the characters attempt to search for bodies or any signs of life, allow them to make investigation tasks even though their search will turn up nothing. The party should eventually make its way toward the administrative center, where they can access the base's computer system and hopefully find out what happened.

Ambush!

While the characters are searching for clues as to the disappearance of the miners, they are suddenly ambushed by several Tsothian mercenaries. Their appearance should be frightening to the group and their presence equally forbidding. Most likely, the

party will survive the attack, but the only avenue for escape is the asteroid's mineshafts, which are located in the center of rock and below the central hub. The Tsothian opponents will certainly give chase through the mines, so provide enough structural elements for the characters to hide in or to set an ambush of their own. There are several major mine shafts that run deep through the core of the asteroid, as well as smaller ones closer to the hub (most of them are exhausted). Tons of catwalks and crawl-ways abound as well, providing both characters and Tsothians with opportunities to play hide and seek. As the characters move further into the mines, they will make a startling discovery—as the Tsothian mercenaries overran the base they murdered every single miner living on the asteroid and buried the bodies deep within the mineshafts.

From Bad to Worse

Depending on the inclinations of the characters, they'll either want to exact revenge on their opponents or get the hell out of Dodge and focus on preventing the shipment of Helium from being stolen. Gamemasters with a mean streak (and we mean that lovingly) may require the characters to trek their way back up through the mineshaft. For those of you with a conscience, you can provide the party with another means of escape—a secret elevator tube that leads from the mineshaft to a processing facility in the central hub. The Tsothians are unaware of its existence, so the characters can utilize it during their escape. In fact, doing so will turn the situation around for the party, as the Tsothians will have split their attention between

watching the mineshaft for the characters' return and toward loading up the tramp freighters with the Helium ore. Now it just becomes a matter of how the party wants to proceed. If they decide to dispatch the Tsothians who chased them into the shaft, be sure they don't take too much time, as there is still the matter of a shipment of Helium ore to save.

If the characters decide to sneak past them into the docking bay, they'll need to plan a coordinated attack to prevent the shipment of Helium ore from being taken off the asteroid. Six Tsothian mercenaries will be busy loading up the tramp freighters and as their attention is turned toward the task at hand they can be taken by surprise if all characters make a successful stealth task.

End Game

This scenario will successfully conclude once the characters defeat the Tsothian mercenaries and prevent the theft of the Helium ore. But what if their opponents manage to steal it? Now, the characters must race to prevent a successful delivery of the material, possibly making a trek into enemy controlled sectors in the process. This can provide a springboard to an entire campaign. You may also want to allow the characters to make good use of their starfighters and thrust them into a dogfight with Tsothian fighter aces, sent to escort the tramp freighter back to their own sector.

TSROTHIAN MERCENARY						
FITNESS	4	REACTION	6			
Brawling	5					
Firearms	8	STAMINA	16			
		BEGIN INJURIES				
REASONING	5	X				①
Computers	5	X	X			②
General Knowledge	3	X	X			③
Science	5	X	X			④
		X	X			⑤
EMPATHY	2	X	X			
Interrogation	4					
Investigation	3					
		EQUIPMENT				
WILLPOWER	4	Blaster Rifle				
Composure	5	Carapace (Armor ①)				

SCENARIO 4 THE DYASHI GAMBIT

**IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO
GAMEMASTER THIS SCENARIO,
DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER!**

A Dyashi extortionist and explosives expert named Jared Stelle intimidates the executives of an interplanetary megacorporation with threats of mass murder if the company refuses to recompense him with several million credits.

Dyashi are a near-human species that have evolved on a frigid world; it is completely covered in ice and snow. They are a secretive race prone to backstabbing and clandestine behavior in the efforts to further their own schemes. In addition, they possess a flair for being able to cajole their way into any type of situation. Since having evolved on an ice world, Dyashi are incapable of tolerating median planetary temperatures, so those who take to the stars can often be seen wearing specialized skin-suits that help moderate their frigid body temperatures. The Dyashi are the only species in the galaxy with no form of blood for gas circulation.

Another alien race present in this scenario are the Sligg, an amorphous species comprised of a matte-black, tar-like substance that they can bend and shape at will. In fact, their molecular cohesion is such that projectiles pass harmlessly through their fluid forms, and they can pass through obstacles such as air vents and grates with ease, simply by oozing their way through the openings. Despite their limited forms, Sliggs do possess an intelligence that is at least on par with that of humanity. That is, they are able to use and create technological devices and, as a culture, have managed to master interstellar flight. They do not, however, seem to have a propensity for wielding psionic powers. Sliggs are immune to projectile and melee weapons, although they are susceptible to blaster fire.

Yet another alien race present in this scenario are the Ul-marians, monstrous (eight feet at the shoulder), sloth-like creatures which are seemingly the most ill-mannered of all the known alien species. They are rude, offensive, gluttonous, but rather non-violent and prone to cowardice. Most members of this species have their clawed hands deep in criminal activities throughout the galaxy. In fact, many of them are so influential that they control the commerce and economic institutions on entire worlds.

Getting Started

The characters are members of an interplanetary law enforcement agency charged with protecting the citizens of their home sector. Applicable archetypes for this scenario include the Soldier, Scout, Spacer, and even the Psion, since the agency has a resident psi-cop division. Each character should also have an assigned starfighter prior to the start of the scenario.

The Briefing

Upon their arrival to sector HQ (on the planet Altair), the characters are quickly ushered into the briefing room to meet with their superior officer. He informs the group that twenty-four hours earlier, a known Dyashi terrorist named Jared Stelle broke into the home of Dallas Brodly, a megacorporate executive with Bryant Interplanetary. His intent was murder. Stelle managed to overpower the executive and tie him to a bed in the master bedroom before strapping a personal explosive device to the victim's chest. Needless to say, Brodly was blown to bits. While investigating the crime scene, sector police secured a piece of evidence that positively links Stelle to the murder (aside from the bomb, that is) —a datapad encoded with the message, 'Pay or Die'. The characters are tasked with investigating the murder and ordered to track down Stelle so he can be brought to justice.

UL-MARIAN THUGS					
FITNESS	4	REACTION	4		
Brawling	5				
Firearms	7	STAMINA	12		
		BEGIN INJURIES			
REASONING	1	X	X		-1
EMPATHY	4	X	X		-2
Interrogation	4	X	X	X	-3
Negotiation	7	X	X	X	-4
Performance	4	X	X	X	-5
WILLPOWER	2				
Composure	3	EQUIPMENT			
		Blaster Pistol			
		Vibro Knife			

The Legwork

At this stage, there are only two avenues of investigation—the crime scene and the megacorporation in question. Visiting the executive's home will turn up nothing of any real interest, as the scene has already been thoroughly investigated and the only item of interest was the datapad (but certainly let the group do their own investigation at the house, if they so desire).

Bryant Interplanetary is a conglomerate of manufacturers that builds starship components and various ship computer systems. The company's headquarters are located on the sector's home planet and the characters should have no trouble arranging a meeting with corporate executives. If asked why Brodly was targeted for the attack, the company officials will argue that it was simply a case of him being at the wrong place at the wrong time (which is true) and that no other company employees have been targeted by Stelle. If asked about the message left at the scene of the crime, the officials will feign ignorance, stating that they have no idea what Stelle meant by the warning. A successful investigation task will reveal that this statement is, in fact, a lie. No amount of interrogation will get them to spill the beans, though.

Murder by Numbers

Whatever course of action the characters take next should be left up to them. Eventually they will come across another clue, proving that the corporation does, in fact, know exactly what Stelle meant by his warning. Several days ago, Stelle attempted to extort more than 60 million credits from Bryant Interplanetary, stating that if the money was not delivered to him by a designated time frame, one of the company's executives would be murdered. Bryant ignored the threat and failed to notify the police. This information can be obtained by hacking into the corporation's computer system (a challenging task, indeed), questioning an employee (an even more difficult task), contacting one of Brodly's friends or family members, or by any other method you deem appropriate. If the company is approached with the new information, they will admit to receiving Stelle's initial message and then state that their internal security agency was in the process of investigating the threat when Brodly was murdered. To date, however, they have not received any other messages from Stelle. That's all about to change, however.

A New Threat

The next day, the characters will be notified by a Bryant executive who tells them that Stelle has contacted the company yet again—unless the company deposits the 60 million credits in the Bank

of Altair within twenty-six hours, an Omega-class tanker en route to the planet Altair will be destroyed. Locating the tanker's flight plan will take some additional legwork, so the characters shouldn't dally for too long. Checking the Planetary Import Registry on Altair (or something similar) will turn up the ship's itinerary and navigational coordinates, but feel free to throw some red herrings in the path of the party, for tension's sake, of course. Armed with the coordinates of the oncoming tanker, the characters must race to intercept it before Stelle's plan comes to fruition.

The Heat is On

The intercept course to the Omega-class tanker will take the characters roughly one hour. Once they board the tanker, the group will meet with Captain Rein and the ship's chief engineer, a Sligg named Azaea. Both will allow access to the entire ship and offer their help, if needed. If the party has been paying attention, they should quickly realize that Stelle probably plans on blowing up the ship with explosives, since that has always been his MO. At nearly 400 meters in length, however, the tanker is far too large to accommodate a room by room and deck by deck search. The characters can, however, narrow down a search pattern, taking into account the most logical places where a bomb could be hidden. This includes the airlock doors (of which there are four), the main engines (accessible via the engineering deck), the bridge, the actual storage tanks, or the cargo bay. If the party insists on searching for the bomb (or Stelle, for that matter) in this way, allow them to locate the bomb, but the tension should run very high as they try to beat the clock. Note that Stelle is NOT on the ship, so a search for him will only waste time.

In any case, the most efficient method for locating the bomb is to pull up the ship's schematics. If the characters attempt this on their own, they'll need a successful computers task to locate the data. Examining the schematics will reveal something unusual—one of the tanker's airlocks has a junction box that clearly doesn't belong there, considering that none of the others have them. When the characters investigate the airlock they will discover that it is actually the location of the explosive device.

Which Wire?

Only those who have the mechanical or engineering skills can defuse the bomb. First, a successful investigation task is necessary to determine which parts of the explosive are real and which are just window dressing. Next, a successful mechanical or engineering task is needed to locate the bomb's power pack. A third successful mechanical or engineering task (❶ on the roll) is needed to actually defuse the bomb.

End Game?

After the successful diffusion of the bomb, the characters will receive a message from Stelle via the tanker's internal com system. He begrudgingly congratulates the party on defusing his bomb, but reminds them that payment is still due. Once again, if he isn't paid the 60 million credits, another executive will die in twelve hours.

Altair or Bust

After receiving the transmission from Stelle, the party may want to find a way of tracking the transmission. Captain Rein will take the group to the bridge where the tanker's communications officer can track the source of Stelle's message. After several tense moments, the com officer will report that the transmission was beamed aboard the tanker via a subspace communications relay back on Altair, in the capital city. Unfortunately, he cannot get more specific than that. The com officer will download the data pulse transmission, along with the actual message, onto a datapad, which he gives to the characters.

Just as the characters return to their sector HQ to regroup and plan their next action, their commanding officer contacts them with a new turn of events: in order to prevent the murder of another company employee, Bryant has finally agreed to pay Stelle the 60 million credits. If this is allowed to happen, however, the party may lose any chance of locating the terrorist. Bryant executives will not budge, because they fear that perhaps one of them will be next should Stelle's demands go ignored for a second time. To make matters worse, the transaction is entirely electronic, so there won't be any chance of capturing Stelle at a drop-off location.

There are several ways around this problem. A successful computers task (1 on the roll) will allow the party to hack into Bryant's computer system, thus planting a tracer file to track the transaction as the money is transferred from Bryant, to the bank, and then to Stelle's secret account. An investigation of the bank records will not turn up Stelle's whereabouts, however, as the terrorist has secured a private account under an airtight alias.

Another option is to legally prohibit Bryant from making the transaction in the interests of planetary security. The idea here is to give the party more time to track Stelle, as they should still have several hours left on the clock.

A third option relates to the datapad which the characters received from the tanker's com officer (this option can, in fact, be used in conjunction with the aforementioned suggestions for tracking Stelle). By carefully scrutinizing the data, a successful computers task (1 on the roll) will narrow down Stelle's location even further—the data pulse was emitted from an abandoned relay station located in

Altair City's downtown district. Unfortunately, there are several such stations located through the downtown area. A successful investigation task (1 on the roll) will also yield a clue—background noise embedded within Stelle's message reveals that he recorded the message near a maglev station somewhere on the planet. By cross referencing the time of the message's transmission with that of all maglev train schedules, the party should be able to narrow down Stelle's location, placing him in Altair City.

The Hunt

Regardless of whether the characters were able to prevent the transaction, they now have a good indication as to where Stelle is hiding. If they were unable to stop Bryant from delivering the 60 million credits, they'll need to work fast in order to prevent Stelle from leaving the planet. Stelle's hideout is located in an abandoned warehouse one block from Altair City's major maglev hub. It's also on the same block as one the city's abandoned relay stations.

The warehouse itself is a one-level structure with a single main entrance that looks out onto the main street and a docking bay located at the rear of the building in an alleyway. The top half of the building's facade, roughly twenty meters from street level, features a long row of windows. A frontal assault of the warehouse would probably be counter-productive, as the noise would surely give Stelle enough time to bolt out the back entrance. Sneaking into the warehouse via the docking bay is probably the best course of action. The interior of the warehouse features a catwalk about twenty meters from the floor and serves as the top level of the building. Despite the presence of windows, all vision-based skill tests should receive 1. Stelle is located in a makeshift office located at the far end of the warehouse, opposite the loading dock, and he is not

JARED STELLE (DYASHI TERRORIST)					
FITNESS	5	REACTION	5		
Brawling	7				
Firearms	9	STAMINA	20		
		BEGIN INJURIES			
REASONING	2				
Computers	4	X			
Mechanics	4	X			
Engineering	4	X			
		X			
EMPATHY	2	X			
Performance	4	X			
WILLPOWER	5	EQUIPMENT			
Composure	8	Slug Pistol			

alone. Six Ul-marian thugs armed with blaster pistols and vibro knives mull about the place, ready to deal with any uninvited guests. Two guards are stationed near the office, while the remaining four patrol the interior at regular intervals. If the characters wish to dispatch the thugs before dealing with Stelle, they'll need to make each take down as quiet as possible. Moving stealthily through the warehouse shouldn't be a problem, as remnants of old machinery, cargo loaders, crates, and boxes abound.

End Game

However the characters proceed, Stelle should not be an easy catch. At the first sign of trouble, he will attempt to escape via whatever entrance isn't blocked, leaving his thugs to deal with the intruders. Indeed, for tension's sake, allow Stelle to escape by jumping into a stolen air car, thus requiring the party to give chase through the crowded streets of Altair City. The ensuing pursuit should be a hair-raising, fingernail-biting affair that requires judicious piloting tasks and penalties for heavy traffic. The end result should be a climactic battle between Stelle and the characters, making for an exciting end to the scenario. They will have saved a megacorporation's millions of credits and, more importantly, saved the galaxy from the machinations of a dangerous Dyashi master criminal.