

DEAD MAN'S HAND



SERENITY
ROLE PLAYING GAME



DEAD MAN'S HAND

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HERE'S HOW IT IS

The job's a bit risky, but gorram lucrative... obtain the Grand Prize of a poker tournament held aboard a luxury liner. Although the bespectacled old fellow who's offered the job is going to take a dreadful large share, the Crew might become mighty rich, declare themselves kings and queens of Londinum, and wear shiny hats. Unless things go south, that is. Since that's exactly what things tend to do on the Rim, the Crew soon realizes that they're knee deep in trouble... They have to drum up a lot of money and drum it up real fast. After all, their awful discontented employer has a reputation to lose and he's willing to go to some lengths to maintain it. Truth be told, he believes that fear and terror are perfect tools to achieve what he wants.

GAME MASTER NOTES

You, the Game Master (GM), are strongly encouraged to read and become familiar with *Dead Man's Hand* before attempting to run it. Players may choose to stray from pre-arranged plotlines, and the only way to respond to such circumstances is to know the adventure thoroughly.

Dead Man's Hand is a tale of ordinary folk faced with an unpleasant situation and is presented in three acts of two scenes each. Act one consists of *A Charming Old Gentleman* and *Gettin' Prepared*. Act two leads to *Welcome Aboard* and *How To Steal A Pot* with the final act concluding with *Things Go South* and *Filchin' From The Filchers*.

Dead Man's Hand is meant for Greenhorn Crews that have gained some experience. Veterans or Big Damn Heroes can use this adventure, but you will have to increase the skills of the non-player characters (NPCs) as well as increase the task difficulties in order to provide a better challenge.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

A CHARMING OLD GENTLEMAN

As the adventure begins, three player characters (PCs) are walked through a dim corridor aboard an infamous skyplex that orbits the harsh Border world Ezra. If your Crew's captain is a PC, ask the player to pick two PCs who are to accompany the captain. If the captain is a NPC, you choose the PCs. Obvious choices would be PCs who have FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES, a GOOD NAME, a NOSE FOR TROUBLE, or a TRUSTWORTHY GUT. Since a lucrative job will be offered to the Crew, PCs that are BRANDED, CRUDE, have a CHIP ON THE SHOULDER, or are likely to disrupt the negotiations in any way should stay aboard the Crew's ship that is secured at one of the space station's docking ports. Bear in mind that tastes in roleplaying vary considerably and that each player's preferences should be given roughly equal weight. For example, do not force a player who is more interested in numbers and Advancement Points than in

taking part in a narrative to conduct the following negotiations.

Once you know which PCs are aboard the skyplex, you should read the following passage out loud or paraphrase it.

Against the wash of stars a space station hangs, large and menacing. The somewhat dingy, yet bustling skyplex is dwarfed by the desert world it orbits. A planet in the Georgia system, Ezra is a harsh world. The law of the gun is absolute on this Border planet. Then again, there is work to be found here, though it may not be to everyone's liking. Rumor has it that the jobs that are offered to those who are granted access to the skyplex's inner sanctum are usually less legal as well as far more risky. They are dangerous, yet very lucrative.

The quiet and watchful PCs are walked through a hall aboard the skyplex by four armed goons. Finally, one of the goons knocks on a door. Read:

The door opens. Standing behind it and raising himself to full height is a gorram mountain of determination, a man who's as mean, big, and strong as tattooed *huai jia huo*¹ as ever stood behind a door. The bald and bearded brute stares grimly at you. He's obviously had lots of practice being intimidating.

¹ Literally, "bad guy", "scoundrel", "dirty bastard"

"It's fine, Leslie, they can come in", a friendly male voice says a moment later. The unseen man speaks with a heavy accent you can't quite identify. Leslie steps aside and reveals not only a spacious and lavishly furnished room, but also a slight, old, bespectacled fellow with thin white hair wearing an expensive, yet a bit old-fashioned attire and now comes from around a large desk, sizing you up as you enter. "My name is Adelei Niska," he says, smiling jovially.

Niska approaches the Crew's captain. After a short exchange of pleasantries, he comes down to business. Time is money, after all. Read:

"I have an exciting job for you. How you say it? An extraction, yes?", Niska says. "There is much money in it... 30.000 credits if you don't mind taking from the rich." After a short pause, he adds, "In a month the passenger liner 'El Dorado' puts out to the Black. It travels from Ariel to Bellerophon and back again. On the fourth, fifth, and sixth day of the voyage, there is a poker tournament. More than 50, you say it... high rollers want to win the guaranteed prize of 50,000 credits... Yes, the winner of the Grand Championship Poker Tournament wins the Grand Prize in cash. All you have to do is get the money. I launder it. Credits are printed on

special paper and tracers on each bill allow the money to be tracked, I think you know. It is not child's play to conceal the source of money. I get 40%, you get 30,000 credits. Yes?"

It is a FORMIDABLE (15) task (*Willpower* + *Influence* / *Appropriate Specialty*) to talk Niska into charging less for his services. A *Success* indicates that he'll settle for 30%. An *Extraordinary Success* means he'll go as low as 25%. A *Failure* or, worse still, a *Botch* means that the PCs have gone too far. Read:

Still smiling charmingly, Niska asks, "Do you know what a reputation is?" He sounds as if he has delivered the speech that's about to follow countless times before.

"Its people talking, gossip, it's not... to hold, to touch it, you can't. Not from gossip."

He pauses for a moment. Then he says, "I am a business man, I think you know. I have reputation. I don't want to lose it."

Suddenly, the conciliatory tone in Niska's voice vanishes along with his friendly smile. For a split second, you see a greedy, ruthless, and cold-blooded old man.

He adds in a cold voice, "I get 40%. That is, you say it... my final offer. You should take it."

The unspoken threat hangs in the air for a few moments before you accept meekly.

Regardless of how well the PCs negotiated with him, Niska provides them with further information. Read:

Niska moves back to his desk and touches a piece of clear paper that has been lying there all along. A moment later, the deck plans of a large and apparently luxurious passenger liner appear.

"You get on the 'El Dorado' on Ariel. It leaves in 32 days at exactly nine o'clock local time," Niska states matter-of-factly. "You can get cover story in case of questions, but you are not bothered, I think."

He touches the digital paper again and it zooms in on the Grand Salon on Deck 3.

"The tournament is held here. The money is on display the whole time, they say. You get it before you reach Bellerophon and you deliver it to Leslie. He gives you your money."

The old man turns the paper off, hands it over to you, and adds, "There are security guards, but they are not allowed to use, you say it... lethal force. Because security is important, they hire out to a private firm. The Alliance uses firms like this to enforce the peace on some Border worlds, I think you know. You better watch out because they are allowed to use violence."

Again, Niska pauses for a moment. Then he says, "That is all. Anything goes wrong... I have never heard of

you and you have never heard of me, you understand?"

That is indeed all the information Niska can provide. If the PCs want more information, they have to gather it on their own. After you've handed out the deck plans of the El Dorado to the players and rewarded each of them with a Plot Point or two, the PCs are walked back to their ship. Proceed to the *Scene 2: Gettin' Prepared*.

SCENE TWO

GETTIN' PREPARED

The PCs can either try to steal or, if there's at least one gambler in the Crew, win the money. Before they decide what to, the PCs should gather more information about the liner and what kind of security will be provided at the Grand Championship Poker Tournament. After spending a few hours passing out money or buying drinks on Ezra or Ariel, the PCs automatically find out that the luxury liner features opulent accommodations, smooth and safe travel, impeccable service, sumptuous dining, and some of the best entertainment in the 'Verse. Fares for El Dorado's 14-day cruise start from 129 credits, per person, double occupancy. A passage in one of her VIP suites costs 319 credits per person. Those who want to participate in the poker tournament travel for free. However, the tournament entry fee is 400 credits per player and covers the cost of accommodations, evening receptions and a banquet.

It is an EASY (3) task (*Willpower + Covert or Influence / Streetwise*) to find out that a security firm called 'Hei Shui'¹ will supply a team of six uniformed security officers who will protect the Grand Prize by maintaining a high visibility presence to deter illegal and inappropriate actions, observing, both directly as well as by watching alarm and surveillance systems, for signs of crime or disorder; then taking action and reporting any incidents to their client and emergency services as appropriate.

It is an AVERAGE (7) feat to find out that a standard six-man team consists of a team leader with at least five years of experience as well as five trained security officers who are licensed to carry firearms. The team's powers are derived from a contractual arrangement and include a nearly unlimited power to question with the absence of probable cause requirements, provided that the security officer does not tread on the rights and liberties of others. This does not come without checks, however, as private security personnel do not enjoy the benefit of civil protection, as Federal Marshals do, and can be sued directly for false arrests and illegal actions if they commit such acts.

Finally, it is HARD (11) to find out that Nyah Mbango, the team leader, and her men will place guns scanners in all doorways leading into El Dorado's Grand Salon, while the Grand Prize will be protected around the clock by a barrier

¹ "Dark water"

field as well as security devices such as cameras and motion sensors.

The PCs may equip themselves with the tools necessary to complete their mission.

An ear-worn and voice-activated miniature wireless radio transceiver, for example, costs 8 credits. Its range is limited to a few hundred yards, but the transceiver makes up for that by allowing easy and discreet communication. If they want to steal the money, the PCs should also obtain an illicit alarm removal kit which contains state-of-the-art intrusion devices, including circuit breakers and micro-manipulator tools, granting a +2 step Skill bonus on *Covert / Disable Devices* and *Open Locks* rolls, and costs 190 credits. It is a HARD (11) task (*Willpower + Covert* or *Influence / Streetwise*) to get a hold of a kit or a signal blocker that costs 13.3 credits and, once activated, scrambles any signal within five miles.

If one or more PCs want to participate in the tournament, they should sign up for it as soon as possible. Unless the other PCs want to sneak aboard while the liner is in port or pose as crew members or security officers, they should book a passage before they set out to the Black.

The journey from Ezra to Ariel takes a ship that has a Speed Class of 1 sixteen weeks, six days, and eleven hours (2,844 hours). Divide by the ship's Speed Class to get the actual travel time. The trip will take a vessel with a cruise Speed Class of 4, for example, more than 29 days.

Before their ship takes off, each character may make a *Willpower + Influence /*

Appropriate Specialty Skill roll to attract work to the ship. This roll represents the PC's best effort at finding a paying job.

There are two types of work: taking on passengers and transporting cargo. Even though all players may make a Skill roll, only the best one is used. Recruiting passengers and rounding up cargo are AVERAGE (7) tasks. The amount of money the PCs can earn depends on how successful the best Skill roll is. When determining passengers and cargo, round fractions down.

	Passengers
Botch	No Passengers
Failure	0.25 x Passenger Capacity (d8) credits per passenger per day
Success	0.5 x Passenger Capacity (d10) credits per passenger per day
Extraordinary Success	1 x Passenger Capacity (d12) credits per passenger per day

	Cargo
Botch	No Cargo
Failure	0.25 x Cargo Capacity (d2/10) credits per ton per day
Success	0.5 x Cargo Capacity (d4/10) credits per ton per day
Extraordinary Success	1 x Cargo Capacity (d6/10) credits per ton per day

Example: The crew of a Firefly-Class vessel has successfully recruited some passengers and drummed up some cargo. Firstly, a ten-sided die is rolled to determine how much each of the three

passengers will pay. Since the die yields an 8, the Crew earns $8 \times 3 = 24$ per day. Secondly, the four-sided die rolled to determine how much money the PCs make by transporting 200 tons of cargo shows a 2. The Crew earns $0.2 \times 200 = 40$ credits per day.

Plotting a direct course to Ariel is an AVERAGE (7) task (*Intelligence + Pilot / Astrogation*). A *Botch* means that the ship is off-course, doubling the actual travel time. A *Failure* means that the actual travel time is multiplied by 1.5. While a *Success* does not modify travel time, an *Extraordinary Success* indicates that the actual travel time is multiplied by 0.75. Reward the players with a Plot Point or two and proceed to *Act Two, Scene One: Welcome Aboard*.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

WELCOME ABOARD!

As a matter of course, you may describe the voyage to Ariel in as much detail as you wish. You may introduce secondary plot strands that revolve around the cargo or the passengers the PCs are transporting. Since this kind of subplot is at best auxiliary to the main plot, it is at your discretion whether you would like to add subplots or not.

You should, however, take the opportunity to encourage your players to engage in some roleplaying. If they make this short bit enjoyable for everyone, the players should earn Plot Points. When

there's nothing left to say, announce that the Crew's ship approaches Ariel. As with most planets in the Core, the world is a restricted landing zone and only those with a legitimate business are allowed to land. Depending on your Crew and their abilities, it may be an AVERAGE (7) or harder task (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*) to get the permission to land. Bear in mind that it is perfectly fair to compel a player to make at least a token effort at roleplaying to use of their characters' skills. However, if the PCs are unlikely to succeed, just skip this bit because failure would mean that the PCs can't land on Ariel and that this adventure will come to an untimely end. As the PCs' ship enters the atmosphere of the Core planet from outer space, read:

Finally, your boat slides fully into Ariel's atmo. Like the rest of the Core planets, the world is what some folks might consider to be a paradise of technology. Tall buildings constructed of glass and steel stretch skyward, gleaming and cold, while holographic billboards advertise all manner of wonders you can't afford.

Your ship drops into a landfall lane and slides along the unseen guidance lines that direct airborne traffic.

Them as never been to the Core before are either terrified by what they're seeing or mighty fascinated by the vastness of the cityscape that some might call futuristic.

Minutes later, your transport slows down. She edges her way out of the

traffic lane and onto a landing dock. Round about thirty minutes after she's first kissed atmo, your boat docks with a soft bump. The first thing them as might be considered *xiang ba lao*¹ by highfalutin folk notice about Ariel when the hatch's slid open, the loading ramp's lowered, and you've finally exited into the world's sunlight is that it doesn't crunch beneath your feet. In the odd silvery glow that suggests the reflection of sunlight off distant glass and metal, you realize that the spaceport you've arrived in is not the kind of landing field most of you are accustomed to. It's not just a flat space on the dusty or verdant ground for ships to land on, but a dead area that's covered over by lifeless concrete. Besides, the air that's apparently filtered and purified by scrubbers tastes and smells vaguely sterile.

After the passengers have disembarked and the cargo has been collected, the PCs may pile out and see to it that the ship is fuelled up, port fees are paid, and that any supplies that have run low are restocked.

More importantly, if the PCs neither signed up for the poker tournament nor booked a passage on El Dorado, they should now ask themselves how to get aboard. In the hope of getting free passage, the PCs may, for example, attempt to sneak aboard while the liner is

¹ (derogatory) "Villager"; "hick"; "bumpkin"

in port. Sneaking and hiding aboard the liner until the ship has left port is a HARD (55) Complex Action (*Alertness + Covert / Stealth*). If the *tou du zhe*² botches a roll, the PC is found and removed from the vessel before it takes off.

Alternatively, the PCs may try to pose as members of El Dorado's company or hired security officers. A few credits and a HARD (11) *Willpower + Covert* or *Influence / Streetwise* Skill roll are required get into illicit possession of a proper uniform. Moreover, passing for a member of the liner's large company is an AVERAGE (7) feat (*Willpower + Performance / Acting*), while pretending to be an additional member of *Hei Shui's* six-man team is simply RIDICULOUS (27). A *Failure* or, worse still, a *Botch* mean that the PC who failed the roll is caught red-handed and removed from the vessel. Obviously, the PCs can save themselves a lot of trouble if they have booked a passage or signed up for the tournament. Now, however, it is too late to do either. The liner's fully booked and there aren't any open slots at the tournament. It has to be said that the Crew may decide that their boat is to follow the liner, maintaining a safe distance, so that the PCs can disembark prematurely. That's a fine idea if the Crew's pilot is a non-player character. If, however, the pilot is a PC, the player will be virtually out of the game until the other PCs are back onboard their ship. It is perfectly fair to make your players aware of this problem and, if they insist, find a way to

² "Stowaway"

keep the pilot's player occupied, having said that, it is strongly suggested that the PCs' ship stays behind on Ariel.

As soon as the fully-equipped and well-prepared PCs have figured out how to get aboard, you may fast-forward a few days of game time and tell your players that the PCs now walk on the pier El Dorado's docked at. Read:

You must admit that the Floating World Class luxury liner is a gorram impressive sight and that you're feeling kind of small right now. Measuring almost 400 feet from bow to stern, she's one of the largest civilian ships you've ever set eyes on. El Dorado's larger than an ordinary liner, but carries a smaller number of passengers because she provides mighty spacious accommodations, awful extensive entertainment facilities, and, seeing as she tends to go on longer voyages, must carry much more fuel and supplies than her smaller relatives. Boarding and disembarking occurs here on Ariel and on Bellerophon, the liner's only officially-scheduled destination along her 14-day round trip. Alliance regulations restrict and monitor deviations anyways. Not that many Border, let alone Rim, worlds have adequate docking facilities to handle this plumb *ju da*¹ lady.

The PCs may now embark. Their luggage is neither searched nor screened.

¹ "Huge"; "gigantic"; "enormous"

However, if the PCs are carrying weapons openly because their players have forgotten about the supposedly tight security aboard the ship, the PCs must make a HARD (11) *Alertness + Covert / Sleight of Hand* Skill roll to conceal their weapons in time. PCs that are carrying a weapon that is larger than a pistol are at least at -1 Skill step. If they fail, the officer who stands at the end of the long gangway that leads to the liner's reception area and sizes all passengers up unobtrusively, yet very attentively notices the concealed weapon and asks the PC to deposit the weapons at the reception desk. Needless to say, if the PC declines a security officer will kindly deposit the weapon in the PCs' stead.

After the PCs have checked in, they may retire to their cabins or explore the liner until the evening when an informal reception is held in the Grand Salon on Deck 3.

When the PCs have gathered in the salon, a short man in a white short sleeved button-up shirt, knee shorts, and knee socks that is flanked by a boisterous woman enter the room. While the middle-aged Asian man is obviously the liner's Captain, the dark-skinned woman wears the dark uniform of a security officer. They traverse the room and come to a halt in front of the bar. Read:

"Ladies and gentleman," the man in the ridiculous dress uniform says, "May I have your attention, please? I am Yu Sing Chi, Master of this ship,

and I would like to welcome you aboard.

As you all know, the Grand Championship Poker Tournament starts in four days in this very room. That is why I would like to take this opportunity to explain the tournament's basic rules to you. The contestants will play five-card draw poker which means that each player is dealt a complete hand before the first round of betting, and then develops the hand for later rounds by replacing, or 'drawing', cards. After the betting is completed, players show their hands and the best hand wins the pot. In the event of a tie, the pot is split between the players that have tied. When a player loses all their chips, they are declared out of the tournament.

Four days from now, at exactly twelve o'clock, sixty participants will start to play at twelve tables. The games will continue until one person holds all the chips of a table. On the second day of the tournament, the twelve winners will play in groups of four at three tables. The final round will be played by those three players who have won all the chips. The winner of this last round will win the Grand Prize of 50,000 credits."

Captain Yu also says that the second winner will win 5,000 credits, while the third winner will be paid out 500 credits in cash. Then he answers a few questions and introduces the woman who stands

right beside him as the leader of the team that will provide additional security. Read:

The uniformed woman advances two steps and, to the surprise of all, quickly draws a pistol from its holster. You've got to hand it to her, she's got style, she's got grace, and she's awful fast. Smiling enigmatically, she points the firearm at the ceiling.

"Let's have some quiet!" she shouts to silence the room again. "I'm Nyah Mbango and this here gun in my hand is, except for them carried by my highly regarded colleagues, the only weapon permitted in this room. Them as are carrying right now better get used to the idea of losing some weight, *hao bu hao*¹?"

She puts the pistol back in the holster and adds, "Seriously, if you think of smuggling some sort of weapon in here, think again. Them gunscanners at the doors are doing a mighty good job. Players that we catch carrying will be disqualified which means they lose their entire stake. And that goes for cheaters too, *dong lu ma*²?"

She pauses for a moment, looking around and sizing some folks up. "Shiny," she finally says, "Now, if them as want to play some poker would please be kind enough to step forward and hand over the entry fee, I'd be much obliged. Mr. To over there will sign for the receipt and Mr.

¹ "All right?"; "OK?"

² "Are we clear?"

Yogeshwar's going to present you with your chips. *Duo xie*¹."

If the PCs signed up for the tournament, they may now pay the entry fee and receive their poker chips in turn. Unless the players still have questions, proceed to *Scene Two: How To Steal A Pot*.

SCENE TWO

HOW TO STEAL A POT

It's up to the players how their characters spend the next four days. There is certainly no shortage of ways to amuse themselves. The drinks one can have in the Grand Salon are expensive, but excellent, while the dishes served in the main dining room not only look dainty. Those who are accustomed to protein paste might be overwhelmed by the dishes' refined flavors, though. Moreover, there are four Companions of both sexes aboard who offer their services to those who can afford them. Finally, there are live performances in the theater on Deck 3 every night. In short, there are certain costly steps the PCs can take to enjoy themselves greatly and earn some Plot Points in the process.

However, they're not onboard because of the entertainment the luxury liner has to offer, but to obtain the Grand Prize. The next day, the PCs who visit the Grand Salon notice that the Grand Prize is indeed on display. Read:

As you enter the Grand Salon, passing through the now active

¹ "Many thanks"; "thanks a lot"

gunscanner, you immediately notice that a massive pedestal has been put up right in the middle of the salon overnight. On it, a robust briefcase rests its lid wide open. The aluminium case contains multitudinous wads of 50 credit bills. Any urge to touch the money vanishes as the invisible barrier field that surrounds the pedestal is highlighted by a flickering energy surge that shows that the barrier is active and ready for action.

It is IMPOSSIBLE (31) to smuggle any concentration of metal or traces of propellant chemicals past the scanner (*Alertness + Covert / Sleight of Hand*). It is an AVERAGE (7) mental feat to know (*Intelligence + Knowledge or Covert / Appropriate Specialty*) that a barrier field is extremely durable. It can take 50 points of damage per turn without overloading. If the barrier is attacked, the security system immediately alerts its administrator.

Noticing the motion sensors installed in the pedestal is an EASY (3) task (*Alertness + Perception / Appropriate Specialty*), while becoming aware of all five security cameras that have been installed throughout the room is an AVERAGE (7) feat. Four cameras are part of the El Dorado's security system, but the one directly above the pedestal has been installed only recently.

Moreover, there is a small team of reporters onboard who cover the poker tournament for a Cortex channel. They may even interview one of the PCs.

Broadly speaking, the PCs have two options. They can either *Win a Fortune* or *Steal a Fortune*.

WIN A FORTUNE

If a PC signed up for the tournament, the gambler might just as well participate. There's even a chance that the PC might actually win the Grand Prize. Granted, Niska will still claim his share, but at least this approach is the less dangerous one. As Captain Yu has already pointed out, the tournament has three rounds. In the first round, the PC has to face four unnamed opponents that are played by other players. Hand over the "Poker Tournament Handout" from this adventure's appendix to all the players and ask those who play the PC's opponents to roll two six-sided dice and find the result along the left hand row to determine both the opponent's Attribute Die Type and Skill Die Type. That is all the player needs to know to play the opponent. Put another way, if an unnamed character is asked to make a Skill roll, he uses those dice.

Example: The two six-sided dice show a 2 and a 6. If the unnamed NPC must make a Skill roll, he uses a d6 and a d8. If the PC wins all the chips of a table, this procedure is repeated for the second round in which the gambler faces three opponents. However, the dice rolled to determine the opponents' abilities change. In the second round, two eight-sided dice are rolled. On the average, the PCs' opponents become more competent each round.

The first two rounds should be played out rather quickly. All the players make opposed *Willpower* + *Perception* / *Gambling* Skill rolls which represent a few hours of game time. The character with the lowest score has lost all his chips and is declared out of the tournament. You may already acquaint your players with the "Hands" table that could, in this early stage of the tournament, show which hand a character held during the final showdown. A Skill roll result of 15, for instance, means that the character had five cards of sequential rank but in more than one suit, a straight.

This procedure is repeated until the PC has either lost his entire stake or won all the chips on the first two tables. Although detailed rules for cheating will be given below, the PC will probably be pleased to hear that spending Plot Points does not count as cheating. Moreover, unnamed NPCs neither have Plot Points, nor do they manipulate the game.

Winning the final round, however, is a bit more difficult. Firstly, the PC doesn't face unnamed NPCs, but famous gamblers: Kim Kwan Ho from Sihnon (Attribute d10, Skill d10) and Reuben Aloysius Clayborn from Londinum (Attribute d8, Skill d12). Each of them has d12 Plot Points. In addition, Clayborn is a cheater. Ask those two players who have shown the highest degree of commitment, attention, as well as enthusiasm and that they enjoy being part of the narrative to play Kim and Clayborn. If they're convincing, they should earn some Plot Points.

As said above, spending Plot Points does not count as cheating. However, gaining an unfair advantage by manipulating or switching cards or by having one or more partners who signal the value of his opponents' cards does.

If the PC is a card sharp, he may make *Alertness + Covert / Sleight of Hand* Skill rolls. These rolls are opposed by the other players' Skill rolls. If the PC wins the opposed rolls, the player may re-roll his *Alertness + Perception / Gambling* Skill roll (unless it was a *Botch*) and use the higher result. If he's extraordinarily successful, he may even re-roll a *Botch*. If he fails or, worse still, botches, he's caught red-handed.

If the PC has one or more partners who signal to him the values of his opponents' cards without attracting attention, the PC's partners must make a HARD (11) *Alertness + Covert / Sleight of Hand* Skill roll. A *Success* indicates that the PC receives a +1 step Skill bonus on his next Skill roll, while an *Extraordinary Success* increases the Skill bonus to +2 steps. A *Failure* or a *Botch* means that the PC and his partners are caught in the act.

Winning the final round is a HARD (55) Complex Action. Each Skill roll costs half an hour of time. Depending on whether or not you want the PC to win the tournament, you can ask Kim's and Clayborn's player to announce either their current total, their present Skill roll results, or merely which hand their characters hold so that the PC may keep track of his opponents' progress more or less easily. While botching once increases

the Difficulty Threshold to FORMIDABLE (75), rolling a second *Botch* means that the character has lost all his chips. The character who reaches or exceeds the threshold first is the winner of the tournament. Compare the results of the remaining characters to determine who the second and third winner is.

As mentioned above, Clayborn is a cheater. When the Skill roll result of the best player exceeds 35, ask the other players to make a Skill roll. The PC rolls *Alertness + Perception / Appropriate Specialty*. It is HARD (11) to notice that Clayborn pulls a card out of his sleeve inconspicuously. An *Extraordinary Success* indicates that the character even observes that Clayborn pulls out an ace of clubs. It goes without saying that he denies being a card sharp. However, it is EASY (3) to both grab Clayborn (*Agility + Unarmed Combat / Appropriate Specialty*) and search him (*Alertness + Perception / Search*). Read:

"Ren ping feng lang qi, wen zuo diao yu tai¹!" Nyah Mbango shouts from the other side of the room. As you turn around, you see Mbango and two security officers approaching at a smart pace, shockrods at the ready. "Git!" the team leader yells before they've reached the table. "Bu shi wanr de²! Back off already! I sure as hell ain't in no joking mood. Let go off

¹ Literally, "Sit at ease in a fishing boat despite wind and storm"; "Stay calm (during tense situation)!"

² "It's no joke!"

that man or you get yourselves some imminent violence.”

The security officers will use their stun batons if the characters do not let go off Clayborn. If they do, however, Clayborn is searched again and disqualified immediately. Read:

As her colleagues march Clayborn off, Mbango takes a quick look at his cards that still lie on the table. She smiles as she reveals that the hand held by Clayborn includes the aces and eights both in the black suits.

Now that the cheater has been disqualified, the PC only has to beat Kim to win the tournament. If he does, there is a small celebration. He’s presented with the briefcase that contains 50,000 credits and interviewed by the reporters. Once the footage is shot, however, Ms. Mbango takes the case away again. Read:

“Our mission ain’t accomplished yet,” she states, “You’re not going to lose the money and sue our client for damages, that’s for sure.” Even though you want to say something, she adds unperturbedly, “Xie qi¹! I ain’t saying you will, but I got my orders. Now, you can accompany me to the reception and watch how I put this gorram case in the safe or stay here while I do. I don’t care.”

¹ “Take it easy!”

Regardless of how the PC reacts, Mbango will do just that.

Award the players with two to four Plot Points, depending on how well they did during this scene. Proceed to *Act 3, Scene 1: Things Go South*.

STEAL A FORTUNE

Stealing the Grand Prize certainly won’t be child’s play. Needless to say the PCs should make their move at night when only Mbango’s men are in the Grand Salon.

It is an AVERAGE (7) task (*Alertness + Covert / Surveillance*) to find out that, apart from El Dorado’s security officers, three members of Mbango’s team are on duty at all times. Mbango or her deputy set up camp in the liner’s security office on Deck 4, watching live video feeds from all the security cameras in the Grand Salon, while the remaining two officers stand guard in it. Hei Shui’s operatives work 8-hour shifts.

If the PCs didn’t by a signal blocker, they have to disable all the security cameras before they can make a move. That is an AVERAGE (7) feat (*Agility + Covert / Disable Devices*). If the PCs want to prevent their tampering from being noticed by feeding in a false signal, for instance, they must make a HARD (11) *Agility + Technical Engineering / Security Systems* Skill roll. Since the cameras’ feeds are being watched, the PCs must also make HARD (11) *Alertness + Covert / Stealth* roll or the fact that they attempted to disable the cameras will be noticed.

Disabling the barrier is a FORMIDABLE (75) Complex Action (*Agility + Covert / Disable Devices*). Each roll represents one turn's work. However, the PCs may also steal the projector's remote control from Mbango's or her deputy's person which is a HARD (11) task (*Alertness + Covert / Sleight of Hand*). Cracking the 5-digit security code is also a HARD (11) feat (*Intelligence + Covert* or *Technical Engineering / Appropriate Specialty*). Finally, disabling the motion sensors that alert the guards when the briefcase is moved is a HARD (55) Complex Action (*Agility + Covert / Disable Devices*). Again, each roll represents one turn's work.

Since the PCs have to spend at least a few turns inside the Grand Salon to disable the motion sensors, the security guards have to be either incapacitated or distracted. Distracting them long enough is a HEROIC (19) task (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*). If any of the above rolls are failed or botched, the PCs' attempts to steal the money will be noticed. Depending on how far the PCs have proceeded, they may try to make excuses which is at least a HARD (11) feat (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*) or be taken into custody right away. Run combat if necessary. Bear in mind, however, that El Dorado's security officers will not use lethal force and that Nyah Mbango and her men will do so only in self-defense. The PCs would be well-advised if they didn't resist the arrest and followed the guards to their own cabins in which they

will be confined for the remainder of the voyage.

If, however, the PCs manage to get possession of the briefcase, they have to hide it for the remainder of the voyage which is a FORMIDABLE (15) task (*Alertness + Covert / Appropriate Specialty*). If the players make more than a token effort at roleplaying to use of their characters' skills and, for instance, describe how and where their quick-witted characters hide the case or the bills, the PCs are at +1 Skill step.

On the following day, every cabin is searched thoroughly. If the money is not found, award the players with two to four Plot Points, depending on how well they did during this scene. Proceed to *Act 3, Scene 1: Things Go South*.

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

THINGS GO SOUTH

It is rather obvious that things have gone bad if the PCs find themselves confined in their cabins. Even though neither El Dorado's security officers nor Nyah Mbango and her men are sworn law enforcement officials, they have exercised a power granted by Federal legislation. However, they risk exposing themselves and their client to possible lawsuits or criminal charges such as charges of false imprisonment or kidnapping by having made a citizen's arrest. That's why they try not to violate the PCs' civil rights and do not lock up their cabins. The PCs are

only disarmed if they committed acts of violence. Still, they are asked not to leave their cabins until El Dorado has landed on Bellerophon where the PCs will be delivered to the Federal Marshals. However, the PCs may walk out of their cabins and through the liner's corridors without being impeded. A security officer will follow them at all times, though. He keeps out of reach, watching the PCs closely. It is anything but a vehement challenge to incapacitate the guard when El Dorado has finally touched down. However, absconding from their now open prison is because the Feds already await the PCs in the liner's reception area. Talking their way or sneaking past the Feds are both HEROIC (19) feats (*Alertness + Covert / Stealth* or *Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*). Exiting the liner through a personnel and goods entrance on the lowest deck, however, is merely an AVERAGE (7) task (*Alertness + Covert / Stealth*). As soon as they've managed to disembark illicitly, they meet Leslie.

If the PCs successfully stole the Grand Prize or won it, they are free to come off the liner, of course. Moreover, they may have already taken a closer look at the money. If the PCs chose to do so, it is a FORMIDABLE (15) feat (*Alertness + Covert / Forgery*) to notice that all the bills are counterfeit, forged masterfully. If they address the problem, Captain Yu is shocked. After he's made contact with his employer, he tells the PCs that, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the bills the shipping company sent were genuine. If

they PCs want to call the Federal Marshals, they are free to do so. Yu will gladly assist in the investigation in any way he can. Until El Dorado lands on Bellerophon, the PCs cannot do anything. When she does, they meet Leslie. Read:

At the end of the gangway that leads to El Dorado's reception area and flanked by four mighty intimidating goons, Niska's henchman Leslie waits for you, as mute as a sullen 7-foot maggot that's as strong as an ox. Leslie's tattooed, beefy arms are crossed in front of the awfully broad chest. His blank face is apparently a subtle sign used to keep folks a polite distance away. It works. You don't feel like meeting the dreadful *wei feng*¹ bully boy and his thuggish, scowling buddies at all. The fact that they're all concealing guns of different sorts don't provide no real incentive, either.

If the PCs tell Leslie that the money is counterfeit or if they don't have it, he's taken aback, but gestures them to follow him. If they don't say anything, he's not shocked, but asks the PCs to follow him anyway. If the PCs decline, read:

"Listen up!" Leslie says awful quietly. His voice is far more silvery that you expected. "And listen real close 'cause I ain't going to say this twice... We can either do this the easy way or the very easy way."

¹ "Awe-inspiring"; "impressive"

After a short pause he adds, smiling infernally, "The very easy way being us beating you to a pulp real quick and dragging you along, *dong ma*¹?"

If the PCs still don't want to come along, roll Initiative because the goons are true to Leslie's word. Since they neither want to attract unnecessary attention nor brawl for the fun of it, they make called shots, aiming for the PCs' heads. The goons suffer a -2 step Skill penalty on their *Strength + Unarmed Combat / Brawling* rolls. If they hit, initial damage is Basic type instead of Stun because they all have really MEAN LEFT HOOKS. A successful hit to a vital area like the head also increases the additional damage. The goons' bare-handed damage of 0 is increased by +4 step to d8 W. Moreover, the PCs must make AVERAGE (7) Endurance (*Vitality + Willpower*) tests. Failure means that they're knocked out and cannot take any actions for d6 turns. If the PCs want to turn the brawl into an armed melee or, worse still, a firefight, Leslie and his men will reluctantly follow suit. Bear in mind, however, that they are not ordered to kill the PCs. They will do their very best to incapacitate them without hurting the PCs too much. If the PCs are subdued or agreed to follow Leslie right from the get-go, they are led or carried to a landing platform not far away on which a mid-bulk transport called *Ye Ma*² has docked. After all the characters have gone aboard, the hatch is

sealed behind them. If Leslie doesn't know that the money that PCs are carrying is counterfeit, he scans the bills and discovers that they are not genuine. He does not confront the PCs with his discovery, though. If he already knows that the money's fake or if the PCs didn't manage to get a hold of it, he walks through the freighter's corridors until he gestures the PCs to stop in front of the doorway that leads to the bridge. Read:

Leslie enters the bridge, sits down in front of the communications console, and begins to record a message. A few minutes later, he sends the wave, turns to you, and says, "It'll take a few hours to receive a reply. Why don't you make yourselves at home in the meantime, eh?"

The PCs may go wherever they please as long as they don't try to leave the boat. Round about two hours later, they are asked to report to the bridge. Read:

Leslie stands in front of the communications console and says, "You've got a wave." He steps aside, revealing a small monitor that shows a paused image of the bespectacled Adelei Niska. He does not smile. Leslie presses a button and Niska begins to move and talk again.

"I am, you say it... dismayed at the news", he says. "My good man Leslie tells me that you didn't do... How you say it? Yes... You didn't do what I told

¹ "Understand?"

² "Wild horse"

you to do. This makes me very angry.”

All of a sudden he becomes alarmingly quiet. A few moments later, he adds, “Your reputation is only gossip, I think. Things between us are not solid. Even so, I am not unreasonable. I am a business man, I think you know. I give you second chance to, you say it... pay your debt. Leslie stays with you. He reports to me. You don’t give me my money, you die slow and very painful death. You understand?”

The recorded message ends abruptly.

There is no point in debating the issue with Leslie.

Award the players with a Plot Point or two and proceed to *Scene 2: Filchin’ from the Filchers*.

SCENE TWO

FILCHIN’ FROM THE FILCHERS

Depending on how well the PCs negotiated with Niska in the first act, they owe him 20,000, 15,000, or 12,500 credits. However, Leslie isn’t the mean ruffian he seemed to be. Read:

“All right, you heard the boss”, Leslie says. “You’re in for a wild and, let’s face it, mighty painful ride if you can’t pay the man. So, if you stashed the money somewhere, this would be a damn good moment to tell me so.” Since you keep protesting your innocence, the big, bald man laughs out loud and adds, “You know what?

I believe you. *Ta me de*¹! I really do.

Now, I’m going to let you in on a little secret... I don’t want to off you. What with all the cleaning up afterwards, it ain’t no job I’ll enjoy doing. Don’t get me wrong... I will if I have to. I just won’t enjoy it.”

Smiling endearingly, he finally asks, “So, any ideas where you can, well, mobilize the necessary funds?”

If the PCs didn’t know that the money is counterfeit, they may contact Captain Yu now. He tells them brusquely that the money was genuine. He does not offer his assistance because, frankly, he doesn’t believe the PCs.

If the gambler won the second or third prize, he’ll be pleased to hear that the money he won is not counterfeit. Still, the PCs probably still don’t have enough money to pay back their debt. If they do, they may part with their hard-earned cash and be on their way, of course. Assuming that they don’t have that much money at hand at the moment, those PCs who are **MONEYED INDIVIDUALS** may make an *Intelligence + Influence / Appropriate Specialty Skill* roll to dip into their trust funds. Acquiring all the money in one go is a **FORMIDABLE (23)** feat, though. The most probable approach, however, is to find those who stole the money. You may sit back now and watch how the players figure out what’s happened. If they really can’t suss out that there’s been another team of thieves aboard *El Dorado*, you should help them along, of course.

¹ (vulgar) “Damn it!”

Besides, since the notes the shipping company that owns the luxury liner sent were not counterfeit, it doesn't take a brilliant detective to come to the conclusion that only the Hei Shui operatives could have replaced the bills with phony ones.

The first question is who are they? A Cortex search and an AVERAGE (35) Complex Action (*Alertness + Technical Engineering / Appropriate Specialty*) are required to find out that the private firm was indeed paid to provide additional security. Moreover, they did send a six-man team led by a certain Nyah Mbango. However, according to an image the PCs stumble upon, the woman they met is not her. If the PCs want to learn more, they must make a HARD (11) *Alertness + Technical Engineering / Appropriate Specialty* Skill roll to find out that Mbango and her men were ambushed and incapacitated on Ariel almost two weeks ago. Against their will, they were held in false imprisonment until today. After their abductors had set them free on Bellerophon, Mbango immediately reported to her superior who chose not to report the incident to the Feds. Obviously, Hei Shui does not want to appear weak and risk losing their contract with the Alliance. Ms. Mbango and her men were ordered not to talk to anyone about the disagreeable occurrence and to return to Hei Shui's headquarters on Sihnon immediately. Since the kidnappers set the operatives free on the world the PCs are currently on just a few hours ago, they're possibly still in the vicinity.

The second question is who hired them? PCs that have FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES may spend three Plot Points to call upon a contact in the underworld and gain this important information without rolling. Those who don't have that Asset must make a HARD (11) *Willpower + Covert or Influence / Streetwise* Skill roll to find out that a certain business man on Persephone was looking for very crafty con artists who apparently were to commit a grand theft. If the PCs haven't dealt with Badger before, they may now spend at least seven Plot Points to manipulate their background stories accordingly. Regardless of whether they know the criminal, they may contact him now. Due to a 45-minute communication lag, the conversation is less than spirited, though. If the PCs know Badger, it is a HARD (11) task to make him talk (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*). If they don't, it's a FORMIDABLE (15) feat. If they offer a large enough bribe, the PCs gain a +1 step Skill bonus. Provided that the PCs are convincing, read:

As always, Badger's wearing a hideous bowler hat, a painful ugly three piece and a tie. He cups his chin that's covered by a two-day-old beard and exposes his bad teeth by smiling plain deviously.

"Well, how shall I put it?" he finally says. "There's indeed been an increased demand for gifted confidence artists of late. Now, if... and that's a real big if... I happened

to know someone in that line of work, I could have made a tidy profit, it seems. Mind you, I don't, so I didn't. Still, and this is me speaking real general, I advise you not to meddle in a woman's affairs. They're superior to men in many ways, you know. Personally, I feel most at home among my own kind, I don't mind telling you. But I digress. According to your wave's signature, you're on Bellerophon at the moment. If you're looking for persons adept at lying and cajolery, you should really approach the Buckmans. Rumor has it they are gorram talented and would do almost anything for coin. However, they're not the brightest buttons that ever shone, if you catch my drift. You might want to handle them with care. That's all I can say to that, really." He consults his watch and adds, "Upon my soul, time does fly! I got to run. Bye for now."

If the PCs can't make Badger talk, it's a HEROIC (19) task to (*Willpower + Covert* or *Influence / Streetwise*) to find out that the Buckman brothers have gained a reputation for being capable con artists and live on Bellerophon.

It is an AVERAGE (7) feat (*Willpower + Covert* or *Influence / Streetwise*) to find out that the Buckmans' so-called headquarters is a bar known as Xing's¹ Saloon here on Bellerophon. The saloon can be found in a comparably poor district of the town they PCs are in. Leslie allows

¹ "Lucky"

the PCs to disembark, but he insists on accompanying them and won't take no for an answer. As the Crew approaches the saloon, read:

Xing's Saloon is a small, disreputable place, doing a brisk, but low-key business. The large, two-story building is open around the clock. The second floor apparently serves as a brothel, with balconies overlooking the street, while the downstairs contains a bar, stage, and several backrooms.

Most of them as frequent this plain shady establishment are probably up to something they don't want other folks to know about.

It's an AVERAGE (7) feat (*Alertness + Perception / Appropriate Specialty*) to recognize two of the patrons. The Buckman brothers and another man sit around a table at the far side of the room. Read:

You recognize two of the three men immediately. You know them by the names of Mr. To and Mr. Yogeshwar. You might just as well assume that those names ain't their own, though. In fact, since the man you know as To is of the Asian persuasion, it's safe to say that the other gentleman is one of the Buckmans.

Unless the PCs make HARD (11) *Alertness + Covert / Stealth* Skill rolls, Lau and the

Buckmans jump to their feet as the Crew approaches the table. Read:

They may be a few tasty ingredients short of a gorram *kao ya*¹, but they sure as hell are perceptive and damn twitchy. In a fraction of a second, the three men have leapt from their seats and drawn their guns. Looks like they ain't in no mood to talk to strangers right now.

"*Shen me*²?" the one you know as Yogeshwar asks without pointing his gun at you.

Unless the PCs want to start a firefight, they should calm the men down which is an AVERAGE (7) feat (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*). At least, they holster their guns if the PCs are successful. Persuading them to part with their money, however, is a RIDICULOUS (27) task (*Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty*) that will likely culminate in a classic barroom brawl. If the brawl is turned into an armed melee or, worse still, a firefight, the bartender calls the Feds that arrive after d6 minutes.

Provided that the PCs can overpower the con artists, read:

"*Jian gui*³", the younger Buckman finally says, wiping blood off his face. "No amount of money is worth dying for."

¹ "Roast duck"

² "What?"; "who?"

³ "Curse it!"; "To hell with it!"

He pauses for a moment and then adds, "Besides, we're not behind all this. Gorramit, we don't even know the names of that dreadful woman or her buddies that took the largest share of the goods. Me and my mates only got 10% each. The money's upstairs, if you want to count it."

Assuming that the PCs indeed want to cast a glance at the money, Randy Buckman, under the halfhearted protest of his friends, leads them up the stairs and into a small room. The nondescript briefcase that lies on one of the dingy beds contains 14,970.75 credits that, in all likelihood, now change hands without the previous possessors' consent.

However, since the three con artists are outnumbered and outgunned, they don't put much of a fight.

Although the PCs are free to try, they cannot find out anything about the woman that led the outfit. However, they don't really have to because they should now have enough money to pay Niska. Leslie gladly accepts it on Adelei Niska's behalf, bids the PCs farewell, and wanders off, whistling cheerfully.

Even though they are now stranded on Bellerophon, the PCs at least don't have to fear for their well-being anymore.

Award the players with four to six Advancement Points.

下場

THE END

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

UNNAMED GOONS

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6;

Life Points 14; Initiative d6+d6

Traits: Intimidatin' Manner (Minor Asset), Loyal (Minor Complication), Mean Left Hook (Minor Asset), Overconfident (Minor Complication)

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Discipline d6 / Intimidation d8, Influence d4, Knowledge d2, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Knives d8, Perception d6 / Sight d8, Ranged Weapons d4, Survival d2, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Equipment: Knife (DMG d4 W, RNG 15), Submachine Gun (DMG d6 W, RNG 60, ROF 3*, MAG 32).

Description: Niska's goons are just that: rowdyish thugs. They're big and strong, but not particularly fast. Even though they might not hit their opponents every time they swing, them as are on the receiving end of a punch better watch out unless they want to enter a world of hurt.

* Can fire single shot, burst, or autofire.

LESLIE YEUNG

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d10, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6;

Life Points 20; Initiative d6+d8

Traits: Crude (Minor Complication), Intimidatin' Manner (Minor Asset), Mean Left Hook (Minor Asset), Memorable (Minor Complication), Loyal (Minor Complication), Tough as Nails (Major Asset).

Skills: Athletics d6, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Discipline d6 / Intimidation d10, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Medical Expertise d2, Melee Weapon Combat d6, Perception d6 / Sight d10 / Empathy d8, Ranged Weapons d4, Survival d2, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Equipment: Knife (DMG d2 W, RNG 15), Pistol (DMG d6 W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 15).

Description: There's more to Leslie than meets the eye. He is brawny, tough, as well as mean and fights well because he's very tall and mighty bullnecked. That's why most folks assume he's stupid. However, that's a mistake Leslie's learned to play to his advantage. Sometimes he plays dumb, causing others to underestimate him.

ADELEI NISKA

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d10, Wil d12;

Life Points 16; Initiative d6+d8

Traits: Friend in Low Places (Minor Asset), Greedy (Minor Complication), Leadership (Minor Asset), Moneyed Individual (Major Asset), Sadistic (Major Complication)

Skills: Athletics d2, Covert d6 / Streetwise d12, Discipline d4, Guns d2, Influence d6 / Leadership d8 / Intimidation d10 / Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6 / Literature d8, Linguist d2, Mechanical Engineering d2, Medical Expertise d4, Perception d6, Performance d4, Unarmed Combat d2, Technical Engineering d2, Survival d4

Description: Adelei Niska is a very intelligent, yet psychotic crime lord. Thoroughly ruthless in his business practices, he is dedicated to maintaining his reputation for exacting terrible reprisals on those who cross him. This reputation is well-deserved. He believes in money and power and that both fear and terror are perfect tools to achieve both.

NYAH MBANGO

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d10;

Life Points 16; Initiative d8+d8

Traits: Crude (Minor Complication), Fightin' Type (Major Asset), Good Name (Minor Asset), Greedy (Minor Complication), Leadership (Minor Asset), Memorable (Minor Complication), Steady Calm (Minor Asset)

Skills: Athletics d6, Covert d6, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Influence d6 / Intimidation d8 / Persuasion d12 / Seduction d8, Mechanical Engineering d2, Medical Expertise d2, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6, Performance d4, Technical Engineering d4, Unarmed Combat d6

Equipment: Ballistic Mesh (AR 1W; converts up to 8 Wounds to Stun), Pistol (DMG d6 W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 12), Stun Baton (DMG d2 S)

Description: She can be elegant, sophisticated, and well-educated. She can also be ruthless, tough, and mean. In short, she's a gorram master of deception and disguise. In fact, she's one of the best con artists in the whole gorram 'Verse. That's why only a select few know her real name. The others might just as well assume that the name she's using ain't her own. She sure ain't called Nyah Mbango.

HEI SHUI OPERATIVE

(BERNARD LAU, COLE BUCKMAN, AND RANDY BUCKMAN)

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d4, Wil d8;

Life Points 12; Initiative d8+d8

Traits: Greedy (Minor Complication), Talented: Influence / Persuasion (Minor Asset)

Skills: Athletics d4, Covert d6 / Streetwise d8, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Influence d6 / Persuasion d10 / Seduction d8, Knowledge d6, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6 / Sight d8, Unarmed Combat d6

Equipment: Ballistic Mesh (AR 1W; converts up to 8 Wounds to Stun), Pistol (DMG d6 W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 12), Stun Baton (DMG d2 S)

Description: Lau and the Buckman brothers are gorram swindlers. They're cheap cheats and liars. They're not awful bright, though. They ain't the ones that make things happen. They need someone else do the thinking. The El Dorado Coup, for instance, was thought up by a woman they didn't know before. She's been the brains of the outfit. Lau, the Buckmans, and the two buddies the woman brought along did what they were told to do. They were hired help. It's as simple as that.

EL DORADO SECURITY OFFICER

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6;

Life Points 12; Initiative d6+d6

Traits: Steady Calm (Minor Asset), Loyal (Minor Complication)

Skills: Athletics d4, Discipline d6, Guns d6, Influence d6 / Persuasion d8, Knowledge d4, Linguist d4, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Clubs d8, Medical Expertise d2, Perception d6 / Sight d8, Unarmed Combat d6

Equipment: Stun Baton (DMG d2 S)

Description: These uniformed security officers are privately and formally employed guards who are paid to protect the shipping company's property. They detect, deter, observe and report. They are not required to make arrests or otherwise act as an agent of law enforcement at the request of a Federal Marshal, sheriff, and others. Their primary duty is the prevention and deterrence of crime. Nothing more, nothing less.

EL DORADO



FLOATING WORLD CLASS LUXURY LINER

Dimensions (LxBxH): 397 x 160 x 52 feet.

Tonnage: 10,000 tons

Speed Class: 5 cruise / 7 hard-burn

Crew Complement: 8 officers, 16 space hands, 50 crew dedicated to passenger care, 10 entertainers.

Crew Quarters: 24 double cabins, two 40-ton suites.

Fuel Capacity: 600 tons (1,200 hours).

Cargo Capacity: 800 tons.

Passenger Capacity: 43 double cabins, three 40-ton VIP suites.

Gear: Six 20-ton passenger shuttles. Sixteen 20-ton shuttles configured as lifeboats. Auditorium / theatre with 500 seats and full stage. Two salons (dining room and casino). Infirmary with three beds.

Price: 1,000,000 credits

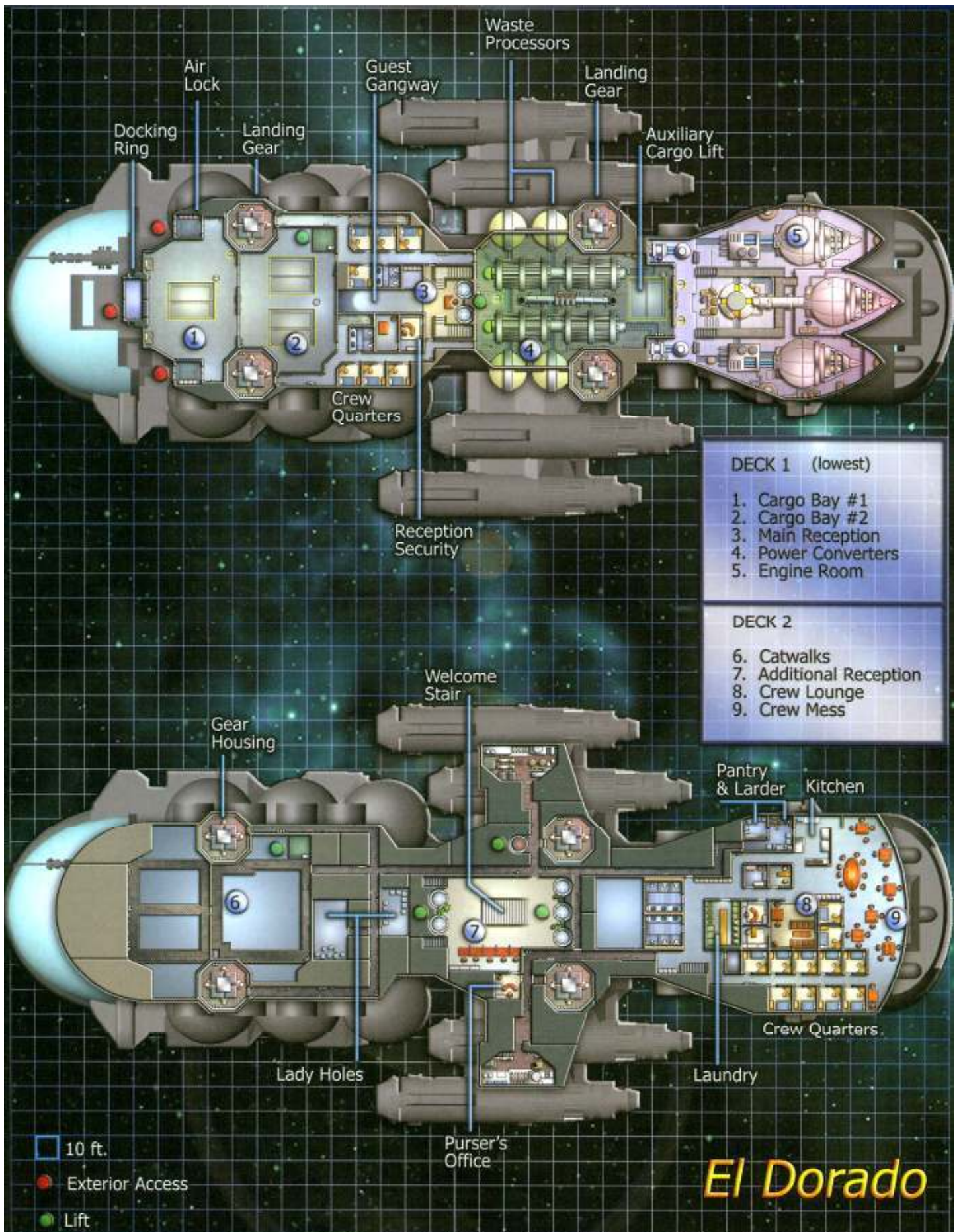
Agi d4, **Str** d8, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d6, **Int** d6, **Wil** d6;

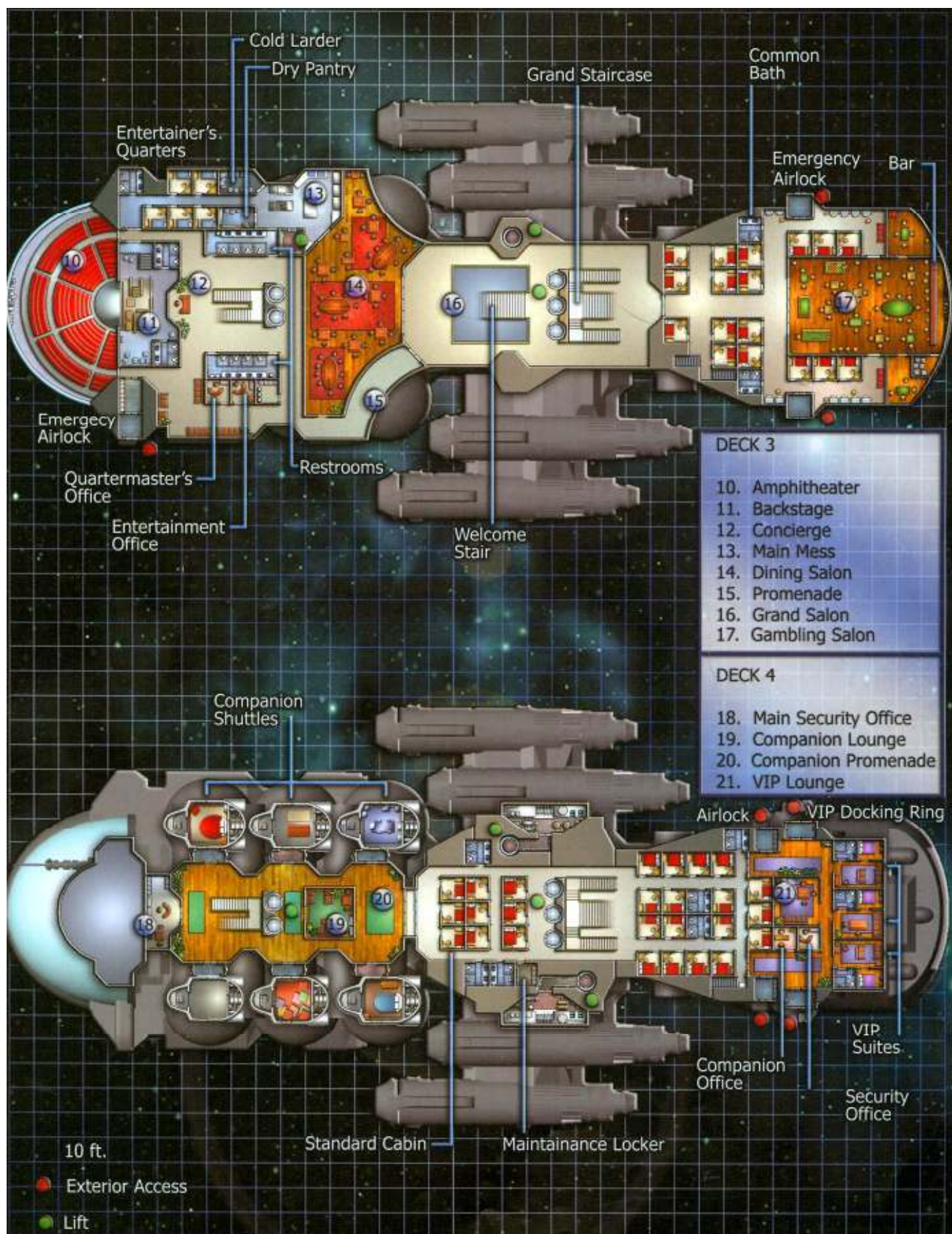
Initiative d4+d6, **Life Points** 14

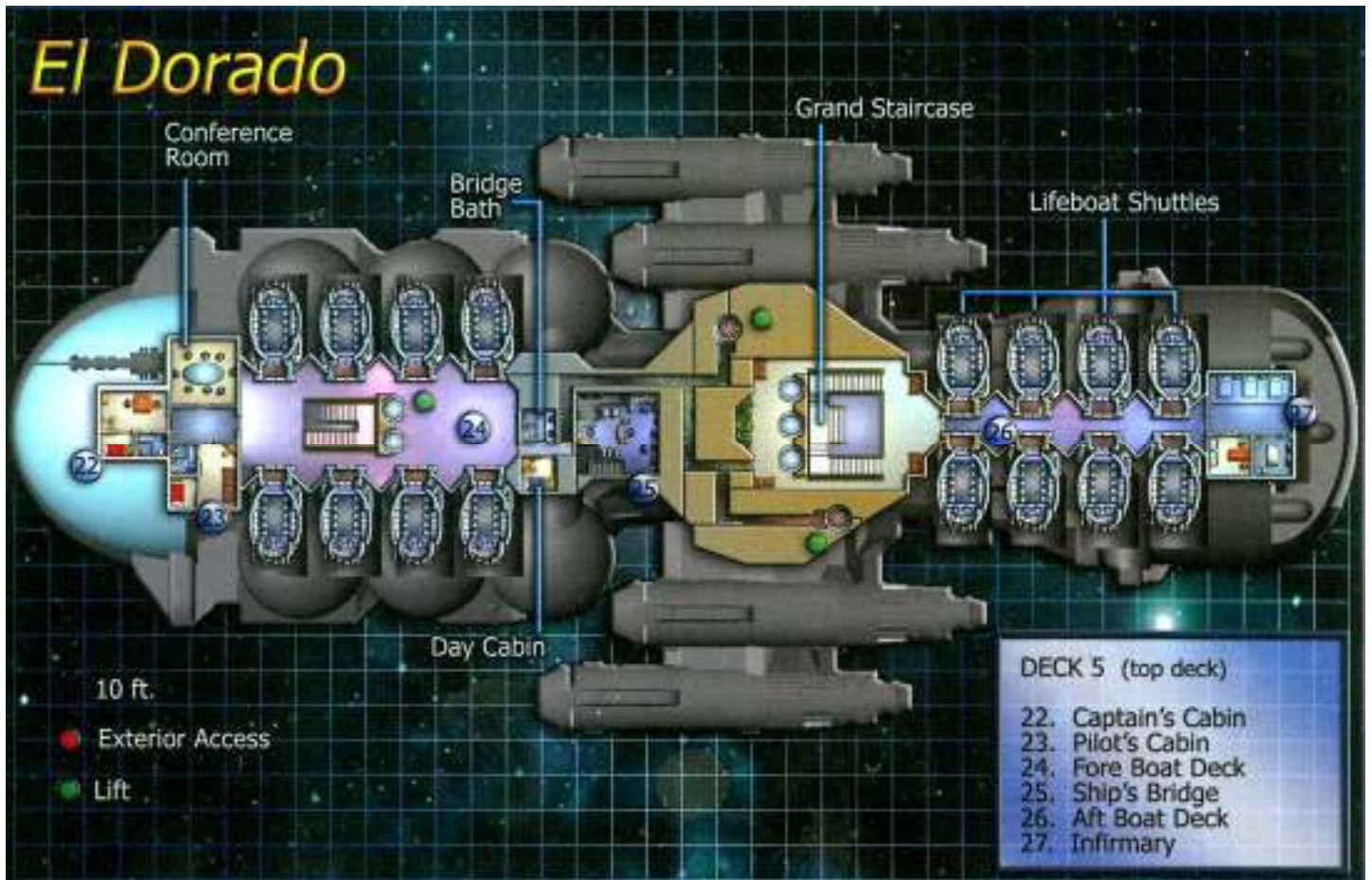
Traits: Allure (Minor Asset), Good Name (Minor Asset)

Skills: Perception d6, Pilot d6

Complexity: high, Maintenance Cost: 32,000 credits a year.







FLOATING WORLD CLASS PASSENGER LINER

Dimensions (LxBxH): 397 x 160 x 52 feet.

Tonnage: 10,000 tons.

Speed Class; 5 cruise / 7 hard-burn.

Crew Complement: 8 officers, 16 space hands, 50 crew dedicated to passenger care, 10 entertainers.

Crew Quarters: 24 double cabins, two 40-ton suites.

Fuel Capacity: 600 tons (1,200 hours).

Cargo Capacity: 800 tons.

Passenger Capacity: 43 double cabins, three 40-tons VIP suites.

Gear: Six 20-ton passenger shuttles. Sixteen 20-ton shuttles configured as lifeboats.

Auditorium / theatre with 500 seats and full stage. Two salons (dining room and casino).

Infirmary with three beds.

Price: 1,000,000 credits.

EL DORADO

5-CARD-DRAW NO-LIMIT

GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP POKER TOURNAMENT

RANDOMLY GENERATED NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

1st Round

d6 Roll	Attribute Die Type
1	d4
2- 5	d6
6	d8

d6 Roll	Skill Die Type
1	d6
2- 5	d8
6	d10

2nd Round

d8 Roll	Attribute Die Type
1	d4
2 – 5	d6
6 – 7	d8
8	d10

d8 Roll	Skill Die Type
1	d6
2 – 5	d8
6 – 7	d10
8	d12

Final Round

Kim Kwan Ho
Attribute d10 Skill d10

Reuben Aloysius Clayborn
Attribute d8 Skill d12

HANDS

Skill Roll Result	Hand	Example
2	High-card No two cards have the same rank, the five cards are not in sequence, and the five cards are not all the same suit.	K♥ J♠ 8♣ 7♦ 3♠
3 – 6	One pair Two cards of the same rank, plus three other unmatched cards.	4♥ 4♠ K♠ 10♦ 5♠
7 – 10	Two pair Two cards of the same rank, plus two cards of another rank (that match each other but not the first pair), plus one unmatched card.	J♥ J♠ 4♣ 4♠ 9♥
11 – 14	Three of a kind Three cards of the same rank, plus two unmatched cards. Also called trips, set or a prile.	2♦ 2♠ 2♣ K♠ 6♥
15 – 16	Straight Five cards of sequential rank but in more than one suit.	Q♣ J♠ 10♠ 9♥ 8♥
17 – 18	Flush Five cards of the same suit, not in rank sequence.	Q♠ 10♠ 7♠ 6♠ 4♠
19 – 20	Full House Three matching cards of one rank, and two matching cards of another rank. Also known as a full boat.	3♣ 3♠ 3♦ 6♣ 6♥
21 – 22	Four of a kind Four cards of one rank, and an unmatched card of another rank. Also known as quads.	9♠ 9♠ 9♦ 9♥ J♥
23 – 24	Straight Flush Five cards in sequence, all of the same suit.	Q♣ J♣ 10♣ 9♣ 8♣
25+	Royal Flush Ace-high straight flush.	A♠ K♠ Q♠ J♠ 10♠